

# Hennepin County Annual Report

## Pandemic Response Projects

July 2023 – June 2024



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# Executive summary

Hennepin County will leverage its American Rescue Plan Act — State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (ARPA- SLFRF) to further its mission and vision to support residents who are adversely affected by disparities; to support innovative, equitable and sustainable changes in service delivery; to promote private and public partnerships within our community, and to seek other funding sources to maximize our investments and best position Hennepin County for the future.

Through the ARPA-SLFRF program, Hennepin County has a total award of \$245.9 million to respond to the economic and public health impacts of COVID-19 and to mitigate its impact on the community, residents, and businesses. In March 2022, the county board took action to use the dollars from ARPA-SLFRF for government services. Starting in 2022, the county has used other revenue sources for pandemic response and recovery efforts, which is anticipated to result in efficiencies. Programs and services previously authorized by the board will continue but will be funded through other sources outside of the ARPA-SLFRF.

Key principles and priorities have been set to build upon the county’s approach to disparity reduction and to support pandemic recovery efforts. Hennepin County is committed to using a racial equity lens to target resources and focus outcomes on reducing disparities in the following domains: education, employment, health, housing, income, justice, and transportation. In addition to the domain areas, overarching infrastructure and supports have been prioritized.

This progress report summarizes Hennepin County’s pandemic response projects from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. Projects are presented by disparity domain area. The following details are provided for each project:

- Project name
- Allocation amount
- Project description
- Progress narrative
- Key performance indicators
- Next steps

# Pandemic recovery funds

Hennepin County continues to leverage federal funding to serve residents and to advance disparity reduction efforts. Various federal funding streams, identified below, have allowed the county to provide timely services and programs for residents in crisis. Specifically, ARPA-SLFRF has enabled the county to continue investments in the public health response, jump-start disparity reduction strategies, and drive transformational change.

As described in the 2021 Recovery Plan for ARPA-SLFRF, Hennepin County has established the following principles and priorities to guide pandemic response efforts.

## Principles

- Hennepin County embraces and embodies core values of continuous improvement, customer service, diversity and inclusion, employee engagement, and workforce development as we serve our residents.
- Hennepin County is committed to using a racial equity lens to target resources and focus outcomes on reducing disparities in the following domains: education, employment, health, housing, income, justice, and transportation.
- In response and recovery efforts, Hennepin County embraces opportunities for transformative change including lasting investments and more efficient, effective, and accessible service delivery for residents in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
- Hennepin County will pursue and leverage other available federal and state funding before using CARES or SLFRF funding to support the recovery of residents, communities and businesses.
- Hennepin County is committed to a people-centered, inclusive, and equitable approach in policymaking and service delivery.

## Priorities

- Fund health programs to respond to COVID-19.
- Ensure legally required functions of county government can continue during COVID-19 pandemic.
- Invest in capital resources and infrastructure that help improve service delivery, remove barriers and mitigate health risks.
- Prioritize strategic investments that will have long-term value or cost reductions.
- Support the recovery of communities, residents, small businesses and nonprofits impacted by COVID-19 in ways that will help our region emerge from this crisis with an even stronger, more inclusive and resilient economy over the long term.
- Expand support and outreach to culturally specific human services and health care providers to strengthen their long-term ability to meet community needs.

## Revenue replacement

In early 2022, Hennepin County took action to use the dollars from ARPA-SLFRF for the provision of government services. The revenue replacement calculation was submitted in the April 2022 Project and Expenditure Report and applies to expenditures from January 1, 2022, through the duration of ARPA-SLFRF. Programs and services previously authorized by the Hennepin County Board will continue but will be funded through other sources outside of ARPA-SLFRF.



# Project inventory

Hennepin County will continue to support residents through the pandemic and beyond as residents and communities work to recover. This progress report includes a summary of Hennepin County’s pandemic response projects from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. Projects that have expended their full allocation amount prior to July 1, 2023 are no longer included in this report. Projects are presented by disparity domain area.

## **Project name**

**Allocation amount**—This is the amount of funding allocated for the project. Minor allocation changes are included in this report. The allocation changes were approved through the budget process.

## **Project description**

### **Progress narrative**

**Key performance indicators**—This is a description of the key performance indicators set for each project. Results and outcomes vary by project due to implementation timelines.

**Next steps** — This is the work that will occur in the next three to six months.

# CONNECTIVITY DOMAIN

## Broadband and Digital Inclusion

**Allocation amount: \$10,000,000**

### Project description

The mission of the Office of Broadband and Digital Inclusion is to build and promote safe access to technology so that all residents of Hennepin County are empowered to thrive in the digital world. This funding continues the most successful parts of the Connecting Hennepin initiative: to ensure all county residents have access to, and can easily and safely use, modern technology to help realize their life goals. Research on digital inclusion identifies three aspects of the digital divide — computer access, internet access, and lack of digital skills — and this program includes programming in all three areas.

Data from the American Community Survey and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, among other sources, show geographic, racial and economic disparities in digital equity.

Households that are Black, Indigenous, Hispanic or other people of color are less likely to own PCs and have home broadband. There are geographic, racial, housing and economic disparities in access to technology, which, among other effects, cause an inherent disparity in the awareness of new public programs and supports.

To overcome these barriers, this project plans to invest funds in community engagement, public and nonprofit partners and multimedia communications to ensure that all residents in need are aware of and able to engage with the programs. It also includes infrastructure projects to resolve broadband gaps in underserved communities, areas with limited providers, and low-income neighborhoods with low broadband uptake rates. The office also coordinates with federal, state and local government partners, internet service providers and community organizations to develop and implement a digital equity plan for Hennepin County.

### Progress narrative

During the reporting period, Digital Navigation continued to serve clients and look for opportunities to continuously improve the service model based on feedback and information received by residents as well as by patterns identified by the Navigators. This includes informing residents of alternative subsidy opportunities due to the end of the Affordable Connectivity Program in May 2024. We have also added a new computer distribution location that is located in a neighborhood with high rates of digital barriers, is easily accessible for residents, and offers additional digital skill-building opportunities for those with limited digital skills. They provide these services for residents while also providing auditable service records to ensure accountability by all parties involved. Having two trustworthy partners for equipment distribution allows the Navigation team to focus on verifying eligibility, digital readiness, specific needs, and completion of online safety course for referred residents.

The team continued to evolve and has filled positions budgeted for 2024. The hiring process and onboarding has been underway throughout the reporting period and will continue through the next quarter. This will allow for the continued maturation of services provided to residents in addition to Digital Navigation, such as broadband expansion and adoption initiatives, community engagement, and continuous improvement of services to ensure we are proactively meeting resident needs as connectivity continues to support digital needs that enable employment, health, education, housing, and justice disparity reduction initiatives. Once the team is fully staffed, we anticipate being able to more fully partner across the county and with other government and community partners to efficiently serve residents with shared demographics.

As the pandemic recovery period winds down, some Digital Navigation contracts have been completed. Throughout the reporting period, 13 community-based providers delivered services to diverse populations, with five maintaining active contracts through the end of this calendar year. These organizations have varied

service models that include home visits for digital navigation, open technology labs in areas where residents lack personal devices or home internet, broadband adoption and outreach, access to assistive or adaptive devices, and skill-building training. These organizations are collectively providing services across the county and can provide digital navigation and support in multiple languages including but not limited to Spanish, Somali, and Hmong. Where possible, these organizations leverage the county's library system to offer additional classes and support.

Notable accomplishments this reporting period include piloting digital skills training specifically designed for English-language learners. This was an identified gap in the available training materials and utilized a curriculum developed in 2023 and tested in early 2024. Feedback from this pilot noted the breadth of English language proficiency among the participating students in the class, which required adapting the content to meet the students where they were to ensure inclusivity and effectiveness.

Another partnership provides computers and digital skills training to residents of Pursuit Homotel. Pursuit Homotel, a 205-bed board and lodge facility located in South Minneapolis, serves adult self-identifying males at risk of long-term homelessness. Pursuit Homotel received upgraded infrastructure in 2023 to ensure Wi-Fi throughout the property. These devices and training for residents ensure that they can use the internet to access the supportive services they receive in the community. Additionally, due to identified opportunities to provide support to temporary residents in transition, we provided Teen Hope Pathway and the Educational Support Services (ESS) New Arrival project with 10 laptops and accessories each for shared use within their populations. These partnerships helped us ensure permanent county residents were prioritized for individual equipment distribution while still providing assistance for temporary residents completing the referral process. These partnerships also allowed us to flag certain addresses for appropriate triaging within our referral portal, thereby increasing the effectiveness within our Digital Navigation team.

Computers for residents are also available through partnerships with community colleges and technical schools for first-generation college students or students who are eligible for Pell grants and who do not have an appropriate device for college coursework. One community college provided the county with 80 first-person testimonials from students, describing the value of having their own laptop and the freedom to complete studies without relying on a computer lab, their phones, or an out of date or borrowed device. "I've never received such a valuable and life-changing device," one student said.

Analysis of data by Education SuperHighway and Hennepin County indicates inadequate internet access to residents residing in affordable multifamily housing. A request for proposals (RFP) was developed with Human Services to upgrade or install Wi-Fi internet infrastructure in multi-dwelling units that have existing Housing Support Agreements with Hennepin County. Eligible facilities include board and lodge, assisted living, and site-based community-based housing support settings. This RFP closed in November and six partners were selected to complete installations at 11 addresses across the county, providing service to over 800 bedrooms (serving at least 800 residents). Installations have been completed at eight addresses with the final three expected to be completed before the end of this calendar year. With this new internet infrastructure, clients will have greater access to resources and services now delivered online. This includes Zoom court hearings, AA meetings, telehealth or therapy appointments, meetings with correctional officers such as parole and probation officers, attending job fairs or virtual job training, and connecting with family or friends. With Wi-Fi available, these clients will have greater access to the supportive services they receive in the community, will be better able to address any legal issues, and will be able to connect socially.

Outreach and promotion of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) continued as long as possible during the ACP wind-down period. A planned outreach campaign was shortened and information about the transition and other next steps was shared via email, the county website, social media, and other communications channels. The campaign collateral was updated where feasible to include the final enrollment date in February 2024.

Multiple partners have noted the lack of affordable internet options and concerns about how to support their communities without the ACP or a meaningful alternative. Hennepin County leveraged its intergovernmental relations team, partners and community members in the region, and federal advocates for the continuation of ACP. One partner organization organized a phone bank for North Minneapolis residents and youth to contact members of Congress and express support for the program.

In parallel, to address the impact of the end of ACP on subscription-vulnerable residents, Hennepin County quickly developed and executed a bridge support, the Hennepin Connectivity Program, to provide a partial \$10/month subsidy to certain ACP-eligible households that might otherwise lose broadband service. This program is a partnership with local internet service providers that participated in the ACP and is planned to run from May–December 2024. This bridge program is forecast to expend \$2 million and support about 26,000 households during this time.

Additional eligible households are able to join the program using the codes provided by our Digital Navigators. The program will serve as a pilot, and an evaluation—synthesizing community and staff feedback—will also include quantitative data on digital needs and an assessment of other available programming for subscription-vulnerable residents.

An internet-safety public awareness campaign launched in February encouraging residents to “Think before you click” with social media, educational videos, and an online resource hub at <https://think2click1.com>. The content includes specific tips for youth, parents, and elders that are culturally appropriate and empowering. Since the campaign’s launch, there have been almost 16,000 site visits, driven primarily through engaging static and video digital ads and organic social. Ads across platforms have achieved over 2.1 million views and generated over 27,000 clicks for a 1.28% click rate, which is higher than average engagement levels of less than 1% across social media platforms. In May 2024, a billboard, transit radio, out-of-home and targeted digital newsletter / email campaign was launched, encouraging users to “stay safe online.” Since launch, the campaign has had close to 7.6 million impressions and has served as a compliment to the social campaign by allowing us to reach populations that may not be users of social media. The campaign will continue to run through the end of July 2024 and we expect continued engagement within this medium.

## Key performance indicators

- 2,778 individual requests to support Hennepin County clients and library patrons were submitted to digital navigation team.
- 1,193 residents were served during the period by the internal Digital Navigation team, who distributed 978 computers to residents in addition to other digital inclusion supports.
- Approximately 5,602 Hennepin County residents received digital navigation support or training through 13 contracted community partners.
- 251 phones are distributed for use by Homeless to Housing program members.
- Through partnerships with local community and technical colleges, 914 computers available to eligible enrolled students; 80 students submitted testimonials in support of the program.
- 140 residents of Pursuit Homotel received computers and digital skills training to make use of the Wi-Fi connectivity provided to the buildings in 2023.
- More than 55,000 Hennepin County households were enrolled in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) on the final enrollment date of February 8; 25,319 households were automatically enrolled in the Hennepin Connectivity Plan bridge plan that began after the official end of the ACP subsidy and provided them with \$10.
- A promotional campaign for ACP subsidy ran from November 2, 2023– February 7, 2024, targeting areas with lower-than-expected enrollment rates, resulting in a total 6,003 clicks and 1,286,497 impressions including 3,316 clicks and 7,289,121 impressions during this reporting period.
- Online safety public awareness campaign launched in February, with 27,391 clicks and 2,137,726 ad views.
- Billboard, transit, out-of-home, radio, and targeted digital internet safety campaign launched in May and had so far delivered 7,595,357 impressions with the simple message “Stay safe online.”
- Selected six vendors to install internet infrastructure in 11 Multi-Dwelling Units covering 727 bedrooms across 669 units. To date, 474 bedrooms across 416 units have been completed with the remaining 253 units on track for completion before the end of 2024.



## Project feature

As more and more interactions are becoming digital, the risk of fraud has increased exponentially. To inform those that are new to this digital landscape, Broadband and Digital Inclusion leaned into online safety communications by launching a “think twice, click once” website with subsequent digital and traditional media campaigns, allowing us to provide our diverse residential population with tools, resources, and information that resonates with them. In addition to a general campaign, there are specific targeted campaigns for children / teens, seniors, and Somali populations with targeted videos translated in Somali, Spanish, and Hmong to increase accessibility. The campaign continues to attract growing numbers of new visitors every month and had them engaging with “What Can You Do” and “The Facts” content in longer than average sessions.

## Next steps

- Implement Digital Equity Plan and make available to county staff, stakeholders, and residents. Finalize implementation planning.
- Collaborate with the State of Minnesota Office of Broadband Development and many regional partners on the Digital Opportunity Plan and Digital Connection Committees.
- Conclude online safety public awareness and expand organic social media messages and reels / videos focused on advising, informing, and sharing resources. As appropriate, translate selected resources and make available to non-English language preference audiences.
- Continue to engage with Minnesota legislators and state regulators to raise awareness of digital equity issues impacting urban and suburban residents with lower household incomes.
- Share finding of additional analysis conducted by research fellow on the broadband needs in multi-family apartments in Hennepin County.

# EDUCATION DOMAIN

## Educational Services

**Allocation amount: \$500,000**

### Project description

Hennepin County’s Education Support Services (ESS) department provides support and resources to youth who receive county services with a focus on student empowerment, skill building and collaboration with families, schools, and support professionals. Hennepin County Library (HCL) is a national leader of library service, innovation, and excellence. The 41 libraries, website and outreach services serve 1.2 million county residents over 611 square miles. Hennepin County Library’s mission is to inspire, facilitate, and celebrate lifelong learning. For this collaborative project, ¡Aprendamos juntos!/Let’s learn together, the objective is to provide immediate educational support to youth and families in the Hennepin County family shelter system who are new arrivals to Minnesota, assisting them with school enrollment, integration into Hennepin County schools, and identification of needed academics supports for youth and identification of needed education supports for parents and caregivers.

Hennepin County Education Support Services and Hennepin County Library are contracting with culturally responsive community organizations to provide education supports to Spanish-speaking youth and adults in family shelter. Through engagement with families at the family shelter in Bloomington, MN, the project’s initial focus has been to identify needs and barriers in literacy and education and respond with services and supports to meet the needs of the families and remove barriers.

### Progress narrative

¡Aprendamos juntos!/Let’s learn together began serving families in May 2024. Contracts are currently being utilized to provide English language classes for adults, to provide transportation for educational excursions to nearby libraries, community events, and opportunities for families to practice English in fun and engaging community-based activities. Hennepin County is also partnering with community organizations to provide educational programming for youth and families staying in shelter.

Hennepin County Library and Education Support Services have hired a total of four full-time Spanish-speaking staff positions to support this program. Staff are providing daily on-site office hours at the shelter to support educational needs for youth and adults. Staff connect families with schools, educational resources, library resources, academic tutoring, community-based organizations, broadband and digital inclusion resources, and other county supports. Staff are also providing educational youth enrichment programming during adult English classes, with support from Hennepin County volunteers and housing stability staff. Additionally, staff are supporting enhanced library services for Spanish-speaking students and families, including providing culturally specific and responsive reading materials and media, tours of nearby libraries, and connection to education and literacy focused programming and services.

### Key performance indicators

Outcome measures may include the following:

- Number of adults who attended English classes
- Number of youth who participated in youth engagement activities
- Number of students who received tutoring
- Number of books distributed
- Number of parents/caregivers who have identified their own education needs
- Number of computers and technology support provided in living spaces or to families

## Next steps

Education Support Services and the Library will continue to implement this project in collaboration with county, community, and school partners. Expansion to additional shelter sites is planned for Fall 2024.

# EMPLOYMENT DOMAIN

## Employment Strategies

Allocation amount: \$9,280,000

### Project description

Sustainable employment impacts an individual’s ability to pay for basic needs and brings stability to individuals and families alike. This project will create and implement employment strategies that will benefit county residents and employers, and ultimately, the county’s overall economic landscape. The county cannot do this work alone. The business community, community-based organizations (CBOs), educational institutions, and the public workforce system are all critical partners in creating jobs and facilitating access to in-demand jobs that pay a livable wage. The project team will work collaboratively to promote equity through the development and implementation of workforce development programs, employment readiness services, and other strategies that prepare and connect residents to employers.

Employment strategies will:

**Partner with the Housing Stability area** to provide employment and training services that supplement case management and housing-related supports for job seekers who are 18 years or older, single (no dependents), and are currently or recently experiencing homelessness. Services include, but are not limited to job coaching, skills training and education, and assistance with placement and retention.

**Create a consortia of workforce development providers** who are able to provide just-in-time employment and training services to ensure participants have the skills employers are seeking, thus leading to livable wage employment.

**Create the Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)**, a collaborative partnership between Hennepin County and small and mid-sized business owners and stakeholder organizations to better understand employment and business operations needs and challenges and to explore opportunities for improvement and innovation.

### Progress narrative

#### Employment and Training Services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative

In 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized funds to be used to provide meaningful employment services to individuals who are experiencing or have recently experienced homelessness. The board agreed that to improve long-term success in maintaining permanent housing and achieving self-sufficiency, persons transitioning from homelessness to permanent housing need to earn an income that meets their basic needs. Employment services provide intentional focus on readiness, skills training, and occupational learning to help this population find and keep jobs.

Hennepin County has partnered with Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota (GWES) and American Indian Opportunities Industrialization Center’s Takoda Stability (AIOIC Takoda Stability) to provide low-barrier, supportive employment and training services to people experiencing or recently exited from homelessness. Hennepin County Housing Stability case managers and selected community-based adult shelter case managers and advocates assess the individuals they serve for readiness and interest in employment and training services. If a person is deemed appropriate, the case manager / advocate submits a referral for one of two partner organizations chosen by the individual being served. GWES and AIOIC Takoda Stability each have designated Career Navigators to support individuals referred.

Annual updates (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024):

- 308 total referrals to the launch of the program (03/01/22–06/30/24).
- 64 new referrals this reporting year (07/01/23–06/30/24).

- 78% of new referrals have been enrolled and received services (169 WF1 enrollments from 7/1/23–6/30/24).
- Power BI Dashboard has been developed over the last year and is near completion. Staff are currently updating the dashboard to incorporate data on number of individuals served who have dependents.
- Program Evaluation Logic Model creation and identification of key evaluation questions has commenced with Hennepin County Strategic Planning and Initiatives Department with a goal to complete the program evaluation by fall 2024.
- Since launching the SharePoint referral system in February 2024, internal and external partners continue to utilize the SharePoint site and Power Platform to submit referrals for program enrollments (this is being conducted through the use of Power Automate flows).
- Monthly case consultations continue and demonstrate valuable collaboration amongst program Career Navigators and Housing Case Managers for holistic service provision.

### **Workforce Development Roster Program (WDRP)**

In October 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized \$10 million for career pathways programming as an employment strategy to address the inequitable impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on Hennepin County residents, particularly those who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color. The strategy created a consortium of nonprofit organizations, able to provide just-in-time employment and training services leading to living wage jobs, by ensuring participants have the skills employers are seeking. To this end, the Workforce Development Roster Program was created. The WDRP partnered with the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce to connect training graduates with living wage jobs and to work with providers to both connect them to employers as well as strengthen existing business relationships.

Annual updates (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024):

- 23 WDRP contracts and two MOUs have been executed to date.
- Workforce Development staff and assigned contract managers meet with providers at least once per quarter to discuss progress and to identify potential barriers.
- WDRP collaborative meetings have been organized to provide space for organizations to work together to enhance service delivery for the residents they serve.
- 331 participants are currently enrolled into Roster Programs; 133 have exited.
- Majority of participants are BIPOC individuals (total of 402 of 464).

### **Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)**

The Workforce Leadership Council is a partnership between Hennepin County and small and mid-sized business owners and stakeholder organizations to better understand employment and business operations needs and challenges and to explore opportunities for improvement and innovation. The WLC provides space for critical conversations, learning, new partnerships, and collaboration.

By creating strategic business partnerships, the WLC is aligned to meet industry demands. Through the collaboration of regional employers, business leaders, and partners, members exchange experiences and know-how, as well as the expertise necessary to align resources and champion strategies that prepare residents for careers and meet employers' needs.

The WLC has identified various pain points in employee attraction, recruitment, retention, and advancement. Three work groups were created to dig deeper to foster a better understanding of their challenges and opportunities for collective solutions. The purpose of each work group is as follows:

1. **The Technology Work Group** focuses on the unmet technology needs of small to mid-sized businesses and its employees. This workgroup is advising and learning from two Elevate Hennepin pilot programs: 1) to assist employers in identifying appropriate technology solutions to enhance their business operations; and 2) to help employees gain a better understanding of the essential technology skills needed for successful employment. Additionally, the work group has added translation services to the Elevate Hennepin platform to allow employers to utilize available services where English is not their primary language.

2. **The Talent Pipeline Work Group** focuses on building career pathways into roles experiencing current and projected shortages in the private sector. The work group compares and analyzes high-demand, hard-to-fill occupations and seeks to better understand minimum qualifications, pay scales, and skill requirements, to create opportunities to expand a potential hiring pool. The work group has implemented two cohort programs focused on creating career pathways for Mental Health (MH) workers and Commercial Driver's License (CDL) truck drivers respectively.

3. **The Barriers to Employment Work Group** focuses on helping businesses identify and implement promising talent attraction and retention strategies to become "employers of choice." The work group partnered with Elevate Hennepin to deliver cohort-based, targeted programming focused on connecting businesses to teams of subject matter experts in human resources, compensation, budgeting, and finance to develop implementable and scalable solutions. Programming focused on financial wellness, asset building, and potential financial subsidies that may come in the form of wages, childcare assistance, and savings, and will be offered to employees of businesses enrolled in the cohort.

Annual updates (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024):

### Diversifying the workforce

RealTime Talent (RTT) is continuing to identify talent pipeline issues and solutions for the mental health and commercial driver's license positions. This work has led us down the path of needing to identify stackable opportunities for employers to engage in the Talent Pipeline Management initiative. This strategy would meet employers where they are at, enhance participation in the initiative based on time availability of employers, and bring in new talent quicker.

The employers engaged in the mental health collaborative have identified an opportunity to partner with our post-secondary system to create training for entry level mental health workers to expand our pipeline and create opportunities to streamline business practices.

Our Barriers to Employment work group is deploying human resources technical assistance to five small to medium-sized businesses, and our community-based organization has conducted an analysis in partnership with the employers and their employees to identify appropriate income, financial supports, training, and retention needs.

The Human Resources technical assistance is leading us to believe this is a promising practice with tremendous value for our small and medium-sized businesses as it relates to removing barriers to employment attraction, hiring, promoting, and retaining employees.

### Skills-based hiring for employers

The Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with GWES, promoted, hosted, and helped facilitate the Rework America Alliance's skills-based practices training. This program helps employers revamp hiring practices to be more inclusive and places a strong emphasis on working with community-based organizations (CBO) to identify new talent pools. There were 30 individuals who attended the last networking event to learn more about possible connections between the employer and the workforce provider.

## Key performance indicators

### Employment and Training Services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative

Key performance indicators:

- Obtain employment
- Obtain stable housing
- Short-term job retention
- Long-term job retention

Annual updates (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024):

- 303 total referrals to the program (03/01/22–06/30/24)
- 118 new referrals this reporting year (07/01/23–06/30/24)
- 122 participant cases are actively open:
- 18 have obtained full-time employment

- 19 have obtained part-time employment
- 14 are actively participating in training
- 23 have successfully completed training
- Five are enrolled in educational opportunities (GED)
- 13 are currently attending GWES's 8-week work experience program
- 16 have successfully completed GWES's work experience program
- 89 cases have closed:
  - Four have achieved non-employment program goals
  - Eight have achieved employment program goals
  - Five have transferred or were referred to another program / organization
  - 55 have exited the program for other reasons (e.g., voluntary, incarceration, moved)
  - 17 have lost contact with the program

Evaluation efforts:

- Program and participant data monitoring and evaluation
- Ongoing discussions with implementing partners and the county regarding data and long-term program sustainability needs

**Workforce Development Roster Program**

Key performance indicators:

- Total number of participants enrolled in all roster program initiatives
- Participants earn credentials and / or job skills
- Number of participants actively enrolled in a training program
- Participants obtain employment
- Participants retain employment (retention captured at 3, 6, and 12 months)

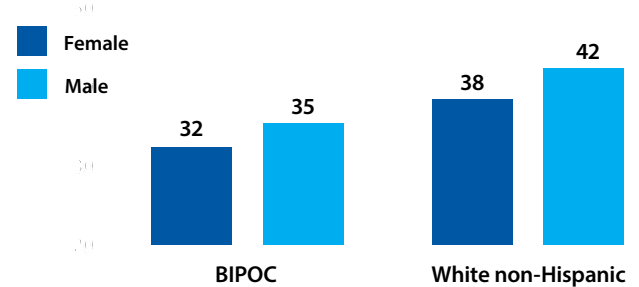
Results data (July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024):

- 331 individuals are currently enrolled; 133 have exited
- 90 individuals have obtained credentials; 19 are currently enrolled in credentialed training
- 369 individuals have participated in training programming (credentialed and non-credentialed)
- 52 current participants have gained employment; 53 have exited with employment
- \$76,310 support dollars have been provided to participants to overcome barriers including tuition fees, training material costs, transportation, housing, clothing, and more.

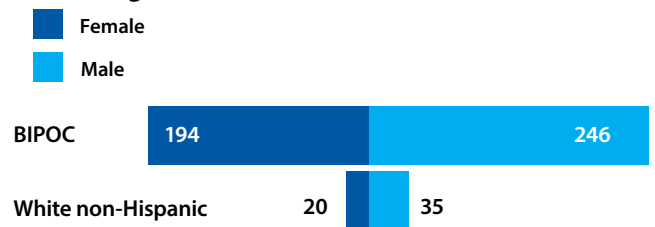
Evaluation efforts:

- Program and participant data monitoring and evaluation
- Ongoing discussion with implementing partners and the county regarding data needs and long-term program sustainability needs

**Average age**



**Race and gender**



## Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

Key performance indicators:

- Identifying pain points, exploring solutions to meet business and resident needs, piloting solutions, and implementing services that solve for barriers to employment

Quarterly results data:

- 43 individuals representing 30 companies have participated in six stand-alone sessions and coaching sessions.
- Five businesses are receiving human resources consulting services via Elevate Hennepin Talent, and their employees are receiving training, financial wellness, and supportive services from a workforce development provider.
- The MH Employer Collaborative defined the key metric formulas to measure vacancy factor, race and gender demographics upon hire, and onboarding costs. These three metrics will continue to support and assess employer ROI as codesigned solutions continue to be created and implemented.

## Employment and training services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative

The Employment and Training Services for People Exiting Homelessness Pilot Program was developed in partnership between Hennepin County Office of Workforce Development and Housing Stability to provide access to meaningful employment services with an intentional focus on readiness, skills training, and occupational learning to assist individuals who are or have recently been homeless secure and maintain employment. This program is a low-barrier program with minimal eligibility criteria and flexible support services.

Program enrollments are conducted through referral partnerships with Hennepin County Housing Stability, Homeless to Housing (H2H) case managers, as well as other partner shelters in Hennepin County. Of the 302 referrals received since the launch of this program, 26 individuals have received services that results in an impressive 87% conversion rate from referral to program enrollment. This demonstrates the motivation of the individuals who are referred and are prepared to engage in services that enhance their employability and connect them to income opportunities to avoid repeat homelessness.

"I feel a million times better than where I was exactly a year ago. This program helped me with what made sense at the time by providing holistic services and helping me see the big picture."

-- Program Participant (American Indian OIC — Takoda Stability)

"The Work Experience program was life changing. It helped me keep up hope and gave me a better attitude. I was able to secure employment as an Assistant Store Manager at a local thrift store and this was all thanks to my Career Navigator, the other Goodwill staff and the family I gained through the Work Experience program."

-- Program Participant (Goodwill Easter Seals of MN)



## Next steps

### **Employment and training services for People Exiting Homelessness initiative**

- Program management (e.g., ongoing partner meetings, internal management meetings, support to providers and case managers)
- Plan for program sustainability (e.g., identify / obtain data, funding sources)
- Obtain program participant feedback
- Complete Power BI Dashboard
- Expand referral source to additional adult homeless shelters
- Monitor quantitative and qualitative data and outcomes
- Monitor program budget

### **Workforce Development Roster Program**

- Business networking events hosted by the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce will continue to be offered.
- The Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce will continue working with community-based organizations (CBO) on employer partnerships and best practices for CBO relationship building.
- Office of Workforce Development will provide technical assistance and support to awarded providers.
- Complete development of Power BI Dashboard.
- Monitor and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data and outcomes.
- Monitor program budget.
- Third collaborative meeting will be hosted in-person mid-August with the focus on business talk with employer partners.
- Story mapping is underway to capture qualitative data and program narrative of all roster programs.

### **Workforce Leadership Council**

- Provide technical assistance and support to awarded providers
- Monitor and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data and outcomes
- Explore Employee Assistance Fund models
- Monitor program budget and identify 2025 strategies for the WLC

# HEALTH DOMAIN

## Behavioral Health

**Allocation amount: \$20,000,000**

### Project description

The Behavioral Health project will invest in early interventions, prevent overreliance on deep-end services, and reduce disparities for Hennepin County residents through behavioral health strategies and interventions.

Initiatives toward these intended outcomes include:

1. Expanding School Based Mental Health
2. Developing and expanding a network of culturally specific mental health services
3. Expanding Family Home Visiting
4. Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids
5. Reforming 911
6. Expanding hours at 1800 Chicago
7. Expanding the embedded police social worker initiative
8. Launching a juvenile behavioral health initiative
9. Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services
10. Piloting a family-based recovery program
11. Launching a mental health awareness campaign

The measures supported through this effort will increase access for more than 11,000 people annually to low-barrier, upstream, whole-person and family supports designed to meet the complex needs of diverse communities. They will leverage multiple funding sources and expand the reach of Hennepin's current investment.

### Progress narrative

As of June 30, 2024, we are very close to finalizing most Behavioral Health (BH) ARPA initiatives using the ARPA funding. With only six months remaining, 10 of 11 programs have met or exceeded targets in entirety or for the current fiscal year. Many programs have fully executed their contracts terms and are wrapping up final reporting in preparation for closeout. Other programs are managing sustainability plans with providers to continue services using non-ARPA funding.

The Expanding School Based Mental Health (SBMH) initiative remains just shy of 100% of public (non-charter) schools receiving services. During fiscal year 2024, 92% of parents and caregivers reported being satisfied with the school-based services they received in July–December 2023.

Developing and Expanding a Network of Culturally Specific Mental Health Services, a sunset program, served 12,756 residents in fiscal year 2024 with fifteen cultural groups represented (July 2023–December 2024).

The Sustaining Family Home Visiting initiative is working on sustainability plans to increase the number of families served in 2025. The principal planning analyst hired in March of 2024 is working with the Hennepin County Data and Assessment team to make data retrieval and presentation more accessible.

Caring Connections 4 Kids (CC4K) screened 704 children for a total of 734 mental health screenings for the 2024 fiscal year. This is down slightly from 755 in 2023, but far exceeding the annual goal of 500 by 47%.

The Expanding Access and Hours at 1800 Chicago initiative hired and onboarded 18 staff members that are specifically dedicated to providing services on the weekend. The weekend expansion to walk-in services for residents provides services on Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m.–9 p.m. The drop-off access for First Responders was also expanded to bring adults to a centralized stabilization center.

During fiscal year 2024, Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services (FRSS) managed six training sessions for workforce development. This team participated in 94 community events and submitted a Medica grant application for Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool to help guide and standardize the recommendations for services at critical access points.

## Key performance indicators

The 11 Behavioral Health initiatives have separate key performance indicators (KPI) based on their individual approaches to supporting the mental health and substance use disorder needs of Hennepin residents. The quarterly KPI reported for the annual fiscal year report reflect that the following initiatives have met or exceeded their established project goal at this time:

- **Expanding School Based Mental Health:** 93% of target of Hennepin County schools receiving services. Further action needed to obtain 100%.
- **Developing and Expanding a Network of Culturally Specific Mental Health Services:** Goal met and target complete. Final reporting: 12,756 residents were served with 15 cultural groups represented (July 2023–June 2024).
- **Sustaining Family Home Visiting:** Secured \$2 million in funding for County Strong Foundations Family Home Visiting programs in 2024, and \$2 million in funding from the City of Minneapolis to serve city residents. Agreement is in place with funders through 2027. Expansion funds are being explored on-going.
- **Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids:** Annual goal of 500 children screened. For fiscal year 2024, 704 children were screened with 734 screening completed.
- **Reforming 911** supported 176 cases opened in fiscal year 2024 and 46 referrals were made for community supports.
- **Expanding Access and Hours** at 1800 Chicago: 7,825 total visits in fiscal year 2024 as compared to 6,697 in 2023 (17% increase). Visits by month peaked at 823 in January of 2024 but averaged 652. 1,946 unique residents were served representing an annual 9% increase over fiscal year 2023.
- **Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services** initiative served 704 families who called FRSS for services. 278 of those calls were repeat families representing 40% of call volume.
- **Piloting a Family-Based Recovery Program:** 47 families served April to June 2024, 45 families served January to March 2024, 47 families served October to December 2023, and 37 families served July to September 2023.

## Next steps

### Goals for Q3 of 2024 include:

- By September 30, 2024, the Expanding School Based Mental Health initiative plans to work with vendor selection to complete the request for proposal (RFP) process for school-based mental health contracts that will begin in January 2025 and engage school mental health providers in a survey process to learn about number of FTEs across Hennepin County schools and the ratio of unstaffed to staffed positions.
- In Q3 2024, the Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids (CC4K) initiative will hire a new administrative assistant to continue strategic partnerships, collaboration, and referrals efforts; explore options for an upgraded database and case management system; and continue meeting with partners and children’s mental health providers to increase collaboration and communication with children’s mental health team and partners.
- Reforming 911 will continue exploring expansion efforts for the Alternative Response Teams (ART) program to other cities within Hennepin County.
- The Expanding the Access and Hours for 1800 Chicago initiative for Q3 plans to hire an early engagement social worker for the Lake Street Corridor team. Another objective is to have the Competency Attainment Pilot be approved to receive interim certification as a new provider from the State’s Competency Attainment Board.
- During Q3 2024, the Piloting an In-Home Family Recovery (IHFR) initiative will establish an MA billing modeling tool; identify and establish the IHFR credentialing tool for implementing agencies; and host resident advisory boards.

# Maternal Health

**Allocation amount: \$9,500,000**

## Project description

This initiative focuses on strengthening and expanding existing services, partnerships, and resources to improve maternal health outcomes for Black, Indigenous and birthing people of color. The resources will expand Hennepin County Public Health's (HCPH) capacity to partner with the community to influence systems change, provide maternal and child health education, and promote access to health care in the community. To facilitate community-driven solutions to maternal health, HCPH is using these funds to invest in community-based efforts and providers focused on improving outcomes for those facing the worst disparities. This includes forging new partnerships and supporting a sustainable birth justice and maternal health infrastructure for systems change to get at the root causes of inequities.

The project activities include:

- Expanding existing programs focused on improving maternal health outcomes for Black and Indigenous persons and people of color affected by disparities.
- Developing and implementing a birth justice plan to improve maternal and infant health outcomes.
- Investing in community-initiated solutions and culturally congruent and innovative practices to reduce disparities.
- Increasing departmental capacity for data collection, reporting and analysis to support measurement strategies.

## Progress narrative

### Expanding access to care and services

Over the last year, the Maternal Health Initiative has continued to work with contracted providers to deliver care and services in the community. Many providers have focused on social determinants of health and connecting patients to supportive resources to address the full range of patient needs after the pandemic. Hennepin Healthcare (HHS) supported a series of training workshops aimed at equipping professionals and paraprofessionals in the field of infant mental health with the knowledge and skills needed to provide culturally-sensitive and trauma-informed care. Additionally, HHS continued to collaborate in the development of an infant mental health framework to address the shortage of infant mental health practitioners and BIPOC practitioners credentialed in infant mental health. For the doula program, HHS saw significant improvements in the number of fully-covered doula on-call shifts and onboarded an additional five to seven doulas to the program. HHS saw doula staffing stability and maintained a full 24/7 doula on-call schedule with some shifts staffed with multiple doulas. Hennepin Healthcare's East Lake Clinic successfully developed and implemented a 24-week comprehensive, trauma-informed screening for prenatal individuals that includes questions on breastfeeding, food insecurity, housing, physical or emotional abuse, major life changes, and sources of support, for which patients then get referred to trauma-responsive resources.

NorthPoint Health & Wellness furthered integration of clinical services and social services through revising internal processes and continuing bi-weekly care huddles to ensure patients can holistically access the full range of NorthPoint services. NorthPoint also hosted 16 group and community building sessions where a total of 157 individuals attended to learn valuable information, get connected to resources, and build community with one another.

Roots Community Birth Center celebrated their eighth birthday and groundbreaking of their new birth center space. The Center wrapped up their contract for services in May, having provided in-office care, home visits, and parenting education. Over the course of the year, the Center continued to see an increase in the volume of clients and enrollment in all services.

Within Public Health clinical services, a Reproductive Health Educator has addressed reproductive health-care needs for patients at the Red Door Clinic. In the last year, the clinic saw an increase in contraceptive uptake especially around communities of color. The second clinical position supported through the initiative, a Maternal Child Health

(MCH) Nurse with Healthcare for the Homeless, addressed gaps in care and helped patients navigate maternal health resources and services. The MCH Nurse continued with individual patient visits involving prenatal care coordination and education, birth control options, breastfeeding, immunization updates, and STD/STI testing. Additionally, the MCH Nurse's reach expanded and was able to connect with new families in shelter that are currently pregnant and / or recently delivered. Connecting patients with postpartum mental health support has been a success as multiple patients have been able to access long-term mental health services.

## Implementing the birth justice strategic plan

The final phase of the initiative launched on October 3, 2023, and centers on implementing the birth justice plan. Collective Action Lab and the Birth Justice Collaborative (BJC) partners are leading implementation, oversight, evaluation, and emergent developments.

Strategy groups, composed of community members and professionals, formed to refine and implement priority actions for each strategy within the birth justice plan. Public Health staff and key maternal child health partners were also involved and connected to strategy implementation to ensure adequate support, problem solving, connections to agency partners, and internal learning that can be applied to county programs and services. Strategy groups regularly met in fall 2023, conducting research, outreach, strategy sessions, and program pilot design activities to create work plans for each birth justice priority in coordination with the BJC partners. Implementation is still underway for the programs and activities in the plan focused on:

- **Acknowledging and addressing the impacts of racism:** Designed and piloted a 15-month postpartum support program with home visiting and supportive resources for 41 Black and American Indian families. Embedded in the pilot is a program evaluation for measuring success and outcomes. The training for the evidence-based home visiting model used was given to a total of 25 BIPOC home visitors, and created a new model affiliate at African American Babies Coalition, expanding the overall capacity for cultural home visiting using the Family Spirit model in Minnesota.
- **Investing in a network of trusted cultural providers and resources:** Developed and introduced two legislative bills for planning dollars for American Indian Birth Center (SF 4992/HF 4935) and African American HomePlace (SF 5171/HF 5108). The American Indian Birth Center will be a Hennepin County located birth center for culturally-centered prenatal and postpartum care. The African American HomePlace will support Black parents, families, and doulas from prenatal through the postpartum period. Both bills passed for a total appropriation of \$600,000 planning dollars in 2025.
- **Creating and expanding culturally meaningful workforce pathways:** Mapped out cultural advocacy and navigator programs, trainings, and certifications, and explored needs for Cultural Provider Councils (one African American and one American Indian) to influence and inform maternal health care models of support. Additionally, identified the need for and opportunity to partner around providing doula business supports with Birth Equity Community Council (BECC).
- **Supporting a system of anti-bias accountability:** The BJC planned and held four community education forums in 2024 for community members and providers to learn about tools, resources, and newly-passed policy that impacts pregnancy and postpartum experiences and care. Also, planned and initiated a collaboration to launch an Obstetric Racism Scale Pilot (PREM-OB) within a local health system.
- **Advocating for & radically reform policy:** Continued advocacy efforts for cultural providers and doulas. Developed and introduced bills for American Indian Birth Center and African American HomePlace.

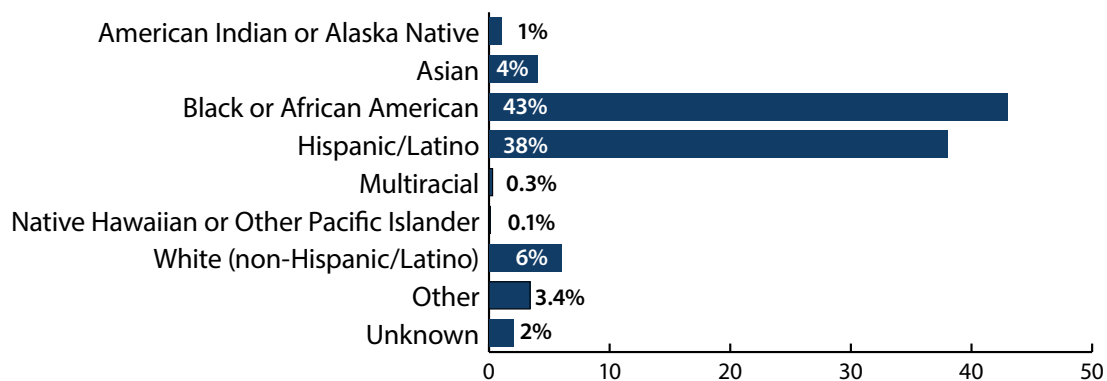
## Key performance indicators

Over the last year, progress was made in the key performance indicators and performance measures with contracted providers. Funding has expanded existing maternal health services through the contracted providers and allowed development and investment in community-initiated solutions to reduce disparities through the birth justice project:

### Expanding existing maternal health services

- Expanded programs and services available through Public Health Clinical Services by retaining two FTEs to support MCH care and reproductive health education at the People Serving People clinic and Red Door Clinic
- Number of individuals served through expansion of Public Health Clinical Services
  - 152 individuals served
- Total number of individuals served through contracted providers Hennepin Healthcare, NorthPoint Health & Wellness Center, and Roots Community Birth Center
  - 2,825 total individuals served
- Number of training and educational sessions offered, topics covered, and attendance
  - 12 trauma-informed care trainings held
  - 88 childbirth classes and group sessions held
  - 885 community members and health care professionals attended trainings and classes
- Number of individuals receiving referrals to supportive resources
  - Food support resources
    - 62 high-risk pregnant and postpartum individuals enrolled in a meal program cohort to support food security; 20 women completed the program
    - 30,492 culturally congruent food bags distributed to patients experiencing food insecurity
    - Over 2,100 referrals to social determinants of health resources, including behavioral health, nutrition, dental, social work, and human services
- Number of visits completed with patients including prenatal and postpartum OB/Gyn, doula, and midwifery care
  - 2,105 visits with practitioners
  - 276 visits with Maternal Health RN
  - 257 doula patients (\*not visits)

### Demographics of Patients and Clients Served



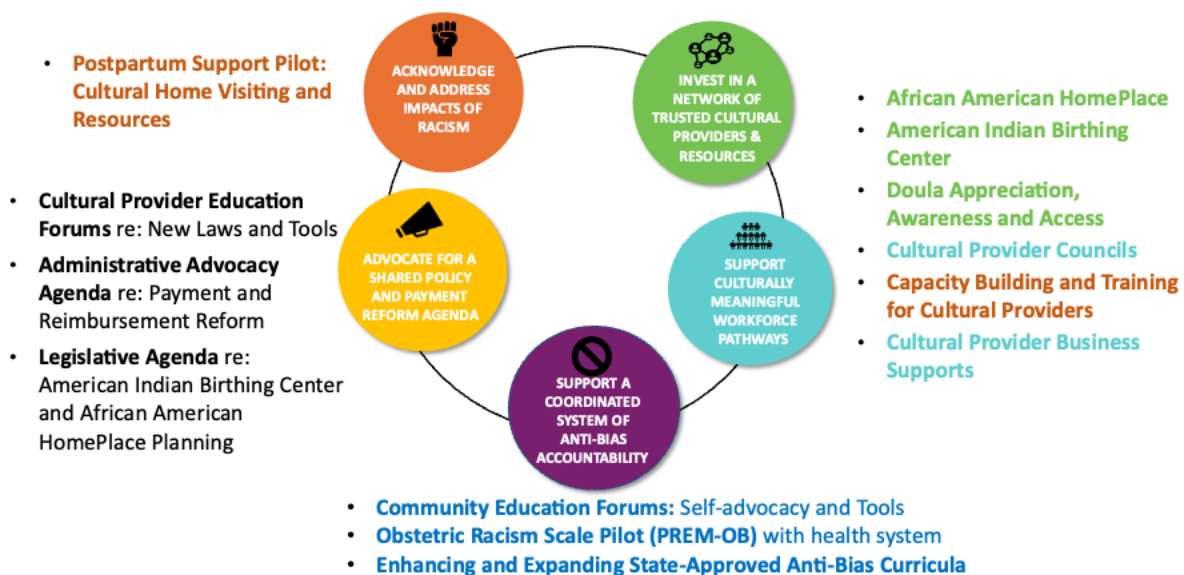
## Develop and invest in community-initiated solutions to reduce disparities

- Number of community members across Hennepin County engaged through outreach efforts: 82 leadership coalition and strategy group members participated in the refinement and workplan development for the birth justice strategies (October 2023–March 2024)
- Developed birth justice strategic plan individual work and evaluation plans
- Hennepin County investments in birth justice strategies implementation
  - Over \$1.6M invested into
    - direct services, planning, and community education such as the postpartum pilot support program, the African American HomePlace design, cultural provider business supports, four community education forums, doula appreciation, and advocacy (April–June 2024); and
    - ongoing birth justice infrastructure, community governance and participation, coordination, project management, and cross-agency collaboration (July 2023–June 2024)

## Data-informed decisions and evaluation efforts

- Successfully stayed on timeline and target with initiative evaluation activities including staff and partner interviews, data analysis, data synthesis, and reporting
- Published birth data Power BI dashboard report as a part of continued maternal child health data surveillance

### **BJC Strategies and 2024 Priority Initiatives**



## Next steps

During the next quarter, the maternal health initiative team will continue to focus on building out sustainability plans informed by the ongoing evaluation of the initiative, feedback received from contracted providers and birth justice partners, and priorities within the public health department and for disparity reduction. Contracted providers and the Birth Justice Collaborative will continue to provide care and services, as well as implement pilot programs and initiatives.

HCPH is proud of the ongoing partnership with the Birth Justice Collaborative and the many individuals, organizations, and cross-sector collaborators that are working to advance birth justice in Hennepin County through this maternal health initiative. The initiative staff and leadership will continue to seek funding for 2025 and beyond to sustain our efforts and accountability for changing maternal health systems, practices, outcomes, and experiences for Black, Indigenous, and people of color.

# HEALTH DOMAIN

## Public Health

Allocation amount: \$9,700,000

### Project description

This project focuses on rebuilding and strengthening critical public health capabilities and services to protect community health. This work is vital as we continue to respond to COVID-19 and its effects as well as other disease outbreaks, while also providing basic public health prevention services for residents of all ages. Efforts focus on bolstering public health infectious disease response and coordinated immunization outreach and delivery; increasing and enhancing capacity to respond to public health emergencies; strengthening health promotion programming to mitigate the impacts of COVID in the community; and coordinating early childhood development strategies to improve access to early childhood services for families. Foundational to these efforts will be expanded assessment capabilities and increased project management capacity with the aim to address long-standing and newly emerging public health challenges. Project activities include:

- Investing in community-initiated solutions and culturally congruent and innovative practices to reduce disparities.
- Increasing departmental capacity for data collection, reporting and analysis to support measurement strategies.

### Progress narrative

Public Health implements strategies in all aspects of this project. Embedded in the project are community-initiated solutions and a commitment to utilize data to drive activities.

#### Prevent the spread of communicable diseases

**Infectious disease response:** The Community-Based Infectious Disease response team (CBID) was formed to ensure a rapid, effective, and culturally-competent response to emerging infectious disease outbreaks. Now two years' old, CBID continues to evolve and instill lessons learned. This past year, CBID helped maintain stable staffing levels in the Public Health Clinic (PHC) and Healthcare for the Homeless sites to ensure delivery of HIV medications, continuous infectious disease screenings, syphilis treatment, and continuation of suboxone services. This past quarter, CBID staff have also supported an increase in vaccines by staffing the PHC immunization clinic and delivering MPOX vaccines at Twin Cities Pride. The Public Health Department continues to monitor measles cases in Hennepin County and a couple CBID staff were trained by Epi in preparation for needed response.

Infection control in long-term care facilities (LTCF): The key strategies that have been implemented in the past year by the Long-Term Care Infection Prevention Unit include:

- Conducting individualized outreach to LTCF to build partnerships and rapport with partners in the community. Visits to 46 skilled nursing facilities (SNF) were completed, including all SNF located in areas of high and medium-high social vulnerability. Visits yielded 20 face-to-face discussions with infection prevention and control (IPC) program leaders, 18 new or updated facility contacts, 10 new long-term care (LTC) infection preventionists (IP) coalition memberships, and four follow-up phone calls introducing available program services and supports. HCPH services and supports include IPC program consultations-proactively oriented and in response to Healthcare Associated Infection / Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI / AR) outbreaks-and assistance onboarding new infection preventionists.
- Planning and providing educational webinars to increase infection preventionists knowledge, skills and abilities in core competencies in antibiotic stewardship. The LTC IP team continued to implement the CDC Local Health Department HAI / AR Strategy during Q1 2024. The coalition's antimicrobial stewardship (AS) subcommittee, in collaboration with the Health Evaluation and Assessment Team (HEAT), developed and



implemented a LTCF health care personnel (HCP) needs assessment to inform the eight-session Antibiotic and Urine Culture Stewardship in LTC: HCP Education Series, Data Use Collaborative and Subject Matter Expert Forum.

## **Prepare and respond to emergencies**

A COVID-19 improvement plan was completed that details operational findings and corrective actions as a result of the Hennepin County COVID-19 public health emergency response. The plan includes 146 corrective actions, with 81 corrective actions relating to the CDC's Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Emergency Operations Coordination Capability. Most corrective actions include training staff to have knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform key incident management responsibilities within the Health Department emergency response incident management structure. The Emergency Preparedness and Response Program is in the final stages of completing a self-paced incident management learning module that will be an annual requirement for all Public Health department staff.

The Workforce Development Coordinator developed four trainings for Public Health Department staff and implemented a department-wide communication strategy with the goal of increasing department personnel's knowledge of Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response concepts and expectations of their role during public health emergency response activations. 81% of Public Health Department personnel (425 completed training of the 523 total department personnel) completed at least one of the Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) trainings that were offered. In total, 788 EPR courses were completed by department personnel in 2023.

Hennepin County's Public Health Emergency Response and Recovery Plan underwent significant revision to increase the plan's effectiveness through simplification and efficiency of use. Plan revisions included merging the Base Plan with the Direction and Control Annex and removing excessive procedural documents, eliminating sections of the plan that were repetitive across annexes, and reformatting plan elements to provide a higher, executive-level description of maintained capabilities.

Hennepin County's Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was revised in coordination with the Hennepin County Attorney's Office to update formal agreements for utilizing community facilities for point of dispensing site operations. A Facility Use Agreement (FUA) was included as an attachment to the MOA for just-in-time execution to govern specific use of facilities. Over the past year, Hennepin County formalized partnerships with five school districts through executed MOAs.

Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response staff worked with department programs to develop continuity of government plans that include considerations for future extreme disruptions to services cause by a widespread pandemic. Focus of continuity planning includes the identification of critical functions and services, identification of key personnel, orders of succession and delegation of authority, identification of support systems and vital records, identification of alternate facilities, and the identification of communication systems and emergency contact information.

## **Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors**

Chronic disease: Through a partnership with the Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP), this initiative is funding four projects including community pop-up clinics to increase access to primary care, train-the-trainer models for mental well-being practices in communities of color, expanding referral networks for primary and mental health care, and increased access to dental care for youth without insurance. The four projects will continue through November 2024. A second community RFP focused on reconnection to primary care and mental well-being, and other health promotion activities awarded nine providers. Their contracts began December 1, 2023, and will conclude at the end of November 2024. Projects include addressing delays and gaps in primary care, chronic disease management, support to expand Community Health Worker programs, mobile health screenings, and whole-person wellness initiatives. The initiative also supports a Community Health Worker (CHW) HUB project with Pillsbury United Communities and that work began in December. The goals are to support the infrastructure for expanded CHW roles in community-based organizations who can access reimbursement support for their services and thus increase longer-term sustainability. The initiative also supports projects with the Reimagine Black Youth Mental Health program to bring youth together to support connectedness, resiliency, and joy.

Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP): Hennepin County Public Health's (HCPH) trauma informed team, the Health Promotion Program area, and the Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP) braided funding for community grants. Between July 2023 and September 2023, this team launched the Community Led Well-being

and Trauma Informed grant. CHIP specifically funded nine grantees. The funding spurred community-driven ideas and recommendations to strengthen communities, build relationships, and promote healing from individual and community trauma. The priority populations for this funding were applicants who serve communities impacted by racial disparities, such as Black, Indigenous, American Indian, Latine, Pacific Islanders, and Asian American people; LGBTQ+ people; people with disabilities; people with low incomes; and non-U.S. born persons.

This past year of funding has allowed CHIP to fund significant community-led initiatives: African Career Education Resources (ACER) organized tenant leaders to engage other tenants; Centro provided training on trauma and psychological first aid to Spanish speaking Latine families; Ebenezer Community Church engaged their church community in becoming trauma informed; Kiwi Collaborative held workshops with new pregnant and parenting individuals at Roots Community Birth Center. In June, CHIP and the other teams from Hennepin County Public Health held a final gathering for the contracted providers to celebrate their efforts and to train them in reflective practice. Overall, feedback from contracted providers has been overwhelmingly positive. Many of them expressed interest in partnering with the county in the future to implement community-led funding opportunities that focus on mental well-being and trauma. The contracted providers shared ideas with each other, and new networks were formed. Braiding funding was new to these teams, and staff are committed to looking for other collaborative funding opportunities.

**Age friendly:** The Public Health age-friendly coordinator and team continue to implement the countywide Age-Friendly Action Plan. The team was awarded an Age-Friendly Communities MN grant that focused on conducting a feasibility study for the CAPABLE model. CAPABLE helps older adults age at home with support from small home improvements and a coordinated care team. The team is now exploring how the program can be implemented at the county in partnership with NorthPoint Health & Wellness. A logic model and evaluation plan are complete, and the team is tracking metrics related to community partnership, technical assistance, and long-term health outcomes. The team also launched a mini-grant process to support community partners in implementing activities focused on older adults and social connection. Twenty-two organizations were awarded funding to support their projects. The Age-Friendly team also supported the county in becoming a certified age-friendly employer. Additional work included partnering with other age-friendly local governments (Minneapolis, Brooklyn Park, and Maple Grove) to host a series of awareness activities in honor of Older Adults month in May. Activities included facilitated conversations on ageism, an elder panel, and the creation of a traveling mural-elders in community produced it and it will travel to county events and other places to spark conversations on aging and connectedness.

**Coordinate early childhood development strategies:** The early childhood (EC) coordinator made significant progress on systems coordination and capacity-building activities this year. Within systems coordination, the EC coordinator started two projects to increase the number of Human Services programs collaborating with Family Health programs. Within capacity building, the EC coordinator began working with four early childhood program contracts, and the management of Strong Beginnings. The EC coordinator continued to build the early childhood network within Hennepin County, and established new relationships with the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Hennepin County Library, and the Interagency Early Intervention Committee.

### **Assure an adequate local public health infrastructure**

**Expand assessment capability and SHAPE survey:** SHAPE (Survey of the Health of All the Population and the Environment) is an ongoing project of Public Health to provide data on the health status and factors that affect health for adults in Hennepin County that is used in planning, programming, and policy development. Project results are used to support health equity data analysis and surveillance of health disparities. Between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, the SHAPE data was shared and presented to internal staff, community partners and stakeholders, and continue to support data needs.

**Increase planning and project management capacity:** Over the past year, Strategic Initiatives has utilized additional staffing capacity to advance department health and racial equity goals through dedicated staff leadership and project management. The department has capacity to plan and organize efforts in this area through a Health Equity Leadership Team and supporting the department's Racial Equity Champions. The staff member leading these efforts has led departmentwide efforts such as implementing a Health and Racial Equity survey and using results to respond to department priorities. A 5-year Health and Racial Equity plan for the department was recently developed and approved by leadership.

Staff capacity also provided support to several program areas in their specific health and racial equity strategic planning. Additionally, the staff member has led efforts to understand violence prevention efforts and craft a draft 5-year Violence Prevention plan to guide department efforts in this area. Finally, the staff member has led a project to meaningfully engage and partner with local cities served by Hennepin County Public Health. Several tools and plans have been developed to facilitate this partnership, and the project has made substantial progress over the past year.

## Key performance indicators

Efforts are underway to meet all key performance indicators.

By December 31, 2024, 70% of HCPH patients of any race will be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

- COVID-19, MPOX and other infectious disease screening and vaccination progress is being captured internally using Power BI.

By June 28, 2024, implement the *Antibiotic and Urine Culture Stewardship* in LTC training series.

June 28: "Recognizing infection in nursing homes: which non-localizing signs and symptoms matter"

- 52 attendees, 100% reporting "Event was a good use of time"

June 11: "Data-driven decision making—Episode 3: Action planning using a continuous improvement framework"

- 48 attendees, 96% reporting "Event was a good use of time"

June 7: "Boost clinical skills in interpreting the key components of a microbiology report and conducting an antibiotic time-out"

- 43 attendees, 92 % reporting "Event was a good use of time"

May 20: "Increase confidence in applying myth-busting communication strategies that address asymptomatic bacteriuria, urine culturing and antibiotic initiations for UTIs"

- 74 attendees, 97% reporting "Event was a good use of time"

May 3: "Where do we want to be? Understand how to use baseline metrics to set improvement goals aligned with evidence-based recommendations"

- 36 attendees, 96% reporting "Event was a good use of time"

April 26: "Identify action steps nurses and infection preventionists can take to impact drivers of unnecessary urine culturing and antibiotic use"

- 67 attendees, 91% reporting "Event was a good use of time"

April 16: "Where are we now? Understand the what, why, and how for collecting meaningful baseline data"

- 33 attendees, 100% reporting "Event was a good use of time"

March 20: "Antibiotic and urine culture stewardship in long-term care"

- 225 attendees

By December 31, 2023, the Long-Term Care Infection Prevention team will provide seven infection prevention site visits to Long-term care facilities.

- Staff completed one visit during Q3 of 2023, a collaborative effort with staff at the Minnesota Department of Health. This was a containment Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR) visit in response to ongoing transmission involving 19 residents at a facility who has been found to have a type of antibiotic resistant bacteria that is rare in Minnesota. Carbapenemase-producing organisms (CPOs) are extremely dangerous in the health-care setting. CPOs can cause invasive infections associated with high mortality, have limited antibiotic treatment options, can spread quickly throughout the health-care setting, and can lead to significant and difficult to control outbreaks.
- 14 long-term care facilities received in-person outreach to introduce the Hennepin County Long-Term Care Infection and Control program and its services, including the ability to provide site visits that would result in quality-improvement recommendations. Despite this outreach no facilities reached out for visits.
- The Minnesota Department of Health, who provides similar visits, also reported that few facilities requested these visits statewide.
- Engagement of facilities in such visits continues to be negatively affected by staff turnover, urgent matters that arise in daily work, and limited staff time available to dedicate to infection prevention.
- We have concluded that lower-intensity approaches may be required to engage facilities. These results will be considered in updating our strategic plan.

By December 31, 2023, 90% of HCPH staff will be trained in Emergency Preparedness.

- The Emergency Preparedness and Response Program hired a Workforce Development Coordinator in 2023 to manage public health emergency preparedness and response training for Hennepin County personnel.
- Four trainings were developed by Workforce Development Coordinator, in addition to a departmentwide communication strategy to increase personnel knowledge of Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response concepts and expectations of their role during public health emergency response activations.
- 81% of Public Health Department personnel (425 completed training of the 523 total department personnel) completed at least one of the Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) trainings that were offered. In total, 788 EPR courses were completed by department personnel in 2023.
- The Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Program hired a Training and Exercise Coordinator position to manage our department's public health emergency preparedness training and exercise activities. Two main components of this position include developing, coordinating, and facilitating trainings to Public Health and Human Services Department staff and community partners regarding all-hazards public health emergency preparedness and response, and developing and conducting exercises to test public health emergency preparedness and response plans.

By December 31, 2024, all health promotion community partners will have received technical assistance in implementing policy, system, and environmental (PSE) changes to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in the community.

- Age-Friendly Hennepin County completed a logic model and evaluation plan. Metrics include tracking awareness, number of new and emerging partners, technical assistance provided both to internal and external partners, and systemic changes made as a result of applying an age-friendly lens.
- Evaluation plans are complete for projects funded by the joint RFP with CHIP, the Chronic Disease Prevention RFP, and all other contractual partners. Partners receive support and technical assistance along the way to improve outcomes.
- All evaluation work is ongoing through the end of 2024.

By December 31, 2022, develop early childhood systems coordination strategic plan.

- From July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024, the early childhood systems coordination plan was reviewed by Family Health program staff and edited as necessary.

By December 31, 2024, implement key activities of early childhood strategic plan.

- From July 1–June 30, 2024, the EC coordinator implemented activities in capacity building, community engagement, communication, and systems coordination. Key activities included increasing parent representation on the Family Home Visiting Community Advisory Board; increasing the number of referrals from Human Services to Public Health programs; and supporting community-based early childhood programs through contracts with Hennepin County Public Health.

By March 31, 2024, the SHAPE 2022 project will have shared and presented the SHAPE data to internal staff, community partners and stakeholders, and continue to support data needs.

- The SHAPE team has made presentations to the County Board, Hennepin County executive team, Hennepin County Public Health staff, Disparity Reduction Governance Group, Trusted Messenger Group, CAPI, Adult Mental Health Local Advisory Council, Climate Action workgroup, Climate and Resiliency group, Hennepin County Library, Twin Cities Research Group, NorthPoint Health & Wellness staff, Highrise Health Alliance Leadership team; the Metro Public Health Analysts Network group; and Age-Friendly Hennepin. The SHAPE survey results were shared at the LGBTQ+ Health in Hennepin County: Data, Resilience, and Action Forum in April 2024.

## Community-Led Well-Being and Trauma Informed projects (CLWBTI)

In March of 2023, Hennepin County Public Health solicited proposals from community providers to reduce or eliminate race-based disparities in health. The Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP), Public Health Promotion (PHP), Public Health Trauma Informed Team (TI Team) and their nonprofit partner Hennepin County Children's Mental Health Collaborative (HCCMHC) partnered to offer a broad range of community health and mental well-being improvement funding opportunities prioritizing communities impacted by racial disparities in cultural, spiritual, faith-based, and geographic communities in Hennepin County. The intent of the funding was to enable local organizations to lift up community-driven ideas, recommendations, and solutions to strengthen communities and build relationships. Reviewers prioritized projects that were working toward becoming trauma-informed, promoting healing from community trauma, improved mental well-being, youth violence prevention, and / or addressing the important role housing stability plays in community health and well-being.

The CLWBTI funded a total of 20 contracted providers at approximately \$700,000 in total award dollars. A few examples include:

1. Children's Dental Services serves low income and uninsured families. They created a trauma-informed care curriculum and then trained all staff and volunteers.
2. The Hope Project worked closely with individuals and families who have experienced grief, loss, and trauma by providing healing circles, breathing and relaxation techniques, as well as additional holistic services like aromatherapy and yoga.
3. Centro Tyrone Guzman worked to become a trauma-informed organization. They used the Circle of Security and Psychological First Aid with their clients to promote healing.



## Next steps

### Prevent the spread of communicable diseases

- CBID will continue infectious disease screening in homeless and unsheltered populations.
- Continue to engage with leaders from Little Earth to talk about supporting them and potential infectious disease screening.
- Communicable disease efforts will continue to focus on other infectious disease outbreaks such as HIV, Hepatitis, and Syphilis.
- Continue to monitor trends in MPOX cases. Participate in community events to increase education and vaccination. CBID may be deployed to increase staffing in the Public Health Clinic if cases increase.
- Monitor Measles cases (given the increase in recent cases). CBID may be deployed to support Epi and provide vaccinations/IgG as directed.
- Debrief results of the infection control educational webinar series with input from post-session surveys and 1:1 conversations with session presenters.

- Review and update the long-term infection control strategic plan for the team based on progress toward performance measures, input gathered from needs assessments, and webinar feedback.
- Initiate IPC Connect of Hennepin County, an informal virtual “water cooler” space where long-term care infection preventionists can meet to share successes, challenges, and approaches toward meeting their IPC goals.

### **Prepare and respond to emergencies**

- Focus on continuous quality improvement through implementation of a Power BI corrective action tracking system that maintains accountability for previous corrective actions identified through emergency response after-action reports.
- Develop the Integrated Preparedness Plan to include multi-year training activities and a comprehensive exercise plan, emergency response After Action Report IP activities, integration of the workforce development plan, workforce training needs assessment, and Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response strategic and operational planning activities.
- Secure additional point of dispensing site Memorandums of Agreement with community partners in high Social Vulnerability Index areas of the county.
- Complete work on the Point of Dispensing Site (POD) GIS Tool with Hennepin County GIS. This tool will assist with identification of at-risk populations for planning and selection of POD sites during a response.
- Continue working with Public Health and Human Services programs to develop continuity of government plans to identify and document critical functions and services, key personnel, orders of succession and delegation of authority, identification of support systems and vital records, identification of alternate facilities / worksites, and the identification of communication systems and emergency contact information.

### **Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors**

- Close out of all contracted partnerships. Final reports and final invoicing due in December.
- Continue to work with staff from NorthPoint Health & Wellness to plan for CAPABLE implementation. Launch a payer collaborative with four plans that offer dual products in Hennepin County to support long-term sustainability.
- Partner with staff across the county to build out mental well-being initiatives and activities.
- Plan to merge work completed under this initiative with aligned work within our team, in particular with the Heart Health Initiative and other health care-focused efforts.
- Support the implementation of 14 mini community-led projects to advance community mental well-being, or support connectedness in housing communities.
- Implement at least one housing activity in the mobile home community.
- Begin planning for the next Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP).
- The early childhood coordinator will work with Child Care Assistance program to identify two more Strong Beginnings providers through a Request for Information process. The early childhood coordinator will also support a meeting of leaders across Hennepin County working on early childhood programs.

### **Assure an adequate local public health infrastructure**

- Continue to disseminate SHAPE 2022 findings to internal partners, community partners, and residents. The SHAPE team is also partnering with Hennepin-University Partnership / School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota to organize a SHAPE survey data competition in fall 2024. The team has also started planning for the SHAPE 2026 iteration of the survey.
- Begin implementation of the five-year Health and Racial Equity Plan.
- Continue addressing gaps in training and skills around health and racial equity through analysis of the health and racial equity assessment.
- Develop a five-year Violence Prevention Plan with strategies to address violence through a health and racial equity lens.
- Formalize partnerships with Hennepin County cities through kickoff meetings, communication products, and tools to facilitate data sharing and collaboration.

# HEALTH DOMAIN

## Vaccine Incentives

**Allocation amount: \$2,000,000**

### Project description

Hennepin County Public Health’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic includes significant efforts to provide vaccines to communities. The vaccine incentive program uses funds for the provision of incentives and stipends to support those efforts. The research is mixed on the overall effectiveness of vaccine incentive programs, but a widely accepted strategy to increase vaccination uptake involves a focus on rebuilding trust in communities: Partnering with communities that have historically experienced medical exploitation, experimentation without consent and marginalization is most effective at decreasing vaccine hesitancy<sup>[1]</sup>. The vaccine incentive program is designed to build trust between Hennepin County and its residents with the goal of increasing vaccination rates.

The vaccine incentive program includes:

- Partnering with trusted community groups to host vaccine events and support the provision of free meals, groceries, and/or entertainment.
- Distributing “Thank You” packs to residents who receive vaccinations, with contents tailored to the targeted population and event location. Community-based businesses may be prioritized for the contents of the “Thank You” packs, (e.g., gift cards to local businesses and youth-specific contents such as sports-related items and technology-focused gifts).
- Hosting a lottery program; or
- Other incentives for individuals who get vaccinated, tailored to the needs of the communities served.

In July 2021 the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners authorized funds to distribute incentives to our community partners and organizations to plan and host COVID-19 vaccine events in their communities. Each organization is eligible for a \$3,000 stipend for an individual event, or up to \$5,000 for two events in one calendar year. Public Health has simplified the approval process to remove barriers in allocating stipends, with the ultimate goal of more people getting vaccinated.

### Progress narrative

Public Health implemented numerous strategies to encourage the use of incentives and stipends to improve vaccination rates. Partnerships with community organizations to promote and support vaccination opportunities and provide the organizations with stipends to offset their costs has been a hallmark of the effort. Community groups utilized funds in ways that met their communities’ needs such as offering gift cards, books, and transportation for those experiencing barriers. Much of 2022 focused on vaccinating children under age five with newly approved Pfizer and Moderna vaccine options. Some community groups requested new stipends to ensure access to vaccines for the youngest community members. Stipend funds helped make spaces more child friendly, with rental of space with private rooms and other child comfort items. HCPH community vaccine events and the community stipend program concluded at the end of 2022. This is when new strategies were implemented to help improve childhood vaccination rates. To promote vaccines within the community, HCPH strengthened the Reminder / Recall Immunization program and launched a childhood immunization marketing campaign.

During the first two quarters of 2024, some of the efforts have shifted to work with identified disparate populations to include our newly arriving families that are immigrating from Mexico and South America. There is a concentration of some of the families in Hennepin County’s Family Shelters and among the many needs identified, assurance of having immunizations up to date to prevent disease outbreak was one of those. Therefore,

along with providing Community Vaccine Clinics in 2024, clinics will also be provided in specific Family Shelters to assist families in need. Routine childhood and adult vaccines will be available along with COVID-19 vaccine to assure that this new population has the opportunity to access this preventative health care without additional barriers.

## Key performance indicators

- **Community-based immunization clinics** A series of community-based immunization clinics were piloted starting in April 2023. The purpose of these clinics is to increase access to childhood vaccines in the community by bringing childhood vaccinations to the community; reducing or eliminating barriers to access; and educating families about the importance of childhood vaccinations and the need to follow the CDC immunization schedule. Information on registering for health insurance and a list of low-cost clinics was also provided. Results for Quarter 2 are the following:
  - On April 27, the community-Based immunization clinics started with a National Infant Immunization Week kickoff event on Saturday, April 27. The National Infant Immunization Week event was held at the Brookdale Library in Brooklyn Center. A total of 10 community vendors participated focusing on services for young children and families. An immunization clinic was also held with the medical provider who provides immunizations at our New Immigrant Immunization clinics. A total of 14 individuals received immunizations. Ages ranged from 3 years to 17 years old. Immunizations and number given included: COVID (3), MMR (8), DTaP (2), Tdap (10), Varicella (10), Hep B (9), IPV (2), and Meningococcal (4).
  - On May 18, the second community-Based immunization clinic was held at the Hosmer Library in South Minneapolis. At this clinic, we had encounters with three individuals. A total of two individuals received immunizations. Ages ranged from 5 years to 8 years old. Immunizations and number given included: MMR (2), DTaP (2), Varicella (1), Hep B (1), and IPV (2).
  - On June 22, the third community-based immunization clinic was held at the Brookdale Library in Brooklyn Center. At this clinic we had encounters with three individuals. A total of two individuals received immunizations. Ages ranged from 9 months to 11 years old. Immunizations and number given included: COVID (1), Tdap (1), Hep A (2), and HPV (2).

At all these community-based immunization clinics, information on registering for health insurance, a list of low-cost clinics, CDC parent-friendly immunization schedules, and Baby Tracks program information was also provided.

- **Community requests for an immunization clinic** If a community partner makes a request for an immunization clinic, the request is taken into consideration and honored if possible.
  - A request to have an immunization clinic at a Citizenship and Immigration Fair that the City of Minneapolis was hosting on June 15 was received. Hennepin County was able to confirm the medical provider who provides immunizations at Hennepin Counties other immunization clinics for this event. Unfortunately, no individuals presented for immunizations.
- **Reminder / Recall immunization efforts** ImmuLink sends out three rounds of reminder / recall letters or postcards to a portion of the population who are overdue for or recommended to receive immunizations based on the Minnesota Immunization Information Connection (MIIC) registry each calendar year. The same cohort is used during the year and if a child receives the needed immunizations or if the letter or postcard is returned, they are removed from future mailings during that year. In 2023, ImmuLink sent these letters in April, July, and December. A total of more than 133,460 letters and postcards were mailed.
- **65+ COVID-19 Reminder / Recall project** In August 2023, 41,319 letters were mailed to individuals aged 65 and older living in Hennepin County who have received at least one COVID-19 immunization dose, but no bivalent doses. This mailing list was obtained from the MIIC database. The letter expressed Hennepin County's interest in keeping seniors healthy, a link to a voluntary survey seeking to obtain information on the COVID-19 bivalent booster, and an educational flyer on the importance of and where to obtain the booster vaccine.
- **Childhood immunization marketing campaign** HCPH used its pandemic response funds to launch a childhood immunization marketing campaign that ran twice in 2022 and once in 2023. The campaign targeted all Hennepin County parents with children birth to 17 years, with additional emphasis placed on parents who lived in Hennepin County ZIP Codes with lower-than-average childhood vaccine rates. Ads appeared on Facebook, Instagram, programmatic display (i.e., website display ads that target people by demographics, interests, or behaviors), and via streaming video.



- **Online publication / article** In June 2024, the Hennepin County Public Health (HCPH) communications team wrote and published a Healthy You Healthy Hennepin (HYHH) article titled Increasing access to immunizations, to showcase the work of the Baby Track's team and the community-based immunization clinics they have hosted (described above). This article was shared with the approximately 4,500 HYHH GovDelivery subscribers. It was also shared on the department's Facebook page (approx. 5,000 followers).
- **Measles response communication plan / campaign** In late May, following a large measles exposure at an area hospital, the HCPH communications team drafted a Measles Communication Plan for Spring 2024. The communications objectives were: 1. Share timely health education messages (seriousness / risk of measles); 2. Share local vaccination options with the community, especially groups at higher risk (based on data). 3. Keep staff and partners informed of our actions and the current situation. The audiences were parents and caregivers, especially those in ZIP Codes with lower rates of MMR vaccination, and area health care providers. The messages were approved and informed by MDH Infectious Disease Epidemiology, Prevention and Control. Key tactics included web updates and social media strategy (e.g., posts and paid ads, translations, creation of a social media toolkit for partners, and creating a paid ad campaign to promote vaccine clinics in the summer and fall (back to school)). All tactics were completed and some are described in more detail below.
- **Social media promotion of MMR vaccine** In late May, following a large measles exposure at an area hospital, the HCPH communications team created a series of social media posts to promote the MMR vaccine. These eight posts were designed in house in English and translated into Somali, Spanish, and Hmong. The posts have been shared in a rotation on the department Facebook page. The first post in the series (English only) as placed as a paid ad on Facebook on May 30 (\$70/10 days) and netted just over 9,000 impressions. The translated ads were placed on June 6 (metrics not yet available). More posts are planned, and all posts will be shared with Hennepin County trusted messenger organizations as a social media toolkit (July 2024).
- **Social media promotion of immunization clinics** April through June, the HCPH communications team created a series of social media posts to advertise the free, community-based immunization clinics. The posts have been shared on the department Facebook page.
- **Flyers for vaccine clinics** April through June, the HCPH communications team created a series of printed flyers to advertise both the free community-based immunization clinics as well as the free clinics for newly arriving families staying in overflow shelters. Community clinic flyers were disseminated through partner organizations and by school nurses. The new arrival clinics were shared with families by placing the flyers under the doors of the shelter / hotel rooms.



## Project feature

New immigrant immunization clinics The need to have HCPH host immunization clinics for new immigrant arrivals continued in the second quarter of 2024. HCPH continued to partner with a community medical provider to provide both child and adult immunizations in the community.

- On April 3, the second New Immigrant Immunization clinic at the Hennepin County Family Shelter in Minneapolis was held. A total of two individuals received immunizations, ages 7 years old and 37 years old. Immunizations given included: COVID (1), Tdap (1).
- On April 6, the second New Immigrant Immunization clinic at the Hennepin County Family Shelter in Brooklyn Park was held. A total of eight individuals received immunizations. Ages ranged from 7 months to 53 years old. Immunizations and number given included: MMR (6), Varicella (6), DTaP (3), Tdap (2), Hep A (5), Hep B (2), IPV (1), and Pneumococcal (1)
- On May 1, the third New Immigrant Immunization clinic at the Hennepin County Family Shelter in Minneapolis was held. A total of eight individuals received immunizations. Ages ranged from 1 years old to 30 years old. Immunizations given included: COVID (1), MMR (2), DTaP (5), Tdap (2), Varicella (5), Hep A (2), and Hep B (4). \$25 Visa gift cards were given out at this immunization clinic from the medical provider. Immunization clinics at this site were paused after this clinic.
- On May 4, the third New Immigrant Immunization clinic at the Hennepin County Family Shelter in Brooklyn Park was held. A total of 19 individuals received immunizations. Ages ranged from 4 years to 41 years old. Immunizations and number given included: COVID (1), MMR (10), DTaP (2), Tdap (13), Varicella (10), Hep A (5), Hep B (7), HPV (4), IPV (7), and Pneumococcal (1). \$25 Visa gift cards were given out at this immunization clinic from the medical provider.
- On June 8, the fourth New Immigrant Immunization clinic at the Hennepin County Family Shelter in Brooklyn Park was held. A total of 11 individuals received immunizations. Ages ranged from 5 years to 55 years old. Immunizations and number given included: MMR (2), DTaP (2), Tdap (7), Varicella (8), Hep B (4), HPV (3), IPV (1), and Meningococcal (2). At this clinic, Baby Tracks Community Health Workers door knocked at the rooms of shelter residents who were identified as either needing one of the following immunizations: MMR, Varicella, or DTaP/Tdap, or who did not have an immunization record in MIIC. A total of 39 doors were knocked on. Shelter residents needing immunizations and who were connected with were encouraged to come down for immunizations. Shelter residents whose immunization records were not in MIIC but had records were also encouraged to come down and have their immunization records added to MIIC and receive immunizations if needed. Photos of immunization records were taken and entered into MIIC for persons who were connected with and unable / unwilling to come down.

At all of these New Immigrant Immunization clinics, all individuals who present for immunizations were assessed for their immunization status. If they had an immunization record and were not in MIIC (Minnesota Immunization Information Connection) their record was added.

**Vacunas gratuitas para niños y adultos**

**GRATIS**

El Departamento de Salud Pública del Condado de Hennepin está organizando una clínica de inmunización **GRATUITA** para niños y adultos.

**Sábado, 8 de Junio**  
**11a.m. - 2 p.m.**  
**LaQuinta, pasillo**

No es necesario registrarse antes del evento. Todas las vacunas se darán sin cita previa. Favor de traer sus registros de vacunación si los tiene.

Vacunas gratuitas para niños y adultos.

Si tiene preguntas, hable con el personal del refugio o llame al número: 612-543-2101.

# Next steps

## New immigrant immunization clinics

- Clinics are planned for July and September at the Hennepin County Family Shelter in Brooklyn Park. Baby Tracks Community Health Workers will continue to door knock at the rooms of shelter residents who were identified as either needing one of the following immunizations, MMR, Varicella, or DTaP/Tdap or who did not have an immunization record in MIIC.
- Door knocking for shelter residents of the Hennepin County Family Shelter in Minneapolis is planned for July. A training for shelter staff is planned for July 2. At this training, staff will be trained on the CDC immunization schedule, how to discuss immunizations with residents, and the importances of being up to date with immunizations for both children and adults. Since the New Immigrant Immunization clinic at this shelter has been paused, shelter staff will refer shelter residents needing immunizations to the Public Health clinic or other health care providers.

## Community-based immunization clinics

- Clinics are planned for August and September at the Hosmer Library in South Minneapolis and the Brookdale Library in Brooklyn Center.

## School-based immunization clinics

- Hennepin County has reached out to school districts in Hennepin County based on their immunization rates offering a school-based immunization clinic. Currently an immunization clinic is planned for August 10 in Brooklyn Center. Other clinics for this project are still in the planning stages.

## Community requests for an immunization clinic

- Hennepin County will continue to take into consideration and honored, if possible, immunization requests from community partners.

## Media and advertising

- Paid ad campaign to promote summer / fall community-based vaccination clinics A contract is in place with local ad agency Metre, Inc and a media strategy is being developed in July for paid promotion / placement in August through mid-October. The campaign will emphasize addressing existing geographic and racial / ethnic disparities in MMR vaccination rates (planned spend = \$37,000).
- Social media toolkit on MMR In July and August, a translated toolkit of social media posts and images will be shared with the 30+ contracted Hennepin County Trusted Messenger organizations. They will be encouraged to share this messaging in their communities and to promote the community-based vaccine clinics as well as the Public Health Clinic as a source for free childhood vaccines, including MMR.

# HOUSING DOMAIN

## Housing Recovery

**Allocation amount: \$45,500,000**

### Project description

The economic impacts of COVID-19 were felt most heavily by people with low incomes, and by Black, Indigenous, and people of color. The pandemic exacerbated existing inequities from the very beginning, and while emergency response efforts in 2020 and 2021 ameliorated these impacts — keeping people fed and in their homes — the economic fallout continues to disproportionately impact those who had less before the pandemic.

As Hennepin County moved from emergency response to long-term recovery, the county board approved \$46 million in funding to support equitable housing recovery strategies. These strategies aimed to create or preserve approximately 2,000 units of affordable housing and support more than 100 households in buying homes by directly addressing both causes and symptoms of the economic fallout from the pandemic. Planned activities included:

- Investments to immediately increase affordable multifamily housing production, such as:
  - Gap funding to kick-start projects delayed by pandemic-related construction cost increases.
  - Financing to accelerate the development of affordable housing projects serving populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency: those most vulnerable to economic recessions.
  - Investments to address a backlog of deferred rehab needed in naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) properties and support for additional nonprofit preservation acquisition of at-risk NOAH properties, which are a primary source of housing for populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- Acquisition of properties supporting affordable housing along the housing continuum, especially for single adults who were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency and are now struggling with homelessness and housing instability.
- Homeownership programs targeting populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

### Progress narrative

Since Housing Recovery funds were authorized in August 2021, Housing and Economic Development (HED) has successfully accelerated development of affordable housing and surpassed impact goals. In a typical housing development, the county does not spend funds until two to three years after a funding award, and units become available another year after that. In the years between the award and unit availability, the developer secures additional financing, receives all required municipal approvals, and works with all funders to negotiate complex project specifications, agree upon a common set of legal documents, and execute a financial closing, and—finally—complete construction.

HED used Housing Recovery funds to implement new tools and strategies to drastically shorten this process while focusing the impact. This included:

- Affordable housing development accelerator: providing larger-than-ever award sizes to reduce the time and money needed to secure complete financing,
- Pandemic-related cost increase assistance: providing “top-off” funding to keep projects on track—or get them back on track—after being hit by increased costs,

- NOAH preservation: infusing cash into existing housing properties with decreased rent revenues available to keep up with deferred maintenance, and ensuring ongoing affordability through this investment,
- Homeownership assistance: targeting for-sale housing development funds to projects that create homeownership opportunities to people who've been historically excluded from them, and
- Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing: acquiring and rehabbing properties to fill a gap in the affordable housing continuum the private market hasn't taken on—deeply affordable, independent housing for people experiencing homelessness who can afford modest rents.

Expediting development meets county goals to open doors faster.

In total, HED has awarded \$40.3 million to 34 affordable housing development projects through competitive selection processes, and programmed remaining funds to acquire and rehabilitate properties to create single room occupancy housing.

### Housing development finance progress

Thus far, HED has executed funding agreements for 29 of the 34 projects, which will create or preserve 2,363 units of affordable rental housing, and create 60 homeownership opportunities. The signed agreements total \$36.6 million in pandemic recovery funding.

Program component	Number of project awards	Award amount	Project agreements executed	Funds encumbered	Affordable units funded
Affordable Housing Accelerator	16 projects	\$27,970,348	14 projects	\$26,570,348	1,037
Homeownership	7 projects	\$3,792,665	6 project	\$2,748,000	60
NOAH Preservation	4 projects	\$5,080,520	4 projects	\$5,080,520	986
Pandemic Cost Increase	7 projects	\$3,492,314	5 projects	\$2,000,000	340
Total awarded	34 projects	\$40,335,847	29 projects	\$36,578,868	2,423

## Single Room Occupancy housing strategy progress

The remaining \$5.2M remains allocated to Single Room Occupancy housing (SRO) acquisition and rehabilitation. As of the end of July 2024, HED completed rehab, conversion and sale of the University Inn and Metro Inn Motel to experienced affordable housing operators with long-term affordability restrictions, and awarded the Aqua City Motel and Stevens Square Residents to affordable housing operators. The Robin and Federal Plaza continue rehabilitation.

Property	Ownership and operating model	Units	Current Status
Metro Inn	Sale to Agate Housing and Services with long-term affordability restrictions	38	Fully leased
University Inn	Sale to 925 Studios with long-term affordability restrictions	45	Fully leased
Aqua City Motel	Sale to Trellis for new construction with long-term affordability restrictions	44	Demolished 2023 Pending Purchase Agreement
Stevens Square Residence	Sale to AICDC with long-term affordability restrictions	31	Vacant Pending Purchase Agreement
Federal Plaza (fka LuMinn)	Transferred to HSPH	TBD	HSPH use Under rehabilitation
Robin Hotel	Acquired by MAC-V with long-term affordability restrictions	16	Conversion to start July 2024, lease-up July 2025

## Key performance indicators

### Financing goals

Housing Recovery goals were to finance the creation or preservation of 2,000 units of rental housing, and 100 homeownership opportunities, while meeting the county's ongoing goals to maximize affordability. HED surpassed the rental goal with funding awards to multifamily projects containing 2,722 affordable rental units, including pending SRO units, and is close to the homeownership goal with 72 units.

### Affordability goals

Progress also surpassed the county and the Housing and Redevelopment Authority affordability goals.

30% AMI Rental Goal: 25% of new units financed are affordable to households with incomes below 30% of the area median income (AMI)

- Outcome: 42% of new units financed through Housing Recovery are affordable at or below 30% AMI

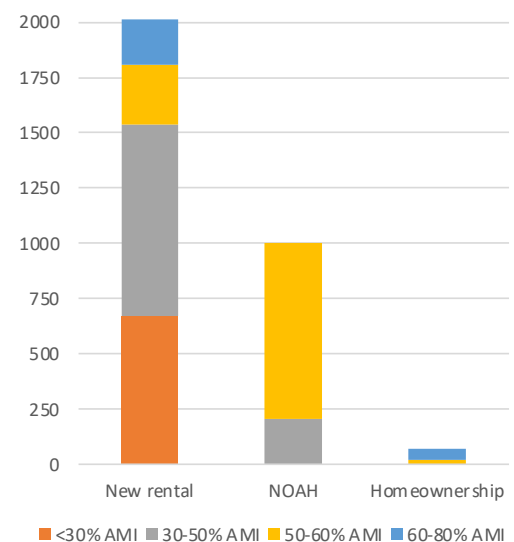
50% AMI Rental Goal: 75% of new units financed are affordable to households with incomes below 50% AMI

- Outcome: 86% of new units financed through Housing Recovery are affordable at or below 50% AMI

Homeownership goal: 25% of homeownership opportunities financed are affordable to household incomes below 60% of the area median income.

- Outcome: 22% of homeownership opportunities financed through Housing Recovery are anticipated to be affordable at or below 60% AMI

Affordability rate across awarded project types



## Production goals

Creating affordable rental housing typically takes five to seven years. With HED's Housing Recovery goal of accelerating production, measures show that we have more than doubled our production from average years.

	Number of projects closed	Number of affordable units in those projects
Average (non-pandemic) annual	11	615
Last 12 months (July 2023–June 2024)		
Pandemic recovery-funded	10	472
Projects without pandemic recovery funding	7	614
Total	17	1,086

We have evaluated these efforts in order to make more data-informed decisions. For example:

- Partnering with Integrated Data and Analytics to evaluate impact of Single Room Occupancy housing on people exiting homelessness, in order to demonstrate social return on investment
- Used lessons learned from Affordable Housing Accelerator and Pandemic-Related Cost Increase Assistance to inform our Metro Sales and Use Tax for Housing Implementation Framework

## Project feature

Hennepin County has invested a total of \$6.8 million into Opportunity Crossing—a multi-use affordable housing development planned for the Lake and Nicollet area in South Minneapolis.

The 110-unit development, led by Project for Pride and Living (PPL) and Wells Fargo, will rise on the site formerly home to a Wells Fargo bank branch that was destroyed during the 2020 civil unrest. The first floor will feature a new bank branch and ground-floor affordable commercial spaces that will be owned by local business owners of color.

The affordable housing units will include housing opportunities for people exiting homelessness with services provided by PPL, households at or below 30% AMI, and households at or below 50% AMI.

Since the development meets so many of Hennepin County's housing and economic development priorities, it received significant funding, including:

- \$6.19 million in pandemic recovery (Affordable Housing Accelerator) funding from two awards issued in 2022 and 2023
- \$750,000 from the Community Investment Initiative
- \$48,454 from the Environmental Response Fund

"This project tackles the housing crisis in our region head on. It is so important and exciting to have more options here for deeply affordable housing in Hennepin County," said Patricia Fitzgerald, the county's director of Community and Economic Development. "On top of that, this project also provides affordable commercial space and ownership opportunities for local businesses. That's not just unique, it's almost unheard of, and it means real economic opportunity and real potential for generational wealth."

The project is a prime example of how Hennepin County is a major contributor to rebuilding the Lake Street corridor.

"How we rebuild is as important as what we rebuild," said Paul Williams, PPL president and CEO. "As part of the process we call 'equitable development,' we have collaborated with our partners to develop what we believe will be a true local asset and vital to bringing back the strength of the Lake Street economy."



## Next steps

Over the next three months, HED will continue to progress undertaking financial closings and expenditures in order to open even more doors to new and preserved affordable housing.

Planned activities for July–September 2024

- Complete final improvements on remaining SRO property
- Negotiate purchase agreements to sell two SRO properties to create affordable housing
- Negotiate and execute three funding agreements:
  - Carrington Drive, 128 units of affordable preserved “NOAH” housing in Brooklyn Center
  - Bimosedaa, 48 units of affordable and supportive housing in Minneapolis
  - Kyle Garden Square, 55 units of affordable housing in Minneapolis
- Minnesota Indian Women’s Resource Center, 22 units of affordable and supportive housing in Minneapolis
- Minnetonka Boulevard Redevelopment, eight new homeownership opportunities in St. Louis Park
- Continued outreach to all funded projects to confirm all will close by 12/31/2024



# HOUSING DOMAIN

## Services for People Experiencing Homelessness

**Allocation amount: \$35,495,000**

### Project description

There are multiple projects involved under this umbrella project description, including (but not limited to) housing-focused case management (Homeless to Housing team), system-wide shelter diversion, low- barrier shelters, shelter and board and lodge capital, 24/7 shelter, eliminating self-pay in shelter, and encampment response (Streets to Housing).

Hennepin County’s Office of Housing Stability (OHS) has an existing strategy in place that guided funding decisions to ensure that this influx of vital and never-before-seen funding will create concrete results to make homelessness as brief as possible for anyone experiencing it in Hennepin County. Hennepin County believes that homelessness is unacceptable and that there are solutions for it. The focus of the Services for People Experiencing Homelessness was to infuse national best practices that will simplify and improve the system for the people in crisis who are accessing it, such as system-wide diversion. There was also intent to actively work to lower barriers for people who are accessing emergency shelter so that more people would be willing to seek the safety of our emergency shelter system and thereby gain access to housing resources and services. The project team has accomplished this by bringing culturally specific low-barrier shelters online and investing in much-needed infrastructure that will improve the day-to-day experience of people experiencing homelessness. Throughout OHS staff have emphasized a laser focus on quick connections to housing. Even with thoughtful and impactful investments in shelter, there are some people who simply will not come inside. Using “housing first” principles, the encampment response program — called Streets to Housing — will focus on quick connection to resources including housing. The team is collecting data so that not only the needs of unique encampments are known, but the housing priorities and barriers for each person staying there.

### Progress narrative

#### Encampment Response: Streets to Housing:

Streets to Housing served 1,198 unique households this year.

- 866 households exited
- Of the 340 exit destinations that are known, 60% exited into a permanent housing destination and 30% exited into emergency shelter
- [Link to New Streets to Housing dashboard](#)

#### Homeless to Housing (H2H)

Housing-focused case managers and case aides begin rapport building and outreach upon assignment to a person experiencing homelessness. This person-center approach gives each client a single point of contact to guide them to permanent housing. Housing goal plans are created with clients, which may include obtaining vital documents, clearing warrants, obtaining employment, applying for all available subsidies and financial assistance, and housing search. Case managers help house clients, deliver a comprehensive move-in kit, and then work to stabilize people in the their new homes and communities with wraparound services and supports.

- Solicited and responded to feedback from staff, and internal and external partners to ensure continuous improvement
- Utilized best practices including the by-name list, which is a comprehensive list of all persons in the community who are active in the homeless response system
- Facilitated community case consult

- Homeless to Housing continued to grow during the past year. In response to the exploding family shelter system, H2H added a new family team composed of 11 social workers and one unit supervisor. This team provided culturally appropriate, trauma- and data-informed housing case management to families experiencing literal homelessness in Hennepin County.
  - During the past year, this new team was hired, onboarded, and began working with families. All social workers are currently at full caseloads and are working with approximately 160 families at any given time.
  - Over 70 families have been housed with a near 100% retention rate of return to homelessness after housing.
- Developed community integrated tasks where a case aide would help a client feel more connected to their new community after being housed by taking them to the local food shelf, park, or Community Support Programs (CSP)
- H2H Program Manager took over managing the flip phones provided to clients who have no other way of communicating with their workers and support systems
- Added cultural hair care products and feminine hygiene products to move-in kits
- Continued to involve those with lived experience of homelessness and / or mental illness into hiring panels, to review new program documentation and consult on processes
- Two social workers focusing on the unsheltered population partner with the Homeless Action Team (HAT- part of Metro Transit) by offering services to people experiencing homelessness who are riding the light rail, buses and staying near train / bus stations
- Training three case aides to be MNSure Assistants

### **24/7 emergency shelter**

- Four agencies have funding to operate 24/7 emergency shelter for single adults (18+ without dependents). This funding impacts six shelter locations.
- The majority of funded programs have been at or near full capacity, operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week while providing shelter guests with meals, housing-focused case management, access to laundry, and more. Two shelters have been struggling with repairs and staff shortages over the last quarter, so capacity was slightly reduced.
- Funded programs continue to correctly enter their data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
- Funded programs had access to more new housing and housing barrier funds to help breakdown financial barriers to housing, which has contributed to an increase in positive exits

### **Low-barrier emergency shelters**

#### Avivo Village

- Continued to work on a new prioritization tool and increasing the urgency of connecting people to housing referrals

#### AICDC Homeward Bound

- Continued to work with staff at AICDC Homeward Bound to ensure accurate data quality

### **Eliminating self-pay at Harbor Light Center**

Harbor Light Center continues to shelter all guests without requiring payment. Capacity is now 104 in the emergency housing programs where self-pay was eliminated. The program serves 52 men and 52 women daily.

### **System-wide shelter diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline**

- Hennepin Shelter Hotline is spending down the \$450,000 added to their contract for five FTEs. Four FTEs have been hired. They've shared it has reduced voicemails and the costs associated with translation services, meaning more person-center services.
- Hennepin Shelter Hotline has access to a dashboard that shows them data errors, successes, and more, allowing them to better serve their target population and identify trends
- Staff meet with the county's Service Area Lead on a weekly and monthly basis to discuss challenges, data corrections, and more

## Board and lodge capital improvement

- During this time period, the team conducted quarterly check ins with each awarded organization regarding the status of its capially funded board and lodge projects
- Missions Inc. also submitted a proposal for upgrading its dining facilities in response to additional funding that came available due to one of Pursuit Hometel's project being determined as not feasible by the end of these funds
- Missions Inc. began and completed Phase 2 of its renovation project, renovating two floors of the Missions Lodge building. The project team conducted a site visit to see the progress of these projects in person in May 2024.
- The outdoor gathering space and meditation garden was completed at Pursuit Hometel at the end of November 2023
- 180 Degrees began renovations of its Clifton Place site in May 2024, starting with replacement of all building windows
- A construction project manager was hired by Pursuit Hometel to oversee their capially- funded projects. Drawings and a project plan were created for the renovation of bathrooms and laundry facilities at the site. Pursuit Hometel also determined that its awarded air conditioning installation project faced barriers that prevented the project from being completed by 12/31/24. The funds from this project were redirected to Missions Inc.'s dining room renovation. Pursuit Hometel has been given a deadline of July 1, 2024, to begin the construction phase of its project.
- An outdoor deck gathering space was completed at Cullen Homes in the fall of 2023
- Cullen Homes received three bids for air conditioning installation at its two buildings, including the electrical upgrades that will need to be made for this renovation. A contractor was selected in May 2024.

## Key performance indicators

### Encampment response: Streets to Housing:

The Streets to Housing team of one supervisor, six systems navigators, and one Opioid Use Disorder OUD specialist (added during this report cycle using Hennepin County ) had a stabilizing and successful year. Launching in late 2022, this report cycle shows the impact of a stable team offering consistent, transparent, trauma-informed services.

Streets to Housing spends over 80% of their time in the field, providing direct service to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. In addition to working in encampments and other places unmeant for human habitation, Streets to Housing offers site-based engagement opportunities for households who are accessing drop in and meal sites, and who would prefer to meet with the team in an indoor environment. Staff are able to provide support with housing needs triage and navigation, assessments, update information in HMIS, offer support with benefits, and more.

Information is collected into our Homeless Management Information System by the Streets to Housing team, which gives us a robust by-name list understanding the breadth and depth of the service needs of households being served and other ways to utilize data to inform programmatic and systemic decisions, as well as track and monitor inflow / outflow and overall impact of this program.

Streets to Housing is participating in a year-long evaluation of the project and project impact through a partnership between Hennepin County and the University of Minnesota. The team is eager to understand if the model that has been developed by people with lived experience has ways in which we can continuously improve while maintaining the original trauma informed, housing focused model. Results of that evaluation will be presented and shared later in 2024.

Through this intervention and in partnership with other single adult and youth street outreach teams, Hennepin County is seeing an increase of unsheltered households exiting homelessness into permanent housing.

### Homeless to Housing

- Number of clients housed: 500 singles; 70 families
- Number of vital documents obtained: 83% have photo ID; 64% SS card
- Median days between assignment and housing: 90 days

- Stats on recidivism (return to homeless response system after housing): 98% of people maintained housing
- Maintaining equitable housing outcomes by race: 73% of clients were people of color; 70% of people housed were people of color
- Overall client satisfaction: 85% of the 60 program survey responses received were passive / promoters of the program

The team uses data to inform program adjustments and continually improve. And in order to continuously evaluate the program, the team created “client satisfaction surveys,” which they review regularly.

### 24/7 emergency shelter

- 1,477 people used shelter
- 1,172 people left shelter
- 27% of people who left had a positive exit: 209 exited to a permanent destination, 39 to an institutional setting, and 70 to a non-homeless setting
- 232 people returned to homelessness and 437 people were missing data
- Worked with shelter providers and ICA to clean-up incorrect, outdated data

### Low-barrier Emergency Shelters

#### Avivo Village

- 273 people used shelter
- 187 people left shelter:
  - 63% of people who left had a positive exit: 92 exited to a permanent destination, 25 to an institutional setting, and one to a non-homeless setting
  - 52 people returned to homelessness, two people died, four people went to an Other destination, and 10 people were missing data

#### AICDC Homeward Bound

- 316 people used shelter
- 266 people left shelter:
  - 29% of people who left had a positive exit: 61 exited to a permanent destination, 15 to an institutional setting, and one to a non-homeless setting
  - 56 people returned to homelessness, two people died, and 109 people were missing data

### Eliminating self-pay at Harbor Light Center

606 people were served by Harbor Light Center’s emergency housing programs

### System-wide shelter diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline

#### From 7/1/2023 to 6/26/2024, diversion navigators worked with:

Type	Age of Head of Household	# Households	# Households Diverted	% Households Diverted
Family	Adult (25+ y/o)	1649	486	29%
Family	Youth or Young Adult (<25 y/o)	415	113	27%
Individual	Adult (25+ y/o)	4140	910	22%
Individual	Youth or Young Adult (<25 y/o)	1047	215	21%
<b>Total</b>		<b>7251</b>	<b>1724</b>	<b>24%</b>

### Board and lodge capital improvement

The key performance indicators are for all capittally-funded projects to be completed by December 31, 2024.

## Project feature

### Encampment response: Streets to Housing:

See a brief video of our work: <https://youtu.be/9Fm2Fn4w87M>

### Homeless to Housing

A key result that shows the impact of the work is 500 singles housed, 70 families (325 singles housed the previous year and zero families).

Over 1,500 people were assigned for outreach / possible program involvement by H2H case managers and social workers this year.

A quote from a participant:

"I appreciate all that you've done to help me and my children. When I left an abusive husband in Florida and moved with my children back home to Minnesota in January of this year, I didn't know how we would survive, but I had faith that we would. And you have been apart of my difficult but beautiful journey. In the same way that you don't see our family as just a number, I recognize that you are not just another faceless organization. You're all a team that is made up of individuals that have advocated for us and helped us move forward. As much as we needed the help, I don't take you for granted. I may never meet all of you, but thank you all."

### 24/7 emergency shelter

- 1,477 people who used a 24/7 shelter had access to their bed, belongings, and housing-focused services throughout the day

### Low-barrier emergency shelters

Avivo Village

- 92 people who were experiencing unsheltered homelessness (e.g., outside, encampment, car, other place not meant for habitation) moved into housing as a result of the stability and services Avivo Village provided

AICDC Homeward Bound

- 61 people who were Native American or Indigenous and experiencing homelessness moved into housing as a result of the stability and services AICDC Homeward Bound provided

### Eliminating self-pay at Harbor Light Center

606 people used emergency shelter without needing to pay anything, giving them a safe space, stability, and access to services

### System-wide shelter diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline

Over the last year, 1,724 households were diverted, meaning Hennepin Shelter Hotline prevented them from accessing emergency shelter or experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

## Next steps

### Encampment response: Streets to Housing

Summer 2024 will focus on continuing to stabilize the Streets to Housing team and model to ensure sustainability and quality service, look at outflow exceeding inflow, and continue to use data to encourage and inspire community partner agencies to align with this Streets to Housing model for collective impact. Streets to Housing and Hennepin County leadership continue to explore ways to enhance the communication and collaboration between health care-specifically Opioid Use Disorder (OUD)-and housing and partnership in community-based engagements are key to making a significant impact in this intersectional space. Streets to Housing OUD specialist will be working to identify and strengthen key partnership to support households who are living with OUD and are unsheltered and want to explore solutions and resources for both substance use and housing.

Later this fall, Streets to Housing will be participating in a strategy session for planning for 2025 and going forward, using information from the year-long evaluation, program, and system data and in authentic partnership with people with lived and living experience to ensure alignment with overarching Hennepin County goal to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring and provide trauma-informed, housing-focused services to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.

### **Homeless to Housing**

- Continue to develop the onboarding process for staff
- Purchase a van to enable staff to drive large families and deliver family move-in kits
- Further development of supervisors and staff

### **24/7 emergency shelter**

- Will provide support with upcoming HMIS transition
- Will modify how performance measures are collected and reported with upcoming HMIS transition

### **Low-barrier emergency shelters**

#### Avivo Village

- Will provide support with upcoming HMIS transition
- Will modify how performance measures are collected and reported with upcoming HMIS transition
- Will continue discussion about changes to how people access the shelter

#### AICDC Homeward Bound

- Will provide support with upcoming HMIS transition
- Will modify how performance measures are collected and reported with upcoming HMIS transition
- Will work with Adult Shelter Connect (ASC)'s manager and AICDC to partner more closely, so anyone leaving AICDC has the option to go somewhere else, and callers to ASC have the ability to access AICDC as needed

### **Eliminating self-pay at Harbor Light Center**

Will continue partnering with Harbor Light Center's program managers to ensure self-pay remains eliminated

### **System-wide shelter diversion: Hennepin Shelter Hotline**

- Will provide support with upcoming HMIS transition
- Will modify how performance measures are collected and reported with upcoming HMIS transition
- Will continue to monitor the impact of the four new FTEs and develop a thoughtful plan to ramp down FTEs
- Will continue to host weekly meetings with program manager and monthly meetings with program director to analyze data, trends, gaps and opportunities to ensure excellent customer service and satisfaction and progress toward target performance measures

### **Board and lodge capital improvement**

- 180 Degrees will complete its renovation of Clifton Place. The project team will conduct a site visit in September 2024 to view the results.
- Cullen Homes will complete its air conditioning project and begin installation. The project team will check in again with this organization in late July 2024 regarding its progress.
- Pursuit Hometel will begin the first phase of its bathroom and laundry facility renovation
- The project team will visit Missions Inc. in late September 2024 when all of its site renovations will be complete

# INCOME DOMAIN

## Economic Recovery

**Allocation amount: \$17,900,000**

### Project description

The pandemic devastated Hennepin County small businesses, with disproportionate impacts to very small businesses, minority-owned businesses, and businesses in low-income communities. As a result, the number of businesses open in early 2021 declined by 22% over early 2020. Race- and gender-based disparities in business ownership and access to capital pre-date and were exacerbated by the pandemic.

Economic impacts of the pandemic were most deep and long-lasting in low-income communities and communities of color. In addition to small business impacts, many nonprofit organizations based in deeply impacted communities have been leading effective response and recovery efforts and providing services critically important to economic recovery. In some cases, the same nonprofits that faced the most acute financial hardship from the pandemic have been called upon to increase programming to meet higher levels of need in the communities they serve.

Hennepin County economic recovery strategies are designed to address these challenges and promote an equitable economic recovery that will rebuild more inclusive, prosperous business districts and communities over the long term, and help tackle long-standing disparities in income and wealth, business ownership, and economic mobility exacerbated by the pandemic.

Economic recovery investments will assist the recovery of over 1,300 small businesses and nonprofits and stimulate investment of over \$30 million in ways that build wealth in communities hardest hit by the pandemic.

### Progress narrative

Since mid-2022, the Hennepin County Housing and Economic Development (HED) Department has simultaneously executed strategies to achieve three interrelated Economic Recovery objectives:

1. Build the long-term capacity of small businesses to recover, succeed and grow
2. Accelerate investment in, and driven by, disproportionately impacted communities
3. Explore innovative ways to advance economic mobility

#### **Small business-focused economic recovery strategies**

Housing and Economic Development’s small business-focused economic recovery strategies have gained increasing visibility and interagency support in part due to the successful branding of a suite of programming under the banner “Elevate Hennepin.” Activities over the past year have increased the depth and breadth of Elevate Hennepin’s core offerings: in-depth technical assistance, “back-office” support, access to capital, and specialized expertise available at no-cost to small businesses in Hennepin County. New and innovative targeted cohort learning opportunities have launched to address specific needs and recovery challenges identified by business owners through early focus groups, ongoing discussions, and client feedback surveys. Systematic improvements were made to the online small business resource platform at [www.elevatehennepin.org](http://www.elevatehennepin.org), generating measurable results in reaching entrepreneurs from specific cultural communities and business owners of color.

Highlights include:

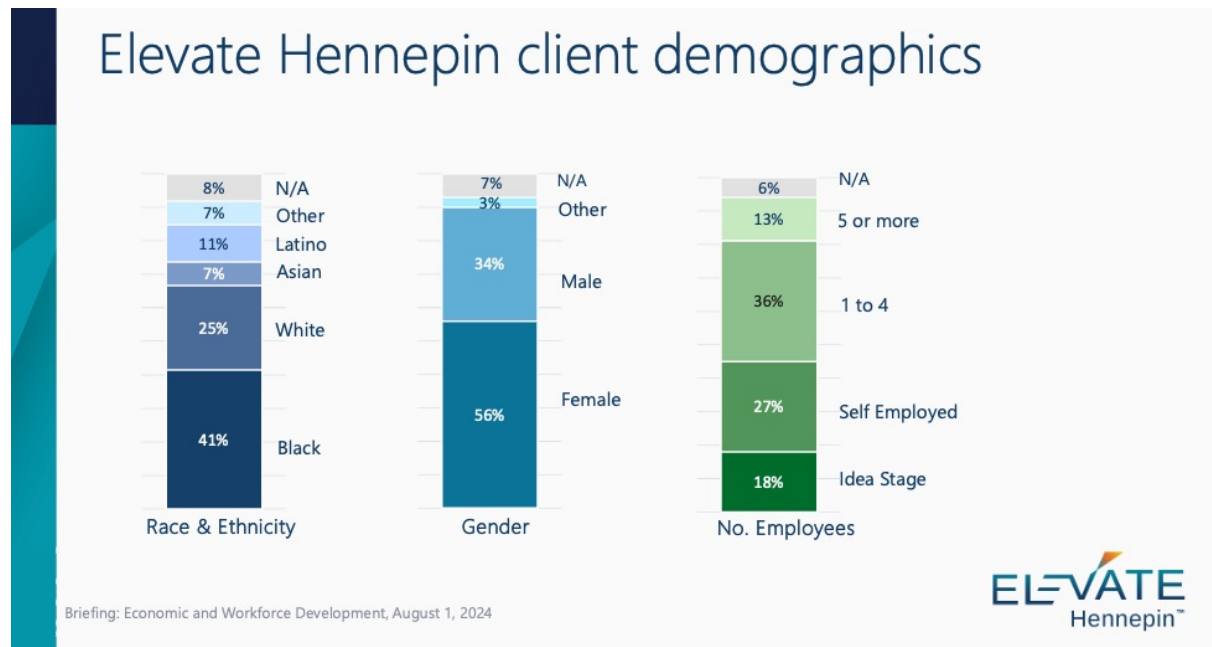
- Expansion of the network of business advisors providing no-cost technical assistance and specialized expertise to a total of forty (40) organizations
- Expansion of the no-cost professional consulting to include technology and human resources

- Certified Access Academy, cohort-based program to build capacity among women business owners of color to contract with government and corporate entities
- Elevate Hennepin Construction Advising, Workshop Series and Working Capital Cohort programs, providing technical assistance for smaller scale local construction businesses, with an emphasis on providing support and financing for contractors of color (in collaboration with Purchasing Department)
- Elevate Nonprofits, providing customized consulting and capacity building for nonprofit organizations that are currently under contract with Hennepin County (in collaboration with Purchasing Department)
- CEO Now™, cohort-based training for growth-minded businesses to build systems and scale
- Elevate Tech Essentials, offering training and support to meet small businesses' technology needs and help tackle the digital divide among many microbusinesses
- Launch of a new "one-stop" digital platform, [www.elevatehennepin.org](http://www.elevatehennepin.org), offering improved filtering and navigation, making it easier for entrepreneurs to find specific types of expertise, connect with consultants who speak different languages, and sign up for business-focused events (in collaboration with Communications and IT departments)
- Elevate Hennepin Talent, cohort-based human resources support to help small businesses attract and retain talent (in collaboration with the Office of Workforce Development)

In June 2024, Housing and Economic Development took the final steps to implement a capital strategy to accelerate small business growth post-pandemic. Under this strategy, Hennepin County will invest \$4.22 million as seed capital to launch two new self-sustaining funds, the Elevate Hennepin Small Business Fund, and Elevate Hennepin Ownership Fund, in collaboration with a local community-based lender. These low-barrier funds will provide access to capital for a wide range of under-resourced businesses, advancing economic growth well into the next decade.

Outreach and communications efforts for all of the above were executed by a collaborative team of Housing and Economic Development and Communications staff and supported by external consulting firms as needed.

Preliminary data on the demographics of aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners who accessed specialized consulting and one-on-one advising through Elevate Hennepin through Q1 2024 suggest that outreach efforts among communities of color and other disadvantaged groups are having an impact. The data also suggest that additional outreach efforts are needed to better serve Asian, American Indian / Native American, and Hispanic / Latinx entrepreneurs.





## Community-focused economic recovery strategies

To accelerate investment in communities that experienced disproportionate economic impacts of the pandemic, Hennepin County launched the Community Investment Initiative (CII) in 2022 awarding \$10 million to eighteen (18) redevelopment projects that create new affordable commercial space, business incubators, or support nonprofits critical to economic recovery in Hennepin County.

In early 2024, five (5) project awards were rescinded in recognition that three of the projects were no longer moving forward and two projects required an extended timeframe for completion beyond the required funding deadline of the end of 2024.

Consistent with program objectives, eleven (11) out of thirteen (13), or 85% of the projects moving forward are located in low-income communities or communities of color.

## Economic mobility-focused recovery strategies

Housing and Economic Development (HED) has implemented two innovative initiatives to advance economic mobility. Hennepin County teams collaborated with Economic Supports and other departments to plan Raise the Baseline (a guaranteed basic income (GBI) pilot), including a Hennepin-University Partnership (HUP) Collaborative Research Assistantship (HCRA) to develop pilot design recommendations. Economic Recovery funds have been allocated to implement a mixed-methods evaluation, including focus groups, surveys, and interviews as part of an overall evaluation framework for the pilot. The Improve Group completed its Initial / Round 1 surveys and interviews with program participants and staff in winter of 2023/24 and presented findings to staff. Midpoint / Round 2 surveys and interviews were completed in June with findings expected in the fall.

A feasibility study funded, in part, with Economic Recovery allocation resources explored national models and the readiness of the local landscape to create or expand social impact investing. The study recommended steps to activate private capital among local investors to support local small business growth.

Housing and Economic Development (HED) launched a new cohort-based program, CEO Start™, for idea-stage entrepreneurs in late 2023. CEO Start™ helps entrepreneurs in a wide range of fields adequately test, refine, and validate their business idea at the pre-launch stage. The photo below shows graduates of the first two cohort programs hosted in collaboration with the cities of Bloomington and Brooklyn Park.



## Key performance indicators

Initial Economic Recovery goals were to support 1,300 businesses and generate investment of \$30,000,000 in ways that build wealth in communities hardest hit by the pandemic.

To date, Housing and Economic Development's multi-faceted Economic Recovery strategies have supported over 3,200 businesses and stimulated investments valued over \$220,000,000 in low-income communities and communities of color, far exceeding our goals. This funding extends beyond the pandemic recovery funds that are the focus of this report.

To date, 77 new contracts have been executed and closely monitored. Continuous monitoring and evaluation of these contracts have resulted in total of over 100 amendments to ensure timely spending and satisfactory deliverables.

Since the launch of Elevate Hennepin, results include:

- Over 2,718 businesses have accessed one-on-one technical assistance, “back-office” support
- 165 entrepreneurs received technical assistance to help their business launch
- \$25.2 million financing has been provided to Hennepin County businesses

Community Investment Initiative (CII) projects will generate the following results:

- Over 236,000 square feet of affordable commercial space,
- Over 450 business incubation / startup / innovation spaces
- 45 longer-term affordable commercial spaces, including 13 ownership opportunities
- \$224 million of total investment value, 65% in low-income communities and communities of color
- An estimated 450 new or retained jobs

### Historic Coliseum Building opens, exemplifying a complex, multi-priority project.



Owners, partners, and elected officials gathered to officially open the historic Coliseum Building.

The process of rebuilding, renovating, and creating that opportunity was an exceptionally complex project. It required a long list of partners, community leaders, creative financing, and organizational support large and small.

This top-to-bottom reimagining of the building benefitted from a total of \$750,000 in investments from several Hennepin County initiatives including the Community Asset Transition Fund (CATF), implemented by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Twin Cities, and Transit-Oriented Communities.

The project shows how Hennepin County can support sustainability, diversity, and economic development goals at various phases and provide agile support. The project is part of \$30 million in investments up and down Lake Street. Lead developer Taylor Smrikárova said she appreciated county support and the county ideals that guided the work.

“It was absolutely crucial to have that funding, and we appreciate Hennepin County coming along with us as we got through the complicated closing process with all the other lenders that were there,” said Smrikárova. “One of the requirements is set around making sure that the rents and the common area maintenance charges are affordable; that was a necessary piece that Hennepin County put into the documentation, which is something doesn’t happen all the time, but it’s definitely helping direct us as we do our leasing.”

## Next steps

Looking ahead, Housing and Economic Development’s ongoing efforts to gather feedback and evaluate the impacts of our recovery efforts will take center stage.

# INCOME DOMAIN

## Raise the Baseline — Empowering Families with Guaranteed Income

**Allocation amount: \$3,000,000**

### Project description

Hennepin County's Raise the Baseline pilot is a cash transfer program that provides monthly payments to residents who were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and who meet the pilot's eligibility criteria. The pilot gives recipients agency to decide how they would like to use the money to meet their family's needs and plan for their futures. Participants also have access to optional supportive services throughout the 15-month pilot period. Raise the Baseline differs from most public assistance programs, which commonly tie benefits to parameters such as fluctuations in recipients' earned income, and which restrict how recipients can use the money.

This pilot is intended to coexist with other public assistance programs, not replace them. Programs that are not carefully designed risk causing harm to recipients who unexpectedly lose their eligibility or receive a reduction in public assistance benefits on which they depend. It may also not be effective if it simply supplants the benefits a participant had been receiving prior to the pilot.

The pilot is expected to serve approximately 200 very low-income Hennepin County residents with dependent children under age 5. A pool of potential participants will be identified through analysis of benefits enrollments gaps and calculations of who is least at risk for facing a reduction or loss in public assistance benefits.

The pilot will explore the impact of payments on participant's economic mobility, housing stability, employment outcomes, health and education factors, and quality of life. Pilot findings will help inform future policy and program decisions to better support working families.

### Progress narrative

- In the past year, Raise the Baseline was created and implemented. At the beginning of July 2023, the pilot was still in the planning phase. Since then we have launched, served families, and are now approaching the phase-out for our first cohort of families.
- Pilot features were developed including pilot population, payment structure and length of program. Disbursement amount and timelines were created and a pool of families meeting pilot eligibility requirements was identified.
- A Customer Relationship Management PowerApp tool was created to provide work direction and case management tracking. Staff were trained in use of the tool. The tool was built out for processes including disenrollment and reinstatement.
- County Attorney and Privacy Officer consultation explored needs related to participant disclosure, consent, data sharing with partners, disenrollment, and reinstatement.
- The Hennepin-University Partnership's Collaborative Grant focused on this pilot for the 2023 grant year, selecting Dr. Lynn Blewett's proposal "Health Care Impact of Hennepin County's Guaranteed Basic Income Program" for funding. The work will guide administrative study of the health utilization impacts of the pilot.

- The Hennepin-University Partnership's Hennepin Collaborative Research Assistant Anna Bokun developed recommendations and methodologies for a quantitative evaluation of Raise the Baseline, focusing on outcome measures that may include housing stability, economic well-being, and health. Hennepin County staff will implement quantitative data analysis recommendations.
- The Improve Group developed protocols and data collection tools for surveys, focus groups, interviews, and arts-based methods. Participant advisors reviewed and provided feedback on protocols and data collection tools. Program staff identified pilot participants willing to participate in the evaluation. The agency completed two rounds of engagement, once as families received their first payments and once as families reached the midpoint of the pilot. Resident-facing materials were translated into Dari, French, and Hmong.
- Families were invited to participate in the pilot. Letters were sent via US mail with phone and email follow up to families.
- Families interested in joining the pilot received an individualized benefits comparison statement so they could make an informed decision about participation. Several individuals consulted with our Human Service Representatives regarding benefits impact and / or with Prepare + Prosper regarding tax implications.
- Families who choose to participate were enrolled in the program and received their ReliaCard.
- All families activated their ReliaCard successfully and all families received payment.
- Raise the Baseline served 174 unique families during the past year.
- Project for Pride in Living connected with participants to offer supportive services.
  - An outreach coordinator was hired to focus on this partnership.
    - The outreach coordinator connected with 85 Raise the Baseline participants to discuss the voluntary services.
    - 38 participants indicated an initial interest in services.
    - As of the end of this reporting period, six participants have enrolled in services and an additional seven are considering enrollment.
- Recognition and sharing:
  - Raise the Baseline was recognized by the National Association of Counties with a Human Services Achievement Award.
  - Raise the Baseline was selected as a countywide Disparity Reduction in Action award winner.
  - Raise the Baseline won the Golden GovIT Innovation Award for the user-friendly data / customer relationship management PowerApp tool that was created to support the program. The work was highlighted at the statewide GovIT Symposium.
  - Raise the Baseline's manager presented to leaders from counties across the nation at a Results in Action Sprint led by Counties for Guaranteed Income.

## Key performance indicators

- Number of families participating:
  - 174 families fully enrolled
  - 15 families declined to participate
  - Final enrollment date: October 10, 2023
- Payment:
  - Percent of payments received on time: 100%
  - Percent with accurate payment amount: 100%
- The Improve Group completed data collection for Round 1 of the Raise the Baseline evaluation.
  - Initial / Round 1, Winter 2023:
    - 76 completed participant surveys
    - 30 completed participant interviews
    - 15 completed participant photo elicitation activity interviews
    - Two staff focus groups, one for administrative and policy staff and one for front-line staff
    - The Improve Group analyzed and synthesized data from Round 1 surveys and interviews, created a preliminary findings document, and held a preliminary findings meeting with key Hennepin County project staff and a participant advisor to discuss findings and collaboratively interpret and contextualize the findings

- The Improve Group synthesized input from the preliminary findings meeting discussions into the findings document to finalize learnings from Round 1
- Midpoint / Round 2, Spring 2024:
  - 54 completed participant surveys, four partial surveys
  - 28 completed participant interviews
  - 15 completed participant photo elicitation activity interviews
  - Surveys are still open as of this writing

## Project feature

Initial program evaluation has indicated that Raise the Baseline is a person-centered, two-generation approach to administering public assistance. Participants are seeing immediate positive outcomes.

- “Now I don’t have to choose whether to go to my kids’ doctor’s appointments or stay at work to make sure there is food on the table where you win one but lose another.”
- “The payments put me in a different space even though it’s temporary. It motivated me to go back to school. Maybe I can make this extra income a permanent thing in a career after seeing how much it can help.”
- “We didn’t have to take money away from the electric bill to buy my son shoes.”

## Next steps

- Families will receive monthly payments they can use to meet their family’s basic needs and plan for their future.
- As families reach the end of their twelve initial payments, they will enter a three-month taper period. During the taper period, they will receive monthly payments that are half of the initial amount as families prepare to exit the pilot.
- The Improve Group will complete Round 2 of their evaluation and will begin analyzing the data.
- Internal quantitative data analysis will be conducted using methodology determined by our partners at the University of Minnesota.
- Customer Relationship Management tool to provide work direction and case management tracking will continue to be built out for the final phases of the pilot.
- County Attorney and Privacy Officer consultation will continue as needed to explore needs related to participant disclosure, consent, data sharing with evaluators, etc.

# JUSTICE DOMAIN

## Anti-Hate Initiative

**Allocation amount: \$1,000,000**

### Project description

The Anti-Hate Initiative is dedicated to supporting community providers in addressing hate crimes and bias-related incidents. The primary goal of the Anti-Hate Initiative is to reduce barriers to reporting and accessing services while enhancing data collection efforts to determine the scope and prevalence of hate-based violence.

The allocated funds were designated to hire a program coordinator responsible for fostering consensus among community providers and managing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to assist local organizations combatting hate-based violence. The fund supports eight organizations in combating hate by raising awareness and providing education to the community, law enforcement, and other agencies. Additionally, the initiative convenes meetings and collaborates with other agencies engaged in similar work and collects data to inform future efforts.

### Progress narrative

Throughout the first quarter, the Anti-Hate funds were channeled into programs focusing on education / awareness, convening, and organizational capacity building. Providers prioritized partnership and awareness activities, such as updating the “Communities Combating Hate” website ([www.stophatemn.org](http://www.stophatemn.org)), hosting events to draw attention to hate crimes and give community members resources to address them, recruiting staff, delivering training sessions, and facilitating the exchange of best practices among local organizations.

The eight community providers worked together on myriad projects. For example, collaborative efforts with the Jewish Community Action (JCA), the City of Brooklyn Park, Reviving Sisterhood, and Asian Media Access yielded educational social media videos targeting Asian hate, Islamophobia, and anti-Semitism, along with supporting allyship. The providers also made progress in raising awareness, enhancing their own organizational capacity, and combating bullying. They work closely with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights to address gaps in addressing hate crimes and bias-motivated incidents.

Rise Home Health Anti-Hate Initiative, “RISE BEYOND HATE,” created a broad-based campaign aimed at debunking myths associated with the LGBTQ community in Liberia. Jewish Community Action hosted numerous events. Reviving Sisterhood held the Rise Up Against Hate Muslim Women’s Leadership Conference in March 2024.

Over the past year, the Anti-Hate Initiative has made progress in several areas:

**Improved reporting:** Enhanced data collection efforts have provided a clearer picture of hate-based violence, helping to identify hotspots and target interventions more effectively.

**Capacity building:** All eight of the organizations hired staff, provided training, and established technical assistance. This included the creation and sharing of best practices among local organizations.

**Collaborative efforts:**

*Partnerships formed:* Community Collaborative 2.0 collaborated with the City of Brooklyn Park; Reviving Islamic Sisterhood for Empowerment (RISE) joined with Jewish Community Action (JCA) to combat and promote unity.

*Collaborative projects:* JCA, the City of Brooklyn Park, Reviving Sisterhood, and Asian Media Access jointly produced educational social media videos targeting Asian hate, Islamophobia, and anti-semitism.

*Collaborative impact:* Feedback from coalition meetings and collaborative projects has highlighted the importance of partnerships in achieving broader community impact. The Anti-Hate Initiative welcomed five new organizations to the

coalition, fostering increased collaboration against hate.

**Youth engagement:** The City of Brooklyn Park hired interns to create a Youth Participatory Evaluation plan with students and staff who will participate in creating data collection tools for anti-hate work.

The work of anti-hate organizations continues to face challenges in the light of the October 7 war. The work remains crucial as Hennepin County continues to serve and present diverse populations.

## Key performance indicators

- Outreach and training: Providers conducted over 300 hours of community outreach campaigns and 25 hours of community and law enforcement training on reporting hate and bias incidents.
- Over 10,000 people visited the website [www.stopthaternn.org](http://www.stopthaternn.org) seeking resources. Data from training sessions and awareness campaigns indicated a rise in community awareness about hate crimes and bias-related incidents.
- Providers held six coalition meetings with 23 organizations, including organizations new to the coalition, counties, and the Minnesota Department of Human Rights team.
- Anti-Asian Hate Initiatives: providers produced and shared four Anti-Asian Hate PSA videos on YouTube, garnering an average of 300 views per video and reaching a total of 1,200 viewers.
- 12 “Stop Anti-Asian Hate” trainings were successfully organized for Asian American Pacific Islanders (AAPI), engaging 387 members.
- Weekly sessions were held with the Brooklyn Center Community School to support the engagement of the Asian Students’ Club in the “Stop Anti-Asian Hate” movement.
- 74 young AAPI dancers were trained to participate in community performances, leading up to the grand finale at the “Between the Water and Clouds” Dance Drama at Minneapolis’ Peavey Plaza, which aimed to promote cross-cultural understanding and peace resolution among all human races, reaching an audience of over 500 individuals.
- Over 1,500 individuals attended Reviving Sisterhood events.

## Next steps

1. *Support to organizations:* Provide support to both external and internal organizations to advance Hennepin’s anti-hate efforts, including data collection, community awareness / education, and convening agencies.
2. *Service gap identification:* Collaborate among community-based organizations to identify additional service gaps and plan future work.
3. *Contract management:* Manage contracts with organizations addressing hate and bias incidents in Hennepin County.
4. *Social media campaigns:* Jewish Community Action (JCA), the City of Brooklyn Park, Reviving Sisterhood, and Asian Media Access will collaborate to create social media videos to combat Asian hate and Islamophobia.

The Anti-Hate Initiative remains committed to fostering a united front against hate, discrimination, and bias, and looks forward to continued progress in the coming months.



# JUSTICE DOMAIN

## COVID-19-Related Court Backlog

**Allocation amount: \$4,511,066**

### Project description

The Hennepin County Public Defender's Office hopes to use contract positions to divert cases away from attorneys with a disproportionate number of backlogged felony trials. This allows the Hennepin County Public Defender's Office to maintain vertical representation while also freeing attorney time to focus on the oldest cases which can only be resolved through a trial. In addition, it provides the office with the flexibility necessary to respond to any increased filings as a result of the Hennepin County Attorney's Office processing its backlog of referred but uncharged cases.

The Hennepin County Attorney's Office hopes to use the contract positions to address the large backlog of charged and uncharged felony cases and address the large and excessive caseloads handled by Hennepin County attorneys. The additional contract positions will allow the office to fill vacancies and hire additional attorneys to meet the demands of the increasing and excessive caseloads handled by attorneys. Additionally, the contract positions will also provide necessary caseload relief by providing additional staff to meet the demands created by the backlog and the increased caseloads.

The work of the Hennepin County Public Defender's Office, Hennepin County Attorney's Office and Hennepin County Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCCR) are all interconnected. Therefore, attempts by the Hennepin County Attorney's Office and Hennepin County Public Defender's Office to address the backlog of cases created by the pandemic will directly affect the DOCCR and its caseloads. The DOCCR will use the contract positions to address the backlog and manage the increased workloads created by the attempts of the County Attorney's Office and Public Defender's Office to address and reduce the backlog of cases created during the pandemic.

### Progress narrative

From July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024, the Hennepin County Public Defenders Office (HCPD) contracted with six attorneys (3.75 FTEs) and four legal office assistants (3.0 FTE) to address the backlog in adult court. The HCPD contracted with three juvenile attorneys (1.15 FTE) during the same time period. The attorneys in adult court are on trial teams, handling cases from arraignment through trial. The attorneys in juvenile court are staffing twice-weekly calendar, handling delinquency cases from first appearance through trial or resolution as well as any Termination of Parental Right (TPR) cases arising out of the initial child protection cases. The juvenile contracts have allowed HCPD to avoid transferring attorneys from the adult division to fill juvenile vacancies.

The Hennepin County Attorney's Office (HCAO) continues to use the court backlog-funded positions to address the backlog of cases created during the pandemic. The positions—three attorneys, two paralegals, one legal secretary, and one victim advocate—have been vital in addressing the backlog of cases created during the pandemic. The positions have provided much needed caseload relief for attorneys, paralegals, legal secretaries, and victim advocates by freeing up resources to address the backlog of cases created during the pandemic and reduce the heavy caseloads handled by attorneys, paralegals, legal secretaries, and victim advocates.

In April 2022, DOCCR and Adult Pre-Adjudication Service (APAS) onboarded and trained one correction unit supervisor, five Felony Investigation probation officers, and two Central Intake probation officers using ARPA funds to assist with the court backlog. Felony Investigation probation officers complete Criminal Record Summary (CRS) and Guideline Worksheet on all felony-level complaint filings. Additionally, they write complex investigative reports to assist judges and attorneys with sentencing decisions. Central Intake probation officers write domestic investigation reports, complete



risk needs assessments, and process felony and DWI cases ordered to probation when a Pre-Sentence Investigation (PSI) is not requested before sentencing. As of December 31, 2023, DOCCR and APAS ARPA funds were exhausted.

## Key performance indicators

For HCPD, adult court contractors handled 562 cases during this time period. The juvenile court contractors handled 110 calendars and 92 new child protection cases along with many of the child protection cases that carried over from the previous year.

The HCAO continues to identify areas in need of caseload relief and assistance to address the backlog of uncharged cases created during the pandemic. The HCAO continues to focus its additional resources on filling positions in the Adult Prosecution Division, Community Prosecution Division, and Youth Prosecution Division. The additional resources will help reduce overall caseloads, help reduce the backlog of uncharged cases, and provide additional staffing resources throughout the office. The key performance indicators will be the overall reduction in staff caseloads and the overall reduction in the total amount of uncharged cases.

During the ARPA grant fiscal year, APAS's court referrals for investigations and intake have steadily increased. The added resources have allowed DOCCR to provide uninterrupted client services for sentencing preparation and probation services. There have been no delays in meeting the goal; cases are assigned, and the work is completed on time. During the State fiscal year July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024, Felony Investigation work increased by 15% compared to the previous fiscal year 2022–2023. During the State fiscal year July 1, 2023–June 30, 2024, Central Intake work increased by 6.5% compared to the previous fiscal year 2022–2023.

## Project feature

As of June 30, 2024, the COVID-19 Related Court Backlog has been eliminated.

## Next steps

In HCPD, the existing contracts will expire at the end of 2024. Attorney contractors will continue to work toward resolving their existing open cases, and one full-time legal office assistant will continue in a support capacity through the end of 2024.

In 2024, the HCAO will have three positions funded through the court backlog project—two attorneys and one paralegal.

DOCCR understands the value these additional staff provide to our clients and the Law, Safety, and Justice business line partners. With the sunset of pandemic recovery funds, APAS assumed the financial responsibility of the additional staff to continue these services.

# JUSTICE DOMAIN

## Violence Prevention

**Allocation amount: \$12,500,000**

### Project description

In June 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized \$5 million for efforts intended to prevent, reduce, and mitigate gun violence in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. The initial \$5 million was allocated for short-term efforts focused on getting resources into the community for violence interruption and intervention strategies, and for wraparound support services utilizing providers that had capacity and programming ready to provide immediate services. In March 2022, the county board authorized an additional \$5 million to support continued and new programming, and a final \$2.5 million was added in third quarter of 2023.

Youth and young adults, particularly those in communities of color, are disproportionately impacted by community violence. Black and African American residents of Hennepin County are disproportionately impacted by gun violence, with firearm-related death rates that are more than twice that of White residents. Hennepin County is committed to reducing community and gun violence through a holistic approach that identifies drivers of the violence, addresses risk and protective factors, and adopts evidence-informed policies and programs and effective strategies that improve outcomes for communities impacted by community violence, with particular focus on young people.

All of the programming falls within one of the three pillars of the Community Violence Prevention framework developed by the Centers for Disease Control: 1) Creating protective environments, 2) Connecting young people to caring adults and activities, and 3) Strengthening young people's skills.

### Progress narrative

Over the past year, 45 Community Violence Prevention (CVP) providers from around Hennepin County were selected from a competitive RFP process. By fall of 2023, all providers were actively working to implement their programming, and staff provided support to build a Community Violence Prevention Network that serves every demographic population within the county. Using a countywide cohort approach, members of the Network collaborate with one another, leveraging resources, staff, and ideas. Each CVP Provider has completed a Challenge for Change Implementation Plan that focuses on engaging young people in their community to create plans for their futures and meet them. Providers also work together, within and across the three pillars. For example, several members of the network are working with the Northwest Suburban Integration School District to improve the success of young people through increased attendance and decreased suspensions.

The Community Violence Prevention Network meets quarterly as a whole cohort, and in the off months in smaller cohorts according to their work. These gatherings have proven to be valuable tools to build community and relationships, strengthening the individual organizations and expanding the number of youth who are reached. As the CVP Network has developed, other groups such as local neighborhood organizations, schools, local government agencies, and law enforcement have reached out to be a part of this growing community-based work.

In May 2024, youth leaders and members of the Community Violence Prevention Network participated in the two-day Hennepin County 2024 Safe Communities Summit, along with leaders from cities, law enforcement agencies, and school districts. The Summit, presented with the national organization Cities United, gave youth leaders a platform to express what they see as the needs of communities impacted by violence. Participants were given tools to begin mapping out violence prevention plans for their cities, and learned about data, technology, and evaluation methods for assessing programs. Plans are being developed for continuation of the conversations that began at this exciting convening.

## Key performance indicators

- All 45 Community Violence Prevention providers have completed a Challenge for Change Implementation Plan.
- 1,419 young people have completed Step 1 of the Challenge for Change.
- Over 300 people attended the Hennepin County 2024 Safe Communities Summit in partnership with Cities United in May 2024.
- 37 organizations provided 387 hours of mental health supports.
- 36 organizations provided 11,535 hours of mentoring.
- Collectively, the 45 members of the Community Violence Prevention Network held 342 community events.

### CVP Provider feature

Culture Barbershop, located in North Minneapolis, has been a leader in demonstrating the countywide cohort model approach by implementing the Challenge for Change, and through strategic peer collaboration. The organization, which was started by local barbers seeking to support the youth in their community, supports leadership development, conflict resolution, and self-esteem building, with free haircuts for youth who attend. A strong component of the program involves restorative justice and mediation. As part of the programming, Culture Barbershop asks the youth to participate in the Challenge for Change.

The Challenge for Change consists of:

Step 1. Extending an invitation to young people to make a change;

Step 2. Helping young people to develop a practice of self-awareness, other awareness, and relationship management;

Step 3. Increasing young people's engagement in community activities. The Challenge for Change is offered to the 10–20 young people who attend each session, and thus far the response has been extremely positive. The program, with its emphasis on local adults offering their services as mentors and role models, is wildly popular, with participation far exceeding initial expectations; Executive Director Kevin Clifton has expanded the work into the school districts, and partnered with other providers to offer outdoor experiences for participants. Culture Barbershop now has interest from local professional sports leagues to discuss partnering to enhance participants' progress.

## Next steps

- CVP providers will continue their Challenge for Change Summer Programming, violence intervention, and youth workforce development work.
- Quarterly convenings will continue, with planning for continued work with Cities United.
- Staff will implement the program evaluation plan including surveys, focus groups, and analysis of data.

# OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

## Countywide HVAC COVID-19 Response

**Allocation amount: \$5,000,000**

### Project description

As a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency and based on recommended best practices per the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) for providing safe buildings to the public, Hennepin County made improvements to the ventilation system in its facilities to reduce the spread of COVID-19. This project will support our efforts to maintain a safe level of ventilation while improving operational efficiency and reducing energy use. By providing safe buildings, the county is protecting the health and wellness of staff and residents who visit the facilities. Priority will be given to 24/7 facilities such as correctional institutions, plus other key buildings serving residents such as the Hennepin County Government Center.

Funding will be used to study and implement needed improvements to building heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) and control systems in county facilities. These improvements will allow for better management of energy use and reduced operational costs associated with maintaining pandemic-level ventilation requirements.

### Progress narrative

In the past year, work on countywide HVAC COVID-19 response projects took place in four areas as follows:

Evaluation of the filter banks and system capacities under the contract with Northern Air Corporation is complete. This work included inspecting the filter banks for all county-operated buildings to assure no air leakage therefore reducing any bypass of contaminated air. In addition, each air handling unit was evaluated for required air capacity due to the increased resistance of higher-rated filters. A review of the corrective actions necessary was completed. Several buildings required additional testing to confirm results, and implementation of corrective actions began in Q1, continued in Q2 2024, and completion of this work is expected in Q3 2024.

A Request for Proposal was issued for a consultant to study all county buildings to verify compliance with the new ASHRAE Standard 241 Control of Infectious Aerosols and to create Building Readiness Plans. A revised Request for Proposal was subsequently issued to study a large subset of the county's library facilities (41 total), focusing on verifying the clean air compliance at each facility and excluding the creation of Building Readiness Plans until evaluations have been completed. Proposals were received and the work authorization was executed early Q1 2024. The final report for Phase 1 was delivered on June 24, 2024. All remaining work as a result of this study is expected to be completed by the end of Q4 2024.

In addition, COVID-19 related upgrades were included as part of the Hennepin County Government Center (HCGC) larger HVAC renovation project. These upgrades are critical to the effective control of airborne contaminants. While work continues on the renovation project, the pandemic response related work that was part of the larger HCGC HVAC renovation project was completed in 2023, which expended a large portion of the grant funding.

Finally, Hennepin County is using MERV 13 or higher filters in the air handling units of county facilities, which has been effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19 via the HVAC system. Since the last annual report, a total of 7,346 filters were ordered, received, and invoiced by June 30, 2024.

## Key performance indicators

- 7,346 filters ordered, received and invoiced.
- Pandemic response related work on the HCGC HVAC project completed.
- Final report for Phase 1 of the ASHRAE 241 library compliance study delivered.
- Evaluation of the filter banks and system capacities under the contract with Northern Air Corporation is complete and implementation of corrective actions underway.

## Project feature

Following the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) recommended best practices for providing safe buildings to the public, Hennepin County Facility Services used pandemic response funding to make improvements to the HVAC system in its facilities. This work allows Facility Services staff to maintain an appropriate level of ventilation while also improving operational efficiency and reducing energy use. By providing safe buildings, Hennepin County is protecting the health and wellness of staff and residents.

## Next steps

- Complete work to verify ASHRAE 241 compliance at each library facility.
- MERV 13+ filters will continue to be installed as needed for the buildings to maintain a safe level of ventilation for residents and staff.

# OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

## Digital Experience

**Allocation amount: \$5,700,000**

### Project description

From the beginning, the COVID-19 pandemic required Hennepin County to rapidly shift to providing services to residents from in person to online. When physical locations closed to the public, the ability to serve digitally was critical to meeting ongoing resident needs. To date, the ongoing pandemic continues to fundamentally shift the county's service approach, making clear our need to build on these initial changes and provide a consistently positive and accessible experience for residents. This project is using funding to sustain and advance the digital transformation that has been required to respond to the pandemic by piloting a scalable, repeatable digital experience delivery model.

The Digital Experience (DX) Department in the Operations line of business leads this work in partnership with Hennepin County's communication and engagement teams, the IT community, and departments delivering residents services. This model will join key business, technology, communication, and engagement partners together to deliver a digital experience that meets residents' varying digital needs. Funding will also support increasing digital content, user experience, and web infrastructure work for the county's digital service platforms. Teams will address both technical debt and continuous improvement needs to keep pace with increasing digital delivery.

The DX Department manages rapid change with an agile mindset and principles, determines long-term staffing and resource needs to support the model, and drives identified digital priorities that support Future Ready Hennepin. These efforts create digital equity and engagement for Hennepin County residents.

### Progress narrative

The DX pandemic response project continues to grow and meet goals in this reporting year.

DX aligns all work to three strategic directions. Each strategic direction supports work at the community, organization, and team levels. The three DX strategic directions are:

1. Drive an equitable and inclusive digital experience for Hennepin County community members.
2. Build and foster a culture of User Experience (UX) across Hennepin County.
3. Establish DX structures, processes, and culture founded in our values.

DX values and strategic directions guide and align the work in a way that is transparent and communicates shared goals with partners.

#### **Drive an equitable and inclusive digital experience for Hennepin County community members**

DX implemented listening strategies to gain knowledge about people's experiences using the county website, Hennepin.us. Listening strategies included web surveys, satisfaction ratings for web page content, and ticketing systems for web visitors to submit requests for help. Data from listening strategies are organized by theme and integrated into the HennepinCounty.gov project.

The HennepinCounty.gov project made significant progress in staffing and project work. This project is jointly sponsored by DX, Communications, and IT departments. In Q3 2023, the Website Communications team in the Communications department hired a project manager for this web migration project. Milestones in this reporting period include: 1) stakeholder mapping sessions, 2) usability testing with internal and external users, and 3) integrated the findings from discovery phase, listening strategies, and usability testing into design sprint iterations.

DX collaborated with Human Services to automate the shelter verification form. The project team conducted field testing with landlords and in-depth interviews with tenants to understand pain points and impacts to residents' ability to secure safe housing more quickly. Usability testing with various users of the form ensured they had an opportunity to interact with a prototype and provide feedback before any code is written. The solution was a dynamic, usable, and accessible web form that can be submitted digitally, reducing completion time from 24 days to one day. The new form is available at [www.hennepin.us/residents/human-services/e-forms](http://www.hennepin.us/residents/human-services/e-forms).

The Web Infrastructure in the IT department and Website Communications teams conducted a major upgrade to the county's content management system, Sitecore, to version 10.3. The county uses Sitecore to manage, design, and publish [Hennepin.us](http://Hennepin.us), and about 20 other public-facing websites and applications. For 10 years, the county hosted Sitecore through its vendor, Atomic Data. Now Sitecore is hosted through Sitecore Managed Cloud (PaaS).

### **Build and foster a culture of UX across Hennepin County**

Digital Experience (DX) achieved department status in December 2023. Previously known as the Office of Digital Experience (ODX), DX leveraged pandemic response funds in Board Action Request: 21-0341. DX drives organizational transformation to improve the resident online experience by working with lines of business and key partner departments to create digital experiences that are accessible, user-friendly, and that meet county brand and web standards. Creating seamless, omnichannel digital experiences allows residents to engage with the county more fully in the digital space and builds trust with residents. Our digital space is as much of an asset as our physical spaces. It is where residents find information they need, conduct business, connect to resources, and engage with their government.

DX convened a multi-disciplinary team including Data Compliance and IT Architecture teams to create guidance for a login method for external digital products. This guidance is a decision-making tool to determine if authentication, or login, is needed for a technological solution or application. Most web visitors access county information and complete transactions without needing to log in. However, there are times when requiring a user login is necessary. The county's Technology Policy Committee endorsed this new guidance for implementation. The guidance is available in the design system: [www.hennepin.us/design-system/patterns/governance/external-logins](http://www.hennepin.us/design-system/patterns/governance/external-logins).

### **Establish DX structures, processes, and culture founded in our values**

Eleven temporary or acting DX staff were converted to permanent, budgeted positions. DX also held departmentwide workshops to enhance team effectiveness, align understanding of terminology and definitions to use shared language for DX work, and begin forming UX metrics that help the organization achieve its objectives and goals as it expands resident online services. These efforts also help the team and organization establish and measure DX maturity.

DX team members completed trainings to gain new skills as well as build on existing skills to gain deeper understanding and expertise in UX and customer experience disciplines. In addition to training, some team members participated in an experience management conference and a networking event with other chief digital experience officers throughout the country.

## Key performance indicators

- Engagement teams completed the resident experience survey with over 530 residents as part of the Hennepin Access project.
- Data from residents through listening strategies (Hennepin Access project, surveys, satisfaction ratings, ticketing systems) provide deeper understanding of resident needs.
- HennepinCounty.gov research with 16 adults, a diverse group of representative users, to observe their experiences completing tasks tied to key digital service journeys.
- Shelter verification project include field testing with eight residents, usability testing with three landlords and three tenants, incentives given to participants for their time, and valuable feedback ahead of publishing final product.
- DX being elevated to department status demonstrates the investment the organization is making in the future of equitable and accessible service delivery for residents.
- Design System has over 500 new users since its launch. The maintenance oversight group approved seven enhancements to be implemented in Q3 2024.

- Transitioning temporary positions to permanent budgeted positions gives validity to this work continuing to move forward in the organization.
- Over 50 people from across all lines of business attended each DX Stakeholder event in October 2023 and March 2024. These events are an opportunity to increase awareness of DX work and possible future engagement opportunities with other business areas.

## Hennepin County Design System

For the first time in county history, there is a single source of truth for creating and sustaining quality digital products called the Hennepin County Design System. The design system combined four distinct artifacts: 1) pattern and component library, 2) web standards, 3) writing guide, and 4) branding guide. It is a powerful one-stop-shop guide of standards and county-branded, accessible assets. It includes reusable grab-and-go components, patterns, design elements, and content guidance. A maintenance oversight group meets regularly to prioritize backlog items, make improvements, and discuss long-term maintenance needs and goals. View the design system at [www.hennepin.us/design-system](http://www.hennepin.us/design-system).

## Next steps

- Continue DX strategic plan implementation.
- Discuss two initiatives with county leadership and line of business partners: 1) an enterprise strategy for listening to and understanding the needs of residents to make meaningful change in their lives, and 2) an enterprise strategy for how residents can engage and conduct county business in the digital space.
- Begin low-fidelity prototype testing for HennepinCounty.gov.
- Design system maintenance oversight group will implement seven enhancements to the system and discuss potential approval of 10 new backlog items for further improvement.
- Expand weekly “open office hours” to help employees with the design system and UX.
- Register at least 20 employees for WeCoLearning before end of 2024.
- Certify at least 12 employees to become DX Champions before end of 2024.
- Expand engagement of Line of Business project teams in accessibility services with WeCo to ensure public-facing websites and applications meet the new ADA rule for local governments to comply with WCAG 2.1 AA, a specific technical web standard, by April 24, 2026.
- Connect with Hennepin-University Partnership as part of the county’s work and implementation of the Translation project.
- Hold a DX stakeholder event in Q3 2024.
- Partner with Facility Services to build out the DX lab space, a space for residents to interact with new digital products, websites, or applications.



# OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

## Engagement Services

**Allocation amount: \$3,180,000**

### Project description

The Engagement Services project will increase and enhance engagement staffing, services and programs as part of the county's ongoing COVID-19 pandemic response. The community will be connected to new and expanded programs and services, including continued mask distribution and education about the importance of getting vaccinated, as well as a variety of human services, housing, economic development, and employment resources.

With a focus on disparity reduction, these efforts will demonstrate the county's commitment to our residents along with providing Hennepin County's Engagement Services area the capacity to advance engagement systems and practices while sustaining community relationships. While this work is foundational to the county and will require long-term funding strategies to support continued development, immediate resources are needed now to continue the county's response to COVID-19.

### Progress narrative

#### Trusted messengers Program

The Trusted Messengers Program is a unique partnership built on trust and provides an opportunity for long-term sustainable relationships with community partners. Trusted Messengers represent the diverse cultural groups and geographic areas in Hennepin County that have experienced the starkest disparities. The most effective messengers are experts and trusted leaders in their communities. This program aligns with and supports the Hennepin County's mission, vision, and core values, and prioritizes disparity reduction and climate action work.

#### 2023:

- Ongoing relationship management of 26 contracted community-based non-profit agencies through December 31, 2023.
- Continued ongoing check-in meetings and monitoring of reports, sharing of events, activities, deliverables, and issues / trends / themes, etc.
- Ongoing monthly large group meetings and ended last meeting in December 2023.
- Shared and communicated information on county program / services.
- Shared RFP / grant opportunities within internal county and other cities, counties, and state.
- Shared consultation and feedback with departments / service areas.

#### 2024:

The focus is on organizations prioritizing communities impacted by racial disparities and social determinants of health (personal, social, economic, and environmental factors). The aim is to address the root causes of racial and health disparities fostering more equitable conditions, improving mental well-being, and improving outcomes in communities affected by these issues.

The Trusted Messengers have four guiding principles: Consultant, Communicator, Convener, and Connector.

- Selected and contracted with 25 community-based non-profit agencies
- Contract effective April 15, 2024, through November 30, 2024
- Provided direct cultural and community engagement consultation to Hennepin County program initiatives

## Community Engagement Roster Program

Since 2022, this program has grown to include 284 community and cultural groups that are pre-qualified for contracting for community engagement support. Engagement Services continues to work with Contracting Services to:

- Upgrade the roster list to a contracting dashboard providing county staff real time information in each organization
- Provide an updated community partners stakeholder list for internal use that includes contact information, services provided, communities served, languages support provided, and service area
- Consult with other departments and promote contracts / agreements via the roster program
- Continued to meet as a team to assess best practices, trainings, user experience, and potential areas for improvement for the program

## Translations

Improving translation and interpretation services is an important strategy for strengthening community support. The translation policy project committee has reviewed countywide policy regarding translation services. Engagement Services has also provided consultation to departments on effective translation and interpretation practices.

## Engagement vans

In the past year, the engagement vans directly engaged thousands of Hennepin County residents on county programs and initiatives along with hearing community issues, concerns, and opportunities for partnerships. The vans provide staff the ability to meet community “where they’re at.” Staff educate community about Hennepin County programs and services along with collecting community viewpoints to inform county work. With a primary focus on outreach to low-income and communities of color, Outreach and Community Supports’ (OCS) three engagement vans continue to be a crucial strategy in directly engaging county residents.

Engagement vans are coordinated in a monthly meeting with Fleet Services, OCS, and Communications to ensure the vans are properly equipped and stocked with engagement supplies. A reservation system was launched, Key Valet, that provides a 24/7 key access to the two Dodge Grand Caravans. Hennepin County staff were given an orientation on how to use the new reservation system. Vans continue to be maintained in a timely manner.

This year the Ford Transit E-van was equipped with Wi-Fi hotspot, green screen backdrop, family-friendly activities, and fully stocked with Hennepin County program handouts. All three vans were equipped with Hennepin County promotional items such as tote bags, water bottles, rice paddles, pens, and notebooks.

## Materials distribution

The team continued to work with the Minnesota Department of Health on distribution of COVID-19 test kits and masks.

## Healing circles / community building

Staff hosted four healing circles from July through November 2023, focused on the Black/African American community, the Latino community, and the Native American community. These healing circles were in person at the library, park centers, and locally owned BIPOC spaces, except for one, which was held virtually over Zoom.

Between January and March 2024, staff had a multi-jurisdictional National Day of Racial Healing event and held three healing circles focused on the Black and African American communities.

Since April 2024 to present, OCS hosted five more healing circles.

## Key performance indicators

### Trusted messengers

- 25 contracts continued through November 30, 2024
- Various departments came to consult and seek feedback, updates, etc. (Climate and Resiliency, Hennepin Health—healthcare renewals, Tech Essentials / Elevate Hennepin, Environment and Energy, Strategic Planning / Initiatives, Public Health Promotion, etc.)
- Monthly check in and large group meetings with trusted messengers including ongoing monthly reports—showing summary of contracted services provided, results, focus areas, and output (how many members reached)

- Enhanced involvement and strengthened relationships with multijurisdictional engagement partners, expanding the trusted messenger model across jurisdictions
- Cultural Engagement Liaison partnered individually with assigned trusted organizations to help them achieve their selected focus areas, workplan, and budget, etc.

### **Community Engagement Roster Program**

- 279+ individuals and organizations registered
- Implemented the Metro Blue Line light rail transit engagement cohort contracts
- Over 45+ work orders completed
- Over 70+ principle agreements completed
- Multiple projects / RFPs consulted and may utilize this program to achieve contracts

### **Translations**

- Continued to meet and work with the Translation Policy Project committee.
- Review draft translation policy document.

### **Engagement vans**

Utilizing one of the engagement Dodge Grand Caravans five days a week year-round (260 days), Streets to Housing team engaged with approximately 600 people experiencing unsheltered homelessness during the past year’s outreach and walk-in locations. The team uses the van for direct outreach where they bring supplies and tables so we can visit encampments and other community spaces, to provides services related to accessing shelter, housing, and economic supports. The team also uses the van to provide transportation to housing meetings, shelter, and housing-related matters, including move ins, approximately 20 hours / week. The team services throughout Hennepin County. More data can be found on the website by clicking “services we provide”. Help for unsheltered homelessness | Hennepin County.

In addition, Hennepin County engagement staff utilized the two Dodge Grand Caravans at 27 events across these lines of business (LOB):

- Outreach and Community Supports, County Administration
- Behavioral Health, HSPH
- Office of Multi-Cultural Services, HSPH
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning, Transportation / Public Works
- Disparity Reduction
- Transportation Planning, Public Works
- Child and Teen Checkups, HSPH
- Elevate Hennepin, Housing and Economic Development
- Out of Home Placement / Foster Care, HSPH
- Environment and Energy, Public Works
- Hmong Day at the State Fair—collaboration across LOBs:
  - Outreach and Community Supports
  - Human Services Community Outreach
  - Public Health Strategic Initiatives
  - Public HealthChild and Teen Checkups
  - Department of Environment and Energy
  - Elections
  - Office of Multi-Cultural Services
  - Libraries
  - Housing and Economic Development
  - Hennepin County Assessor Office
  - Hennepin County Attorney’s Office

Testimonial from Streets to Housing: *“The van allows us to show up in the community in a Hennepin vehicle that stores our supplies and allows us to transport move-in kits and clients to meetings or shelter when needed.”*



### Materials distribution

In 2024, the team distributed approximately 88,400 masks and 12,559 COVID-19 test kits. OCS continues to share promotional items with the community including lip balms, frisbees, drawstring backpacks, tote bags, program handouts, and more.

### Healing circles / community building

Below is a snapshot of what each community healer brought to their workshop:

- **The Importance of Pouring In, Part 2** with community healer TC was held via Zoom on Saturday, July 29. This session continued the conversation on the transformative healing of Black Boys and Men and offered body-based movement.
- **Cuerpx Estmapa Workshop** with Lynda Grafito and Claudia Valentino was held on Saturday, July 29, and was a healing circle aimed at young Latinas/o/x. The youth learned to carve and print linoleum blocks focused on reflecting on the negative view that women or non-binary have towards their own body.
- **Embracing our Shadow** with community healer Nancy Rocha was held on Saturday, September 30, and was focused on the Latino community. This healing circle discussed with the participants how the stories we accept impact our relationship with self and explore the relationship this has with our ancestors who are represented by the direction of the north, the place of cold, wisdom, shadow, and wind. Energy Healing workshop with community healer Shelly Belgarde was highly requested.
- **Energy Healing Workshop: Restore\*Awake\*Restore\*Ascend** with Shelly Belgarde was held on Wednesday, November 8, and was a healing circle designed for American Indian community members with a focus on energy and healing using tools to reduce stress and anxiety, releasing emotional and physical trauma stored in the body, and increasing and enhancing personal and spiritual growth.

We ended the 2023 iteration of the healing circle program with reflections from the healers and supporting staff, as well as visioning for future healing circles and program needs.

Continuing in 2024, five sessions were focused on the Black / African American community and one focused on the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community.

- **Free Your Body Series healing circles** held by community healer, TC. Participants joined in on hot yoga sessions, working on ways to relax and free the body.
  - Dates held: April 13, April 27, May 18
- **Ancient and Future Healing** with community healer, Isaiah Frandsen, on Sunday, June 23. This circle combined ancient and future wellness technology to embrace and embody the light within.
- **Towards a Healing Journey** with Sound Bath by community healer Nancy Xiong and Pagnia Xiong. Thirty-eight community members registered to participate and thirty-one attended.

The OCS team has held a total of 13 healing circles hosted by seven Community Healers with a total of 187 participants. Keeping our healing circles small has allowed us to focus on individuals. Participants continue to give positive feedback.

*"Been to all 3 sessions so far/ and this one was the best! keeps getting better. Thank you for holding space for our community. Bringing my mom next time!"*

*"Great class great instructors."*

In 2024, the multijurisdictions included Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, City of Bloomington, Edina, City of Minnetonka, Ramsey County, St. Paul, and St. Louis Park.



- **National Day of Racial Healing** featuring Dr. Joy DeGruy, on Tuesday, January 16. The event focused on the impacts of racial trauma inside the workplace and using tools to engage in racial healing to create a healthy workplace. This event was for government staff in the Twin Cities and surrounding area.
- **Breath is Power** with community healer Isaiah Frandsen, on Sunday, February 25. The healing circle focused on breathwork, body movement, and community connection.
- **Free the Body Series** with community healer TC, on Saturday, March 23 and 30. These two sessions are a part of a longer series focusing on body movement and community connection.

## Next steps

### Trusted messengers Program

- Continuing relationship building and having monthly large group and check-in meetings
- Meet with community engagement cultural liaisons on ways to implement and improve the program
- Possibility of a direct-select or competitive selection / request for proposals using the Community Engagement Roster Program

### Community Engagement Roster Program

- Find ways to improve and promote the roster program internally and externally through strategic planning
- Work with three new Purchasing and Contract staff on strengthening and improving the program
- Ongoing monthly meetings

### Translations

Continuing working, finalizing, and getting leadership approval on the translation policy.

### Engagement vans

OCS will host several virtual sessions for county engagement staff on how to reserve the vans, what is included in van usage, and how to track usage of engagement supplies. OCS will continue hold monthly meetings with Fleet Services for problem solving and ensure proper use of the vans.

### Materials distribution

Looking forward, OCS remains committed to assisting community agencies by providing distribution of COVID-19 tests and masks.

### Healing circles / community building

Looking forward, we plan to continue healing circles for the Latinx, African Immigrant, American Indian and Asian American Pacific Islander communities.

# OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

## Enterprise Integrated Data

**Allocation amount: \$3,000,000**

### Project description

The Enterprise Integrated Data System aims to integrate data from across county systems to discover summary insights that enable the county to better respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, reduce disparities, and support key strategic initiatives. The project includes four key components: integrated data infrastructure, summary analytics, governance and security, and data use.

The integrated data infrastructure entails the development of the technical infrastructure required to integrate county data and modernize county data systems safely and securely. This work leverages modern data infrastructure tools to bring county data together effectively and iteratively to meaningfully create summary reports and analytics.

Summary analytics entails the development of a variety of summary reports that provide ongoing holistic insights into county services. Analyses focus on the county's ability to rapidly respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative impacts; how residents navigate county services across lines of business; the impact of county services on the well-being of residents, and county disparity reduction efforts, among others.

The governance and security component entails the development of a robust and transparent governance structure that supports the development of strategic data insights while ensuring data security, privacy, and the ethical use of data. This work is done in coordination with existing data governance activities including the county's responsible authorities, legal counsel, and IT and data security staff.

Lastly, this effort includes a framework for data use that is intended to provide support for how the summary data insights created from this system can be used for effective decision making.

### Progress narrative

Over the past year, substantial progress continues to be made across each facet of the Enterprise Integrated Data System. The integrated data infrastructure continues to mature with efforts focusing on systemic improvements to ongoing data integration and record linkage. To date, 14 summary analytics projects have now been initiated. In the last review period, three new projects were launched, one was completed, and one underwent a significant update. The governance and security components of this effort continue to be refined with a continued focus on ensuring this system is highly secured and carefully governed. Lastly, the framework for data literacy has made significant progress. In the past year, this work moved from initial user adoption support for each analysis to the establishment of a broader training program, county-wide events, and a community of practice. As the third year of work on this system concludes, there is a marked shift from the initial development of the system to ongoing operations and continuous improvement to ensure the strategic data insights this system provides continue to be a regular and ongoing part of all county work.

The primary focus of the past year's work on the integrated data infrastructure has been on systemic improvements. The data engineers' major achievement of the year has been to systematize lessons learned from the first two years of data ingestion efforts into a structured mechanism to manage all data ingestion process and subsequent transformations. This has helped ensure consistency in the way data is being ingested and integrated into the system, a vital component to ensure scalability and the ability to manage significant volumes of data. Systematizing our ingestion process has also fueled advancement in the team's DataOps practices. A more structured data ingestion process has enabled more robust monitoring which helps ensure the system is operating with fidelity and helps identify strategic opportunities for improvement. For example, the team now has improved awareness of all data that is (and is not) included in a particular data model, improving the trustworthiness and transparency of these data. The final key aspect

of continuous improvement in the data infrastructure component of this project has been advancements in the use of graph databases. A critical component of ensuring accurate summary analyses is the ability to accurately link records from disparate systems. Early proof-of-concepts effectively demonstrated the capability of graph-based approaches to more accurately link record sets. In this review period, a joint team of data scientists and engineers has nearly completed the integration of early record linkage proof-of-concept projects into the system.

The aim of the Enterprise Integrated Data System has been to create summary insights that enable the county to reduce disparities and support key strategic initiatives. As such, it was expected that the overall volume of analyses would eventually stabilize in line with the priorities of the county. To date, fourteen summary analytics projects have been initiated with three new efforts beginning in the past review period (compared to four new efforts in the prior review period). Overall, the team's data scientists continue to make progress on these efforts and continue to refine the approach to partnering with county staff to help identify meaningful and actionable strategic insights. It's also worth noting two key accomplishments during this period. First, the team's data scientists completed an analysis related to understanding early intervention and collaboration opportunities to better respond to the opioid epidemic. These insights are being used to drive collaboration and early prevention efforts within the county. Second, the team completed its first major update to the Who We Serve report. This summary of cross-program utilization across Human Services and the Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation programs is now being updated quarterly to provide more timely insights into cross-program involvement and how the county operates as a whole.

A key principle of the Enterprise Integrated Data System is that it is highly secured and carefully governed. Work on these components over the past year has focused on monitoring and continuous improvement. A key challenge for the overall governance process is efficiency as all projects go through multiple review processes to ensure efforts are strategic in nature, include an explicit focus on disparity reduction, and meet all data practices requirements. The overall timeline for a new project to go through this governance process has gone up and emphasizes the need to find improvements. To this end, the team continues to collaborate with county attorneys and the office of compliance to review and revise the governance process as applicable.

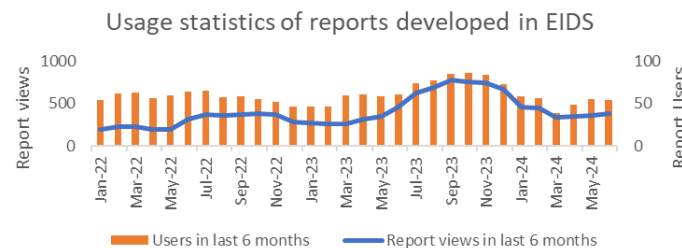
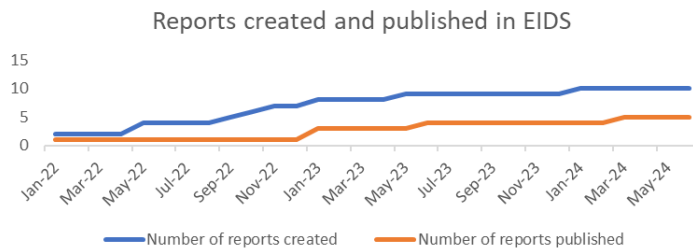
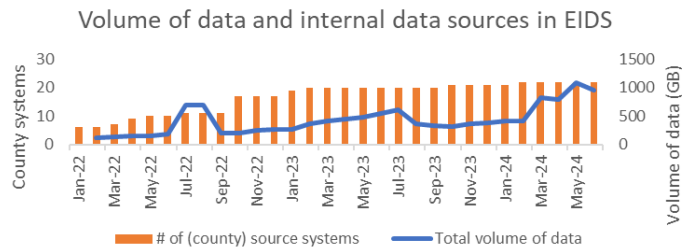
As more summary insights are being produced because of the Enterprise Integrated Data System, the importance of helping county leaders and staff to effectively use those insights has also increased. Overall, the past review period has marked the significant ramping up of the data strategy team's work on creating a framework for data use (i.e., a data literacy program for the county). This work began by creating specific user adoption support for each summary analytics project. It has now matured into a structured series of trainings, county events, and a community of practice, all of which are focused on helping county leaders and staff effectively use data. Early feedback and engagement data has been very promising for these efforts. For example, 85% of staff who provided feedback about a data week event reported they felt confident about being to apply what they learned to their work. In the community of practice, 93% of staff who have given feedback have found the sessions useful and 79% report they would share the information learned with a colleague.

The Enterprise Integrated Data System is intended to enable the discovery of summary insights in support of key county strategies and reducing disparities. As the initial development phase of this project nears its end, attention is and has been shifting to the ongoing operations and continuous improvement of this system. All of the progress made to date is being viewed with an emphasis on ensuring sustainable and repeatable processes to both scale this system and manage it effectively as it grows. In the final months of this effort, a robust look at the documentation, skill pathways, and what is needed to ensure the successful transition to an ongoing and sustainable system will be a major focus.

## Key performance indicators

The key performance indicators for this project include:

- Total volume of data incorporated
- An evolving set of quality assurance metrics related to data quality and fidelity with established definitions
- The number of analytics projects utilizing this system
- Number of days it takes for a project to go through the governance process
- The number of report views as a proxy for utilization



Monitoring of key performance indicator data continues to be formative in nature.

Total volume of data has increased to over 900 GB as of the end of the second quarter in 2024. Fluctuations in total volume of data are due to efforts by the data engineering team to ensure a carefully managed data ecosystem where any redundant copies are deleted. The overall upward trend in the volume of data is due primarily to adding more timely data from existing systems as opposed to the addition of new systems.

Fourteen analytics projects are now leveraging this system. Five have been made available to stakeholders based on business need, two are nearing completion, and seven are in active development.

Usage statistics have started to trend upwards again. The recent decrease in utilization was thought to be due to either a lack of timely data or insufficient user adoption support. While too early to draw firm conclusions, the recent update of more timely data to the Who We Serve report is likely the major cause of the recent uptick in utilization. The team will continue to monitor this, especially as new reports are released.

Quality assurance metrics have been updated and continue to be refined. Data pipeline success rates continue to average above 95% success per month and improved monitoring of data refreshes has been established.

The current average length of time for an analytics effort to go through the governance process has increased to 49 days (an increase of five days inclusive of non-business days).



## Project feature

The Opioid Pathways report is an excellent example of the power of integrated data. The Enterprise Integrated Data System brought together data from health and human services programs, community corrections programs, and emergency shelter to understand how those experiencing opioid abuse were being served across program areas. The ultimate aim of this report was to support upstream and integrated strategies to mitigate the opioid crisis. The insights from this report illustrated the need for a more integrated approach as 69% of individuals identified as experiencing opioid abuse were being served in three or more service areas. These insights have led program areas to identify more specific outreach and integration points to better deliver coordinated services.

## Next steps

In the next three months, the following efforts are expected:

- Continue to make meaningful progress on all analytics projects in adherence to the system's principles of partnership, careful governance, and data security. This includes a focused effort on the next iteration of the Who We Serve report.
- Continue to implement the user adoption plan for each completed analytics project.
- Finalize implementation of a graph-based entity resolution process and complete comparison metrics.
- Continue to refine and implement the Enterprise Integrated Data System's data model.
- Begin to translate the team's DataOps practices into a code base to enable scaling across the county.
- Continue to build out the data literacy program; finalize data week 2024 planning, continue to develop learning and microlearning opportunities, and plan for director level workshop.
- Complete minor updates to the governance processed based on lessons learned that were captured in the prior quarter.
- Ensure all documentation is up to date, solicit feedback on training and skill requirements for our data engineering work, and refine internal operating models to sustain this system and support staff training in these areas.

# OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

## Information Technology

**Allocation amount: \$10,000,000**

### Project description

The IT Department will partner with all business lines to develop and deliver solutions to technology needs resulting from the pandemic. By engaging with each line of business, IT is identifying numerous applications and technology solutions that will significantly advance the county's ability to deliver services digitally. Funds will support IT work in four areas:

#### **Improving the design and execution of health, public health, and relief programs**

Improvements include modernizing systems, automating manual transactions, and gathering and using data to make informed decisions to support public health and relief programs.

#### **Modernizing hardware and software**

Future Ready Hennepin includes working and delivering services remotely. IT seeks to ensure staff will have the necessary technology to work in any approved county location and residents will be served by upgraded hardware for new or updated service offerings and provided with additional technology for public use. A modernized technology infrastructure allows for greater agility and faster innovation.

#### **Protecting our critical infrastructure**

To help protect county and resident data, IT will need to ensure our hardware and software is as up to date and secure as possible.

#### **Modernizing business processes**

IT created new solutions to connect residents with health care and services during the pandemic. These solutions and the relief programs they support now need to be operationalized and improved so Hennepin County can continue to dedicate resources to provide care to impacted persons, improve health outcomes for residents and build a healthier environment for all.

### Progress narrative

Twenty-six projects have been identified in the areas listed above. Nineteen projects have begun spending pandemic response fund allocations and the other seven will use remaining funds by the end of 2024. Just over \$8.3 million has been spent as of June 30, 2024.

### Key performance indicators

Some notable accomplishments include:

- Modernization and migration to Azure for secure, cost-effective and environmentally responsible provision of services
- Backfile conversions that reduce offsite storage costs and make records more accessible to both the public and county employees. These efforts support decision making, data integrations, remote working, and resident services.
- Key valet for motor pool vehicles available at multiple locations

- Progress towards foster care referral system enhancements for initial placement matches with family whenever possible, and in-family foster care when relatives are not available. Children and Family Services has prioritized stability for children and youth.
- Training and review of ADA website design to make online material more accessible.
- Investment in continuous deployment tool to accelerate application deployment and manage complexity.
- Modernized central services equipment to respond to pandemic-related and other special printing and mailing needs.
- Partial funding of hardware placed in collaborative work centers to enhance hybrid workforce and service delivery capabilities.
- Purchase and installation of digital signage at the drop-off facilities in Brooklyn Park and Bloomington.
- Enhancements to workforce management system used by the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office

## Next steps

Prioritized projects continue to proceed through IT intake to coordinate resources and ensure efficient use of enterprise tools. Projects have been identified across all lines of business, and the remaining of IT pandemic response fund expenditures will occur in 2024.

# OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

## Information Technology: Community Connectivity

**Allocation amount: \$4,000,000**

### Project description

The IT Community Connectivity project aims to meet the growing need for high-speed broadband by establishing secure, reliable, and redundant high-speed broadband connections to county facilities and equipment. The project partners with the State of Minnesota, the Metropolitan Council, cities and school districts within Hennepin County, and other public agencies to share fiber assets and provide mutual benefits. This project supports critical public service program needs such as 911 dispatch, libraries, human services and public health regionalization and data redundancy. The project works closely with the Public Works line of business to leverage existing fiber infrastructure for traffic management programs, and to share fiber planning, funding, and maintenance services. This project is the backbone that provides the foundation for future expansion of the county's fiber infrastructure.

### Progress narrative

The Community Connectivity project has completed requisitions and purchases for the entire allocation:

- \$1.0 million to accelerate plans to connect county facilities to fiber.
  - \$617,880 for installation of fiber optic infrastructure along Lake Street from France Avenue to the Mississippi River. Metropolitan Council is managing the design, procurement, and installation of fiber along this corridor as part for the broader Metro B Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project. Once completed, the county will hold ownership of the trunk line fiber infrastructure and will lease strands back to Metro Transit for BRT operations at no cost.
  - 344,552 for materials, including fiber cable, to add to stock for future and ongoing projects.
- \$3.0 million with Public Works to increase fiber connections and expand the Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS). This includes:
  - \$523,325 spent for Server Infrastructure for the Video Management System (VMS) for the Traffic Management Center (TMC)
  - \$2,364,526 spent to add over 25 miles of fiber to connect 35 intersections
  - \$108,909 for purchase of wireless modem equipment for traffic signals not connected to county fiber (14 intersections)

### Next steps

This project was completed in Q1 of 2024.

# OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

## Voter Participation

**Allocation amount: \$5,312,000**

### Project description

The Elections Department will:

- Support a countywide voter registration campaign and an absentee voting education campaign, building on the successful absentee voter outreach campaign that was conducted in 2020. Investing in pre-registering voters prior to election day and in ensuring absentee voters do not make mistakes on their absentee voting materials is cost-effective. Processing voter registrations prior to election day saves in time and materials as compared to processing election-day registrations, and reduces wait times in polling places. Helping absentee voters complete their paperwork correctly the first time saves time and materials costs in avoiding the necessity of issuing replacement materials to correct mistakes.
- Upgrade poll book hardware. The poll book system is used in all polling places during every election conducted in the county. This system upgrade is critical to the county's ability to maintain useability of the poll book system and directly impacts the county's ability to administer accurate and secure elections.
- Replace the current central ballot scanners with new upgraded models. Absentee voting rates increased significantly in 2020 to approximately 70% of voters, compared to 30% in previous years, and is expected to remain high for upcoming elections. New upgraded central ballot scanners will enable the county to continue to effectively manage the increase in absentee ballots. New models feature hardware upgrades that improve the efficiency of ballot processing, ultimately supporting timely results reporting despite the larger volume of absentee ballots.

### Progress narrative

From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, Hennepin County Elections has continued to implement two key voter engagement strategies: establishing community partner contracts for voter engagement services and a tailored voter outreach media campaign focusing on registration and expanded voter eligibility.

The Elections Department contracted with 10 community organizations to conduct voter outreach work during the 2023 election cycle. Contract work began on May 15, 2023, and ended in November 2023. The organizations were directly selected through the Hennepin County community engagement roster program and were awarded up to \$10,000 each to conduct their work. The 2023 contracted organizations reached an estimated total of 106,000 people, of which 8,600 were face-to-face. The 2023 contracted organizations registered or pledged to register an estimated 4,400 people. Some of the work performed by the contract organizations include:

- Producing multilingual nonpartisan voter materials to distribute at outreach events
- Working with youth to create voter outreach graphics and social media content
- Creating election engagement videos
- Engaging students at community colleges about the importance of voting through events and class presentations
- Providing high school administrators with election toolkits
- Educating community members about expanded voter eligibility and felon voting rights
- Developing staff trainings on how to engage and assist voters
- Hosting candidate forums

- Registering and engaging voters around voter registration, absentee voting, and Election Day logistics

For the fifth year, Hennepin County Election is contracting with community organizations to do voter outreach. In December 2023, Hennepin County Elections selected 22 organizations to do voter engagement work from January to November 2024. The organizations were selected through the Hennepin County community engagement roster program and are awarded up to \$20,000 to conduct their work. The 2024 contract program started in advance of the presidential nomination primary on March 5, 2024. The organizations worked hard to engage Hennepin County residents on voting in the presidential primary. Organizations continue to prepare and engage voters ahead of the 2024 primary and general elections.

In 2024, Hennepin County is hosting a second contract program to provide individuals and organizations up to \$5,000 for creative one-time voter engagement events. The request for proposals opened on June 26 and closed on July 15. Proposals will be selected by August 1, 2024. Contract work will focus on preparing voters for the 2024 primary and general elections through creative outreach tactics.

During this reporting period Hennepin County Elections continued to work with an advertisement agency to conduct a media campaign focusing on voter registration, expanded voter eligibility awareness, and preparing voters for upcoming elections. The voter outreach campaigns are on multiple media channels including Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor, Google, and YouTube. The media campaign in 2023 focused heavily on expanded voter eligibility ahead of November local elections. In 2023, the advertisement campaign gained 1,384,070 impressions from June to November. Additionally in 2023 the advertisement agency put together a photoshoot of election equipment and community models. These photos are part of the 2024 advertisement campaign.

In 2024, advertisement campaigns have focused on preparing voters for upcoming elections. For the March 5 presidential primary, the Hennepin County Elections advertisement campaign gained a total of 1,412,450 impressions. For the Hennepin County Commissioner District 6 special elections on April 30 and May 14, the advertisement campaign gained a total of 91,390 impressions. The campaign will continue prior to the August 13 primary election and the November 5 general election. The campaign reach will expand to include print media, radio, and MetroTransit bus advertisements.

In April 2024, Hennepin County Elections sent a mailing to all households within Hennepin County Commissioner District 6 to promote the special primary and general elections for that office. The mailing was sent to 70,000 households and included information on the election timeline, absentee voting, and Election Day voting.

During this reporting period, Hennepin County Elections provided voter education at 65 in-person outreach events. Of those events, 41 were at Hennepin County Libraries, including nine libraries within District 6 prior to the special election. Other events and locations Hennepin County Elections staff attended include high schools, the Hennepin County Fair, Twin Cities Pride, the Special Olympics, Federation of the Blind, and more. At these events, staff provided residents with voter guides, handouts on voting in special circumstances, and translated voter outreach materials. Hennepin County Elections focuses outreach events in areas with low voter registration and turnout.

In 2023, Hennepin County Elections began hosting monthly community partner meetings to increase institutional knowledge, build trust, and provide space for collaboration. The meetings are open to all our community partners and have been well attended with between 10-45 attendees at each meeting. These meetings have continued in 2024 and have focused on helping partner organizations prepare their communities to vote in the 2024 elections.

During this reporting period, Hennepin County Elections has updated and created 13 outreach handouts. Each of these materials are translated into the five most used languages in Hennepin County (Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Russian, and Oromo) and are available on our website. Hennepin County Elections provides translated handouts at all in-person outreach events and ensures partners have access to the engagement materials.

## Key performance indicators

Hennepin County Elections evaluates the accomplishments of contracted organizations based on the following:

- How many people they talked to, or registered
- Materials developed, translated, distributed
- Media engagement
- Events held or attended, and materials shared
- Other quantitative or qualitative information or stories and other activities and accomplishments

Key performance indicators for Hennepin County Elections outreach and engagement efforts include:

- Increased institutional knowledge of election process among contracted organizations
- Number of community organizations Hennepin County Elections contacts and engages
- Number of toolkits developed, translated materials, and other voter education materials Hennepin County Elections produced and distributed
- Number of people reached through Hennepin County Election's targeted media campaign
- Number of trainings for community organizations and service providers

## Project feature

The 2023 contracted organizations reached an estimated total of 106,000 people, of which 8,600 were face-to-face.

## Next steps

In the next three months, Hennepin County Elections will continue voter engagement tactics aimed at increasing voter participation, especially among communities with high barriers to the election process.

The January–November contracted organizations will continue engaging their communities through a diverse set of tactics including in-person events, social media campaigns, and dispersing educational materials. Contracted organizations will submit a midpoint progress report in August detailing their voter engagement work thus far.

In July, Hennepin County Elections will review proposals for the \$5,000 creative voter engagement contract program. Contract work will begin on August 1.

Hennepin County Elections will continue to host monthly community partner meetings to foster collaboration, provide education, and increase trust in the elections process. The next three topics for the monthly meetings are voter registration drives, primary voting 101, and student voter outreach.

Hennepin County will continue work on the advertising campaign to ensure voters know what they need to vote in the state primary on August 13.

Hennepin County Elections will continue to do in-person voter education events through the summer and fall. Events will focus on communities who face the highest barriers to voting. Elections will also host an event in September during Disability Voting Rights week to demonstrate the accessible ballot marking machines. The event will be open to all community partners.

In September, Hennepin County Elections will prepare and send a postcard to all Hennepin County households encouraging participation in the November 5 general election. The postcard will include information on registration, absentee voting, and polling place locations.



Hennepin County

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