



Montana Department of LABOR & INDUSTRY

Division: Workforce Services Division
Category: Programs
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Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership (HELP) Link Policy

Background: The 2015 Montana Legislature established the Health and Economic Livelihood Partnership (HELP) Act through a collaborative effort between Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) and Montana Department of Labor and Industry (MTDLI). HELP-Link is the MTDLI-implemented workforce development program for Medicaid-enrolled individuals, created to leverage workforce development opportunities to increase the earning capacity, economic stability, and self-sufficiency of program participants. HELP-Link places individuals who are not engaged in workforce development activities into employment and training otherwise unavailable to them without the partnership's assistance.

Scope: This policy applies to all service providers operating the HELP-Link program, the HELP-Link program manager, WSD fiscal officer(s), and the MTDLI monitoring team.

Policy:

Required for HELP-Link Participants:

- Determination of eligibility;
- Comprehensive assessment;
- An Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) developed in partnership with the participant; and
- Case management (including staff-assisted career services and follow-up services as applicable).

HELP-Link Eligibility:

To receive HELP-Link services, an individual must:

- Currently receive Medicaid Expansion coverage
 - Proof of coverage from CHIMES/DPHHS is required and must be documented before education and training begin.
- Be legally authorized to work in the U.S.;
- Provide a Social Security number; and
- Require HELP-Link assistance to begin education, training, or worksite learning.

Comprehensive Assessment:

- Enrolled individuals must be provided with a comprehensive assessment of their individual skill levels and service needs using testing and other assessment tools. An in-depth interview and evaluation to identify their employment barriers and appropriate employment goals must also be completed.
- Based on the assessment's results, a complete Individual Employment Plan (IEP) is required for a participant to access individualized career and training services.

Individual Employment Plan (IEP):

- An IEP must be developed in partnership with the participant.
- The IEP identifies the participant's current circumstances, goals, and the appropriate mix of services and support needed to reach a realistic employment goal.
- The IEP must be maintained in the participant's file. This IEP is the acknowledgement that the participant has read and agrees to the responsibilities; and knows where to file a grievance or complaint. The EEO copy must be given to the participant.
- Case managers must open the IEP service in the Management Information System (MIS). The work history, strengths, goals, and assessments must be recorded. Case managers must record and update IEP activities as needed.

HELP-Link Services and Activities:

Co-enrollment in the Adult Program is allowed but not required.

Basic Career Services

Universally available to all individuals without being enrolled in the HELP-Link program.

Individualized Career Services

Available to individuals enrolled in the HELP-Link Program. Please refer to the Operations Manual for details.

Supportive Services

Available to enable an enrolled individual to participate in and complete HELP-Link activities when they cannot obtain services through other programs. Please refer to the Supportive Services policy for details.

Training Services

Training services may be provided to participants and must include the following considerations:

- Occupational skills training programs can be no longer than 18 months.
- The training program targets in-demand skills and occupations from the following sectors:
 - Healthcare and health-related careers
 - Construction trades
 - Hospitality and recreation
 - Advanced Manufacturing and Computing
 - Education and childcare
 - Financial and professional services
- Maximum total cost of participant services is \$7,500. Within this cap, supportive services have a separate limit of \$2,500 per participant.
- An allowable training program must:
 - Be on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) or
 - Have prior written approval from the program manager to use a program that is not on the list, justified based on local community needs.
 - At most, 25 percent of enrollments statewide can be approved using this exemption.
 - To obtain written approval from the program manager, providers must summarize their justification via email based on the following:
 - A brief description of community need;
 - Documentation of the need;
 - The reason that the training is not already on the ETPL or will not be added; and

- Projected community impact and alignment with in-demand occupations.

Follow-up Services

- Follow-up services must be provided to HELP-Link participants and customized to their needs.
- During the follow-up period, quarterly contact should be made with the participant to obtain employment, wage, and credential outcome information for reporting purposes, including quarterly reports.

Case Management

Case Management responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Documenting monthly contact or contact attempts with participant
- Maintaining the participant file by recording all program services, case notes, and documentation MIS within seven (7) working days and as service/contact occurs;
- Documenting participant's Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) and credential achievement. Please refer to the MSG Policy and/or the Credentials Policy for more details.
- Entering program services and start and end dates.

Service Provider Reporting:

Service providers are required to submit a quarterly report to HELP-Link program manager, providing the following information:

- Number of participants enrolled in program activities and co-enrolled in other workforce programs;
- Types of services provided;
- Number of participants who attained a credential and/or measurable skill gain;
- Number of participants who exited the program;
- Number of participants who exited the program to employment;
- Number of participants who continued with their enrollment in the program;
- Amount and type of outreach conducted to recruit participants; and
- Amount of funding spent directly on participants.

Administrative Requirements:

- MTDLI will:
 - Communicate client involvement in HELP-Link and services provided to DPHHS.
 - Provide data and information to legislative subcommittees regarding program participation, expenditures, and outcomes.
 - Provide data and reports to DPHHS as needed.

Monitoring and Technical Assistance:

- A formal monitoring will be conducted by the MTDLI monitoring team.
- The HELP-Link program manager will provide technical assistance to case managers.

References:

- [2025 Montana Legislature House Bill 245](#)
- [2 CFR Part 200](#)
- [Montana Code Annotated \(MCA\) 2023, 39-12-106](#)
- [Administrative Rules of Montana \(ARM\), 24.13](#)