

**256.742 MINNESOTA HEALTHY MARRIAGE AND RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE.**

Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** Within the limits of available appropriations, the commissioner shall develop and implement a Minnesota Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Initiative, as provided for in this section. The commissioner may administer the initiative with federal grants, state appropriations, and in-kind services received for this purpose.

Subd. 2. **Purpose.** The purpose of the Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Initiative is to develop a community-based collaborative project that will test and evaluate a comprehensive strategy for promoting marriage and responsible fatherhood among unmarried urban parents who are expecting or have recently had a child. The initiative objectives are to:

- (1) encourage stable family formation among unmarried new parents in urban communities;
- (2) promote healthy marriages among unmarried new parents who want to be a couple and indicate that marriage is a goal for their relationship;
- (3) increase paternity establishment and enhance related child support performance indicators;
- (4) promote responsible fathering;
- (5) enhance the well-being of children; and
- (6) encourage and facilitate community support for marriage and family formation among unmarried parents.

Subd. 3. **Implementation.** The target population for the initiative is unmarried new parent couples whose babies are born in urban hospitals in Minneapolis and St. Paul. The initiative must not include couples with a history of domestic violence. In cases involving alcohol or substance abuse by either participant, the initiative must include the provision of resources and services to remedy those issues. The initiative may be implemented through the University of Minnesota and community-based programs and organizations. The commissioner shall:

- (1) enter into contracts or manage a grant process for implementation of the initiative;
- (2) provide technical assistance; and
- (3) develop and implement an evaluation component for the initiative.

**History:** 2004 c 273 s 1