



# Legislative Position

## 2009

### Topic/Descriptive Title:

### Human Services System Redesign: State-County Results Accountability Initiative

### Brief Summary Statement:

The State-County Results Accountability Initiative aims to redesign the structural relationship between the state and counties to promote greater accountability, productivity and results in Minnesota's human services system. Such redesign may be necessary as the complexity of our publicly-funded human services system has rendered the structural relationship between the state and counties inadequate for assuring: tax dollars are being used efficiently to produce desired results; clients have access to high-quality services that effectively meet their needs; and the state and counties have the tools necessary to produce intended outcomes.

### Problem/Issue Statement:

Faced with challenging budgetary constraints, an increased demand for human services, and a service system that is growing in complexity, Minnesota must find a way to realign systems and governmental structures to better achieve human services outcomes.

### Legislative Committee Action Proposed:

MACSSA believes redesign of the human services delivery system should proceed only according to the following principles:

**Client-Focused:** Clients' safety and well-being must be at the center of any human services system redesign.

**Outcomes-Based:** Effective human service delivery systems are those that are strategically designed to enable the achievement of specific system outcomes such as cost-effectiveness or administrative simplicity as well as program outcomes such as those based upon indicators of client well-being or safety. The specific design of the system can only be established once the outcomes to be achieved are known and clearly articulated. Design of the system should be research-based and data driven. This concept can be simply expressed as "form follows function."

**Adequately Resourced:** As partners in the delivery of human services, the state Department of Human Services and counties must each be given the tools necessary to produce the intended outcomes. This includes, but is not limited to, access to appropriate funding, technology systems, and training.

**Administratively Simplified:** Redesign of the human services system must include the removal of low value-added administrative rules, mandates and other requirements that inhibit the ability of the state or counties to produce intended outcomes efficiently, cost-effectively, using evidence-based best practices. This can be accomplished through the enactment of a county charter (see MACSSA position on "State-County Results Accountability Initiative: New State-County Governance Model").

**Locally-Defined:** As local units of government, counties are uniquely positioned to understand the needs of local residents and as such, are best positioned to define the specific partnerships that are necessary to achieve desired results. 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.

### Fiscal Implications:

To be determined according to the specific redesign model implemented.

### Impact If Change Is Not Implemented:

The human services delivery system will continue to be inadequate for assuring tax dollars are being used efficiently, clients have access to high-quality services that effectively meet their needs and the state and counties have the tools necessary to produce desired results.

**Affected Statute**

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