

End Parental Fees

Summary

In the past, many parents were forced to pay a fee to access Medical Assistance (MA) for their children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). High fees caused financial stress to families and prevented them from applying for services that would meet their child's needs.

After years of advocacy, the 2023 Minnesota legislature eliminated parental fees for MA state plan and Home and Community Based Services waiver programs.

This policy change did not eliminate fees for parents whose children have an [Out of Home Placement Plan \(OHPP\)](#).

The Minnesota legislature must not reinstate parental fees for MA state plan and Home and Community Based waiver services.

Minnesota legislators must eliminate all parental fees for services accessed by children with disabilities, including OHPP.

Issue

In the past, many parents were forced to pay a fee to access Medical Assistance (MA) for their children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). MA funds long-term services and supports and medical care. This fee was assessed when parents earned too much money for their family to qualify for MA based on income.

These fees were very costly for many families. Families of children with disabilities often pay more of their income on medical care than families without. They pay for medical care for their child with disabilities, plus private insurance coverage.

High fees caused great financial stress to families and even prevented them from applying for crucial services that would meet their child's needs.

To help balance the state budget, lawmakers at times increased parental fees and made fees unaffordable for many Minnesota families. In some cases, fees were equal to a family's mortgage or car payment. Some families drained their savings accounts or drew down retirement savings to pay the fee. Some families had to forego MA services for their child altogether because they could not afford the fee.

After many years of intensive advocacy by parents of children with disabilities statewide, the 2023 Minnesota legislature eliminated parental fees for MA state plan and Home and Community Based Services waiver programs. This showed a strong commitment to support children with disabilities who can benefit from MA programs and services.

However, this policy change did not eliminate all parental fees. Parents whose children have an [Out of Home Placement Plan \(OHPP\)](#) still have to pay a fee.

Position

The Minnesota legislature must not reinstate parental fees for MA state plan and Home and Community Based waiver services. For too long, the state targeted human services accessed by people with disabilities and their trusted supporters by cutting funding or increasing fees. We must not go backward in creating unnecessary barriers to services and supports for children who have disabilities.

Minnesota legislators must eliminate all parental fees for services accessed by children with disabilities, including OHPP.

Some children who have OHPP are in active crisis. If their parents cannot afford the parental fee, their crisis may get worse or go on longer than it would without intervention. This is harmful for children and their trusted supporters.

Eliminating the parental fee for OHPP, as the legislature did for other MA-funded disability services, will help make sure children with disabilities have equitable access to supports without added financial pressure on their parents.

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