

Chapter 4 Overview of the Fiscal Note Tracking System

A. FNTS Overview

The fiscal note tracking system (FNTS) is a computerized system developed and operated by Minnesota Management & Budget. The system consists of the following five major functions:

1. **Security function** controls system sign-on and access rights for various user groups.
2. **Request function** enables the legislature to electronically request fiscal notes and Minnesota Management & Budget to assign and notify assigned agencies.
3. **Preparation function** enables agencies to enter, edit and store fiscal note data.
4. **Tracking function** enables users to determine the processing status of fiscal note requests.
5. **Reporting function** enables users to view and print the fiscal note, tracking reports, and statistical reports.

It is essential that agency fiscal note coordinators have a general understanding of FNTS functions and procedures to facilitate efficient processing of fiscal notes. The following outline is designed to assist fiscal note coordinators to have an understanding of FNTS operations.

RESPONSIBILITY	SUMMARY OF FNTS ACTION
Legislature (House or Senate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enters fiscal note request into FNTS. A requester indicates the bill number and version, author, requesting committee, due date, and any relevant messages to Minnesota Management & Budget and agencies to be assigned. At this point, a fiscal note has a fiscal note status of “Legislative Request”. ▪ Uses the “Message” function to communicate and relevant information such as committee hearing dates, if the bill is similar to other legislation or if the agency is only being asked to respond to certain sections of the bill.
Minnesota Management & Budget Budget Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviews bill for which fiscal note is requested. Determines agency or agencies affected by provisions of the bill. Assigns agencies by section sequence number to the fiscal note. ▪ If more than one agency is assigned (consolidated note), selects and designates a Lead agency. ▪ Uses the “Message” function to communicate any relevant information such as if a central service agency is being asked to respond on behalf of multiple agencies.
Agency Fiscal Note Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Each hour, FNTS notifies assigned agencies by e-mail of new fiscal note requests. Agencies should routinely check FNTS daily to monitor status of their incomplete fiscal notes. ▪ Obtains bill for which a fiscal note has been requested. Reads bill and distributes to appropriate agency staff. At this point, a fiscal note has an agency status of “No Data”. ▪ To obtain a listing of all new and incomplete fiscal notes, agency checks <i>Fiscal Notes Requiring Agency Action</i> box on the search screen. ▪ Uses the “Message” function to communicate any related delays to completing the fiscal note.

RESPONSIBILITY	SUMMARY OF FNTS ACTION
Agency Program, Fiscal and Administrative Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reads and analyzes bill to extent required for preparation of accurate and complete fiscal estimates for fiscal years 2013 through 2017. Prepares fiscal note narrative as required to explain assumptions and rationale used in preparing fiscal estimates. Prior to the stipulated due date, forwards material to agency fiscal note coordinator. ▪ If consolidated fiscal note, works with other assigned agencies to coordinate assumptions used for fiscal note preparation. ▪ If local government units are affected, works with representatives of local government organizations to estimate impact of bill on relevant local government units or political subdivisions.
Agency Fiscal Note Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviews and organizes expenditure, revenue, and FTE information provided by agency staff. Assembles all relevant fiscal and narrative information and forwards to agency FNTS staff. To facilitate entry, this information should be provided to agency FNTS staff on the fiscal note worksheet. Agencies are encouraged to use the Fiscal Note Worksheet for internal preparation and processing of fiscal notes. The Fiscal Note Worksheet can be printed from FNTS or online at: http://www.mmb.state.mn.us/fiscal-docs
Agency FNTS Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completes Fiscal Impact indicators, enters expenditure, agency can absorb amount, revenue, and FTE information by fund for each fiscal year, 2013 through 2017. ▪ Completes fiscal note entry by adding supporting narrative.
Agency Fiscal Note Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviews fiscal note. If fiscal note is acceptable, authorizes agency sign off. ▪ If lead agency for a consolidated fiscal note, reviews data entered by other agencies using the View or Print option in FNTS. If errors or omissions are found in data entered by another agency, contacts agency to obtain accurate data. See on-line list of Agency Fiscal Note Coordinators in FNTS. ▪ Note: Lead agencies cannot access FNTS for the purpose of altering data entered by other agencies; any necessary changes must be made by the agency that originally entered the data.
Minnesota Management & Budget Executive Budget Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviews completed fiscal note in FNTS. ▪ If acceptable, signs off in system by selecting appropriate signoff option (approve or not approve). Enters comments, as necessary, using the EBO narrative screen. ▪ If agency data is not acceptable, contacts the agency with questions or recommendations for revision. If the fiscal note is a consolidated fiscal note (more than one agency assigned), see the next step.
Minnesota Management & Budget Lead Executive Budget Officer (Consolidated Fiscal Notes Only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If the fiscal note is a consolidated fiscal note, the lead agency EBO reviews the fiscal note for conflicting assumptions, double counting, or omissions. ▪ If acceptable, signs off in the system by selecting appropriate signoff option (approve or not approve). Enters comments, as necessary, using the EBO narrative screen. ▪ If data entered by any assigned agency is unacceptable, contacts the agency or assigned EBO with questions or recommendations for revision.

RESPONSIBILITY	SUMMARY OF FNTS ACTION
Minnesota Management & Budget Fiscal Note System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immediately following the final EBO signoff, the completed fiscal note is distributed via e-mail to the legislative requester, chief author, requesting committee chair, agency fiscal note coordinator and committee fiscal analyst.
Legislative Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviews completed fiscal note. If necessary, contacts agency contact person, agency fiscal note coordinator or Minnesota Management & Budget executive budget officer to obtain additional information or clarification. If bill is amended or engrossed, may request new fiscal note (thus returning to the beginning of the fiscal note process).

B. FNTS Search and Tracking Functions

Besides providing for requesting, preparing, and distributing fiscal notes, FNTS has tracking and reporting capabilities. The FNTS Search screen that is accessed through the Main Menu is to be used to select those fiscal notes of interest to a user (e.g., for the purpose of checking the status of a fiscal note or to review fiscal notes by author, title, agency, etc). A fiscal note may be viewed or printed from the Fiscal Note Search or Status screen.

FNTS includes a tracking capability that allows users to determine the current processing status of the fiscal note as a whole or for each individual agency fiscal note. The Fiscal Note (FN) Status indicates the status of the fiscal note as a whole and is shown on both the Search and Status screen. Below is a list of FN statuses:

Legislative Request	Fiscal note has been requested by the legislature, but agencies have not been assigned.
In Process	Fiscal note has been assigned to agency or agencies for preparation.
Waiting for EBO Signoff	Waiting for one or more EBOs to review and sign off (all agencies have signed off).
Waiting for Lead EBO Signoff	On a consolidated fiscal note, waiting for lead EBO to review and sign off on the consolidated note.
Inactive	Fiscal note that was initially requested by the legislature, but currently is not needed.
Complete	Fiscal note has been signed off by all agencies and EBOs and transmitted to the legislature. The Complete Date field is automatically populated upon final signoff of the fiscal note.

While the Fiscal Note (FN) status indicates the status of the fiscal note as a whole, the Agency status indicates the processing status of the individual agency fiscal note. The agency status is also displayed on both the Search and Status screens. After an agency or agencies have been assigned, each agency fiscal note will display one of the following statuses:

No Data	FN assigned to an agency for preparation but no information has been entered by the agency.
Preliminary Data	Data has been entered by agency, but has not yet been signed off as complete.
Agency Signed Off	FN signed off by agency and returned to Minnesota Management & Budget for executive budget officer review and signoff.
EBO Signed Off	Agency and executive budget officer have reviewed and signed off.
MMB Signed off for Agency	Minnesota Management & Budget signed off for an agency because agency did not respond to request by specified due date.

C. Agency E-Mail Notifications

In addition to receiving e-mail notifications from FNTS about new fiscal note requests and companion bill fiscal notes, the agency fiscal note coordinator will receive e-mail notifications for the following reasons:

1. Change in Fiscal Note Due Date;
2. Fiscal Note no longer needed (moved to inactive status);
3. Fiscal Note reactivated (moved to active status);
4. Agency Sign Off Removed on a Fiscal note; and
5. Notification of Fiscal Notes Past Due Date (produced daily).
6. Notification of a completed Fiscal Notes transmitted to the legislature (upon final sign off).

D. Available Tracking Reports

There are three tracking reports available for users who do not want to individually review fiscal note statuses using the search function. The tracking reports are available from the Fiscal Note Tracking System main menu under the Fiscal Note Reports option. Below is a list of the three reports:

1. Legislative FN Requests
2. Fiscal Note Requests by Agency
3. Fiscal Note Requests by EBO

E. Assistance

Minnesota Management & Budget staff is available to assist agencies in resolving fiscal note policy, procedure, or system issues. To obtain needed assistance, please contact Mary Crosson at 651-201-8042 or send an e-mail to Mary.Crosson@state.mn.us.