



MSA - (Minnesota Supplemental Aid)

What is MSA?

MSA is Minnesota Supplemental Aid. It is a small amount the state pays to people with low incomes who are elderly, blind or disabled and who get Supplemental Security Income (SSI). It is also possible to qualify for MSA if you get Social Security Disability (SSDI) benefits that are slightly more than the SSI amount. You may get MSA if you are:

- Living alone and getting the basic SSI grant or a low SSDI benefit.
- A married couple who live alone and get the SSI couple's rate.
- Living in certain types of non-medical care facilities. Like a group home.

Because of the way MSA is figured out, you usually can't get it if you live with anyone else except a spouse who also gets the basic SSI grant. The amount you get can change every year with the SSI cost of living adjustment.

You are living alone if:

- You have your own lease
- You have at least one room to yourself, and
- You buy and make your food separately

If you live in a place like this and get denied MSA, contact Legal Aid at [1-\(877\) 696-6529](tel:1-877-696-6529).

Any income you have above the SSI amount counts against your MSA grant, but if you work, some of your earned income is not counted.

Special Needs Payments

If you qualify for MSA, sometimes you can get more if:

- you need certain kinds of special diets prescribed by a doctor
- you have a representative payee, guardian or conservator who charges fees
- you have a one-time need for home repairs or replacement of furniture or appliances
- you pay a high rent and
 - are moving from an institution or residential mental health treatment program or
 - get waived services through Medical Assistance (MA)



There is also MSA Housing Assistance. It is a benefit that helps with housing. If you get MSA, you can get \$472 more per month if your housing costs more than 40% of your income. This amount changes every July 1st.

Should I apply for MSA?

Yes, if you:

- Are 65 or older or
- Are blind or disabled as determined by Social Security or by the State Medical Review Team and between the ages of 18 and 65
- The State Medical Review Team uses the same rules as Social Security to say who is disabled. You can find [information about this](#) on the Social Security Administration's site at www.ssa.gov.

Your income must be less than SSI plus the basic MSA grant. This does not include any special needs payments. For a single person, the most you can make per month is \$1,048. To apply, file an application at your county welfare office. A worker goes over your income and assets to see if you are eligible. You can also ask them to mail you an application.

Or apply online at <https://mnbenefits.mn.gov>.

What are the MSA asset limits?

Assets mean money or property. If you get SSI, the asset limits for MSA are the same as for SSI. This means a single person can have up to \$2,000 in assets. A couple can have up to \$3,000. But some things don't count:

- A home
- Personal items and household goods
- 1 car, value doesn't matter, as long as you or someone in your household uses it
- Any property or tools you use to support yourself
- Life insurance and burial plans worth up to \$1,500
- Burial plots



The asset limits are higher (\$10,000) for some people who only get Social Security Retirement or Disability benefits but not SSI.

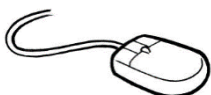
Emergency Minnesota Supplemental Assistance (EMSA) no longer exists. If you have an emergency, apply for Emergency General Assistance. See our fact sheet [Emergency General Assistance](#).

What if I get turned down for MSA?

You have the right to appeal. There are 2 ways to get your appeal in:

Online:

You can [fill out a form and submit your appeal](#) online. Go to: <https://mn.gov/dhs>.



- Click on the "How do I" box towards top of page
- Under "Find" click on "edocs and forms"
- Click your language
- Type 0033 in the search bar

There are instructions you can read. Read the form carefully, fill it out completely and click "Submit" on the bottom right. It is a good idea to print a copy for yourself. You should get a confirmation screen showing that your appeal was filed.

By mail or fax:

You can write a letter and mail or fax it. Say you want to appeal an MSA decision and why. Make sure you put your case number and the date on your letter. Keep a copy for yourself. The papers the county sent you should have the address and fax number you need.

For more information see our fact sheet, [Benefits Appeals to DHS](#).

You have 30 days to file an appeal from the date on the notice that says you were turned down. You may appeal within 90 days of the notice if you have a good reason for not being able to appeal in 30 days.

You get a hearing with a state human services judge, who makes a written decision on your appeal. If you have an emergency, ask for an **expedited** appeal ("expedited" means fast). Then your hearing date is set quickly.



Fact Sheets are legal information NOT legal advice. See a lawyer for advice.

Don't use this fact sheet if it is more than 1 year old. Ask us for updates, a fact sheet list, or alternate formats.

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