

Midwest Partners for SNAP Improvement



*First
Midwest Partners
Education & Training Event
July 27–29, 2016
St. Paul, Minn.*

General Information

Introduction

The Midwest Partners for Program Improvement Board of Directors and Steering Committee cordially invite you to attend the

First Midwest Partners Education & Training Event

The Midwest Partners event will be held in Saint Paul, Minnesota on July 27, 28 and 29, 2016. The event is co-sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Midwest Regional Office of the Food and Nutrition Service, United States Department of Agriculture.

Who are the Midwest Partners?

The Midwest Partners are federal, state and local staff in the Midwest geographical region which includes: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. These partners are committed to improving administration of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and focuses on activities that improve and sustain very timely and accurate benefit approvals, reduce procedural errors, and build regional and national partnerships to learn and share successful strategies to improve SNAP administration.

Why is this event important?

As we implement program changes to meet the demand for nutritional assistance, the upcoming Midwest Partners event will provide valuable tools to help local agencies manage workload. With ongoing budget challenges, it is essential that state and local agencies use technology and other management tools effectively to continue providing high benefit accuracy and excellent service. This Midwest Partners event is timely in that the workshops will help agencies as well as provide a forum to recognize the excellent work currently happening in the Midwest.

Event Registration Information

Registration deadline is June 10, 2016.

- Registration fee is \$100.
- Make checks payable to:
State of Minnesota Midwest Partners Event.
- Registration fees are non-refundable.
- There is no onsite registration.
- Please refer to the registration form for further instructions and contact information.

Meals

The event will include a plated lunch on Thursday. In addition, snacks and beverages will be provided during the breaks each day.

For overnight guests, the hotel rate includes a complimentary social hour and made-to-order breakfast in the hotel.

Dress Code

Casual professional attire is recommended. Climate control throughout the event facility can vary. You may wish to dress in layers to be as comfortable as possible.

General Information



Embassy Suites Saint Paul
175 East 10th Street
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Hotel Reservations

Telephone..... 800-445-8667

Fax..... 651-224-0957

http://embassysuites.hilton.com/en/es/groups/personalized/M/MSPSPES-MPG-20160726/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG.

Hotel Information

Reservation Deadline:

The deadline for hotel reservations is June 26, 2016.

Room Rates:

Event rate for all attendees is \$159.08 per night, tax included. To receive the discounted room rate, please refer to the **Midwest Partners Education & Training Event**.

Parking:

Parking fee is \$15 daily.

Travel Arrangements

The hotel does not provide shuttle service from the airport.

There is Light Rail service available from the airport to downtown St. Paul, but travelers must ride to Minneapolis on the Blue Line and transfer to the Green Line to come to St. Paul.

Super Shuttle

Fee is \$32 per person, round trip. Reservations are required. Please call 612-827-777, ext. 2, or 800-BLUE-VAN (258-3826).

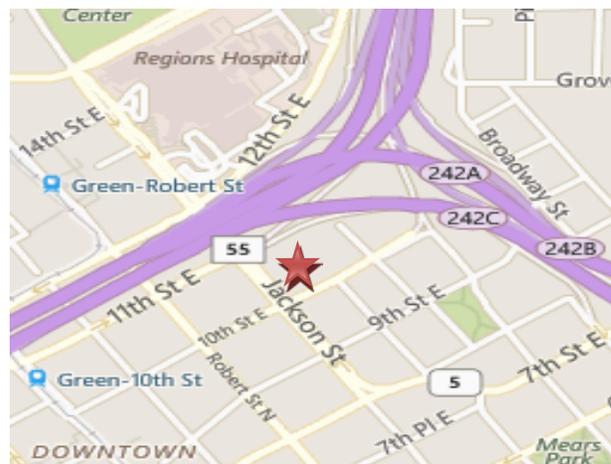
Taxi:

A one-way trip from the airport is \$30–40.

Bus service

From Lindbergh Terminal 1, take bus route 54 at Gate 4 at the Transit Plaza, up one level from the tram. Service operates roughly every 15 minutes.

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Travel time is 20 minutes. Arrives at 5th street and Jackson Street. Walk 0.4mi (approx. 8 mins) to 175 10th Street E, St. Paul (Embassy Suites Hotel). Fare is \$1.75 to \$2.25 depending on time of travel.

From Humphrey Terminal 2, follow signs to Transit Station and follow instructions from Lindbergh above.

Hotel Directions

Driving directions from airport

Follow signs out of airport for Highway 5/St. Paul. This turns into 7th Street. Follow signs for 35E N and merge onto highway. Exit 11th Street, follow to Jackson. Turn right on Jackson to 10th. Turn left onto 10th; hotel will be on the left.

Driving directions from the north

Take 35E S to 10th Street and Wacouta exit, follow 10th Street to the hotel.

Driving directions from the south

Take 35E N to 11th Street exit. Travel six blocks to Jackson Street, turn right on Jackson to 10th Street.

Driving directions from the east

Take 94 E to 10th Street. Exit and follow to Cedar Street. Turn right on Cedar, and then an immediate left back onto 10th. Continue to the hotel.

Driving directions from the west

Take 94 W to 12th Street/State Capitol Exit. Left on Jackson. Travel two blocks and take a left on 10th Street.

Agenda

Wed., July 27, 2016

- 10:00 – 12:00 p.m. **Check-in outside of ballroom**
- 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. **Ballroom**
*Welcome – **Jim Koppel**, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Human Services
*SNAP Express Delivers Benefits
***Jessica Shahin**, Associate Administrator for SNAP – National Office
* **Tim English**, FNS Midwest Regional Office Administrator
- 2:30 – 2:45 p.m. **Networking break with snacks**
- 2:45 – 4:45 p.m. **Ballroom**
Keynote Speaker
***Donna Rae Scheffert**, President, Leadership Tools
Leadership and Integrity

Thursday, July 28, 2016

- 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. **First Platform Sessions**
- 10:00 – 10:30 a.m. **Networking Break with snacks**
- 10:30 – 12:00 p.m. **Second Platform Sessions**
- 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. **Luncheon**
- 1:30 – 3:00 p.m. **Third Platform Sessions**
- 3:00 – 3:30 p.m. **Networking Break with snacks**
- 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. **Fourth Platform Sessions**

Friday, July 29, 2016

- 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. **Case and Procedural Errors**
- 10:00 – 10:45 a.m. **State and Local Agency Awards**
- 10:45 – 12:00 p.m. **Alan Shannon**, Public Affairs Director, FNS Midwest Regional and **Tracy Fountain**, District Manager, Genesee County, Michigan DHHS
Service and Integrity
- 12:00 – 12:30 p.m. **Train leaves the station**

Event Descriptions and Schedule

8:30—10:00 a.m.

Platform One

1. Next step, Customer Service Junction! (Phone Interviewing, Time Management, Customer Service)

Despite modernization efforts, quality customer service and payment accuracy remain dependent upon each other. Avoid the runaway train of time mismanagement by joining Indiana State Eligibility Managers as they share phone interviewing and customer service best practices and strategies. Learn how to tie it all together and improve the overall eligibility experience for clients and staff!

2. Ensure you are on the right track! (Client education using FNS guidance)

Effective education is a proven, cost effective way to prevent fraud before it occurs. This workshop will discuss the best practices currently used by several states to effectively communicate education messaging to help prevent fraud, with a particular emphasis on preventing SNAP trafficking. We will also review templates and examples that can be used to improve messaging. In addition, there will be a discussion on how educating clients on their reporting responsibilities during the interview process can improve payment accuracy and ensure you are on the right track.

3. Your ticket to problem solving

Join continuous improvement engineers and fill your boxcar with tools for solving your SNAP program improvement challenges. Facilitators will use SNAP expedited service as an example to provide you with tried and true techniques for uncovering root causes and identifying, prioritizing and implementing solutions for any SNAP performance challenge.

10:30—12:00 p.m.

Platform Two

4. Ride the rails to corrective action planning with Management Evaluation

Get your ticket punched at this panel presentation with representatives from Minnesota, Ohio and FNS in the main boxcar. Panelists will discuss concepts around corrective action plans (CAPs), including: identifying scope of deficiency, identifying root causes contributing to deficiency, data analysis, strategies for improvement, and continual evaluation of implemented strategies. Successful corrective action planning will steam you forward to success in meeting performance standards and providing good customer service. All aboard!

5. All aboard to testing new tracks! (Business processing re-engineering)

Sometimes in order to illuminate or achieve excellence, an entire system is changed. In many states, major changes have been made to state eligibility systems and service delivery models in order to streamline operations and improve access to SNAP. Relying on technology, phones and a Web-based application that automatically fills in the state's eligibility systems, many states have gone high-tech. With an emphasis on the utilization of phones and the Internet, some states have reduced the number of offices, while increasing access points, improving technology and streamlining service delivery. While you might not be able to undertake an overhaul of service delivery, you might be able to adapt a few of the other states' novel approaches which helped navigate a new course.

6. Making a timely arrival at every station! (Application timeliness)

It seems that SNAP application timeliness draws everyone's attention at some point in time. Learn about how states conquered challenges such as higher caseloads, fewer staff and transitioning to a new computer eligibility determination system. You will learn about their best practices to improving timelines and gain tools that you can use to help your staff achieve excellent results in SNAP application timeliness.

Event Descriptions and Schedule

1:30—3 p.m.

Platform Three

7. Don't get derailed... Use Error Prone Profiles to keep your payment accuracy on track.

(Payment accuracy: data and Error Prone Profiles)

Keeping that train on the track to payment accuracy can sometimes be a daunting task, and when we get derailed, we get errors. The Error Prone Profile (EPP) provides indicators of those obstacles that might run us off the rails. Are there more expenses that the income can meet? Are there unresolved discrepancies from inaccurate or unreported income? Are there individuals that have a history of intentional program violations or overpayments? The EPP is hitched to a tracking system that allows us to store savings and develop ad hoc reports. In Wisconsin, SFY 2015, on average EPP avoided \$880 in overpayments each time an error was subsequently corrected prior to benefit confirmation.

8. Waiver initiatives: lessons learned

(Panel Quality Control/Policy)

Waivers can often bring work relief for workers and increased program success. Most waivers yield beneficial results. However, not all waivers work out or bring the intended results. This panel discussion will highlight both the benefits and potential for waivers, as well as waivers that did not work out as well and best practices for waiver implementation.

9. Ride the rails to effective learning

Minnesota staff

Given all of the various delivery methods available for training, how do you choose the right method(s) and most effective way to help eligibility staff learn and retain information? This session will discuss the various training methods and techniques used among SNAP Midwest Partners, and the success and challenges experienced along the way.

Get on board with the most effective learning methods to improve SNAP payment accuracy and customer service!

3:30—5 p.m.

Platform Four

10. Employment and Training, and Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (E&T and ABAWDs)

This informative presentation will provide definitions of ABAWDs and non-ABAWDs, as well as an overview of the role of E&T activities in serving the ABAWD population. FNS staff will provide expertise and insight for effective and impactful program implementation.

11. Arriving at recertification station!

Many states are on track to improve or maintain SNAP application timeliness, but what about SNAP recertification timeliness? Both categories are important but often require different approaches, tracking and monitoring. Join staff from FNS and Michigan's Food Assistance Management Evaluation team to learn some new bells and whistles to improve recertification timeliness. Don't be the caboose of the Midwest Region in recertification timeliness!

12. Signal for SNAP integrity with our community partner

How can community partners help individuals and families ensure integrity in the SNAP program? We all want to ensure that SNAP is available to those in need for generations to come. One way to do that is to ensure that eligible families and individuals receive the right benefit amounts at the right time. What role do our community partners play?

Registration

Participants attending the 2016 Midwest Partners Education and Training Event must complete and return this registration form.

- Registration fee is \$100.
- Registration fees are non-refundable.
- There is no onsite registration.
- Make checks payable to:
State of Minnesota Midwest Partners Event
- Send this completed registration form to your steering committee member (listed on the right) no later than **June 10, 2016**.

Linda A. Konsella
Section Chief—Food Share Quality Control
Department of Health Services DHCAA/BEPS
1 West Wilson Street
P.O. Box 309
Madison, WI 53701-0309
Office: (608) 261-8321
Fax: (608) 261-6758

Name: _____

Agency: _____

Job Title: _____

Work Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

The event will include breakfast and lunch on Thurs., July 28 and breakfast on Fri., July 29.

Please select your lunch option:

- _____ Italian Buffet
_____ Vegetarian
_____ I won't be eating at this luncheon.

List any special accommodations you may need:

Workshop session registration

See registration packet for workshop session numbers and descriptions. Enter the workshop session numbers for your first and second choice for each time slot. On Thurs., July 28, morning sessions will be presented from 8:30—10:00 a.m. and from 10:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m. Afternoon sessions will be presented from 2—3:15 p.m. and from 3:45 p.m.—5 p.m.

Platform One:	8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	_____ 1st Choice	_____ 2nd Choice
Platform Two:	10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	_____ 1st Choice	_____ 2nd Choice
Platform Three:	1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	_____ 1st Choice	_____ 2nd Choice
Platform Four:	3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	_____ 1st Choice	_____ 2nd Choice

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