



# Legislative Position

2009

## State-County Results Accountability Initiative: New State-County Governance Model

### Topic/Descriptive Title:

### Brief Summary Statement:

This legislative proposal establishes a **pilot project** in which the human services delivery system is redesigned by granting to individual counties or **voluntary** multi-county entities that so choose, statutory authority to operate within the context of a new state-county governance model.

### Problem/Issue Statement:

Government systems are often designed to mitigate risk, fraud and abuse. While important, such a heavy emphasis on risk mitigation results in a bureaucratic web of administrative rules, hindering government's ability to direct limited resources to those innovative, best practices that are proven to deliver intended outcomes. The new state-county governance model allows government to direct limited time and money toward innovative best practices that deliver intended outcomes rather than low value-added administrative rule compliance. They allow government to adequately minimize risk while granting greater flexibility to promote innovation and deliver results.

### Legislative Committee Action Proposed:

This legislative proposal establishes a pilot project in which the human services delivery system is redesigned by granting to individual counties or voluntary multi-county entities that so choose, statutory authority to operate within the new state-county governance model.

Counties or multi-county entities participating in the new governance model would be required to develop a series of binding agreements with the state Department of Human Services that clarify roles, responsibilities, and performance outcomes for the state and participating counties or voluntary multi-county entities.

**Governance Agreement:** A Governance Agreement would redefine the respective authority, powers, roles and responsibilities of the state and participating counties (i.e. "the governance partners"). As part of the Governance Agreement, the participating counties would be held accountable for achieving defined performance outcomes but, through the use of waivers, be granted greater local control and flexibility to determine the most cost-effective means of achieving those outcomes.

**Performance Agreement:** An annual performance agreement would additionally be required between the governance partners which defines measurable goals in key operational areas. This agreement could identify: dependencies and requirements for each governance partner to maintain service levels, respective resource commitments, funding or expenditure flexibilities, and essential reporting and accountability measures.

**Service Level Agreement:** Service level agreements would be required between the governance partners specifying the expectations and responsibilities of each regarding administrative and information technology support. Assuring adequate technology and administrative support is critical to the ability of each governance partner to uphold the requirements specified within both the governance and performance agreements.

This initiative provides county human services departments with local control and flexibility to determine those partnerships that most effectively achieve the results defined in the Governance, Performance and Service level agreements. In some cases, this will result in the consolidation of county human service departments and/or shared service arrangements as some counties may find it more feasible to achieve specified results through a multi-county collaboration. Other counties may find success in achieving desired outcomes as a single administrative authority. The key is to allow participating counties local flexibility to define their form based on the specific results to be achieved: form must follow function.

### Fiscal Implications:

To be determined based upon the specific pilot project developed.

### Impact If Change

The human services delivery system will continue to require compliance and will reward bureaucratic regulatory functions rather than good outcomes of bettered lives and value delivered to Minnesota

**Is Not  
Implemented:**

taxpayers, clients, and communities.

**Affected Statute**

County Powers statutes (e.g. MS Chapter 375)

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