

# North Carolina MFP Supplemental Services Proposal

## MFP Demonstration Project

North Carolina proposes the following supplemental services that fall into one of the four focus areas identified in the MFP Supplemental Services Notices effective January 1, 2022, issued by CMS.

The proposed supplemental services were developed to meet the needs of MFP beneficiaries and are person-centered. Based on the data collected on the use of startup funds prior to transition, the supplemental services proposed are responsive to a person's needs and wants.

Throughout the proposal we have used eligibility criteria as "MFP participants at risk of reinstitutionalization". Any MFP participant, without the support of post transition follow along and the use of supplemental services, would be considered "at risk of reinstitutionalization". If additional eligibility criteria for a service is required, the criteria will be described for the specific supplemental service.

For all of the supplemental services proposed, the State will monitor each service to determine how this service has contributed not only to the initial transition but also how well the MFP beneficiary thrives in the follow along period. The State attests that these services were developed and proposed to be responsive to a beneficiary's needs and wants. Should modifications or additional guidance be warranted, MFP will make the necessary recommendations to modify the service(s) and provide training on any changes to the service(s).

### Food Security - Pantry Stocking Service

NC MFP will create a pantry stocking benefit to include food and personal care items to support the health, safety, and well-being of the MFP beneficiary. Allowable expenses under this service will enable a person to establish a basic household and do not qualify as room and board expenses. As individuals establish a home in the community, the pantry stocking service is an essential service to meet their unique needs and can be modified for those who have food sensitivities or allergies.

This service falls under the category of food security. The Pantry Stocking Service is available for all beneficiaries who are eligible for the MFP Demonstration Project in North Carolina.

**Pantry Stocking:** Defined as the purchase of essential pantry stocking items to ensure adequate and necessary access to food and goods immediately following transition. Examples include any initial staples, fresh and frozen food, utensils, cookware, and dishes. This pantry stocking prepares the beneficiary for life in the community giving them culturally sensitive, person-centered choices while protecting the beneficiary's health and safety. The maximum allowable amount shall not exceed \$1000.

<b>MFP Supplemental Service</b>	<b>Billable Unit of Service</b>
1x Pantry Stocking	Up to \$1,000 per individual (non-recurring)

***A. Document the maximum amount of pantry stocking per beneficiary recipient through MFP funded supplemental services:***

1. Establish an authorized service for one-time pantry stocking in an amount not to exceed \$1000 per MFP eligible individual.
2. Establish the coverage period of one-time pantry stocking to ninety (90) days.

<b>FOOD ASSISTANCE: \$1000 Per Recipient</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Projected Number of Recipients</b>	<b>Projected Cost</b>
2023	120	\$120,000
<b>Cost</b>		\$120,000

***B. Describe strategies for developing, strengthening, and maintaining partnerships with food assistance programs:***

The contracted agencies will assist MFP participants with the application and referral paperwork necessary to apply for SNAP benefits, home delivered meal services, and local food pantries. North Carolina is currently launching Medicaid initiatives addressing social determinants of health (SDOH) including food insecurity. The MFP Demonstration Project will provide training to our contracted agencies on these SDOH initiatives.

***C. Describe the recipient's plan for building local outreach and referral networks:***

The contracted agencies will refer beneficiaries to local food assistance programs and work with waiver program staff to ensure that the beneficiary has a working knowledge of local food bank resources when help is needed.

***D. Provide assurance and describe how the state will ensure access to food assistance for MFP beneficiaries if the supplemental funding is no longer available:***

During the pretransition planning process, transition coordinators will:

- Work with waiver social workers to advocate for home delivered meals for the beneficiaries who qualify as part of their waiver services;
- Assist the individual with identifying local food assistance programs in their area;
- Provide beneficiary with information about the NC CARES 360 and the NC211 online resources;

- Make referrals to public benefits such as WIC or SNAP benefits; and
- Provide information about online food shopping through Amazon, big box retailers, farmers' markets, and local grocers.

E. ***Describe how the state will oversee and monitor contracted agencies responsible for implementing any component of the supplemental services for food assistance supports:***

The contracted agencies will be responsible for assisting the MFP beneficiaries with the pantry stocking service. The MFP Demonstration Project will distribute a list of minimum food pantry stocking items that can be purchased based upon individual dietary need and religious/cultural preferences. This list will be reviewed annually for updates to ensure that the service is person-centered and has regular updates based on stakeholder input.

Oversight and monitoring will be conducted through the MFP program and fiscal staff and the Division of Health Benefits audit team. Invoices and programmatic reports are submitted to the MFP office for review and approval. The MFP Program staff will retain the right to request additional information or documentation.

**Ancillary Service:** Expand the Food Security supplemental service to include a short-term provision of groceries for an MFP participant if their usual source of food is disrupted due to a re-institutionalization or hospitalization. The criteria would include:

- Re-institutionalization/hospitalization sixty days (60) or longer;
- The individual must have a balance of MFP eligibility days left after their MFP clock has stopped because of the re-institutionalization/hospitalization over 30 days.
- Short term provision of groceries is defined as a 2-week supply;
- Limited to 3 instances within the 365 days of MFP eligibility.

In the situation explained above, the MFP participant may experience a nutritional crisis upon discharge from the nursing facility/hospital after a 2 month or more stay as their regular process for obtaining groceries has been disrupted. Their Supports Coordinator/Provider Agency would be expected to use that time to work with the individual to more permanently resolve the disruption to the individual's ordinary food supply.

Payment for Activities Prior to Transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility  
Clothing Allowance

Beneficiaries who have lived in a facility for an extended period of time often lack the necessary clothing needed for life in the community. Currently when a transition coordinator requests clothing for their beneficiaries, the costs are approved and covered as an authorized Transition Year Startup Resource (TYSR) expense, an NC MFP Demonstration Service. Based on past transitions, about 50% of the individuals transitioning utilize TYSR funds for clothing purchases. Now that we are providing a list of items for clothing similar to the pantry stocking, individuals will choose from the items on the list including seasonal items such as winter coats and footwear at a maximum not to exceed \$1,000. We want to ensure that we include enough funding so that clothing for accessible wear for those with I/DD or fine motor skill issues which has a higher price point can be purchased to support independence for those individuals.

This service falls under the category of payment for activities prior to transitioning from an MFP-Qualified Inpatient Facility. The Clothing Allowance service is for all beneficiaries who are eligible for Money Follows the Person program in North Carolina. The service can be personalized to meet the unique needs of the beneficiary. Purchases can be made 60 days prior to discharge. The provider will submit invoices within 90 days of purchase for reimbursement.

The North Carolina MFP Demonstration Project proposes a clothing allowance supplemental service to pay for clothing items necessary to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of the beneficiary. MFP participants at risk of reinstitutionalization would be eligible for this service.

**BUDGET**

SERVICE	OCCURRENCES	COST PER OCCURRENCE	TOTAL
Clothing allowance	60	\$1,000	\$60,000

## Payment for Activities Prior to Transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility

### HOME MODIFICATIONS

Home modifications implemented prior to transition ensure the beneficiary's accessibility needs are met on day one of their transition. These physical modifications/adaptations to a beneficiary's residence are medically necessary and ensure the health and well-being of the beneficiary, create a home setting where the beneficiary has access and greater independence, and ability to access the community without which the beneficiary would be at risk of returning to institutional care.

Home adaptations may include, but are not limited to, the installation of ramps and grab bars, widening of doorways, modifications of bathrooms, or installation of specialized technology, monitoring, modifications to the electrical or plumbing systems necessary to accommodate the medical equipment, and supplies that are needed for the health, safety, and well-being of the beneficiary.

Current allowable costs for home modifications are covered under the TYSR demonstration service at a maximum of \$3,000. The contracted agency is responsible for arranging and approving the residential modifications. Both the Innovations waiver and the CAP/DA waiver include a service definition, Community Transition Services (CTS). However, this proposed supplemental service will authorize the work to be completed **prior** to transition unlike the CTS service that will only authorize the work after the beneficiary has been discharged, placing the beneficiary at risk.

This service falls under the category of payment for activities prior to transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility. The Home Modification Service is available for all beneficiaries who are eligible for the MFP Demonstration Project in North Carolina. The service can be personalized to meet the unique needs of the beneficiary. Modification will be rendered no later than 1 day prior to transition to ensure that modifications will accommodate the unique needs of the beneficiary. The provider will submit invoices for home modifications within 90 days of completing the service.

The North Carolina MFP Demonstration Project proposes a home modification supplemental service to pay for the modification prior to transition. MFP participants at risk of reinstitutionalization would be eligible for this service.

### **BUDGET**

<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>OCCURRENCES</b>	<b>COST PER OCCURRENCE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Residential Modification	25	\$10,000	\$250,000

Payment for Activities Prior to Transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility  
Pretransition Visits

Pretransition visits are currently covered under NC MFP Demonstration Project's TYSR demonstration service. These visits to the home in the community prepare the beneficiaries for the move and allow the provider agencies to identify unique support needs to be included in the service plan.

These visits will be authorized for up to three days to identify any unanticipated support needs and determine fit with other members of the household without creating a disruption for others. Beneficiaries will tour their residential placement, shop for furnishings for their new home, participate in community activities with household members, and meet staff and other members of the household, and neighbors. The transition coordinator will monitor the visit and document new information to be included in the transition plan.

This service falls under the category of payment for activities prior to transitioning from an MFP-Qualified Inpatient Facility. MFP participants at risk of reinstitutionalization would be eligible for this service. Service will be prior to transition to ensure that the selected residential setting meets the unique support needs of the beneficiary. The provider will submit invoices for pretransition visits within 90 days of the service delivery for reimbursement.

The North Carolina MFP Demonstration Project proposes pretransition visit service. The service would cover the cost of travel to the community home and payment for staff supporting the beneficiary during the pretransition visit.

**BUDGET**

SERVICE	OCCURRENCES	COST PER OCCURRENCE	TOTAL
Pretransition visit	50	\$1,000	\$50,000

Payment for Activities Prior to Transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility  
Behavior Support Plans

Behavior support plans are currently covered under NC MFP Demonstration Project's TYSR demonstration service. For individuals accessing the Innovations waiver and requiring behavior supports upon transition, these behavior support plans (BSP) provide a blueprint for staff and natural supports to meet the needs of the MFP beneficiary. These behavior support plans incorporate strategies to ensure the health, and well-being of the beneficiary and that the beneficiary has the greatest level of independence and access to the community.

This service includes a written behavior support plan by an approved clinician and training for direct support staff to ensure how to provide the support strategies in the BSP **prior** to the transition. For MFP beneficiaries requiring behavioral support needs, accessing this service is critical to address needs that could result in reinstitutionalization.

This service falls under the category of payment for activities prior to transitioning from an MFP-Qualified Inpatient Facility. MFP participants who are eligible for the Innovations waiver with assessed needs for behavioral health supports would be eligible for this service. Service will be rendered prior to transition to ensure that the provider can develop the plan and provide technical assistance on the plan and how it will meet the unique support needs of the beneficiary. The provider will submit invoices for behavior support plans within 90 days of service delivery for reimbursement.

The North Carolina MFP Demonstration Project proposes a behavior support plan service. MFP participants who are eligible for the Innovations Waiver and are at risk of reinstitutionalization would be eligible for this service.

**BUDGET**

SERVICE	OCCURRENCES	COST PER OCCURRENCE	TOTAL
Behavior Support Plan	60	\$2,000	\$120,000

Payment for Activities Prior to Transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility  
Community Based Assessment Plans

Community based assessment plans also known as supplemental environmental support service plans are available through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – Independent Living Program. The waiting time for these assessments can be lengthy and often availability for these assessments is after the MFP beneficiary discharge date. For individuals accessing the CAP/DA waiver and requiring community-based assessments, this can be a barrier to transition. Without this assessment, an MFP beneficiary may be at risk of reinstitutionalization.

This service will include a written report detailing an on-site review of the residential setting, recommendations for environmental modifications to ensure safety and independence, and training for the direct support staff and natural supports **prior** to the person transitioning.

This service falls under the category of payment for activities prior to transitioning from an MFP-Qualified Inpatient Facility. MFP participants at risk of reinstitutionalization would be eligible for this service. Service will be rendered prior to transition to ensure that the provider has sufficient time to implement recommendations from the plan. The provider will submit invoices within 90 days of service delivery for reimbursement.

The North Carolina MFP Demonstration Project proposes a community-based assessment service. MFP participants accessing the CAP/DA waiver and requiring community-based assessments that are at risk of reinstitutionalization would be eligible for this service.

**BUDGET**

<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>OCCURRENCES</b>	<b>COST PER OCCURRENCE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Community based assessment	50	\$1,000	\$50,000



Payment for Activities Prior to Transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility  
Home or Apartment Set up

Home set up costs are currently covered under NC MFP Demonstration Project's TYSR demonstration service. For individuals transitioning from a lengthy institutional stay, setting up a new household can be a significant barrier to transition. Without the support of the MFP Demonstration Project to support the individual **prior** to transition with the expenses for a home set up, the beneficiary would not have the necessary items to ensure their health, safety, and well-being.

This service will cover the costs of essential furnishings and one-time preparation tasks such as pest eradication, cleaning, allergen control, and would be accessed **prior** to transition to ensure that the beneficiary has the necessary items to access the community and to live as independently as possible.

This service falls under the category of payment for activities prior to transitioning from an MFP-Qualified Inpatient Facility. MFP participants at risk of reinstitutionalization would be eligible for this service. Service will be rendered prior to transition to ensure that the beneficiary has all of the necessary items, or the service has been completed before the day of transition. The provider will submit invoices within 90 days of service delivery for reimbursement.

The North Carolina MFP Demonstration Project proposes a home set up service. MFP participants at risk of reinstitutionalization would be eligible for this service.

**BUDGET**

SERVICE	OCCURRENCES	COST PER OCCURRENCE	TOTAL
Home set up	50	\$5,000	\$250,000

Securing housing is one of the most challenging tasks when working with an MFP beneficiary. As housing costs have risen, these costs have consumed a considerable portion of the beneficiary's limited TYSR funds leaving fewer resources for other costs required to establish a household. Without the support of the MFP Demonstration Project to cover the costs of these expenses, the beneficiary cannot transition to the community. We propose a series of supplemental services to address critical barriers to transition including payments for application fees, security deposits, utility deposits, holding fees, utility and rent arrears payment, and records acquisition. The payment total for these proposed services, shall not exceed the cost of 6 months of rental payments.

The transition coordinator collaborates with the beneficiary and the state housing 10programm coordinator to secure a unit with an anticipated date of transition. The first supplemental service proposed is to cover the cost of applications for housing units at \$50 per application.

Some MFP beneficiaries may have an application denied due to past due rents or utilities appearing on their credit record. The past due amounts will need to be cleared to be approved for housing. We propose a utility and rent arrears payment service to clear those past due amounts. The service will be available once prior to transition for a maximum of \$1,500 to clear these past due amounts for rents or utilities.

MFP proposes a security deposit service that will cover the cost of a security deposit and the first month's rent. The cost of the security deposit varies by region in North Carolina with metropolitan areas costing more than rural areas of the state. The proposed amount of \$2,000 per occurrence is an average of the metropolitan and rural area amounts. The security deposit is defined in this supplemental service request as the first month's rent, and a security deposit.

Some beneficiaries may be assessed a utility deposit before establishing service. MFP proposes a supplemental service to cover the cost of the utility deposits for electricity, gas, and water in the amount of \$200 per occurrence. These deposits will be paid prior to transition and are in the category of payment for activities prior to transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility.

In some cases, a transition is delayed due to a medical emergency or staffing challenge. When a delay occurs, it is necessary to work with the landlord and the housing program to pay a hold fee to the landlord to keep the unit available until the beneficiary is able to transition. The amount of the hold fee paid to the landlord will not exceed the market rent for the unit. The duration that a hold fee will be paid will not exceed 120 days. The MFP transition coordinator will negotiate with the landlord on whether the holding fee converts to a "first month's" rent payment. The MFP beneficiary is eligible to utilize the holding fee once prior to transition. The hold fees will be paid prior to transition and are in the category of payment for activities prior to transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility.

The following assurances are included as part of the holding fee.

1. MFP participant must have secured eligibility for a federal/state/local rental assistance program (e.g, housing choice voucher) prior to payment of a holding fee, or State will use the guidelines in the HUD Occupancy Handbook to determine that an MFP participant has adequate household income to afford the private rental market rent for the jurisdiction of residence that is in alignment with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) policy and guidelines around household rent affordability for that jurisdiction.
2. Holding fee must be based or estimated on a monthly rental amount and must not exceed 120 days in duration.
3. Payment for a holding fee, combined with any other expenditure in this category (e.g., application fees, housing and utility deposits, arrears payments, and records acquisition), will be counted toward the service payment total and shall not exceed the cost of 6 months of rental assistance.

Some beneficiaries may need identification documents such as a photo ID, social security card, and birth certificate to complete a housing application. MFP proposes a supplemental service to cover the cost of acquiring these documents in the amount of \$50 per occurrence.

These services fall under the category of payment for activities prior to transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility. The services are available for all beneficiaries who are eligible for the MFP Demonstration Project in North Carolina who are moving into a home or apartment, or mobile home.

## **BUDGET**

<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>OCCURRENCES</b>	<b>COST PER OCCURRENCE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Housing application fee(s)	125	\$50	\$6,250
Housing deposits	75	\$2,000	\$150,000
Utility Deposits	75	\$200	\$15,000
Holding fees to retain unit	37	\$4,000	\$148,000
Payment for Utility & Rent arrears	30	\$1,500	\$45,000
Records acquisition (birth certificate, photo ID, social security card)	50	\$50	\$2,500
Total			\$366,750

## Payment for Activities Prior to Transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility

### Criminal Record Expungement

Before a home or apartment lease is signed, beneficiaries are subject to a background check. Those beneficiaries with a criminal record or unresolved legal issues may be denied housing options due to items discovered during a background check. Transition coordinators may offer some assistance to address landlord concerns but are not qualified to offer the assistance necessary to resolve collection notices, past evictions, and other complex issues that create a barrier to private rental units and subsidized housing. In these cases, legal services may be required to clear a record. Without the support of the MFP Demonstration Project to cover the costs of having items resolved on a background check, the beneficiary's options for a community home can be severely limited and potentially a barrier to transitioning at all.

This service will cover the costs to address a legal issue affecting housing or expunging a charge from a beneficiary's record making them eligible for housing in the community.

This service falls under the category of payment for activities prior to transition from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility. This service is available for all beneficiaries who are at risk of remaining in a facility because the unresolved issues create a barrier for housing.

The North Carolina MFP Demonstration Project proposes a service to cover legal fees necessary to address legal issues preventing a beneficiary from eligibility for housing in the community. MFP participants who choose a home or apartment would be eligible for this service.

#### **BUDGET**

<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>OCCURRENCES</b>	<b>COST PER OCCURRENCE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Criminal record expungement	5	\$2,500	\$125,000

Payment for Activities Prior to Transitioning from an MFP Qualified Inpatient Facility  
Personal Technology

Covid and the Public Health Emergency created isolation that further resulted in mental and physical health crises. Studies have shown adults who are lonely or socially isolated are less healthy, have longer hospital stays, are readmitted to the hospital more frequently, and are more likely to die earlier than those with meaningful and supportive social connections.

Congressional funding attempted to address digital connections with funding to increase broadband accessibility in rural areas as well as creating a subsidy for a broadband connection. However, without a computer or tablet, a beneficiary is not able to utilize the service and digitally connect to their community. NC's MFP Demonstration Project is proposing to utilize supplemental services funding to purchase personal computers or tablets for any interested MFP participant. These devices would be used for connecting to their community and not for telehealth services.

This service will cover the costs of an electronic device (tablet or laptop), case, screen protector, and extended warranty.

This service falls under the category of payment for activities prior to transitioning from an MFP-Qualified Inpatient Facility. This personal technology service is available for all beneficiaries who are eligible for the MFP Demonstration Project in North Carolina. Service will be approved for up to 60 days prior to transition to ensure that the device has been activated. The provider will submit invoices for the personal technology prior to pretransition visits within 90 days of the service delivery for reimbursement.

For those participants that receive personal technology through the MFP Demonstration Project, MFP will partner with local support agencies such as the Area Agencies on Aging or the Centers for Independent Living to provide an internet safety course and tutorial for those beneficiaries and to assist beneficiaries with applications to the Affordable Connectivity Program. Courses will cover internet safety, utilizing communication platforms, how to connect to community engagement activities, and how to utilize shopping sites.

**BUDGET**

DEVICE	No. of Users	Cost	TOTAL COST
Electronic Device	40	\$800	\$32,000

**TOTAL SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICES BUDGET**

<b>SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICES PROPOSED</b>	<b>COST</b>
One-time pantry stocking	\$120,000
Clothing Allowance	\$60,000
Home Modifications	\$250,000
Pretransition visit	\$50,000
Behavior Support Plan	\$120,000
Community Based Assessments	\$50,000
Home or Apartment Set-Up	\$250,000
Housing application fee(s)	\$6,250
Housing Deposits	\$150,000
Utility Deposits	\$15,000
Holding fees to retain housing unit	\$148,000
Utility & Rental Arrears	\$45,000
Records Acquisition	\$2,500
Criminal Record Expungement	\$12,500
Personal Technology	\$32,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,311,250</b>