



BAYFIELD COUNTY
Department of Human Services

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PRESS RELEASE

Income Maintenance Services—Bayfield County

In response to requirements included in the Governor's 2011-2012 Budget, the Department of Health Services (DHS) has regionalized Income Maintenance Programs as of January 1, 2012. Income Maintenance programs include: FoodShare, Health Care (Medicaid, BadgerCare Plus, Family Planning Only Services) and Caretaker Supplement benefits. The goal of this change is to improve customer service while reducing the cost of enrollment services statewide. What does that mean to Bayfield County residents enrolled in these programs? It means that our service delivery system will change. Services will now be delivered by a 12-County Consortium, named the *Northern IM Consortium*, which includes: Ashland, Bayfield, Florence, Forest, Iron, Lincoln, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, Vilas and Wood Counties. By January 1, 2012, all cases will be electronically transferred to the consortium. Cases will be shared, rather than assigned to a single county or a single case worker. Clients will be required to contact a call-change center using a toll-free phone number to report changes and to schedule appointments. When not required to meet with a worker, clients will be encouraged to conduct business on line at <https://access.wisconsin.gov/> or via the telephone through the Call Change Center at 888-794-5772. Clients will also be instructed by DHS to submit all documents by mail to a central data processing unit in Madison beginning January 1, 2012.

New applicants are encouraged to submit an application via the Internet at <https://access.wisconsin.gov/>. If you do not have Internet Access, you may want to visit the local library during their regular hours of operation. Please note, library staff will not be able to assist clients with application questions.

Although regionalization forces us to change the way we have previously conducted business, we remain committed to providing quality services to county residents and ensuring that individuals and families receive the benefits that they are eligible for. We appreciate your cooperation and patience during this historical change.

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