

HELP-Link Workforce Program Report

HELP Act Oversight Committee

November 22, 2016

* All of the data in the report was updated on November 3, 2016. Participant counts change daily.

HELP-Link is gaining popularity and is on track to maximize program enrollment

- The Montana Department of Labor & Industry (MTDLI) has connected with over 6,500 Montana HELP Plan enrollees through the HELP-Link survey, representing a 72% growth since the last meeting of the oversight committee.
- The number of surveys completed made by Montana HELP Plan enrollees is on track to meet the goal of 10,000 people reached by the end of the fiscal year.
- There are over 3,200 people who received staff-assisted services from the Department of Labor & Industry while they were enrolled in Montana HELP Plan.
- Approximately 1,700 people engaged with MTDLI to an extent that qualified them for the workforce disenrollment exemption (Qualified Workforce).
- Over 1,100 people participated specifically in HELP-Link, the program created under SB 405 to provide workforce services to Montana HELP Plan recipients, a 95% growth since the last Oversight Committee meeting.
- Given the current spending levels and projected budget, HELP-Link can support 105 people in a training program each year. HELP-Link is currently funding training for 100 workers.

Figure 1. Number of Workforce Participants

	Current	Total	Over-the-Quarter Growth (%)
HELP-Link Survey Completers	4,590	6,510	72%
DLI Clients	2,375	3,222	--
DPHHS Clients	2,503	N/A	
Qualified Workforce	825	1,693	69%
HELP-Link Participants	682*	1,104	95%

Source: MT DLI on 11/3/2016. Total since 01/01/2016.

Notes: DLI Clients are people who have received staff-assisted services from MT DLI while on Medicaid. This includes HELP Link, RESEA, WIOA, 100% appointments, Wagner-Peyser services, apprenticeships, etc.

*All current HELP-Link Participants may not be enrolled in Medicaid. Medicaid enrollment is only checked at the time an individual enrolls in HELP-Link. A participant can continue their HELP-Link participation if they continue to receive services every 90 days, even if their Medicaid enrollment ends.

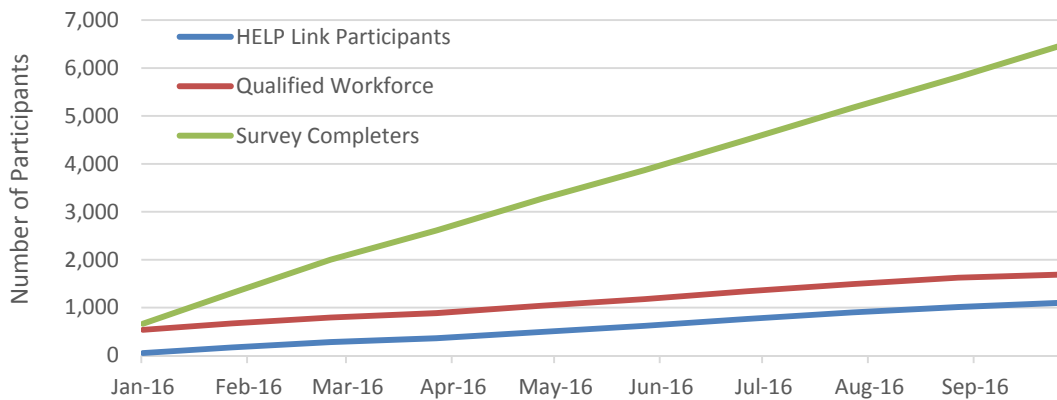
Figure 2. Clients by Program

	Current	Total
DLI Clients	2,375	3,222
Wagner Peyser	1667	2253
100% Appointment	254	366
HELP-Link	682	1104
RESEA	242	508
WIOA	366	583
Apprenticeship	65	89

Source: MT DLI as of 11/03/2016

Notes: HELP-Link, RESEA and WIOA are the programs that count towards the qualified workforce. To be consider a participant in any of MTDLI's workforce programs the individual must have met all the initial requirements to become enrolled in the program, and received a service every 90 days. The time period of participation in a program must overlap a period of Montana HELP Plan enrollment.

Figure 3. Trends in Participation



Source: MTDLI on 11/3/2016.

Barriers to Participation

- HELP-Link is a voluntary program that can help prevent someone from losing their health insurance in the event that they cannot pay their premiums for more than 90 days. HELP-Link does not provide financial relief for health insurance payments: Participants still must pay premiums.
- Medicaid expansion recipients are often tenuously employed in low wage jobs, making it more difficult to take the time out of their work schedule to become a participant.
- Almost two-thirds of Medicaid expansion recipients were employed at some point in 2015, and 30% were employed year-round. The median wage for Medicaid recipients in 2015 was \$15,000.
- Approximately 57.4% of Medicaid expansion recipients have held two or more jobs in Montana since 2010. The average number of jobs held by job switchers over the last six calendar years is 4.6 jobs. Given this difficult work schedule, many recipients may not have time for the travel time and meeting in the Job Service Office.

About 6.2% of survey completers identified a lack of childcare as a barrier to employment, compared to only 2.5% of active participants. This suggests a lack of childcare is not only a barrier to employment, but also a barrier to becoming an active participant. Mental illness, poor physical health, and lack of access to transportation, housing, or a telephone may also be barriers to HELP-Link participation (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Barriers to Employment

<i>Barrier</i>	HELP Link Participants		HELP Link Survey Completers	
	Total	% of Total Identifying Barriers	Total	% of Total Identifying Barriers
<i>Felony/misdemeanor conviction</i>	90	8.2%	619	9.5%
<i>Physical disability</i>	30	2.7%	261	4.0%
<i>Learning disability</i>	13	1.2%	143	2.2%
<i>Mental illness</i>	36	3.3%	332	5.1%
<i>Drug or alcohol addiction</i>	14	1.3%	114	1.8%
<i>Lack of childcare</i>	28	2.5%	406	6.2%
<i>Caring for a family member</i>	24	2.2%	249	3.8%
<i>Lack of transportation</i>	61	5.5%	548	8.4%
<i>Probation</i>	15	1.4%	169	2.6%
<i>Pending felony/misdemeanor</i>	4	0.4%	71	1.1%
<i>Domestic violence</i>	10	0.9%	87	1.3%
<i>Court mandated programs or classes</i>	6	0.5%	72	1.1%
<i>Personal finances/credit history</i>	97	8.8%	739	11.4%
<i>Lack of housing</i>	28	2.5%	261	4.0%
<i>Lack of telephone</i>	20	1.8%	261	4.0%
<i>Poor physical health</i>	48	4.3%	392	6.0%
<i>Number Identifying At Least One Barrier</i>	516	46.7%	2,671	41.0%
<i>Total</i>	1,104		6,510	

Source: MTDLI compiled on 11/03/16

Figure 5. Referrals

<i>REFERRAL</i>	<i>COUNT</i>	<i>REFERRAL</i>	<i>COUNT</i>
<i>Auxiliary aides and services for participants with disabilities</i>	17	<i>Placement to a Job</i>	28
<i>Childcare</i>	23	<i>Referred To WIA Services</i>	179
<i>Financial counseling</i>	9	<i>Referred to Training</i>	17
<i>Health care</i>	29	<i>Referred to WIOA</i>	364
<i>Housing</i>	24	<i>Referred to WIOA2</i>	82
<i>Internet Services</i>	18	<i>SNAP/Food Stamps</i>	48
<i>Job Referral</i>	668	<i>TANF</i>	7
<i>Placed in Other Employment</i>	63	<i>Transportation</i>	23
<i>Placed in Training</i>	160	<i>Vet Referred To WIA Training</i>	8
<i>Placed in WIA</i>	202	<i>Vocational Rehabilitation</i>	94
<i>Total</i>			923

Notes: Data compiled on 11/03/16. Excludes referrals that occurred before they became an active participant.

HELP-Link Expenses

MTDLI anticipates that the full budget for HELP-Link will be exhausted as directed by the end of the current fiscal year. MTDLI has requested funding in the next biennium to continue the HELP-Link program. The requested amount of \$899,000 is expected to support education and trainings for roughly 105 clients. Given current ratios, we expect to provide roughly 1,000 clients per year with intensive career planning advice.

- HELP-Link spending is consistent with spending per client for DLI’s other workforce programs, such as WIOA and RESEA.
- 96 people have received funding for “employment-related” education through HELP Link or HELP-Link Plus at a cost of \$2,568 per person.
 - Tuition and fees for resident full-time students at 2-year colleges range from \$3,000 to \$4,000.
- Supportive services include gas to get to work, boots, training materials, and other barrier to employment. 90 people have received supportive services at a cost of \$922 per person.
- Every HELP-Link participant receives some level of “case management,” which includes an individualized assessment and career plan at a cost of \$197 per person.

Figure 6. Spending To Date

	Total	Number of Participants	Cost per Participant
Administrative	\$532,889	--	--
Case Management	\$217,321	1,104	\$197
Training and Support	\$398,022	155	\$2,568
Total Expenses	\$1,148,232		

APPENDIX

Figure 15. Participant Numbers by County

COUNTY	SURVEY COMPLETERS	DLI CLIENTS	HELP LINK PARTICIPANTS
BEAVERHEAD	67	30	12
BIG HORN	56	42	25
BLAINE	22	11	4
BROADWATER	12	6	3
CARBON	24	7	0
CARTER	0	1	0
CASCADE	729	419	89
CHOUTEAU	12	5	2
CUSTER	84	43	7
DANIELS	0	0	0
DAWSON	77	33	15
DEER LODGE	97	31	13
FALLON	12	6	2
FERGUS	55	21	2
FLATHEAD	660	290	119
GALLATIN	284	143	47
GARFIELD	2	1	1
GLACIER	69	95	11
GOLDEN VALLEY	0	1	0
GRANITE	8	3	0
HILL	196	88	42
JEFFERSON	43	19	10
JUDITH BASIN	1	0	0
LAKE	296	199	97
LEWIS AND CLARK	399	184	60
LIBERTY	5	0	0
LINCOLN	219	162	79
MCCONE	3	1	0

COUNTY	SURVEY COMPLETERS	DLI CLIENTS	HELP LINK PARTICIPANTS
MADISON	19	7	1
MEAGHER	7	4	2
MINERAL	26	20	3
MISSOULA	854	379	73
MUSSELSHELL	16	13	1
PARK	89	50	17
PETROLEUM	1	0	0
PHILLIPS	16	6	4
PONDERA	11	11	2
POWDER RIVER	0	0	0
POWELL	39	12	4
PRAIRIE	5	1	1
RAVALLI	355	97	74
RICHLAND	89	43	13
ROOSEVELT	74	45	16
ROSEBUD	22	12	3
SANDERS	74	48	27
SHERIDAN	10	4	2
SILVER BOW	370	121	60
STILLWATER	30	11	2
SWEET GRASS	5	3	1
TETON	20	9	4
TOOLE	19	9	3
TREASURE	1	1	0
VALLEY	56	37	9
WHEATLAND	3	0	0
WIBAUX	4	0	0
YELLOWSTONE	822	406	109