

Legislative Report

Date: Sept. 1, 2025

To: Senator Melissa Wiklund, chair, Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Senator Paul Utke, ranking minority member, Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Representative Carlie Kotyza-Witthuhn, co-chair, House Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee
Representative Nolan West, co-chair, House Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee
Representative Jessica Hanson, co-vice chair, House Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee
Representative Nathan Nelson, co-vice chair, House Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee

From: The Department of Children, Youth, and Families, Child Safety and Permanency Administration

RE: County financial data on federal cash benefits for children in foster care, July 1-Dec. 31, 2024

This report and attached appendix are submitted to the chairs and ranking minority members of the Minnesota legislative committees with jurisdiction over child protection, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 142A.609, subd. 11 (f), which states:

By July 1, 2025, and each July 1 thereafter, each financially responsible agency must submit a report to the commissioner of children, youth, and families that includes [federal cash benefits] information required under paragraph (e). By September 1 of each year, the commissioner must submit a report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over child protection that compiles the information provided to the commissioner by each financially responsible agency under paragraph (e); subdivision 12, paragraph (e); and section 260C.331, subdivision 7, paragraph (d). This paragraph expires January 31, 2034.

The federal cash benefits information required to be reported, compiled and submitted to the legislature is outlined in Minnesota Statutes 142A.609, subd. 11 (e) and subd. 12 (e), and Minnesota Statutes 260C.331, subd. 7 (d), as follows:

If a financially responsible agency receives any [federal cash] benefits under this subdivision, it must keep a record of:

- (1) the total dollar amount it received on behalf of all children it receives benefits for;
- (2) the total number of children it applied to be a payee for; and
- (3) the total number of children it received benefits for.

To meet the above requirements and ensure consistency and accuracy in data collection, the Minnesota Department of Children, Youth, and Families staff established the following parameters to obtain this data from financially responsible agencies:

- “Financially responsible agency” means a county agency that is financially responsible for a child in foster care.
- “Federal cash benefits” means Supplemental Security Income (SSI); Retirement, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (RSDI); veteran’s benefits; railroad retirement benefits; and Black Lung Benefits.
- “County calendar year” is the reporting period and covers Jan. 1-Dec. 31 each year, except for the initial report due Sept. 1, 2025, which covers July 1-Dec. 31, 2024, due to legislation not taking effect until July 1, 2024.
- “Child in foster care” means a child who is under the placement authority of a county social services agency via court order ([Minnesota Statutes, chapter 260C](#)) or voluntary placement agreement ([Minnesota Statutes, chapter 260D](#)).

Department staff developed a three-question survey with the assistance of the Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) Management Analysis and Development (MAD) team. MAD sent the survey via Qualtrics to each county or county consortium director for their responses on this required data covering July 1-Dec. 31, 2024. While the survey was active, department staff received requests from county staff for additional clarification on determining the reporting period and whether to include receipt of other federal funds, parental fees and back payments. For the purpose of this survey and to accurately reflect the legislative intent, department staff provided the following clarifications:

- Federal cash benefits do not include Title IV-E funding. They only include cash benefits agencies applied for or received on behalf of a child in foster care from the federal agency responsible for administering such benefits.
- Balance of held funds sent to an agency by a prior representative payee for a child does not need to be included in the reporting of this survey. This survey requires agencies to report only the funds received when said agency became the representative payee for the child.
- Agencies can report backpay funds they received as representative payee for a child in foster care, provided the backpay funds were for one or more months within the reporting period of July 1-Dec. 31, 2024, and the agency was the representative payee and therefore authorized to receive such funds.
- Survey responses should specify the total dollar amount an agency received on behalf of a child in foster care as the representative payee, regardless of how the funding was utilized.

Payments received from a parent or custodian would never apply to this survey because the statute requires agencies to report only on federal cash benefits they applied for or received on behalf of children in foster care directly from the federal agency administering the federal cash benefits. Such payments instead fall under the scope of billing parents/custodians for costs of care based on the child’s resources/income.

Direct questions about the data and survey to Sarah Florman, legislative director for the Child Safety and Permanency Administration at sarah.florman@state.mn.us.

Appendix A: County and county consortium responses to federal cash benefits survey

The table below provides financial data received from counties and county consortiums in response to the department's three-question survey that was open from May 1-June 6, 2025. The survey requested each county/county consortium to report on:

- Total dollar amount of federal cash benefits received by the county/county consortium between July 1 and Dec. 31, 2024, on behalf of all children under its care
- Total number of children for whom the county/county consortium applied to be the representative payee for the child's federal cash benefits from July 1-Dec. 31, 2024
- Total number of children for whom the county/county consortium received federal cash benefits from July 1-Dec. 31, 2024.

The following counties/county consortiums did not respond to the survey and are not included in the table below: McLeod, Pennington, Roseau, Sibley, Southwest Health & Human Services and Swift.

County/Consortium	Total dollar amount of federal cash benefits agency received	Total number of children agency applied to be representative payee	Total number of children for whom agency received federal cash benefits
Aitkin	\$5,784.00	2	2
Anoka	\$64,287.23	0	16
Becker	\$57,627.82	4	14
Beltrami	\$2,345.71	6	6
Benton	\$11,610.00	0	4
Big Stone	\$136.00	1	1
Blue Earth	\$14,538.00	4	4
Brown	\$0	0	0
Carlton	\$25,242.04	0	4
Carver	\$5,628.00	0	2
Cass	\$52,718.79	95	46
Chippewa	\$9,802.41	1	2
Chisago	\$6,524.00	0	1
Clay	\$27,430.00	0	7
Clearwater	\$0	0	0
Cook	\$7,530.00	0	1
Crow Wing	\$14,895.00	0	5

County/Consortium	Total dollar amount of federal cash benefits agency received	Total number of children agency applied to be representative payee	Total number of children for whom agency received federal cash benefits
Dakota	\$47,947.00	5	9
Des Moines Valley Health & Human Services (Cottonwood and Jackson Counties)	\$8,775.00	3	3
Douglas	\$6,853.00	0	2
Fillmore	\$3,456.00	0	1
Freeborn	\$12,419.00	3	9
Goodhue	\$12,051.00	0	4
Hennepin	\$274,251.00	45	79
Houston	\$0	0	0
Hubbard	\$0	0	0
Faribault & Martin County Human Services	\$37,794.00	2	13
Isanti	\$5,658.00	0	1
Itasca	\$32,163.00	4	18
Kanabec	\$11,823.62	0	2
Kandiyohi	\$0	0	0
Kittson	\$0	0	0
Koochiching	\$5,942.58	1	3
Lac qui Parle	\$0	0	0
Lake	\$3,275.68	2	2
Lake of the Woods	\$0	0	0
Le Sueur	\$0	0	0
Mahnomen	\$0	0	0
Marshall	\$0	0	0
Meeker	\$5,642.00	0	1
Mille Lacs	\$6,050.00	3	3
Minnesota Prairie County Alliance (Dodge, Steele and Waseca Counties)	\$20,123.67	3	7
Morrison	\$30,784.00	0	6
Mower	\$1,180.00	2	2

County/Consortium	Total dollar amount of federal cash benefits agency received	Total number of children agency applied to be representative payee	Total number of children for whom agency received federal cash benefits
Nicollet	\$8,404.00	3	1
Nobles	\$0	0	0
Norman	\$2,688.00	1	1
Olmstead	\$21,310.96	2	5
Otter Tail	\$29,845.03	2	21
Pine	\$3,030.00	1	1
Polk	\$15,600.00	0	4
Ramsey	\$425.00	0	2
Renville	\$0	0	0
Rice	\$0	0	0
Scott	\$29,279.00	2	8
Sherburne	\$2,088.00	0	2
St. Louis	\$138,446.00	8	36
Stearns	\$66,380.00	15	0
Stevens	\$1,886.00	1	1
Todd	\$15,178.00	0	4
Traverse	\$0	0	0
Wabasha	\$7,122.00	1	1
Wadena	\$13,616.00	2	3
Washington	\$695.00	0	1
Watsonwan	\$0	0	0
Western Prairie Human Services (<i>Pope and Grant Counties</i>)	\$5,658.00	1	1
Wilkin	\$5,658.00	1	1
Winona	\$27,186.90	9	9
Wright	\$28,484.00	3	4
Yellow Medicine	\$0	0	0
STATEWIDE TOTAL	\$1,255,267.44	238	386