

# Minnesota Commission on Fatherhood - Conceptual Proposal

Oct. 16, 2014 Draft

The proposed Minnesota Commission on Fatherhood would be a state-wide commission housed within a department of Minnesota state government. The mission would be to enhance the well-being of Minnesota's children by providing opportunities for fathers to become better parents, partners and providers.

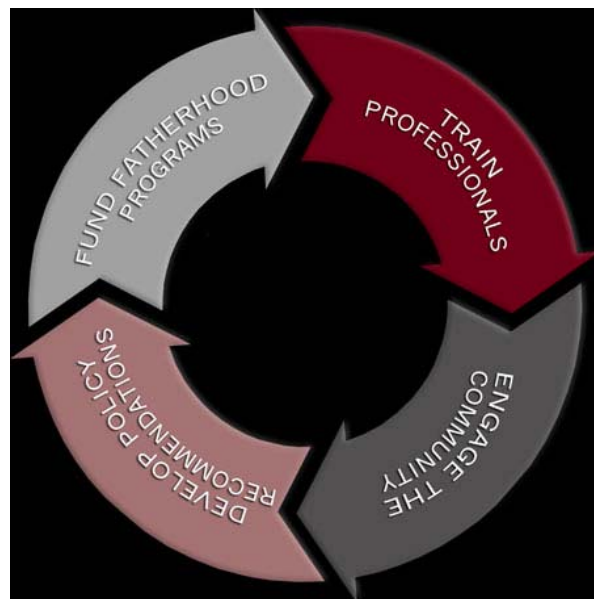
The Commission would seek to strengthen all families, with an emphasis on vulnerable families, by funding community based programs that serve fathers, children, and families. These fatherhood programs would help fathers and families:

1. **improve economic stability** when they help fathers prepare for, find and retain employment;
2. **foster responsible parenting** through skills-based classes and mentoring relationships; and
3. **promote healthy relationships** through conflict resolution, communications skills , and parenting partnership training.

In addition to funding fatherhood programs, the Commission on Fatherhood would make policy recommendations regarding fathers, engage the community and train practitioners. This Commission would strategically promote father engagement on all levels.

## Commission membership:

- a) Two members of the house of representatives, each representing different political parties. One shall represent the seven county metropolitan area and the other represent greater MN.
- b) Two members of the senate, each representing different political parties. One shall represent the seven county metropolitan area and the other represent greater MN.
- c) The governor, or the governor's designee.
- d) One representative of the judicial branch of government, appointed by the chief justice of the supreme court.
- e) The commissioners, or their designees, of the departments of health, human services, education, corrections, economic development, and veterans affairs.
- f) Six representatives of programs providing direct services to fathers and families. Three shall be from the seven county metropolitan area and three from greater MN.
- g) Two representatives who have received direct services from fatherhood inclusive programs, one each from the seven county metropolitan area and one from greater MN.



### Duties of the Commission

- a) Maintain a website, organize a state summit on fatherhood, and conduct statewide trainings annually.
- b) Identifies and secures resources available to fund healthy fatherhood-family programs and services, and supports the creation of initiatives that do the following:
  - a. increase public awareness of the important roles of fathers.
  - b. build the parenting skills of fathers
  - c. build parenting partnerships
  - d. provide employment related services for low income fathers
  - e. prevent premature fatherhood
  - f. provide services to inmates of state and county correctional institutions so that they are able to maintain or reestablish relationships with their children
- c) Prepare a report each year that describes the commission's expectations for the outcomes of fatherhood related programs and initiatives, and the methods the commission uses for conducting measures of outcomes.

### Organization, Staff and Funding

- a) The commission shall annually elect a chair from among its members.
- b) The governor shall appoint an individual to serve as the commission's executive director. The executive director shall serve at the pleasure of the governor and shall report to the Commissioner of Health.
- c) The commission may accept gifts, grants, donations, contributions, and other funds from any public agency or private source to carry out the commission's duties. All funds received by the commission shall be used solely to support the operation of the commission.