

# Hennepin County Progress Report

## Pandemic Response Projects

July – September 2023



<b>Executive summary</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Pandemic recovery funds</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Project inventory</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>CONNECTIVITY DOMAIN</b>	
Broadband and Digital Inclusion .....	6
<b>EMPLOYMENT DOMAIN</b>	
Employment Strategies .....	9
<b>HEALTH DOMAIN</b>	
Behavioral Health .....	15
Maternal Health .....	17
Public Health .....	21
Vaccine Incentives.....	27
<b>HOUSING DOMAIN</b>	
Housing Recovery.....	30
Services for People Experiencing Homelessness .....	33
<b>INCOME DOMAIN</b>	
Economic Recovery .....	39
Raise the Baseline — Empowering Families with Guaranteed Income.....	42
<b>JUSTICE DOMAIN</b>	
Anti-Hate Initiative .....	45
COVID-19-Related Court Backlog .....	47
Violence Prevention .....	49
<b>OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	
Countywide HVAC COVID-19 Response .....	51
Digital Experience.....	53
Engagement Services .....	56
Enterprise Integrated Data System .....	60
Information Technology .....	63
Information Technology: Community Connectivity .....	65
Voter Participation .....	66

# 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: connectivity, education, employment, health, housing, income and justice. 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 2023 through September 2023. 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: connectivity, education, employment, health, housing, income, and justice..
- 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 September 30, 2023. Projects that have expended their full allocation amount 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.

## **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, referrals for digital navigation services have continued to increase. A new supervisor has been brought on board and is focusing on process efficiency as well as hiring additional staff. Continuous improvement efforts include upgrades to the case management tool and increased device distribution partners and locations, notably two within Minneapolis neighborhoods with high rates of digital disparities. Negotiations with the additional device distributors operating in the county are underway. Expansions on successful partnerships continue including contracts with additional community colleges to ensure their students have adequate access to computers.

Thirteen community-based providers have contracts for digital navigation services. 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 collectively are providing services across the county and can provide digital navigation and support in multiple languages including but not limited to Spanish, Somali, and Hmong.

Analysis of data by EducationSuperHighway and Hennepin County indicates inadequate internet access to residents residing in affordable multi-dwelling housing. Based on the successful deployment of wireless infrastructure at Pursuit Hometel, a board and lodge facility, additional similar pilot projects are being explored with dual goals: ensure residents have home internet access. and gather insights for broader programming

or policy. During this quarter, negotiations with four additional residential facilities continued to provide Wi-Fi internet access; these organizations provide housing and supportive services to seniors and adults with disabilities who have low incomes. A Request for Proposal (RFP) was also 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 will close in November.

Work continues on outreach and promotion of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The target areas for this campaign will be communities with below average internet subscription rates, large numbers of eligible households, and lagging enrollment rates based on analysis of available ACP enrollment data. The county's media partner has developed creative concepts and a campaign strategy; channels include transit ads, minority-owned traditional and social media, direct mail, email, faith-based bulletins, and gas station and grocery store advertising. The campaign is scheduled to launch in the next quarter and run for six months.

An internet-safety public awareness campaign is also underway. Based on stakeholder interviews and market research conducted in the spring, a co-creation process with the Somali community will result in online ads, videos and an online safety resource hub in English and Somali. The content will include specific tips for youth, parents, and elders that are culturally appropriate and empowering.

The Minnesota State Office of Broadband Development released a draft Digital Opportunity Plan as part of the process established under the Digital Equity Act. Hennepin County hosted a local community feedback session at North Regional Library in North Minneapolis on September 21. According to the State, this was the largest in-person community gathering. The Office of Broadband and Digital Inclusion also submitted formal feedback to the State plan. That draft is currently being revised and will be the basis for Minnesota's digital opportunity programming.

## Key performance indicators

- 814 individual requests to support Hennepin County clients and library patrons were submitted to the digital navigation team. Referrals for this service continue to increase. The majority of these are in progress, with 8% complete.
- 241 residents were served during the period by the internal Digital Navigation team, who distributed 187 computers to residents in addition to other digital inclusion supports.
- Approximately 1,140 Hennepin County residents received digital navigation support or training and an estimated 2,800 people were engaged in broadband adoption or outreach activities through 13 contracted community partners.
- Two additional computer distribution locations, one in South Minneapolis and one in North Minneapolis, are planned to serve digital navigation clients through a contract with Free Geek.
- 191 phones are currently in use by Homeless to Housing program members.
- Partnerships with local community and technical colleges have been expanded, with additional contracts signed this quarter. These devices should be available to students later this year.
- 52,518 Hennepin County households are enrolled in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP).
- A promotional campaign for ACP subsidy that has been developed will run for approximately six months targeting areas with lower-than-expected enrollment rates.
- An online public safety awareness campaign is underway that includes co-creation of ads, videos, and a website with a resource hub.
- An RFP was developed to upgrade or install Wi-Fi internet infrastructure in multi-dwelling units that have existing Housing Support Agreements with Hennepin County.
- Hennepin County gathered feedback on the Minnesota State Office of Broadband Development's Digital Opportunity Plan. The county co-hosted a local community feedback session at North Regional Library in North Minneapolis on September 21 and submitted a formal comment to the State on September 28.

## Next steps

- Hire additional Digital Navigation staff to increase the team's capacity based on demand for service and to fill some recently vacated positions. At least one of the positions will Open an RFP to upgrade or install internet infrastructure in multi-dwelling units that have existing Housing Support Agreements with Hennepin County, and conduct an evaluation of responses.
- Implement Affordable Connectivity Program promotional activities.
- Finalize and launch online public safety awareness videos and other campaign materials.
- Make available additional computers for eligible students enrolled in community and technical colleges.

# EMPLOYMENT DOMAIN

## Employment Strategies

**Allocation amount: \$16,580,000**

### Project description

Sustainable employment can make a difference in people’s ability to pay for basic needs, bringing stability to individuals and families. This project aims to create and implement a number of 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, educational institutions, and the public workforce system are all critical partners in creating jobs and facilitating access to jobs that pay a livable wage and are in demand. 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 focus on:

- Partnering with the Housing Stability area to provide employment and training services that will supplement case management and housing-related supports for anyone who is interested in work, is 18 years or older and single (no dependents), is currently or recently experiencing homelessness. Services under this project include, but are not limited to, employment coaching, skills development through training and education, and assistance with placement and retention.
- Creating a consortia of workforce development providers that can provide just-in-time employment and training services leading to living-wage jobs by ensuring participants have the skills employers are seeking.
- Creating the Workforce Leadership Council (WLC) which is the platform the county will use to convene business partners for cross-sector sharing of ideas, promising practices and resources, and for cultivating strong partnerships to address pandemic-related economic hardships.

### 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 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 Centers 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 individuals they serve for readiness and interest in employment and training services. If a person is deemed appropriate and interested, 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.

Quarterly updates:

- New program coordinator has been hired and onboarded
- 155 total referrals to the program (03/01/22-09/30/23)
- 31 new referrals this reporting quarter
- PowerPoint program dashboard is in development
- New program referral training video is in development
- New SharePoint site with referral mechanism is in testing phase and will roll out for case managers and shelter advocates to use by the end of 2023
- Monthly case consultations continue

### **Workforce Development Roster Program**

In October 2021, the Hennepin County Board authorized \$10 million for career pathways programming as an employment strategy to address the unequal impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on certain Hennepin County communities, especially residents who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color. The strategy created a consortium of nonprofit organizations who can provide just-in-time employment and training services leading to living wage jobs by ensuring participants have the skills employers are seeking. To accomplish this, project staff planned, prepared, and facilitated the creation of the Workforce Development Roster Program. Additionally, a partnership was formed with the Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) to connect training graduates with living wage jobs. The chamber also works with the roster providers to both connect them to employers and to aid in ways to strengthen existing business relationships. Having a firm understanding of business needs ensures programs are created in a way that ensures participants have the most appropriate skills to be competitive in the workforce.

Quarterly updates:

- 18 Workforce Development Roster Program contracts and two MOUs have been executed to date.
- Three new contracts were finalized this quarter to support the 38th Street Youth Initiative that aims to provide career readiness and employment services to youth residing within a three-mile radius of George Floyd Square (38th St. and Chicago Ave., Minneapolis). The contracts are as follows:
  - \$62,500 with Bancroft
  - \$200,000 with Sabathani Community Center
  - \$137,500 with Smart North
- Two new RFPs were created and published for responses this quarter including:
  - Parent Re-engagement Pilot Program that aims to support non-custodial parents with employment and training services and supports. Contract negotiation is currently underway; expected start date for the pilot is November 1, 2023. \$225,000 has been allocated for this initiative.
  - Youth Gun Violence Prevention- Employment Strategy that aims to support youth ages 11-24. who have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and gun violence, through career readiness and employment service opportunities. A review of 39 proposals is underway; expected start date for the pilot is January 1, 2024. \$500,000 has been allocated for this initiative.
  - Workforce Development staff and assigned Contract Manager are meeting with each provider at least one time per quarter to discuss program progress and identify any barriers the providers are facing to fully execute their program.

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

The Workforce Leadership Council (WLC) is the platform the county uses to convene small to medium-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.

The WLC is a partnership between Hennepin County and small to medium-sized employers to better understand their challenges and needs and identify opportunities for innovation. By creating strategic business partnerships, we have a council that is aligned to meet industry demands. Through the collaboration of regional employers, business leaders, and other partners, we can exchange and share the experiences, know-how, and expertise necessary to then align resources and champion strategies that prepare residents for careers and meet employers' needs.

The members of the WLC have identified various pain points in employee attraction, recruitment, retention, and advancement; thus they have broken into three work groups to dig deeper to garner a better understanding of their challenges and opportunities for collective solutions. The purpose and focus of each work group is as follows:

1. The Technology Workgroup is focused on addressing the unmet technology needs of small to medium-sized businesses and its employees. For businesses this means assisting them in identifying appropriate technology solutions to enhance their business operations. For employees, this means gaining a better understanding of the essential technology skills needed for successful employment. The workgroup is exploring the feasibility/utility/use of a digital tool kit that could be offered through the Elevate Hennepin Platform. This tool kit would be focused on providing a comprehensive list of resources available to small businesses. The workgroup will also strategize with small businesses to understand the technology skills needed by their workforce.
2. The Talent Pipeline Workgroup is focused on building career pathways into roles experiencing current/projected shortages in the private sector with a focus on engaging small to medium-sized businesses. The workgroup is comparing and analyzing high demand, hard-to-fill occupations. The workgroup seeks to better understand the minimum qualifications pay scales skill requirements, etc., which will then create opportunities to expand a potential hiring pool. The information learned from this will not only benefit businesses but aid in creating pathways to build skills of residents. The Talent Pipeline Workgroup has engaged a local workforce development organization to implement two cohort programs of small to medium sized businesses. The two cohorts are focused on creating employment/career pathways for Mental Health Workers and Commercial Truck Drivers respectively. Findings and insights from this proposed intervention will inform how the WLC and the county approach the development of additional pathway programs.
3. The Barriers to Employment Workgroup is focused on helping small to medium-sized businesses be "employers of choice" by helping them identify and implement promising talent attraction and retention strategies. The Barriers to Employment Workgroup is currently planning a partnership with Elevate Hennepin to deliver cohort-based targeted programming to small to medium-sized businesses. This program would be focused on connecting businesses in the cohorts to teams of consultants/SMEs in human resources, compensation, budgeting, and finance, who can help the businesses develop implementable and scalable solutions. As part of this intervention, programming focused on financial wellness and asset building as well as potential financial subsidies that may come in the form of wages, childcare assistance, savings, etc., will also be offered to employees of businesses enrolled in the cohort. Staff will work closely with the program to ensure there are no unintended consequences for employees (e.g., impact on public benefits, etc.).

## Quarterly progress updates

### Mental Health Collaborative

**Diversifying the Workforce** — RealTime Talent (RTT) and Prosperity Ready created a proposal and presentation for the Mental Health (MH) Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) Employer Collaborative to explain what a custom TPM cohort could look like for the MH TPM team. RTT has asked Hennepin County to support the TPM initiative by funding the initial cohort to help MH employers diversify their workforce, fill positions, and provide quality wraparound services needed for employees in the MH industry.

**245 Training** — RTT continues to research and explore funding options to begin Phase 1 of 245 Training. Phase 1 includes working with Minneapolis College (MC), St. Paul College (SPC), and TPM employers to design curriculum/training that prepares future, newly hired, and current Mental Health Case Managers to receive training that aligns with MH DHS MN 245 Statutes. Minneapolis College is anticipating a grant that could support design and development of this program. A small group of TPM employers will support Phase 1 by providing feedback to MC and SPC. Phase 2 will include piloting and testing the program with TPM employers. Phase 3 includes implementing the program and standardizing the training statewide.

### **Public Works / Commercial Driver License (CDL) Collaborative**

**Business Metrics** — As the Public Works Collaborative continues to work through the TPM strategies, the employers have been interested in learning more about the “true cost” of the CDL Credential. Many employers are creating their own CDL training. Is this worth it? It’s a question the employers are posing, measuring, and determining ROI. The main pain point that has emerged through the TPM work is the CDL Certification costs.

**Back Mapping** — Back mapping to identify current sources of talent was completed in September.

**Skills-based hiring for employers** — The Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce (Chamber), 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. Three sessions are scheduled for the remainder of 2023. In January 2024, there will be a kickoff social for current and future skills-based practitioners; continued monthly day-long training sessions; and we will pilot monthly virtual community of practice sessions.

### **Employer/CBO partnership building**

- To better develop partnerships between employers and training partners, the Chamber hosted a networking event for businesses to meet one-on-one with representatives from community-based organizations in the Roster Program. A second event will be held in October.
- Chamber staff also continues to meet with employers who have unfilled talent needs to provide 1:1 consultation and introductions to community-based training providers. Staff send weekly emails to CBOs with details about these employer needs and make personal introductions to those who make the request.
- The Chamber has also created several educational workforce webinars for employers, with topics including best practices for building relationships with community-based organizations, how to support new Americans and refugees, and fair chance hiring.

### **Manufacturers Consortium**

The Minneapolis Regional Chamber hosted the second meeting of a Manufacturers’ Consortium in September after previously hosting a focus group January 25 and the first meeting May 24, 2023. In September, we continued to look at talent and workforce resources for manufacturers.

## Key performance indicators

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

Key performance indicators are:

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

Quarterly results data:

- 155 total referrals to the program (03/01/22–09/30/23)
- 31 new referrals this reporting quarter
- 108 participants are actively open. Employment and training statistics for open participants include:
- 18 have obtained full-time employment; eight obtained part-time employment
- 21 actively participating in training courses; five completed training courses
- Three enrolled in educational opportunities (GED or college)
- Nine currently attending Goodwill's work experience program; nine have completed the 8-week work experience program
- 47 cases have closed
- 24 closed without engaging in services
- 23 closed after engaging in services
- Five employed full-time
- Two employed part-time Three completed training courses
- 60 participants have obtained stable housing

Evaluation efforts include:

- Continue program and participant data monitoring and evaluation
- Ongoing discussion with implementing partners and Hennepin County management regarding data and long-term program sustainability needs

### **Workforce Development Roster Program**

Key performance indicators:

- Participants earn credentials and/or job skills
- Participants obtain employment
- Participants retain employment (retention captured at 3, 6, and 12 months)

Quarterly results data:

- No quarterly results data available to share currently. Contracts have been executed and providers are actively implementing programming. Providers are being set up with access to Workforce One, Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) case management system that will allow the county to easily access program data.

Evaluation efforts include:

- Program and participant data monitoring and evaluation
- Ongoing discussion with implementing partners and Hennepin County management regarding data needs and long-term program sustainability needs

### **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.
- In September, the Mental Health TPM Employer Collaborative defined the key business metrics that were agreed upon in August. The metric formulas have been created for the Employer Collaborative 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.

## Next steps

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

- Continue program coordination and management efforts (ongoing partner meetings, internal management meetings, support to providers and case managers)
- Plan for program sustainability (identify/obtain data, funding sources, etc.)
- Obtain program feedback from participants
- Continue to monitor quantitative and qualitative data and outcomes
- Roll out collaborative SharePoint site and new referral and ROI forms
- Complete initial program Power BI dashboard
- Expand referral source to additional adult homeless shelters
- Monitor program budget

### Workforce Development Roster Program

- Initiate remaining Roster program contracts
- Provide technical assistance and support to awarded providers
- Provide program monitoring and evaluation
  - Develop Power BI program dashboard
  - Monitor quantitative and qualitative program data
- Monitor program budgets

### Workforce Leadership Council (WLC)

WLC meetings and work groups continue to refine scope and purpose statements and to learn about potential solutions to their business needs.

- Employers will begin submitting business metrics in late October.
  - October 4 — Prosperity Ready will present their proposal to the MH TPM Employer Collaborative and identify immediate next steps to execute.
  - October 23 — Hennepin County will meet with their team to ensure that TPM funding can support the TPM cohort(s) for Prosperity Ready.
- Secure funding for 245 Training to begin Phase 1 of 245 Training development with customized training providers and TPM employers.
- MH employers: Guild Services, Touchstone Mental Health, Children's MN, M Health Fairview, Ramsey County, Fraser, and Avivo
  - Training Providers: *Augsburg University, Century College, Metropolitan State University, Minneapolis College, St. Cloud State, St. Kate's University, St. Mary's University, St. Paul College, University of Minnesota*
- RTT is working with employer co-chairs to determine how to best support the work.
  - Should TPM be identified as the framework that would help accelerate executing the common workforce plan, then Katie McClelland and Drive For Five Advanced Manufacturing co-chairs will be engaged to identify the appropriate sources to fund RTT's TPM involvement.

Dive deeper into the cost of CDL certifications (examples in-house versus third-party training costs, cost per credential). Share what the talent supply looks like based on Back Mapping results. Public Works employers: Hennepin County, City of St. Paul, City of Minneapolis

# 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

The 11 Behavioral Health initiative teams are on track to finish 2023 strong and ahead of expectations. All 11 Behavioral Health initiatives have reported a status of "On Track" to meet 2023 targets on or before the start of 2024. Three initiatives identified fixed targets to meet by the end of the project in December 2024 and have already met these overall targets. The remaining initiatives are working towards quarterly goals and continue to make marked progress. As we near the end of 2023, the related theme for this quarter is to continue quantifiable progress towards goals while at the same time focusing on sustainability.

In Q2 of 2023, the Expanding School Based Mental Health initiative had six proposals in negotiations with MN DHS in response to their School Linked Mental Health RFP (Request for Proposal). In Q3, those six proposals are now fully executed agreements that began on day one of Q3, July 1, 2023. Acquiring State funding was an accomplished objective of the sustainability plan. The Developing and Expanding a Network of Culturally Specific Mental Health Services initiative is wrapping up its contract by December 2023 and will have final impact reports to share by the start of 2024. The Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids initiative worked last quarter to partner with Hennepin County Public Health Department's Mental Health Center to enlist the participation of trained mental health staff with children's mental health screenings. This quarter, another goal is reached as Hennepin County Public Health Department's Mental Health Center is now holding time for CC4K diagnostic assessment referrals for children 6–18 years old. At the end of Q3, the Reforming 911 program began the planning phase of the Substance Abuse

and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Community Crisis Response grant to successfully launch its third Alternative Response Team (ART). The program received additional federal grant funding in Q2 to bring the additional team online, and in Q3 and Q4, worked to finalize agreements, ensure compliance, and equip staff, and secure vehicles. Piloting an In-Home Family Recovery Program partnered with an additional five new schools including the Robbinsdale Public School District. This program team also tracked 10 community engagement events led by Family Response and Stabilization Services providers.

## Key performance indicators

The 11 Behavioral Health initiatives have separate key performance indicators (KPI) based on their individual approaches to supporting the mental health needs of Hennepin residents. The quarterly KPIs reported in Q3, 2023 reflect that the following initiatives have met or exceeded their established project goal at this time: Expanding School Based Mental Health; Expanding the Embedded Police Social Worker Initiative; and Expanding Access and Hours at 1800 Chicago Initiative. Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids has completed 203 screenings within this reporting quarter. Launching a Juvenile Behavioral Health Initiative has initiated a Rule 20.01 Pilot that has received 16 referrals for youth engaged in delinquency court in Q3. Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services (FRSS) met Year 1 KPI of serving 100 families. Year 2 goal has two parts: (1) to track the approximate number of families calling for immediate escalation within 1 hour; and (2) to engage 40% of those families in stabilization services (this target is at 32% in Year 2 as of this report). The FRSS initiative is expanding service hours in Q4 that may help to meet target by the end of 2023. Piloting an In-home Family Recovery Program served 37 families in Q3 and assisted an impressive 90% of those families to stay together. The Launching a Mental Health Awareness Campaign has over 135 million media impressions. In Q3, there were 13 hands-on community engagements reaching over 3,500 Hennepin County residents.

## Next steps

Goals for Q4 of 2023 include:

- By December 31, 2023, the Sustaining Family Home Visiting initiative plans to complete full integration of the Coordinated Intake / Referral system for Hennepin County family home visiting that was in progress in Q3. Team building and training are underway, and a new system will be tested and adjusted during Q4 with full implementation by the end of the year.
- Goals for the Expanding Caring Connections 4 Kids (CC4K) initiative will be working to hire a new CC4K supervisor and an additional screener for a total of seven screeners.
- Expanding the Embedded Police Social Worker initiative will continue to explore ways to increase worker safety in the community and pilot ideas with staff embedded in the Minneapolis Police Department.
- The Expanding Family Response and Stabilization Services (FRSS) initiative is working towards several new goals in the final quarter of 2023 including service hours expansion, working on the Cope FRSS Child Crisis Response Project Charter, customization of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) clinical assessment tool for Hennepin County, and finally expanding school partnerships within Minneapolis Public Schools.
- The main Q4, 2023 goal for the Expanding School Based Mental Health initiative is to start the RFP process for school-based mental health contracts that will begin in July 2024.

# HEALTH DOMAIN

## Maternal Health

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

### 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

The contracted providers funded in the first phase of the initiative are continuing to deliver care and services in the community and make progress on expansion of maternal health programs and services. Many providers have focused on social determinants of health and connecting patients to supportive resources to address the full range of patient needs. Hennepin Healthcare (HHS) supported a series of training workshops aimed at equipping professionals in the field of infant mental health with the knowledge and skills needed to provide culturally sensitive and trauma-informed care. In the doula program, HHS saw significant improvements in the number of fully covered on-call doula shifts and onboarded an additional three to five doulas to the program. HHS continued its partnership with UCare and Open Arms of Minnesota to provide a cohort of 19 high-risk women nutritious meals during their pregnancies and for eight-weeks postpartum. HHS has also responded to increased patient food support needs through its food bag program, which provided 6,161 food bags last quarter. Additionally, HHS' East Lake Clinic held a staff retreat during the last quarter, which was the first of its kind since the clinic opened. Staff were retrained in trauma-informed care (TIC) principles and had time to reflect on TIC in their work. East Lake Clinic also began a 24-week 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 Center continued integration of clinical services and social services across the organization through revisiting intake processes, patient huddles, and assessments to ensure patients can holistically access the full range of NorthPoint services. NorthPoint additionally launched five series of Empowerment Group sessions geared toward people who are pregnant and

parenting. Roots Community Birth Center recently celebrated their eighth birthday and groundbreaking of their new birth center space. This last quarter, Roots conducted over 100 postpartum visits that covered topics of mental health, reproductive care, and chronic condition management.

To support expansion of programs within Public Health clinical services, a Reproductive Health Educator has provided navigation support and addressed reproductive health care needs for patients at the Red Door Clinic. This past quarter, walk-in pregnancy tests were made available five days per week along with increased support for reproductive health services, including reminder calls, pre-appointment education, and follow-up calls. The second clinical position supported through the initiative, a Maternal Child Health Nurse with Healthcare for the Homeless, addressed gaps in care and helped patients at the People Serving People clinic navigate maternal health resources and services.

### **Continuing community engagement process to create a birth justice strategic plan**

The second phase of the Maternal Health Initiative has wrapped up, which began with the formation of a Birth Justice Collaborative and culminated in the completion of a birth justice strategic plan.

Themes and strategies in the birth justice plan centered around five categories of action for improved maternal health in the Black and American Indian communities:

1. **acknowledge and address impacts of racism** by piloting a cultural parenting program with financial support for the first year after birth,
2. **advocate for and radically reform policy and payment for care delivery** by collectively pursuing a shared advocacy agenda,
3. **create culturally meaningful workforce pathways** by piloting a cultural advocate and navigator program for community members,
4. **enforce a coordinated system of anti-bias accountability** by designing and implementing an anti-bias report card program, and
5. **invest in a network of trusted cultural providers and resources** by establishing a community-endorsement process and a provider network

Over the last quarter, Family Health area staff have partnered with Collective Action Lab (CAL) and the Birth Justice Collaborative to refine plans for implementation of the birth justice plan. Additionally, Family Health area staff have partnered with communications to develop materials for sharing the process and results of the plan.

### **Implementing the birth justice strategic plan**

The final phase of the initiative launched and will center on implementing the birth justice plan. CAL and the Birth Justice Collaborative partners will lead implementation coordination and oversight, supporting a governance structure that oversees implementation of the plan.

## Key performance indicators

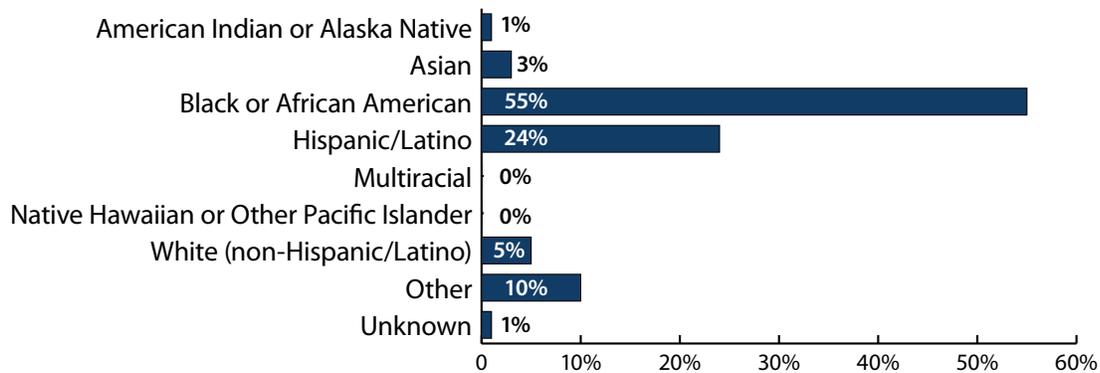
Over the last quarter, progress was made on expanding existing maternal health services and developing and investing in community-initiated solutions to reduce disparities:

### **Expand existing maternal health services**

- Number of individuals served through expansion of Public Health Clinical Services
  - 72 individuals served
- Total number of individuals served through contracted providers Hennepin Healthcare, NorthPoint Health & Wellness Center, and Roots Community Birth Center
  - 1,506 total individuals served

- Number of training and educational sessions offered, topics covered and attendance
  - One trauma-informed care training held
  - Three infant mental health trainings held
    - 12 childbirth classes and group sessions held
    - 699 community members and health care professionals attended trainings and classes
- Number of individuals receiving referrals to supportive resources
  - Food support resources
  - 19 high-risk pregnant and postpartum individuals enrolled in a meal program cohort to support food security
- 6,161 culturally congruent food bags distributed to patients experiencing food insecurity
  - 47 individuals screened via East Lake Clinic trauma screening tool and referred to trauma responsive supports
  - 412 referrals to social determinants of health resources including behavioral health, mental health supports, nutrition, dental, childcare, social work, and human services
- Number of visits completed with patients, including prenatal and postpartum OB/GYN, doula, and midwifery care
  - 534 visits with practitioners
    - 73 visits with Maternal Child Health Nurse
    - 49 doula visits

**Race and ethnicity of clients and patients provided services, July–September 2023**



Develop and invest in community-initiated solutions to reduce disparities

- Completed birth justice plan and implementation has begun
- Continued support of and collaboration with the Birth Justice Collaborative

**Data-informed decisions and evaluation efforts**

Throughout 2023, Family Health area staff have met quarterly with contracted providers to maintain regular communication about program updates, invoicing, and support needed from the county. Evaluation of the initiative is continuing with support from the Public Health Data and Assessment team, and the scope will focus on evaluating the process and short-term outcomes of the initiative. Short-term outcomes related to systems changes, community engagement and connections to key stakeholders for improving maternal health, and results of expanding services will be included in the ongoing evaluation of the initiative through 2024.

Additionally, Maternal Health Initiative staff connected with other initiatives to help guide improvements in internal data monitoring and surveillance of maternal and child health, particularly for Black and American Indian residents of Hennepin County. In the last quarter, connections included the Substance Use Disorder/Opioid Crisis team, Public Health epidemiology and informatics staff regarding developing a maternal opioid use indicator to include in the Health Trends Across Communities project, submitting for access to MN Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) data for exploration, and discussions with colleagues in human services and child protection.

## Next steps

Over the next few months, CAL and the Birth Justice Collaborative partners will lead implementation and oversight of the birth justice plan through a governance structure involving lead agencies for each strategy, strategy design groups, community advisory, professional advisory, as well as backbone communications and advocacy supports. Implementation officially began on October 3, bringing together the leadership coalition that is made up of community and professionals, into strategy groups for implementing the birth justice plan priority actions. Public Health staff are also involved and connected to strategy implementation to ensure internal learning that can be applied to our programs and services. Those in attendance got grounded in where the birth justice project has been and where it is in the process of going. The energized and passionate group viewed [Birth Justice Collaborative video](#) and reflected on its powerful call to action before engaging in a working session on implementation plans for advancing Black and American Indian maternal health and birth justice.

Strategy groups will meet regularly to refine work plans and budgets, design and implement pilot programs and services, and monitor and evaluate results. Plans will be vetted with a community advisory group for ongoing input. Additionally, contracted providers will continue to serve patients and clients in need of maternal health care, services, and supports.

# HEALTH DOMAIN

## Public Health

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

### Project description

This project focuses on rebuilding and strengthening critical public health capabilities and services that are essential to protect community health during the pandemic and in a post-COVID-19 era. 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-19 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 a year old, CBID continues to evolve and instill lessons learned. This past quarter, CBID helped maintain stable staffing levels in the Public Health Clinic and Healthcare for the Homeless sites to ensure delivery of HIV medications, continuous infectious disease screenings, syphilis treatment, and continuation of suboxone services. CBID also planned and executed six MPOX community events.

**Infection control in long-term care facilities (LTCF):** The LTCF Infection Prevention team piloted the CDC LHD Healthcare Associated Infection / Antimicrobial Resistance (HAI/AR) Strategy earlier this year, which began with a series of data strategy planning sessions that allowed the Long-Term Care Infection Prevention Coalition of Hennepin County participants to define key actions our community could collaboratively take to collect, use and share data, and propel local prevention efforts forward. The Antimicrobial Stewardship (AS) subcommittee within the coalition was created to advance the data collaboration strategies and identified immediate needs of LTCF infection preventionists for bedside AS implementation tools. Additionally, two capacity-building goals were identified: 1) decrease antibiotic treatment of asymptomatic bacteriuria when it is not indicated and 2) decrease the impact of prescribing pressure that healthcare workers experience from LTCF residents / families.

To achieve these goals, the subcommittee will launch a Urine Culture Stewardship and AS (UCx/AS) educational collaborative for LTCF clinicians, infection preventionists, and nursing staff based on Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality's framework and tool kit. Activities include:

1. Conducting a needs assessment to inform interactive webinars and capacity-building activities.
2. Offering a clinician-focused webinar describing recommendations to county, state and regional LTCF healthcare workers.
3. Developing a nursing / infection preventionist focused educational curriculum aimed at fostering nurses' ownership of their role in UCx/AS.
4. Developing a nonpharmaceutical "prescription" kit that healthcare workers can share with residents / families to provide a sense of empowerment and active management of a resident's change in condition if antibiotics aren't yet appropriate; inspired by Minnesota Department of Health's viral prescription pad.

### 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 within this capability include training staff to have knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform key incident management responsibilities. The Emergency Preparedness and Response Program is in the final stages of developing a self-paced incident management learning module that will be available to all staff in October. In addition to the self-paced module, additional learning modules will be released in October focusing on personal and family preparedness. Information on the modules and additional trainings were shared at the September all public health department staff meeting. A communication strategy has been developed to share training information with Public Health Department personnel.

### 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 healthcare, and increased access to dental care for youth without insurance. A second community RFP focused on reconnection to primary care, mental well-being, and other health promotion activities closed in September. Twenty applications were received, and award decisions will be determined in October. Additionally, a stipend fund pilot program was launched, which was modeled after the stipend program used during the COVID-19 response, and is aimed at meeting immediate needs of partners who are working on chronic disease prevention activities. By providing short-term support, the initiative aims to remove barriers to needed training, equipment, or other needs and increase the trust and collaboration between the team and community partners. The initiative will also support a Community Health Worker (CHW) HUB project with Pillsbury United Communities to expand access to CHWs in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center.

**Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP):** A collaborative RFP process was conducted among CHIP, the public health trauma informed team, and the Public Health Promotion program area. Between July 2023 and September 2023, this team launched the Community Led Well-being and Trauma-Informed grant. CHIP specifically is now funding nine grantees. The intent of this funding is to enable local organizations to lift up community-driven ideas and recommendations to strengthen communities, build relationships, and promote healing from individual and community trauma. The priority populations for this funding are applicants who serve communities impacted by racial disparities, such as Black, Indigenous, American Indian, Latin Americans, Pacific Islanders, and Asian American people; LGBTQ+ people; people with disabilities; people with low incomes; and non-U.S. born persons. Mid-point workplan updates due in January will provide information on progress and barriers.

**Age friendly:** The Public Health age-friendly coordinator and team continue to implement the countywide Age-Friendly Action Plan and are currently working to identify departments to partner with on age-friendly policy scans. The team was awarded an Age-Friendly Communities MN grant to conduct a feasibility study for the Community Aging in Place Advancing Better Living for Elders (CAPABLE) model. CAPABLE's goal is to help older adults age better at home with support from small home improvements and a coordinated care team. The study is underway and key informant interviews are in process. 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. Next steps include community engagement and financial analysis. The team is also working on a mini-grant process to support community partners in implementing activities focused on older adults. The application will launch in early 2024.

**Coordinate early childhood development strategies:** The early childhood coordinator continued progress on the pilot project with Family Home Visiting (FHV) and Family Stabilization Services (FSS) by providing technical assistance to the counselors making referrals and facilitating communication between the teams. The Parents As Teachers program in FHV had a full caseload in Q3 in part due to this pilot project. The FHV-FSS pilot falls under the Systems Coordination area of the early childhood strategic plan. A portion of the plan is included below:

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### **PRIORITY AREA: systems coordination**

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**GOAL:** Hennepin County will have a coordinated system for connecting families to services that match their identified needs and wants to promote early childhood development.

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#### **Performance measures**

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By March 31, 2024, increase the number of collaboration meetings between Human Services and Public Health.

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By December 31, 2024, increase the number of Hennepin County Human Services programs referring to Family Health Services from one to three.

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The coordinator also began working with the contract for the Washburn Center for Children Outreach program and the Strong Beginnings program. The coordinator's work with these programs helps ensure childcare programs are working together for the most vulnerable residents.

### **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. Data collection for SHAPE 2022 spanned May – November 2022. Data analysis is complete, and the results have been published and are available to the public.

**Increase planning and project management capacity:** Strategic Initiatives staff are continuing to enhance and expand health and racial equity efforts across the department and align with other county efforts. A departmentwide health and racial equity survey was developed to inform department priorities for training, communication, and other strategies to support employees in integrating health and racial equity efforts into their everyday work and was administered in October. Additionally, Strategic Initiatives staff are leading efforts to determine Hennepin County Public Health's (HCPH) role in violence prevention and in how it can best assist cities within Hennepin County that do not have their own public health department. Environmental scans were completed with stakeholders in both topic areas.

## Key performance indicators

Efforts are underway to meet all key performance indicators.

By December 31, 2023, 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.
- Partnered with the Baby Tracks team to plan and implement childhood immunization community events that occurred in September 2023.

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 healthcare setting. CPOs can cause invasive infections associated with high mortality, have limited antibiotic treatment options, can spread quickly throughout the healthcare setting, and can lead to significant and difficult to control outbreaks.
- Engagement of facilities in ICAR 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. This is also the observation of staff at the Minnesota Department of Health.

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 and is in the process of hiring a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Coordinator. A Training and Exercise Coordinator will be hired by the end of 2023.
- The Workforce Development Coordinator is developing four trainings and communication activities for department staff to meet staff training needs. This includes developing training for various skill sets and incident management positions and will be available in late fall 2023.

By December 31, 2023, 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 and are in the process of establishing a Power BI dashboard to track progress. Metrics include tracking initiative 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, and plans are in place to track forthcoming efforts for the second RFP with community partnerships.

By December 31, 2023, develop early childhood systems coordination strategic plan.

- The strategic plan was revised after feedback was shared from Family Health program staff.

By December 31, 2023, 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, and Hennepin County Library.

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

- The early childhood coordinator has been implementing service coordination activities, including building relationships across departments in Hennepin County including Human Services and Community Corrections and Rehabilitation.

## Next steps

### Prepare and respond to emergencies

- Focus on the continuous quality improvement cycle through implementation of the COVID-19 After Action Report Improvement Plan (IP) and associated activities.
- Develop the Integrated Preparedness Plan to include multi-year training activities and a comprehensive exercise plan, emergency response AAR IP activities, integration of the workforce development plan, workforce training needs assessment, and Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response strategic and operational planning activities.

### Prevent the spread of communicable diseases

- CBID will continue infectious disease screening in homeless and unsheltered populations. Planning is in process with community partner Native American Community Center to hold screenings at Little Earth in December.
- 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, and CBID may be deployed to increase staffing in the Public Health Clinic if cases increase.
- Continue to participate in containment-related activities with the Minnesota Department of Health to prevent the spread of antibiotic resistant organisms at affected facility.
- Finalize plans to provide educational activities to infection preventionists and clinician staff to promote antibiotic stewardship.

### Promote healthy communities and healthy behaviors

- Identify awardees for the second Chronic Disease Prevention RFP and implement contracts.
- Partner with new staff across the county to build out mental well-being initiatives and activities.
- Continue to manage and monitor four contracts funded by the joint RFP with CHIP.
- Complete the pilot phase and evaluate the pilot community stipend program focused on health promotion priorities with a goal of increasing community partnerships and removing barriers to accessing needed education, equipment, and resources.
- Implement the CHIP Trauma Informed survey with CHIP collaborating organizations.
- CHIP's community mental well-being action team will share their work on becoming trauma informed with the housing action team. A combined visioning session is planned for late fall.
- The CHIP housing stability team will revise its vision to focus on social connectedness among residents to better reflect community-led ideas.
- Complete the feasibility study on the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing program CAPABLE (Community Aging in Place).
- Develop a cross-departmental panel to discuss Age-Friendly Hennepin and educate on why the associated work matters.
- The early childhood coordinator will gather stakeholders in Hennepin County to finalize the early childhood systems coordination strategic plan.

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

- Continue to disseminate SHAPE 2022 findings to internal partners, community partners, and residents, with upcoming presentations to the University of Minnesota students / Hennepin-University Partnership (HUP) members, Twin Cities Research Group, NorthPoint Health & Wellness staff, and the Metro Public Health Analysts Network group.
- Advance health equity work by identifying additional training needs through the health and racial equity assessment.
- Move the city-focused work forward by completing a stakeholder map, a communication plan, and a general framework for evaluation.

# HEALTH DOMAIN

## Vaccine Incentives

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

### Project description

Hennepin County Public Health's (HCPH) 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. By partnering with communities that have historically experienced medical exploitation, experimentation without consent and marginalization, authentic relationships are built, leading to decreased vaccine hesitancy. 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.
- Hosting a lottery program.
- Other incentives for individuals who get vaccinated as appropriate.

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 was 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 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.

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 and July, and the next round will occur in October.

In July 2023, 35,642 total reminder letters were sent to 14,391 6- to 20-month-olds; 9,492 5-year-olds; and 11,759 15- to 16-year-olds. These letters included a list of low-cost clinics for the seven-county metro area that ImmuLink serves, the “Are Your Kids Ready” brochure that features the childhood and adolescent immunization schedule, instructions on how a guardian can request their child / adolescent’s immunization record, and how to opt out of future mailings.

**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.

**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.

**Community-based immunization clinics:** A series of community-based immunization clinics were piloted starting in April of 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. The initial target population was children birth to six years old and was expanded to birth to 18 years starting the third quarter of 2023. Building on the success of the clinics offered earlier in the year, in August and September 2023, HCPH partnered with Odam Medical to provide vaccination clinics to the expanded age group.

The Baby Track Community Health Workers worked with community partners to spread the word about these community-based immunization clinics. These partners included schools, day cares, food shelves, religious organizations, and community organizations to name a few. For the August and September clinics, the below post card was distributed in the community. The post card was also in Spanish and Somali.

## Key performance indicators

Hennepin County Public Health’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic included significant efforts to provide vaccines to communities. HCPH partnered with Odam Medical to provide vaccination clinics to children ages 0 to 18 years:

- August 2023: 20 children received vaccines, with an average age of nine and 81 vaccines provided.
- September 2023: Four children received vaccines, with an average age of seven and 17 vaccines provided.

The Babytracks team also partnered with Public Health’s Community-Based Infectious Disease response team (CBID) to increase vaccination rates with the following results:

- CBID completed nine vaccine clinics at six shelters within Hennepin County
  - These shelters included: Homeward Bound, People Serving People, Agate - First Covenant, Agate - “510” building, YouthLink, and Simpson Shelter
- CBID distributed 71 \$10 Target gift cards to vaccine recipients
- Of the 80 individuals that were vaccinated:
  - 12 received the COVID-19 monovalent primary series (either initiating or completing the series)
  - 45 received the COVID-19 bivalent booster
  - 45 received the quadrivalent influenza vaccine

## Next steps

### Reminder / recall immunization efforts:

- Round one 2023 mailings occurred in April, round two mailings occurred in July, and the round three mailings are planned for October.

### Childhood immunization marketing campaign:

- HCPH will take campaign performance metrics and lessons learned into account in determining whether to launch another marketing campaign later in 2023.

**Immunizations protect babies from serious diseases, like whooping cough.**

Contact your primary care provider or reach out to Hennepin County.

**612-348-8900**  
[hennepin.us/immunizations](https://hennepin.us/immunizations)



**Las vacunas previenen brotes de enfermedades y mantienen a los niños protegidos.**

Comuníquese con su proveedor de atención primaria o comuníquese al condado de Hennepin.

**612-348-8900**  
[hennepin.us/immunizations](https://hennepin.us/immunizations)



# HOUSING DOMAIN

## Housing Recovery

**Allocation amount: \$46,000,000**

### Project description

The economic impacts of COVID-19 were felt most heavily by people with low incomes, and by Black and Indigenous people 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 already 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 allocation, Housing and Economic Development (HED) has been programming funds through its program components: Affordable Housing Development Accelerator, Homeownership, NOAH Preservation, Pandemic-Related Cost Increase, and Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing. As noted earlier, staff have implemented policies to drastically shorten the development process to meet funding requirements, and more importantly to open doors faster.

In July through September of 2023, staff executed funding agreements for two (2) projects to create 125 affordable housing units. These agreements totaled \$3,800,000 in pandemic recovery funding.

- Housing recovery component: Affordable Housing Development Accelerator
  - Emerson Village (Beacon Interfaith): new construction of 40 supportive housing units in Minneapolis; 32 affordable to incomes at or below 30% AMI and eight affordable at or below 50% AMI; 12 for families involved with Hennepin County child welfare.

- Whittier Community Housing (CommonBond Communities): preservation and rehabilitation of 85 housing units with project-based Section 8 assistance; four units for households with incomes at or below 30% AMI and 41 at or below 50% AMI; 19 large family units.

In total, HED has executed funding agreements for 21 of the 35 projects, which will create or preserve 2,037 units of affordable rental housing, and create 35 homeownership opportunities. The signed agreements total over \$25 million in pandemic recovery funding.

Program component	Number of project awards	Award amount	Project agreements executed	Funds encumbered	Affordable units funded
Affordable Housing Accelerator	18 projects	\$27,666,076	9 projects	\$17,135,514	711
Homeownership	7 projects	\$3,328,000	3 projects	\$1,400,000	39
NOAH Preservation	5 projects	\$4,905,924	4 projects	\$4,605,000	986
Pandemic Cost Increase	5 projects	\$2,000,000	5 projects	\$2,000,000	340
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>35 projects</b>	<b>\$37,900,000</b>	<b>21 projects</b>	<b>\$25,140,514</b>	<b>2,076</b>

The remaining \$8.1 M is allocated to Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing acquisition and rehabilitation. As of the end of September 2023, HED:

- Released an RFP for an SRO developer for the Aqua City Motel site
- Executed purchase agreements for the University Inn and Metro Inn Motel
- Neared 90% completion of rehab and conversion scopes for the University Inn and Metro Inn Motel

Since inception, HED has expended over \$4.3 million on SRO acquisition and rehabilitation, and nearly \$17.5 million on pandemic recovery contracts.

## Key performance indicators

### Financing goals

Housing Recovery goals were to finance the creation or preservation of 2,000 rental housing units, and 100 homeownership opportunities, while meeting the county’s ongoing goals to maximize affordability. HED surpassed the rental goal with funding awards to multi-dwelling projects containing 2,810 affordable units, including pending SRO units, and is close to the homeownership goal with 77 units.

### Affordability goals

Current progress is also surpassing the county and HRA’s affordability goals and has not changed since the last quarter.

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

- Outcome: 27% 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: 74% 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% AMI.

- Outcome: 33% of homeownership opportunities financed through Housing Recovery are anticipated to be affordable at or below 60% AMI

## 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 (October 2022 through September 2023)		
Pandemic recovery-funded	13	1,1476
Projects without pandemic recovery funding	6	340
Total	19	1,816

## 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 October-December 2023

- At two SRO properties: complete rehabilitation, execute sales and begin lease-up
- Complete additional improvements on remaining SRO properties
- Identify planned projects that will not meet encumbrance and expenditure deadlines; rescind awards and competitively re-award remaining funds to the above program components
- Negotiate and execute four funding agreements:
- Wangstad Commons, 54 units of affordable housing in Brooklyn Center
- Union Park Flats, 60 units of affordable housing in Saint Louis Park
- Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, four homeownership opportunities converted from tax-forfeited lots in Minneapolis
- Harrison Townhomes, 17 homeownership opportunities in Minneapolis
- Expend \$3.6 million
- Continued outreach to all funded projects to confirm all will close by 12/31/2024

# HOUSING DOMAIN

## Services for People Experiencing Homelessness

**Allocation amount: \$36,070,000**

### 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

#### Board and lodge capital improvements

- Pursuit Hometel:
  - Monthly check ins were held with the provider to ensure that their projects remain on track to finish within the funding timeframe.
  - The bids for the outdoor landscaped space were completed so that the contract for this work could be signed, allowing work to begin next quarter.
  - The project team is working to resolve barriers that have come up with the air conditioning installation.
- Clifton Place: Work continues with the building renovation.
- Missions Lodge: This quarter they completed the schematic design review and pricing phase for its renovation work.
- Cullen Homes: The deck was installed while the AC installation for the building has been in the city's permit process.

## Housing-focused case management services: Homeless to Housing

Overview of program:

- Housing-focused case managers and case aides begin rapport building and outreach upon assignment to a new person experiencing homelessness.
- Once connected, the case manager provides housing-focused case management using a trauma-informed lens and person-centered approach.
- These teams work with people experiencing literal homelessness both in sheltered and unsheltered settings.
- Goal plans are created with clients that include obtaining vital documents, locating safe, affordable, and desirable housing while connecting clients with available resources and subsidies.
- Case managers help house clients and then work to stabilize them in their new homes with wraparound services and supports.
  - At the same time, case aides complete housing readiness tasks (obtain vital docs, deliver move-in kits, tour apartments) with clients.

Overview of program improvements and progress made this quarter:

- Person-centered and trauma-informed approach to case management.
- Streamlined onboarding process.
- Solicited feedback from staff, community partners, clients (former and current), and other county departments to ensure continuous improvement.
- Staff continued to expand, organize, and streamline the building and delivery of move-in kits for clients in our storage units; this includes a new culturally appropriate hair care option.
- Two case aides have partnered with Minneapolis Public Housing Authority to support them in helping clients housed with an Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) to recertify and maintain housing.
- Continued to staff up and stabilize workforce to continually sustain a full team, ensuring that the team is utilizing all available FTEs at all times.
- Established ongoing meetings between line staff and Coordinated Entry Priority List Managers and with Eligibility Supports for better communication and cohesion to better support both staff and clients.
- Training three existing case aides to be MNsure Assessors for the team — this will help streamline services and create further efficiencies.
- 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.

### 24/7 shelter

- Four agencies have funding to operate 24/7 emergency shelter for single adults (18+ without dependents) —Catholic Charities (Higher Ground Shelter), Salvation Army (Harbor Light Shelter and the Women's Only shelter), Agate (510 and First Covenant Church Shelters), and Simpson Housing Services (Simpson Shelter).
- Funded programs have been at 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.
- Funded programs continue to correctly enter their data into the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).
- Funded programs are changing some of their policies and practices to ensure all beds aren't only spoken for, but also being used every night.

## Low-barrier shelters: Avivo Village and AICDC Homeward Bound

### Avivo Village

- Continuing to work with staff at Avivo Village to ensure shelter access is equitable, and that quickly moving people into housing is a priority.
- Avivo Village experienced a fire, which took seven beds offline. They temporarily sheltered guests of impacted units at a hotel.

### AICDC Homeward Bound

- Continue to work with staff at AICDC Homeward Bound to ensure accurate data quality.
- Shelter continues to be at capacity every night
- This program is managed by an Indigenous organization and is targeted to people who identify as Native American and offers culturally-specific services.

## Eliminating self pay at Harbor Light Center

- Harbor Light Center continues to shelter all guests without requiring payment.
- Harbor Light Center completed renovations of their 2nd and 3rd floors of shelter (using State of Minnesota capital improvement funding), which included their men's emergency housing program.
- 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 has been in operation for nine months.
- The county recently added \$450,000 to budget to add five FTEs to their team with the goal of eliminating voicemails, reducing wait times, and adding Spanish-speaking staff.
- Hennepin Shelter Hotline has posted the positions
- Changed service area lead overseeing this program and contract, resulting in addition of weekly meeting with Hennepin Shelter Hotline's program manager.
- Service area lead and Hennepin Shelter Hotline staff provided feedback on HMIS drafted diversion report.
- Hennepin Shelter Hotline reported an increase in new Americans / asylum seekers needing shelter—expressed challenges in serving this new population and needing to adjust service delivery in order to meet the emerging need.

## Encampment response: Streets to Housing

- Streets to Housing continues to make a significant impact in the landscape of unsheltered homelessness. Leading with a Trauma Informed approach, housing-focused services Streets to Housing spends time working in encampments and other known locations to conduct housing assessments and triage for benefits and other mainstream resources, healthcare, and support to access shelter or other safe, appropriate alternatives to sleeping in places unmeant for human habitation. Engagements occur at encampments and other known locations and is transparent and posted here: [Help for unsheltered homelessness on Hennepin.us](https://www.hennepin.us/help-for-unsheltered-homelessness)
- Streets to Housing along with another Hennepin County Planning Analyst facilitating an 'unsheltered' case consultation that focuses on households with open referrals, households that are new to unsheltered homelessness, families, and other special sub-populations to ensure coordination and non-duplication of services. This case consultation will also provide a real time opportunity for data quality to ensure data in HMIS is accurate and up to date. This service coordination meeting will also review the various encampments to ensure full coverage and reduce duplication of street outreach teams.

## Key performance indicators

### Board and lodge capital improvements

- The first of the capitably funded projects was completed on August 25, 2023.
- A deck space was built at Cullen Homes for residents to gather outdoors.
- Housing- focused case management services: Homeless to Housing The team has been tracking consistent data points since launching the team.
  - Number of clients housed, numbers of vital docs obtained, stats on recidivism (return to homeless response system after housing), maintaining equitable housing outcomes by race, client satisfaction.
- 50 people housed during this reporting period
  - 66% of clients identify as people of color and 65% of people housed identify as people of color (statistically equitable)
  - 81% of clients have photo ID at closing, 62% have SS card, 83% of client satisfaction surveys have been positive, 96% of those housed are not back in the homeless response system currently.
- Data is reviewed bi-weekly to ensure positive progress and to make program adjustments and invest in continuous improvement.
- Evaluation: the team reviews client surveys quarterly and there was a University of Minnesota Capstone project conducted on the effectiveness of the model.

### 24/7 shelter

- 730 people used shelter
- 359 people left shelter
  - 19% (50% when excluding missing / don't know data) of people who left had a positive exit:
    - 10 exited to a permanent destination, 10 to an institutional setting, and one to a non-homeless setting
  - 25 people returned to homelessness, two people died, and 311 people were missing data

### Low-barrier shelters: Avivo Village and AICDC Homeward Bound

#### Avivo Village

- 120 people used shelter
- 32 people left shelter:
  - 53% of people who left had a positive exit, nine exited to a permanent destination, one to an institutional setting, and seven to a non-homeless setting
  - 13 people returned to homelessness, 1 person died, and 1 person was missing data.
- Among people who left shelter, 16 people used shelter for less than 183 days, 10 people used shelter for 183–365 days and six people used shelter for more than 366 days

#### AICDC Homeward Bound

- 125 people used shelter
- 75 people left shelter:
  - 36% of people who left had a positive exit, 17 exited to a permanent destination, four to an institutional setting, and six to a non-homeless setting
  - 11 people returned to homelessness, one person died, and 36 people were missing data
- Among people who left shelter, 13 people used shelter for six days or fewer, 32 people used shelter for 7–30 days, 27 people used shelter for 31–182 days, and three people used shelter for more than 183 days

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

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

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

- 2,249 households were served (3,718 individuals and 2,551 occurrences)
  - 1,558 single adult households served
  - 691 family households served
- 431 (17%) occurrences were successfully diverted

### **Encampment Response: Streets to Housing**

- 583 unduplicated households served
  - 320 or 55% identified as male
  - 250 or 43% identified as female
  - 57 or 10% were between 18 and 24 years old
  - 188 or 32% were between 25 and 34 years old
  - 175 or 30% were between 35 and 44 years old
  - 40 or 7% were between 55 and 61 years old
  - 16 or 3% were 61 years or older
  - 241 or 41% Black or African American
  - 137 or 23% Indigenous
  - 138 or 24% White
  - 48 or 8% Multiple Races
  - 474 or 81% Non-Hispanic
  - 58 or 10% Missing / Refused
  - 47 or 8% Hispanic
  - 302 or 52% reported a mental health disorder
  - 91 or 16% reported a physical health disorder
  - 117 or 20% reported a chemical health disorder (drug, alcohol or both)
  - 33 or 7% reported a chronic health condition
  - 63 or 11% reported fleeing domestic violence
  - 400 or 67% met the definition of chronic homelessness
- 244 exits to date (since August 2022): Streets to Housing has exited 140 exits to permanent destinations, 89 exits to emergency shelter from unsheltered locations

## **Next steps**

### **Board and lodge capital improvements**

- Pursuit Hometel: The Hennepin County project team continues to conduct monthly check ins so that the bathroom and laundry room renovations remain on track for completion and the obstacles to AC installation are successfully resolved.
  - The construction of a landscaped outdoor space will begin.
- Missions Lodge: Construction work for renovations will begin next quarter.

### **Housing-focused case management services: Homeless to Housing**

- The next few months will be busy for the Homeless to Housing program.
  - A new team (one supervisor and 11 social workers) will be hired and onboarded.
  - This new team will specialize in working with and housing families directly from the Hennepin County shelter system.

### **24/7 shelter**

- Will continue to monitor performance measures to ensure progress is moving in the right direction.
- Will continue to provide technical assistance for entering housing outcomes and other data in HMIS as needed.
- Will rethink policies that impact the Adult Shelter Connect and how people access these shelter beds to better accommodate people moving through a 24/7 system.

### **Low-barrier shelters: Avivo Village and AICDC Homeward Bound**

#### Avivo Village

- Will update Avivo Village's contract and performance measures to reflect their current practices.
- Will finalize the new prioritization tool to identify people interested in shelter.
- Will start working with leadership to more closely partner with Adult Shelter Connect and more efficiently use all shelter beds in the system.
- Will monitor seven beds that are still offline to ensure quick repairs and future utilization.

#### AICDC Homeward Bound

- Will monitor Homeward Bound's performance measures to ensure progress is moving in the right direction.
- Will provide technical assistance for entering case management and exit destination data in HMIS to reduce the amount of missing data.
- Will start working with leadership to more closely partner with the Adult Shelter Connect and more efficiently use all shelter beds in the system.

### **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 continue to develop the diversion report that will have more data points and show how diversion impacts the entire shelter system.
- Will monitor the impact of the five new FTEs.
- Will focus on reducing call times when caller has no alternative solutions to shelter.
- 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.

### **Encampment response: Streets to Housing**

- Continue to strategize and be responsive to unsheltered households in the current landscape of encampments being closed quite quickly, making 'encampment engagement events' less feasible; however, the Streets to Housing team continues to be creative and solution focused to engage with highly mobile households.
- Increase partnerships with day service locations to coordinate housing solutions and services for households with open referrals.
- Work towards purchasing a van for the team.

# INCOME DOMAIN

## Economic Recovery

**Allocation amount: \$19,000,000**

### 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 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 Department has executed concurrent 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

To date, Housing and Economic Development has allocated or awarded \$16.5 million of the allocated \$19 million.

#### **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, 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, generating measurable results in our ability to reach and serve entrepreneurs from specific cultural communities and business owners of color.

Highlights include:

- Expansion of the network of business advisors under contract to provide no-cost technical assistance and specialized expertise now includes a total of thirty-nine (39) organizations
- Certified Access Academy, cohort-based program to build capacity among women business owners of color to contract with government and corporate entities
- CEO Now, new cohort-based training for growth-minded businesses to build systems and scale
- CEO Start, new cohort-based training for entrepreneurs at the idea stage
- Elevate Tech Essentials, offering training and support to meet small businesses' technology needs and help tackle the digital divide among many microbusinesses
- Elevate Hennepin Construction Advising providing technical assistance for smaller scale local construction businesses, with an emphasis on providing support 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)

### **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.

Consistent with program objectives, 79% of program funding was awarded to projects in low-income communities or communities of color. As of third quarter 2023, five (5) of the 18 projects have closed on financing and are under construction.

### **Economic mobility-focused recovery strategies**

Housing and Economic Development has implemented two innovative initiatives to advance economic mobility. Hennepin County teams collaborated with Economic Supports and other departments to plan the 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 evaluation work is underway and gathering insights into participants' lived experience as they begin the pilot program.

In July 2023, a feasibility study was completed that explored national models and the readiness of the local landscape to create or expand social impact investing, assessing current needs and promising strategies for activating private capital among local investors to support local small business growth. The study concluded that the small business ecosystem in Hennepin County and the broader metropolitan region has seen improvements in access to financing over the past five years, yet significant gaps remain for entrepreneurs, especially entrepreneurs of color, women, and LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs. Recommendations include establishing a well-connected tiered system of small business capital and building a locally-based high net-worth investor network to provide ongoing impact investment education, vetted investment opportunities, and foster relationship building among investors and capital seekers.

## **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.

Actual results indicate that Housing and Economic Development's multi-faceted Economic Recovery strategies have supported a total of 2,256 businesses and stimulated investments valued over \$122,000,000 in low-income communities and communities of color, vastly exceeding our goals.

Since the launch of Elevate Hennepin, results include:

- Over 1,925 businesses have accessed 16,941 hours of one-on-one technical assistance, “back-office” support, and cohort-based learning opportunities

Housing and Economic Development quarterly tracks the demographics of entrepreneurs and small business owners who access Elevate Hennepin consulting and one-on-one advising. Demographics from the most recent quarter shown below suggest that outreach efforts among communities of color and other disadvantaged groups are having an impact.

From April 2022 – June 2023 (note that June 2023 is the most recent reporting period that outcomes data are available)

- 91 entrepreneurs received technical assistance to help their businesses launch
- \$10.6 million financing provided to Hennepin County businesses resulting in 256 jobs

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

- Over 315,000 square feet of affordable commercial space
- 522 business incubation/startup/innovation spaces
- 30 longer-term affordable commercial spaces, including 18 ownership opportunities
- Creating or retaining over 760 jobs
- Generating \$206 million of total investment value

Over 160,000 of nonprofit and community space for five nonprofits

- Creating and retaining over 200 jobs
- Supporting economic recovery services for 12,000 community members
- Generating \$67.7 million in total investment value
- CII projects in low-income communities and communities of color will provide:
  - Direct capital investment of \$7.9 million (or 79% of program capital)
  - \$122 million in total investment value

## Next steps

In the next quarter, Housing and Economic Development will focus efforts on the following strategies within the Elevate Hennepin portfolio:

Targeted programming to support talent recruitment and retention, including increasing entry level pay to a living wage (in collaboration with the Office of Workforce Development)

Continued outreach among communities of color, with particular emphasis on reaching Asian, American Indian, and Hispanic/Latinx entrepreneurs.

Advancing a new strategy to improve capital access among Hennepin County entrepreneurs and small businesses

# INCOME DOMAIN

## Raise the Baseline — Empowering Families with Guaranteed Income

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

### 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 175 very low-income Hennepin County residents with dependent children under age 5. A pool of potential participants was 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

- This quarter 165 families enrolled in the pilot. By September 30, 140 families had received payment.
- Updated pilot features were finalized including pilot population, payment structure and length of program. Disbursement amount and timelines have been finalized and a pool of families meeting pilot eligibility requirements was created.
- Customer Relationship Management tool to provide work direction and case management tracking has been created and tested. Staff were trained in use of the tool. The tool will continue to be built out for the upcoming phases of the pilot. The IT Strategic Alignment department plans to highlight the project in upcoming recognition opportunities including regional and national awards.
- Analysts explored individual benefits loss mitigation strategy via the creation of a tool to look at the interaction of public assistance benefits and pilot payments. A loss mitigation tool has been completed and staff determined timing of payments. The tool was tested with Human Services Representatives and case-specific adjustments were made as needed. The pilot is timing monthly payments to minimize the impact on SNAP benefits and reporting requirements. The loss mitigation calculations are included as part of the Customer Relationship Management tool.
- County Attorney and Privacy Officer consultation continued as needed to explore needs related to participant disclosure, consent, data sharing with evaluators, etc.

- US Bank issued ReliaCards to families who have completed enrollment. A test ReliaCard was created so staff could test the participant experience.
- 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 can make an informed decision about participation. Several individuals consulted with our Human Services Representatives regarding benefits impact and / or with Prepare + Prosper regarding tax implications.
- Families who choose to participate are enrolled in the program and receive their ReliaCard. All families activated their ReliaCard successfully.
- Project for Pride in Living (PPL) is in the process of hiring staff to offer supportive services to pilot participants.
- 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 results of this work will guide administrative study of the health utilization impacts of the pilot.
- The Hennepin-University Partnership's Hennepin Collaborative Research Assistant Anna Bokun is developing 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. Bokun's work with Hennepin County is continuing during the fall semester.
- The Improve Group, the pilot's contracted evaluator, revised the evaluation plan in response to changes to the pilot. 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.

## Key performance indicators

- Number of families participating:
  - 165 families fully enrolled
  - 15 families declined to participate
  - Final enrollment date is October 10, 2023
- Payment:
  - Percent of payments received on time: 100%
  - Percent with accurate payment amount: 100%
- Evaluation measures will be available when we begin participant surveys

## Next steps

- Families will continue to enroll in the pilot through mid October.
- Families interested in joining the pilot will receive an individualized benefits comparison statement so they can make an informed decision about participation. Individuals have the opportunity to consult with our Human Services Representatives regarding benefits impact and / or with Prepare + Prosper regarding tax implications.
- Families who choose to participate will be enrolled in the program and will receive and activate their ReliaCard.
- Enrolled families will be offered supportive services through PPL.
- Customer Relationship Management tool to provide work direction and case management tracking will continue to be built out for the upcoming 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.
- The Hennepin-University Partnership's Collaborative Grant work will guide administrative study of health utilization impacts of the pilot.
- University of Minnesota Sociology Ph.D. candidate Anna Bokun will complete her recommendations for a quantitative evaluation of Raise the Baseline, advising the county on how to leverage existing administrative data to evaluate this program.
- The Improve Group will finalize all evaluation tools. They will begin outreach to participants who are interested in being involved in the evaluation. Participants will share feedback through surveys, interviews, and art-based methods. The contractor will conduct focus groups with frontline staff and with staff who plan and manage the pilot. They will begin analysis on findings from the first round of data collection.
- Families will receive monthly payments they can use to meet their family's basic needs and plan for their future.

# JUSTICE DOMAIN

## Anti-Hate Initiative

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

### Project description

The Anti-Hate Initiative supports community providers in raising awareness about hate crimes and bias-related incidents, encouraging reporting, and accessing services. It also aims to improve data collection to understand the extent of hate-based violence. Funds were allocated to hire a program coordinator responsible for fostering a common understanding among community providers and managing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to support local organizations addressing hate-based violence.

### Progress summary

Eight organizations were chosen pursuant to a competitive RFP process; each one demonstrated the required experience, expertise, and unwavering commitment to combat hate in a diverse range of communities. Contracts were negotiated for each of the providers and their work began.

- During the 3rd quarter, the providers worked on capacity building, which included hiring staff, providing training, establishing technical assistance, and fostering the sharing of best practices among local organizations.
- The providers made progress in areas such as anti-bullying initiatives, data collection, collaborative efforts, and community engagement. This progress was particularly evident in the strengthened partnership between Community Collaborative 2.0 and the City of Brooklyn Park. Similarly, Reviving Islamic Sisterhood for Empowerment (RISE) and Jewish Community Action (JCA) focused on facilitating productive meetings and promoting collaboration among organizations.
- In September 2023, JCA and RISE hosted the first in-person convening, attended by 23 organizations dedicated to combating hate in Hennepin County, which included organizations that received funding from the Anti-Hate Initiative. The convening allowed organizations to build relationships, start identifying goals throughout the county, and share information and resources. The convening included presentations from the RISE and JCA regarding additional trainings available. Breakouts were done for organizations to connect at a deeper level to discuss the county's Anti-Hate Initiative contracts.

### Key performance indicators

- Successfully executed contracts with service providers
- Facilitated monthly meetings of the Anti-Hate Coalition
- Held in-person all-day Anti-Hate Convening for community providers
- Continued work with organizations to create a community-wide anti-hate plan

## Next steps

1. Provide support to external and internal organizations to advance Hennepin's anti-hate efforts including data collection, community awareness/education, and convening agencies.
2. Collaborate among community-based organizations to identify any additional service gaps and plan for future work.
3. Manage contracts with organizations in addressing hate and bias incidents in Hennepin County.

# 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

For the third quarter of 2023, HCPD resumed responsibility for funding contract positions from the State. HCPD contracted with six attorneys (4.75 FTE) and one legal office assistant (1.0 FTE) to handle adult felony cases. HCPD continued to fund two attorneys (.4 FTE) who staffed mandatory child protection calendars and represented children in those child protection cases, and one attorney (.75 FTE) to represent children in delinquency and child protection cases.

The HCAO continues to use the seven identified FTE positions to address the backlog of cases created during the pandemic. The following seven FTE 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.

During the third quarter of 2023, Adult Pre-Adjudication Service (APAS) staff of one correction unit supervisor, five Felony Investigation probation officers, and two Central Intake probation officers worked at full capacity to assist with the court referrals related to the court backlog. Felony Investigations 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 without a Pre-Sentence Investigation (PSI). For the third quarter of 2023, Felony Investigation workload was equal to the workload of the third quarter 2022. Central Intake work volume increased by 17% compared to the third quarter of 2022.

## Key performance indicators

HCPD was able to provide caseload relief to attorneys to allow them more time to focus on their cases set for trial. In addition, the contracted attorneys handled trial cases as part of the caseload relief. The Adult Court contractors handled 318 cases during the third quarter of 2023. The attorneys in Juvenile Court handled 30 separate half-day calendars and 48 new child protection cases.

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 Juvenile 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.

APAS's Felony Investigation and Central Intake units' workload increases have slowed during the third quarter of 2023 comparative to the workload increases experienced during the previous year. The added pandemic response 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. According to the Minnesota Fourth Judicial District Business Partners Hub, there continues to be 401 Major Criminal cases (felony and gross misdemeanors) in the backlog. At the end of the second quarter 2023, there were 677 Major Criminal cases in the backlog.

## Next steps

HCPD actively looking to hire one attorney (.75 FTE) to replace the existing Juvenile Court contractor who has ended his contract. HCPD is exploring options to increase the existing contracts to 5.75 FTE through the end of 2023.

The HCAO will continue to hire and allocate staff and resources throughout the office to areas where they will have the most significant impact in addressing the increased caseloads and backlog of cases created during the pandemic.

DOCCR is well-positioned to assist their criminal justice partners in their joint efforts to reduce the court backlog. APAS is fully staffed and prepared to assist District Court in meeting its backlog goals.

# JUSTICE DOMAIN

## Violence Prevention

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

### 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.

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-based policies and programs and effective strategies that improve outcomes for communities impacted by gun violence, with particular focus on young people.

### Progress narrative

This quarter, RFP funding decisions were completed, and contracts were developed for most of the 46 providers who were awarded community violence prevention grants. These providers, who represent a broad array of services, programs, and culturally specific communities, have started providing programming. All of the services fall into one of three areas of work, as developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Creating Protective Environments; Connecting Young People to Caring Adults and Activities, and Strengthening Young People's Skills. The contracted providers, who are offering services in multiple areas most impacted by community violence, offer programming specifically for members of a variety of culturally specific communities, including Black and African American, American Indian, Hispanic, Liberian, East African and Somali, West African, LGBTQ+, Asian / Pacific Islander and Hmong communities.

The providers will start meeting as a Community Violence Prevention Network in the next quarter, with planning underway to include technical capacity building, sharing of best practices, and relationship building.

Each contract includes required reporting metrics, evaluation standards, and the requirement that the provider work internally to develop a "Challenge for Change" with their participants. Data analytics staff have developed a detailed survey with qualitative and quantitative metrics, which each provider will use to document and report progress, during the contract terms, allowing for ongoing evaluation.

Members of the Community Violence Prevention Network who are new to contracting with Hennepin County, or who are in need of assistance with contracting, have been formally connected with Elevate Hennepin Nonprofit, to give them ongoing individualized technical support.

## Key performance indicators

- The Community Violence Prevention Request for Proposal process was completed, with a robust response by applicants. After a competitive process that included community input on the review panels, 46 providers were selected.
- Contracts are in the process of being developed with the majority executed during this quarter.
- Each of the 46 contracts includes required reporting metrics, evaluation standards, and the requirement that the provider work internally to develop a “Challenge for Change” with their participants.

## Next steps

- A provider kickoff conference will be held once all contracts are executed.
- Initial Quarterly Convening of the Community Violence Prevention Network will be held in November. The Convening will allow providers to create a community of practice that will lead to growth and future sustainability. Providers will meet as a large group and in functional teams, review expectations, receive technical advice and develop plans for future convenings.

# 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 and the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers 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 maintain this 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. This will allow better management of energy use and reduced operational costs associated with maintaining pandemic-level ventilation requirements.

### Progress narrative

Work continues on the HVAC COVID-19 Pandemic projects. The work allocated for the HCGC HVAC Renovation Project has been completed in this quarter that expended a large portion of the grant funding and will make a huge reduction in the spread of COVID-19 in the HCGC.

Work has continued to evaluate the filter banks and system capacities under the contract with Northern Air Corporation. A total of 41 buildings have been evaluated and reports have been received. Evaluations are expected to be completed in Q4 of 2023 with any necessary corrective actions being completed as well.

Since the last report, ASHRAE has come out with a new Standard 241 Control of Infectious Aerosols. It is recommended that in all buildings the amount of fresh air be verified to meet the requirements of the standard and that all buildings have a Building Readiness Plan (BRP) that outlines how the building will operate when conditions are present. An RFP for a consultant will be released in the next month with work being completed in four to six months.

The HVAC work related to reducing cross-contamination at the Adult Corrections Facility (ACF), a 24/7 facility. About 90% of the work is complete with the remaining being completed by Q4 of 2023.

In addition, MERV 13+ filters continue to be purchased as needed to continue to provide safe spaces for county staff and patrons.

### Key performance indicators

During this reporting period, another 1,246 filters were purchased and delivered. The area renovated at the HCGC for COVID-19 Pandemic conditions is 1,500,000 square feet. A total of 18 buildings had their HVAC systems evaluated this quarter, specifically the filter banks and air flow capacities.

## Next steps

Work to be completed in the next three months include completing the filter evaluations at buildings and make any needed corrective actions.

In addition, an RFP will be posted and a consultant hired to start with the confirmation of fresh air requirements at each building along with starting to create building readiness plans for each building.

It is expected that the ACF HVAC project will be completed in the next three months.

More MERV-13+ filters will be ordered and installed as needed for the buildings to maintain a safe space for users 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 team in the Operations line of business will lead this work in partnership with Hennepin County's communication and engagement teams, the IT community, and departments delivering resident 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, including the Hennepin.us and HCLib.org websites. Teams will address both technical debt and continuous improvement needs to keep pace with increasing digital delivery.

The Digital Experience team will manage rapid change with an agile mindset and principles, determine long-term staffing and resource needs to support the model, and drive identified digital priorities that support Future Ready Hennepin. These efforts create digital equity and engagement for Hennepin County residents.

### Progress narrative

The Digital Experience (DX) quarterly report is organized to reflect the work done that supports the three Office of Digital Experience (ODX) strategic directions at each of the community, organization, and team levels:

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 ODX structures, processes, and culture founded in our values.

DX Model partners are named in the relevant progress items demonstrating the continued collaborative nature of coordinating and leading this work.

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

In collaboration with Hennepin County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) Director of Internal Communications, ODX nominated the project team for the HCSO website redesign for the Granicus Website of the Year award. The project is a finalist, highlighting the team's approach to lead with a content and mobile first approach and for intentionally engaging with community for user testing and testing for accessibility.

The Web Infrastructure team continued developing plans for the content management system (CMS) migration to ensure as seamless of a transition as possible in Q4. This includes constant communication about plans and timelines with DX Model partner teams to ensure all public-facing sites can migrate without disruption.

The project team for the Human Services (HS) submit project, automating the shelter verification form, conducted field testing with landlords and in-depth interviews with tenants. User testing with various users of the shelter verification form ensures the users have an opportunity to interact with a prototype and provide feedback before any code is written. The new form is now available to tenants and landlords, reducing time to complete from 24 days to 2.

ODX team members presented to local UX professionals about the importance of government incorporating digital accessibility in all digital touchpoints. The team highlighted the progress on the creation of the design system, a single resource that incorporates the county's website and accessibility standards, the pattern and component library, and branding and writing guidelines.

The Customer Experience (CX) team in ODX created an experience survey to gather feedback from users of the county's public-facing website. The survey called "Help us improve this site" is live and at the top of all pages on Hennepin.us.

### **Build and foster a culture of User Experience (UX) across Hennepin County**

The Website Communications team hired and onboarded the project manager for the website migration project as the county moves from Hennepin.us to HennepinCounty.gov. The project manager participated and led stakeholder mapping sessions for the project and created role clarity for the various teams contributing to the project.

Progress continued on the design system with continued fine-tuning of the prototype and communication plan. ODX worked with a contracted vendor who provided specific language for the design system about testing for digital accessibility.

ODX continued promoting the DX Champions program and the WeCollege accessibility training platform. The DX Champions program is available to all employees who voluntarily want to be a resource to promote user-centered and racial equity principles. The more than 50 DX Champions read and understand the digital accessibility policy, web standards, the pattern and component library, participate in the UX Community of Practice and Community Engagement Community of Practice, complete racial equity training. WeCollege is an online, self-paced digital accessibility training program for employees who want to learn more about how to incorporate accessibility at the beginning of projects. WeCollege is the training provided by the local vendor, WeCo.

### **Establish ODX structures, processes, and culture founded in ODX values**

Most of the positions in ODX are temporary, either acting, mobility, or limited-duration positions. Four temporary positions were converted into permanent positions during this reporting period.

The CX team in ODX created dashboards to visualize the feedback coming in from the experience survey on Hennepin.us. Having a visual way to organize the data will allow themes to emerge that will inform future strategic directions.

The strategy team in ODX developed a three-year strategic plan that aligns with the ODX strategic directions. The management team approved the plan ahead of office adoption and 2024 implementation.

## **Key performance indicators**

- Shelter verification project field research and usability testing indicators:
  - Field testing done with eight residents
  - Usability testing done with three landlords
  - Usability testing done with three tenants
  - Incentives were distributed to all people participating in field and usability testing to compensate users' time and expertise
- Feedback from field and usability testing created a user-centered experience that allowed the project team to incorporate changes before publishing a final product

- 50 employees are DX Champions
- 105 employees are enrolled in WeCollege
- 25 people from all over the Twin Cities attended ODX Digital Accessibility presentation with WeCo

## Next steps

- ODX will have a facilitated workshop with a local vendor to ensure the strategic plan encompasses ODX values and leads with an equity lens before the plan is implemented in 2024.
- ODX will develop survey tagging and analysis model practices to analyze the experience survey data on Hennepin.us to better understand resident feedback.
- ODX will convert two additional temporary positions to permanent roles.
- The Website Communications team will continue coordinated work in the HennepinCounty.gov discovery phase.
- The Web Infrastructure team will begin the CMS migration.
- ODX will participate in the Operations line of business budget presentation to the county board in October.
- ODX will host the DX Stakeholder update meeting in October.
- ODX will host the DX Advisory Committee meeting in November.

# OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

## Engagement Services

**Allocation amount: \$1,680,000**

### 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

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

#### Community Engagement Roster Program

- Continued to 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

- Translation policy project committee met to discuss a countywide policy regarding translation services and come up with recommendations.

#### Engagement vans

- The three community engagement vans continued to be a crucial strategy in meeting community where they gather in supporting Hennepin County's relationships and trust with residents.

- During the reporting period, the expense of the new electric van and related technology and equipment for the van, including the Wi-Fi mobile hotspot and tracking systems, was processed in the Engagement Services project budget. Previously, a work order had been kept open for the van with Fleet Services for related technology and equipment, but it has been closed and the van is complete.

### **Healing circles / community building**

- During the reporting period, the department facilitated four healing circles / community building sessions, two as part of the Collective Restoration Series focused on the Black / African American community and two focused on the Latino community:
  - 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.
  - Community Reunion Barbeque with community healer TC was held at Boom Island Park, on Sunday, August 27. This was the final session of The Collective Restoration Freedom Series and focused on family and community reunion. It was a token of gratitude to thank all the community members that have participated in the series and worked on their healing.
  - 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.

### **Materials distribution**

- The team continued to work with the Minnesota Department of Health on distribution of COVID-19 test kits and masks.
- The team also continued to share promotional items with community, including lip balms, frisbees, drawstring backpacks, tote bags, program handouts and more.

## **Key performance indicators**

### **Trusted Messengers Program**

- 26 contracts continued through the end of 2023
- Various departments came to seek feedback, updates, etc. (2020 Shape Survey, Hennepin Residence Access Project, Digital Equity Plan, Youth activities and grant programs, etc.)

### **Community Engagement Roster Program**

- Added four new organizations
- 220+ individuals and organizations registered
- Implemented and published Lead hazard prevention RFP
- In process with the Blue Line LRT engagement cohort contracts
- Multiple projects / RFPs consulted and may have utilized this program to achieve contracts

### **Translations**

- Continued to meet and work with the Translation Policy Project committee
- Liaison and provide guidance to the internal service areas / departments

## Engagement vans

- During the reporting period, the vans were reserved for use for 75 days. Outreach was conducted to the communities of Black, Hmong, Latino, American Indian, African Immigrant, and residents experiencing homelessness. Some of the county divisions using the vans were Streets to Housing, Public Health, Environment and Energy, Transportation / Blue Line LRT, and the Behavioral Health Campaign. Streets to Housing was the primary user of the vans as they went out several times a week to encampments of people experiencing homelessness to connect adults and families to Hennepin County services.

## Healing circles / community building

- 11 people attended The Importance of Pouring In, Part 2
- 10 people attended Cuerpx Estampa Workshop
- 30 people attended the Community Reunion Barbeque
- 14 people attended Embracing Our Shadow / Apapachar Nuestra Sombra

## Materials distribution

- During the reporting period, 6,150 masks were distributed with 1,000 in July, 2,250 in August, and 2,900 in September.
- In July- September, the team distributed 1,111 COVID-19 test kits distributed to eight organizations.
- At Hmong Day at the State Fair on September 4, Hennepin County staff handed out approximately 1,500 promotional items, which helped create conversation between staff and community members about county services.
- The team continued sharing materials with county departments and service areas including juvenile probation, Office of Broadband and Digital Inclusion, Purchasing and Contract Services, Human Services Public Health, and more. Some of the events included a school wellness fair, back-to-school event, small business expo, and more.
- The team distributed an estimated 2,000 promotional items during the reporting period.

## Next steps

### Trusted Messengers Program

- Communicate and ensure Trusted Messengers are billing monthly and utilize full funding by end of year.
- Send final report template.
- Work on strategy for 2024 Trusted Messenger program.

### Community Engagement Roster Program

- Offer communication and RFP strategy learning training course for organizations.
- Strategic plan: Find ways to improve and promote the Roster program internally and externally.

### Translations

- Work and consult with project manager hired under the Communications Department to discuss existing translations efforts and assess future needs.
- Work with translation policy project lead on countywide policy for translation services.
- Project sponsors reviewing recommendations.

### **Engagement vans**

- The team will continue to explore ways to improve utilization and efficiency of their three vans, working with Fleet Services to streamline maintenance and cross-departmental usage / agreements.
- The team will continue to work with internal partners to ensure the vans are being fully utilized and ensure the most impactful outcomes.

### **Healing circles / community building**

- Staff are working on a new contract with community healer TC for the remainder of the year. This new contract will focus on planning for the 2024 monthly series. TC will be meeting with the team monthly to check in and by December, he will have a proposed plan.
- The department will be planning another healing circle with Shelly Belgarde focusing on the Native American community in November in honor of Native American Heritage Month.
- The department is also working on a Healer's Gathering event with all the community healers the team have worked with this past year. This gathering will be a celebration and a planning session with the healers on how the team can improve healing circles next year and on.

### **Materials distribution**

- The team will continue to manage current inventory of materials and distribute them to staff and community accordingly, as well as order more items to cover the remainder of the engagement season.
- The team will continue to work with other departments across the county to create new policies and procedures around outreach items, which will help improve efficiencies as well as ensure that items are environmentally friendly, cost-effective, relatively easy to carry and transport, culturally specific, and usable by community members.
- The team will evaluate which items were the most popular, the quality, and the communication with the vendors as they plan for procuring more items for next year.

# OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

## Enterprise Integrated Data System

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

### 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

Progress on the Enterprise Integrated Data System (EIDS) in quarter three of 2023 was centered around continuous improvement of the underlying data infrastructure, the addition of graph database architecture, progress on key analyses, and advancements in our framework to support the use of data. The data engineers established a revised mechanism to manage all incoming data feeds and key data processing steps. Developing a mechanism to manage the configuration of all data feeds has also improved the ability to track metadata and monitor the ways in which data are being integrated. This has led to increased efficiencies of EIDS data pipelines and a more transparent data architecture that makes navigating the available data easier for the team's data scientists.

While the inclusion of graph databases as a mechanism to integrate a wide variety of data has been a part of the project since the beginning, quarter three marked the moment where progress on other aspects of the system enabled the team to take the next steps with graph concepts. In particular, the data scientists and data engineers have been working on leveraging graph architectures for entity resolution to support the system's record linkage protocols. Early results indicate more robust record linkage processes that the team will be exploring how to incorporate into the broader system. The second key use case relates to building a graph data model to analyze the ways in which residents interact with county services borrowing from customer journey mapping approaches.

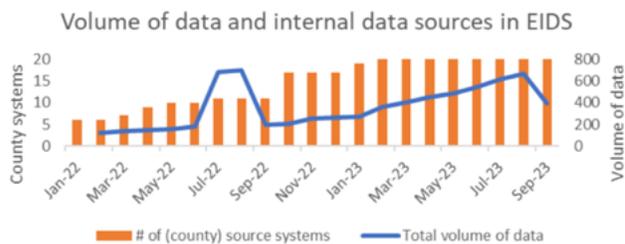
As the underlying data infrastructure has advanced, so too has the number of analysis projects underway. To date, 11 analytics projects have been established for EIDS with four reaching a stage where insights have been shared with the relevant business partners. Of the projects underway, two are nearing publication and expected to be completed in the final quarter of 2023. One additional project will be added within the next month and a growing backlog of potential future analyses has been established. Data scientists continue to work closely with business stakeholders and analysts within each line of business to make progress on these efforts. In addition, the data strategy team in Integrated Data and Analytics has established a user adoption plan to provide direct support for how business stakeholders can effectively use the data insights we have developed.

The development of a user adoption plan is also a good example of the progress being made on developing a framework to support the use of data. The data strategy team continues to advance the work in this space through tools like the user adoption plan for new reports and the development of a formal data literacy program for the county. The data literacy program plan developed in quarter two is now being implemented. The team has also established mechanisms to get ongoing feedback to both guide this work and monitor the efficacy of each step.

## 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





Evaluation efforts continue to be formative in nature. A key example is the ways in which the team has monitored the volume of data and how data are stored. Insights about this have and continue to influence the data architecture, design, and quality controls of the system. In fact, these insights have led to a decrease in the total volume of data stored as the data engineers continue to discover efficiencies in our data pipelines and storage processes.

Total volume of data is now just under 400 GB with 20 county data systems included.

There are 11 analytics projects leveraging this system. Four have been made available to stakeholders based on business need, two of them are nearing completion, and five are in active development.

Usage statistics increased steadily over the last quarter. This gives the team confidence that the new insights being produced are useful and the user adoption and data literacy supports are having the intended effect. The team will continue to monitor these trends and continues to explore effective ways to get additional feedback.

Quality assurance metrics have been updated to ensure ongoing fidelity to design standards and data quality.

The current average length of time for an analytics effort to go through the governance process remains at 44 days (inclusive of non-business days).

## 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.
- Continue to implement the user adoption plan for each completed analytics project.
- Complete the initial graph database efforts underway and plan for the next projects and iterations of these efforts with graphs.
- Implement the next phase of the Enterprise Integrated Data System's data model.
- Begin planning of the next iteration of the system's data model.
- Continue to update the team's DataOps practices with the addition of soliciting input and feedback from analytics teams across the county.
- Implement initial components of the data literacy program to support the effective use of data by county staff.
- Continue to formalize and refine processes for coordination and feedback between data engineering and data analytics functions.
- Maintain the goal of four new analytics projects by year end.
- Incorporate ongoing feedback of the governance process to date and develop recommendations for improvement.

# 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 three areas listed above. Nineteen projects have begun spending pandemic response fund allocations and the other seven are in the initial planning and development stages. Just over \$4.1 million has been spent as of September 30, 2023, with additional spending expected in late 2023 and early 2024.

### Key performance indicators

Some notable accomplishments include:

- Modernization and migration to Azure for secure, cost-effective and environmentally responsibility 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 majority 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 moved forward in two areas:

- \$1.0 million to accelerate plans to connect county facilities to fiber.
  - We received a preliminary estimate from Metropolitan Council 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.
  - 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:
  - \$636,000 spent for Server Infrastructure for the Video Management System (VMS) for the Traffic Management Center (TMC)
  - Over \$1.8 million spent to add over 25 miles of fiber to connect 35 intersections
  - Purchase of wireless modem equipment for traffic signals not connected to county fiber (14 intersections)

### Next steps

Requisitions have been issued for fiber installation along Metro B Line and additional ATMS capital bid packages.

# OTHER/DOMAIN INFRASTRUCTURE

## Voter Participation

**Allocation amount: \$3,312,000**

### 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 – September 30, 2023, Hennepin County Elections staff have continued to implement two key outreach and engagement strategies: establishing community partner contracts for voter outreach and education services and a tailored voter outreach media campaign focused on registration and expanded voter eligibility.

Hennepin County Elections continues to administer 10 community organization contracts that began in May 2023. These 10 organizations serve a broad range of communities that experience various disparities in voter registration and turnout. The contracted organizations submitted their mid-contract reports on August 1, 2023. Work completed by these organizations during this reporting period include:

- Creating short multilingual voter education messaging
- Conducting registration drives and pre-registering 16- and 17-year-olds
- Sharing election information at local community events
- Recruiting Get Out the Vote ambassadors and outreach fellows
- Translating voter information
- Designing voter stickers, buttons, and t-shirts
- Educating staff and residents about expanded voter eligibility
- Preparing fall outreach events

On August 11, 2023, Hennepin County Elections partnered with Catholic Charities to host a community conversation focused on barriers to voting. The participants included Catholic Charities shelter residents who shared their wide range of experience with election participation. Participants talked about what barriers they faced to voting and what could be done to reduce those barriers. The information participants shared during this session is informing future Hennepin County Election's outreach tactics.

Hennepin County Elections continued monthly community partner meetings during this reporting period. These sessions are available to all community partners supporting voter education and outreach across Hennepin County. The purpose of these sessions is to increase election knowledge among organizations, provide space for collaboration between organizations, and help inform Hennepin County Election's outreach work. Session topics during this reporting period included accessible voting options and absentee voting.

In partnership with the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, Hennepin County Elections posted advertisements about expanded voter eligibility on MetroTransit buses, light rail trains, and at bus stops. The advertisements included information about new voter eligibility laws and encouraged people to register to vote. The advertisements ran from July 24, 2023, until September 17, 2023.

Hennepin County Elections continues to work with an advertising agency to reach and connect with Hennepin County residents through targeted media focused on sharing elections information. Two campaigns ran concurrently through this reporting period and will continue through the fall. The first campaign is focused on voter registration, encouraging users to check their registration or register online. The second campaign is focused on expanded voter eligibility information for people on felony supervision. The voter outreach campaigns are on multiple media channels including Facebook, Instagram, Google, and YouTube.

Between July 1 – September 30, 2023, Hennepin County Elections produced updated outreach handouts. These handouts were all translated into the top five languages used in Hennepin County and are available to the public on the Hennepin County Elections website.

## Key performance indicators

Key performance indicators for Hennepin County led outreach and engagement may include:

- Increased institutional knowledge of election process among contracted and partner organizations
- Number of toolkits developed, translated materials, and other voter education materials produced and distributed
- Number of community organizations contacted and engaged with Hennepin County
- Number of people reached through targeted media campaigns
- Number of trainings for community organizations and service providers

Directly selected community contract organizations submitted mid-contract reports on August 1, 2023. Work and accomplishments are described in terms of the following:

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

## Next steps

In the next three months Hennepin County Elections will continue efforts to organize and maintain advertising and media campaign strategies (social media, digital advertising, print and radio advertising, on-air programming) focused on voter registration, absentee voting education and expanded voter eligibility. Targeted media campaigns will focus on ensuring voters have the knowledge and resources needed to prepare for upcoming elections.

Contracted community organizations will continue their outreach and engagement work through November 7, 2023. Hennepin County Elections staff will conduct debriefs with contracted organizations to assess the program and inform outreach strategies. In 2024, Hennepin County Elections is planning to contract with up to 25 community organizations. Prospective organizations will submit their 2024 contract proposals by early November. Proposals will be reviewed in November and Hennepin County will review proposals and award up to 25 organizations with contracts ranging from \$5,000–\$25,000. These voter outreach and engagement contracts will begin in late January 2024 and run through November 2024.



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