



Montgomery County,
Maryland
**Recovery Plan
Performance Report**

State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

July 31, 2021 Report

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General Overview

Executive Summary

On March 5, 2020, the Governor of Maryland declared a state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the last eighteen months, more than 75,000 County residents have contracted COVID-19 and nearly 1,600 County residents have lost their lives to this disease.

Over the past year, the County Executive and County Council have made many difficult financial decisions to adjust to these unprecedented times. The County's Federal and State partners have provided some much-needed assistance. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided the County with \$183.3 million in flexible aid to help address many of our most pressing expenditure challenges. Furthermore, President Biden's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) has provided the County government with \$204.1 million in Federal aid that will be used over the coming months and years to respond to the challenges created by the pandemic.

The County's approach to the allocation of the infusion of Federal aid has focused on three main goals: Response, Recovery, and Resilience, so that County residents and businesses can continue to pull through this crisis and that the County can continue to move towards several of the County Executive's key goals of promoting Equity and Advancing Social Justice, Economic Development Across the County, and Efficient and Effective Public Services.

As shown in the following table, the County Executive and County Council have allocated \$133.2 million of the County's \$204.1 million share of the ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). In fiscal year 2021 (FY21), the County will recognize \$92 million in pandemic-related revenue losses. This amount was determined through the calculation methodology prescribed by the U.S. Treasury Department and will be used to pay for government services that County residents have come to rely upon.

Of the budget enhancements in fiscal year 2022 (FY22), \$25 million has been allocated to pay for an expansion to the Working Families Income Supplement Program to provide financial assistance to low-income working families in the County. The County's minority health programs will receive almost \$6 million in ARPA funds to continue the vital work of ensuring an equitable pandemic response among all of the County's diverse communities. The County's Health and Human Services Department will receive \$5.2 million to establish a mobile health clinic to promote equitable health outcomes, enhance therapeutic recreation services and provide for mental health services for students and families, and continue the vital human services that are provided at the County's service consolidation hubs including meals, diapers, telemedicine, and comprehensive wraparound services to residents most impacted by the pandemic. In addition, \$1.5 million is being provided to expand the County's rapid rehousing program and rental assistance program to ensure that the County's most vulnerable residents can continue to have a roof over their heads. Over \$1 million has been provided to support the County's broadband infrastructure programs, and \$2.5 million has been allocated for other administrative expenses including support for the County's Conference and Visitor's Bureau.

The County continues to assess and adapt to the ongoing impact of the evolving pandemic and provide the services necessary to ensure that residents continue to recover and thrive in a post-

pandemic world. Over the coming months the County Executive and County Council will work together to allocate the remaining \$70.8 million in ARPA SLFRF funds so that County residents and businesses recover from the pandemic stronger and more resilient.

Intended Uses of ARPA SLFRF Funds (\$ in Millions)				
Project Number	Expenditure Category	Project Name	FY21	FY22
2004010	6.1	Revenue Loss Factor Recognition	\$92.0	
2004399	2.3	Working Families Income Supplement Expansion		\$25.0
2004490	1.8	Latino Health Initiative - COVID Response "Por Nuestra Salud"		\$2.9
2004491	1.8	African American Health Program - COVID Response		\$1.7
2004492	1.8	Asian American Health Initiative - COVID Response		\$1.2
2004395	1.10	Enhance Therapeutic Recreation Services		\$0.8
2004406	1.12	Establish a Mobile Health Clinic to Promote Health Equity		\$0.6
2004407	1.12	Provide for Health and Human Service Hubs to Promote Equity		\$3.6
2004408	1.10	Mental Health Services for Students & Families		\$0.3
2004405	2.2	Rapid Rehousing Expansion		\$0.5
2004398	2.2	Rental Assistance Program Enhancement		\$1.0
2004397	2.10	Operational Aid to Conference Visitors Bureau		\$0.8
2004401	5.17	Broadband Infrastructure FiberNet2 Maintenance		\$0.5
2004402	5.17	Broadband Infrastructure FiberNet3 Build Out		\$0.7
2004403	5.17	Broadband Infrastructure Digital Equity Program		\$0.1
2004404	7.1	COVID Short Term Line of Credit Administrative Costs		\$1.4
2004396	7.1	Circuit Court Remote Proceeding Modifications due to COVID		\$0.3
Total		Total	\$92.0	\$41.3
County ARPA Allocation				\$204.1
To Be Allocated				\$70.8

Figure 1. Intended Uses of American Rescue Plan Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds

Overall Recovery Vision

To create a more effective and efficient government that will lead the effort to revitalize the diverse communities throughout Montgomery County so that we successfully overcome the impact of COVID19 by strengthening our economy, being inclusive of all communities, and implementing innovative and sustainable solutions.

The guiding principles of the County's COVID-19 recovery efforts are:

- **Racial Equity:** Provide equitable access to quality services and resources by examining and changing policy, practice, and allocation of County resources so that race is not a predictor of recovery.
- **Inclusion:** Make Montgomery County a place where all people can recover regardless of race, ethnicity, language, age or economic circumstances through a transparent process of public groups and forums where residents can provide feedback and recommendations on the County's recovery deliverables.
- **Innovation:** Harness advancements that sustain a continuation of County services and resources while improving access to services, cost effectiveness and service delivery.

- **Sustainability:** Ensure that recovery decisions made today remain relevant and consistent with our shared vision of a resilient future through the thoughtful and rigorous application of the recovery framework.

Key Outcome Goals

The guiding principles will be achieved through the following goals by the six recovery Mission Areas:

- **Economic Revitalization:** Aid County businesses in adapting to the post-COVID-19 economy by guiding businesses through the re-opening process, adapting to changed consumer behaviors, and supporting the local economy and workforce by providing new opportunities for employment and commerce.
- **Government Services:** Improve how County Government does its work by giving employees more flexibility, providing customers more options for accessing services, reducing our carbon footprint, and making more efficient use of space and other resources.
- **Education:** Leverage County Government and School Systems organizations and resources to create better outcomes for students, parents, and staff.
- **Health and Human Services:** Address inequities in social services, health, and other support services amplified by the pandemic.
- **Housing:** To provide assistance and work in cooperation with tenants, property owners, lenders, common ownership communities, regulatory authorities, and to recommend actions that Montgomery County can take to reduce evictions, prevent homelessness, defaults and foreclosures.
- **Food Resilience:** Guide the development of a long-term strategy building on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic response and working towards a vision of a sustainable, resilient food system.

Recovery Mission Areas:

To achieve the key outcome recovery goals, the work of recovery planning was organized around six Mission Areas:

- **Government Operations and Services** focused on restoring government operations, services and facilities back to pre-disaster condition or better and will match interim and restored services to the anticipated renewed demand of the community. The mission area worked to address reconstituting County Government workplaces safely to restore all services, plan for summer programming in the context of the health situation, implement process improvements, improve service delivery, expand telework effectively for the long-term and retool the workforce in conjunction with evaluating how work places can be restructured to be more efficient and effective.
- **Economic Revitalization** focused on returning economic activity to a sustainable level while also looking at innovative and viable economic opportunities. This mission area addressed the reopening of businesses and other vital community resources consistent with public health guidance, help businesses, non-profits and workers impacted by the

economic disruption get back on their feet, recognize the economic challenges presented by the pandemic, and to identify opportunities for business advancement and related efforts to prepare the workforce for a changed economy.

- **Health and Human Services** focused on meeting the needs of vulnerable people and communities in the County, whose access to food, health care, social services, and other support services have been negatively impacted by the pandemic. This mission area also addressed childcare, behavioral health, and other cross-cutting issues critical to recovery, and worked closely with non-profit partners to help them restore services. It is also working to develop plans for addressing the racial disparities that have been laid bare in this crisis.
- **Housing** focused on interim and long-term solutions for housing relief and sustainability. The mission area has worked to address keeping people housed, ensuring health and safety in multi-family housing, and expanding housing opportunities. This work has involved working with tenants, landlords and lenders to prevent evictions and foreclosures, increasing affordable housing options and assisting common ownership communities hurt by economic disruption.
- **Education** focused on supporting the development and implementation of recovery plans by public, independent, and private sectors of K12 and higher education as approved by their governing bodies. Essential elements of the plans that will be monitored are the equitable and effective delivery of remote instruction and support programs, sustainable and agile return-to-building strategies, and adaptation to the economic and fiscal environment.
- **Food Resilience** focused on coordinating and implementing the long-term recovery of the Montgomery County food system from the COVID-19 pandemic and building a more resilient, equitable food system in Montgomery County. This mission area uses data to guide decision-making and strengthening the County's food system's critical infrastructure.

Noteworthy Challenges

- Our ability to collect data about impacted communities / sectors in order to take action is made complicated by the fact that some data is not immediately available.
- The up-and-down nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, to include the challenges brought by variants has necessitated a shift from recovery back into response several times.
- Economic challenges at the local level and in the community has made accessing and utilizing funding more complicated and dynamic than in normal times and previous emergency events.

Noteworthy Opportunities

- Montgomery County was able to implement its "Pre-Disaster Recovery Plan", which was just completed in 2019, to jumpstart the local recovery process. In doing so, County government has identified methods, systems, and partnerships that will likely continue beyond COVID-19.

- COVID-19 has given the County a unique opportunity to step-back and envision positive changes and new opportunities in our communities that were not previously contemplated.
- COVID-19 restrictions throughout the pandemic has enabled the County to rethink, restructure, and offer services and resources in a new way that is more accessible to the community.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

In December of 2019 County Executive Marc Elrich, with the full support of the nine-member County Council, signed the Racial Equity and Social Justice Act, creating the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ). The primary goal of the law and the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice is to imbed a racial equity lens in all county decision making. The law requires that we train all county employees on the tenets of racial equity and social justice, and that that every bill and budget decision be examined for racial equity impacts. Using the well-established Government Alliance on Race and Equity framework of normalizing, organizing, and operationalizing for racial equity as a guide, ORESJ has developed a robust training plan, structured organizing practices, and analytical tools and products that support staff in applying a racial equity lens to their work. Using a racial equity lens brings conscious attention to potential racial equity impacts of government decisions by providing insights into historical and current structural inequities that are likely to produce or exacerbate disparate or disproportionate racialized outcomes.

The County uses racial equity tools to make the application of an equity lens more concrete. Racial equity tools are analytical approaches or structured sets of questions and guidance that support decision makers in applying a racial equity lens at various decision points. The County has developed and currently uses a racial equity impact assessment tool and a budget equity tool to evaluate the current or predicted impact of a proposed policy, program, or budget decision on racial disparities. Central to the use of both tools is disaggregating data and directly engaging residents of color to deepen understanding of who is most impacted, and how, by proposed decisions. Using this type of analysis brings attention to the range of systems influencing racially disparate outcomes observed today. It also helps decisionmakers gain new insights while also strengthening connections to the community. In this way, racial equity impact assessments and budget equity tools are both a product and a process supporting the County's mission of shrinking and eliminating racial disparities. Effective use of these tools is constrained by organizational readiness to adopt a growth mindset that prioritizes building authentic community relationships and interrogating established decision-making practices. To fully realize the benefits of applying a racial equity lens, decisionmakers will need to factor in time for increased internal collaboration and evaluating and refining proposed solutions when new insights come to light.

Community Engagement

Community Recovery Advisory Group: Consists of representatives from the spectrum of communities, populations, issue areas and institutions impacted by the pandemic. The group advises the County Executive and County Council on the needs of the community in recovery and how the County can achieve a new normal that is more equitable than before the pandemic. The group is supported by the Office of Community Partnerships, the Chief Equity Officer, OEMHS recovery staff, the Mission Area Teams, and other staff and subject matter experts as necessary.

Public Health Advisory Group: Consists of public health, epidemiology, and clinical experts and provide guidance to the Public Health Officer on the public health criteria for public health measures. This will include reviewing metrics and data to understand the course of the virus and make recommendations regarding how to phase and carry out reopening, as well as developing an implementation plan to minimize the threat and impact posed by the expected other waves of the virus.

Economic Advisory Group: Consists of County leaders from businesses of various sizes and sectors, non-profits and representatives of labor. Its purpose is to inform the County Executive and County Council on conditions in the community and to advise the County Executive and County Council on long-term strategies to adjust to a changing economic landscape. Through this effort, the County will be poised to take advantage of this opportunity to enhance the local economy by helping businesses retool, pivot and survive while simultaneously connecting employers with the various employee skillsets they need to prosper. In addition, it will help identify new opportunities and strategies to build on our economic assets.

Economic Revitalization & Recovery Town Hall: A forum hosted by the County Executives Economic Development team to broadly engage the business community, share up to date information regarding the COVID-19 response and recovery, deliver helpful information on relevant topics, and receive valuable feedback from the community.

The Racial Equity and Social Justice Advisory Committee: Established by the County Council and became effective on March 2, 2020. Plays a major role in addressing structural inequities and addressing systemic inequality and social justice issues throughout the County. Works with department heads, government agencies and leaders to bring the change Montgomery County residents seek. Engages with the public, advises the County Council and County Executive, and promotes subcommittee and committee findings while exploring new and innovative strategies to address racial equity and social justice issues in Montgomery County.

Health and Human Services - Service Hubs: One of the positive outcomes from the COVID pandemic was the creation of Service Consolidation Hubs across Montgomery County. These 8 hubs are placed within churches or other non-profit buildings in neighborhoods with high needs and easy access to transportation and are mostly run by community volunteers. Because these hubs are not in Government buildings, our ability to reach more residents of each community has been easier and the hubs have been able to serve clients who have never sought services before due to fear or other circumstances. Word of mouth through the communities has allowed the hub client numbers to grow quickly and residents know they can get food assistance, access to SNAP and other benefits and other services in the Hub without having to leave their neighborhood or go to a government building. The hubs have recently added case managers to

work with families and individuals with multiple needs and assistance in navigating services in the community and in the Department of Health and Human Services.

Montgomery Connects Digital Equity Programs: Leverage WhatsApp text-based program promotion, offer promotional materials in Spanish as a standard practice and translate materials into other languages based on demand and need from partner organizations, leverage trusted community partners to expand participation within vulnerable communities and other traditionally underserved groups, and support the ability of community organizations to expand internet-based communications and service delivery to their clients. In addition, FiberNet equipment supports the ability of County agencies and community organizations to offer services by leveraging public WiFi at government and educational buildings and outdoor plazas.

Visit Montgomery: Promotes the quality of life to all residents of Montgomery County. The parks system, historic sites, retail outlets, restaurants, museums, entertainment venues, sports venues, event venues and special events we promote throughout the county. In turn, we provide the tools and assistance needed for businesses to promote their products and services to all the residents through our Tastemakers Trail, MoCo Eats and visitmontgomery.com website.

When developing our programs to support local businesses, Visit Montgomery works to collaborate with local interest groups and stakeholders to ensure the structure of the programs align to serve community residents' interests. Recent collaborations have included Heritage Montgomery, Montgomery Parks, Montgomery County Office of Agricultural Services, MoCo Pride, Montgomery County Food Council, Montgomery County Small Business Navigator and Regional Centers, Arts & Humanities Council, and the Arts & Entertainment Districts.

Labor Practices

Montgomery County uses strong labor standards to promote effective and efficient delivery of high-quality projects while support the economic recovery through strong employment opportunities for workers.

Project Labor Agreement (PLA): There are currently no ARPA-funded projects utilizing a PLA though Montgomery County does have other projects in which vendors were given points if they signed an attestation that they would work in good faith to enter into a PLA.

Minority, Female, Disabled Persons owned Program (MFD): The MFD program sets a 21% subcontracting goal to MFD vendors for construction contracts. This requirement applies to all construction contracts that are over \$50,000. The County has achieved on average 30% construction MFD subcontracting to construction MFD vendors in the past 3 years. In FY21, the MFD vendor utilization achieved a high of 52% in construction area, or \$22.76 million out of the total \$43.53 million in construction. There were less active construction projects in FY21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic but MFD subcontracting vendors participation remained strong. The MFD program has helped the disadvantaged community to still be able to get County dollars during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Labor Peace Agreement (LPA): The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) has the authority to require a contractor awarded a covered contract to enter into a labor peace agreement with a labor organization, to prevent the interruption of services to County residents provided by private contractors due to concerted economic action or a lock-out during a labor dispute.

However, this law is only applicable to “trash collecting and recycling services directly to County residents with a value equal to or greater than \$250,000.”

Prevailing Wage Law (PWL): On September 9, 2008 Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett signed into law the Prevailing Wage bill that passed the County Council with overwhelming support. Beginning with contracts executed on July 1, 2009, the Prevailing Wage Law is patterned after the Federal Davis-Bacon and State of Maryland’s prevailing wage laws. It requires the prevailing wage be paid to workers on County financed construction contracts. The prevailing wage rate is the rate paid for comparable work in the private sector within the County. The rates are calculated by the State, based on surveys of construction company employers. In the instance where a job classification is not listed, request a rate determination with this Request for Additional Wage Rates form.

Wage Requirement Law (WRL): The Wage Requirement Law Program ensures workers on County funded non-construction services (examples: custodial services, landscaping services, security guard services, consulting services, staffing, marketing) receive livable wages. Contractors and subcontractors must pay their employees an hourly wage rate compliant with the annually adjusted rate established by the Montgomery County Wage Requirements Law on qualifying contracts. The County Council passed on June 11, 2002, and the County Executive signed on June 20, 2002, Bill 5-02, relating to Wage Requirements Law on Service Contracts. Please note that effective April 1, 2010, the exemption to the Wage Requirements Law for having fewer than 10 employees has been repealed. The current Wage Requirements Law rate is \$15.40 through June 30, 2022.

In addition to the aforementioned, the Montgomery County Office of Human Rights also manages and enforces a Minimum Wage Law and an Earned Sick and Safe Leave Law which relate to all businesses in Montgomery County.

Use of Evidence

Montgomery County strongly believes in and promotes the use of evidence-based practices. Many of the projects and interventions listed below that are leveraging and benefitting from SLFRF funds are grounded in research and evidence, particularly in the Health and Human Services realm. When determining program design, a variety of steps are taken to promote the best possible outcomes, including: research and literature reviews, identification of best and/or promising practices, investigation into the practices of peer and surrounding jurisdictions, use of validated instruments for evaluation, use of data to identify and target program beneficiaries, and the identification of evidence-based practices. Where possible, the County has commissioned a study for new evaluation to help create additional research and evidence.

To facilitate ongoing evaluation, refining, and the success of these programs, both output and outcome metrics will be developed and regularly reviewed. Some programs’ metrics are still to be determined due to the very narrow reporting window of this first report.

Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1	Expenditure Category: Public Health		
1.1	COVID-19 Vaccination		
1.2	COVID-19 Testing		
1.3	COVID-19 Contact Tracing		
1.4	Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work Sites, Schools, etc.)		
1.5	Personal Protective Equipment		
1.6	Medical Expenses (including Alternative Care Facilities)		
1.7	Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes to Public Facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency		
1.8	Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses (including Communications, Enforcement, Isolation/Quarantine)		
1.9	Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Responding to COVID-19		
1.10	Mental Health Services		
1.11	Substance Use Services		
1.12	Other Public Health Services		
2	Expenditure Category: Negative Economic Impacts		
2.1	Household Assistance: Food Programs		
2.2	Household Assistance: Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid		
2.3	Household Assistance: Cash Transfers	17398879.84	17398879.84
2.4	Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs		
2.5	Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention		
2.6	Unemployment Benefits or Cash Assistance to Unemployed Workers		
2.7	Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)		
2.8	Contributions to UI Trust Funds*		
2.9	Small Business Economic Assistance (General)		
2.10	Aid to nonprofit organizations	151672.32	151672.32
2.11	Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality		
2.12	Aid to Other Impacted Industries		
2.13	Other Economic Support		

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
2.14	Rehiring Public Sector Staff		
3	Expenditure Category: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities		
3.1	Education Assistance: Early Learning		
3.2	Education Assistance: Aid to High-Poverty Districts		
3.3	Education Assistance: Academic Services		
3.4	Education Assistance: Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Services		
3.5	Education Assistance: Other		
3.6	Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care		
3.7	Healthy Childhood Environments: Home Visiting		
3.8	Healthy Childhood Environments: Services to Foster Youth or Families Involved in Child Welfare System		
3.9.	Healthy Childhood Environments: Other		
3.10	Housing Support: Affordable Housing		
3.11	Housing Support: Services for Unhoused persons		
3.12	Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance		
3.13	Social Determinants of Health: Other		
3.14	Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators		
3.15	Social Determinants of Health: Lead Remediation		
3.16	Social Determinants of Health: Community Violence Interventions		
4	Expenditure Category: Premium Pay		
4.1	Public Sector Employees		
4.2	Private Sector: Grants to other employers		
5	Expenditure Category: Infrastructure		
5.1	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater treatment		
5.2	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater collection and conveyance		
5.3	Clean Water: Decentralized wastewater		
5.4	Clean Water: Combined sewer overflows		
5.5	Clean Water: Other sewer infrastructure		
5.6	Clean Water: Stormwater		
5.7	Clean Water: Energy conservation		
5.8	Clean Water: Water conservation		
5.9	Clean Water: Nonpoint source		
5.10	Drinking water: Treatment		

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
5.11	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution		
5.12	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution: lead remediation		
5.13	Drinking water: Source		
5.14	Drinking water: Storage		
5.15	Drinking water: Other water infrastructure		
5.16	Broadband: "Last Mile" projects		
5.17	Broadband: Other projects		
6	Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement		
6.1	Provision of Government Services	91950000.00	91950000.00
7	Administrative and Other		
7.1	Administrative Expenses		
7.2	Evaluation and data analysis		
7.3	Transfers to Other Units of Government		
7.4	Transfers to Nonentitlement Units (States and Territories only)		

Project Inventory

Project 2004010: Revenue Loss Factor Recognition

Funding amount: \$91,950,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1, Revenue Replacement

Project Overview

Using the methodology outlined in the Interim Final Rule, Montgomery County government computed its revenue replacement factor. The County recognized \$91.95 million of this revenue replacement factor in fiscal year 2021 and used the funds to pay for the provision of government services as outlined by the Interim Final Rule.

Use of Evidence

N/A

Performance

N/A

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

N/A

Project 2004399: Working Families Income Supplement Expansion

Funding amount: \$25 million

Project Expenditure Category: 2.3

Project overview

- The Working Families Income Supplement expansion provides financial assistance to the County's low income working residents that are eligible to receive the State's Expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit under Senate Bill 218. The County matches 100% the State EITC. The State on behalf of the County mails out checks to eligible families and individuals at the end of July, October, and January to allow late filers to claim the credit. The County reimburses the State for these funds.
- [MD Senate Bill 218, Child Tax Credit and Expansion of Earned Income Credit](#)
- [Montgomery County Expedited 14-21 – Working Families Income Supplement – Amendments](#)

Use of Evidence

- The Working Families Income Supplement expansion provides financial assistance to the County's low income working residents that are eligible to receive the State's Expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit under Senate Bill 218 using SLFRF funds.
- As of July 31, 2021, out of the \$25,000,000 ARPA funds allocated to this project, a total of \$17,398,880 has been spent to date.

Performance

KPIs for this project are in development and future reports will be updated to include them.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

In collaboration with the County's Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, disaggregated demographic data related to outcomes will be reported.

Project 2004490: Por Nuestra Salud y Bienestar (PNSB)

Supporting COVID-19 Recovery and Resiliency Through Culturally Competent and Linguistically Appropriate Information, Services, and Care for Latino Residents of Montgomery County, Maryland (September- December 2021)

Funding amount: \$2,946,776

Project Expenditure Category: 1.8

Project Overview:

The Por Nuestra Salud y Bienestar (PNSB) initiative was established to implement a holistic, culturally competent and integrated wrap-around services approach to address COVID-19 in the Latino communities of Montgomery County. These communities have been identified as high-risk due to the known higher incidence of COVID-19 cases and/or because of existing high-risk health, social, economic, and environmental factors prevalent in those communities making them vulnerable to COVID-19.

Through a unique public-private partnership between Montgomery County and seven preeminent Latino community-based organizations - CASA de Maryland, Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Health, Care for Your Health, Identity, Inc., Mansfield Kaseman Health Clinic, Proyecto Salud, and the Upcounty Consolidation HUB at BlackRock- PNSB has leveraged a broad array of programmatic areas to reduce the impact from COVID-19, its related issues, and to support the recovery among Latinos in the County.

Use of Evidence

PNSB's objectives are:

- Increase the dissemination of information on COVID-19 testing and vaccination to mobilize the Latino community around prevention, testing, treatment, and vaccination services
- Increase the number of COVID-19 tests for Latinos
- Provide COVID-19 vaccinations to high-risk, high-need Latino communities
- Provide effective clinical and social support for Latinos affected by COVID-19 and assist with placement and care as needed
- Conduct case management and navigation to address social services and general health needs of the Latino community.

The Recovery Plan funds will support the following PNSB program areas: Community Outreach and Engagement; Case Management; Data Management, Analysis, and Reporting; and Non-Clinical Community Mental Health.

Performance

KPIs for this project are in development and future reports will be updated to include them.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

By definition, the PNSB initiative exists to eliminate COVID-19 related disparities and inequities among Latinos in Montgomery County. PNSB's has been designed and is being implemented with this focus and aim throughout all its components.

Latinos – a historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected group.

Latinos have been historically a vulnerable community that experiences many health and social inequities. Data from May 2020 showed that in the top 10 county zip codes with the highest number of COVID-19 cases, the percent of positive tests for non-Latino Whites was 16.1% compared to 67.6% for Latinos. In June 2020, 73% of the new cases were among Latinos. Over the last year, significant reductions in the percentage of residents testing positive for COVID-19 have been achieved. Despite this improvement, as of August 2021, one out of 5 (20.1%) of residents in Montgomery county were Latino but disproportionately represented 30% of all COVID cases and 20.8% of all COVID-19 deaths in the county.

Awareness: How equal and practical is the ability for Latino residents to become aware of PNSB services

As described above, PNSB is implementing a very robust and far-reaching strategy of outreach, community engagement, and communications to inform the Latino community of the services available. The effectiveness of increasing awareness depends not only on the message that is being delivered, but as importantly, it is driven by who is delivering the message. The nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Latino community's realities, need, and challenges requires the

leadership by organizations that have a proven history of working in the community and are trusted to community members. PNSB’s partner organizations have been working together for more than 20 years to effectively respond to the needs of Montgomery County’s Latino community in a culturally and linguistically competent manner and have the community’s trust and respect.

Access and Distribution: Are there differences in levels of access to benefits and services across groups? Are there administrative requirements that result in disparities in ability to complete applications or meet eligibility criteria?

There are many social determinants of health behind these inequities. Maryland Latinos are more likely to live in poverty, have front-facing essential jobs without paid sick leave or health insurance, use public transportation, live in closed quarters, mistrust the medical system and have a greater incidence of preexisting health conditions like diabetes than non-Hispanic whites. Many Latinos don’t have the luxury of sheltering at home and lack access to adequate and culturally competent health information, services, and resources that could help them prevent or mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

Outcomes: Are intended outcomes focused on closing gaps, reaching universal levels of service, or disaggregating progress by race, ethnicity, and other equity dimensions where relevant for the policy objective?

Yes. As of August 23, 2021, the COVID-19 vaccination rate for Latino residents in Montgomery County is 10 percent above that of White non-Latino county residents. This is a big change from April and May of 2021 when the rate for Latinos lagged behind that of Whites non-Latinos by about 20 percent. The improvements can be attributed to equity-focused measures lead, for the most part, by PNSB.

Describe how your jurisdiction’s planned or current use of funds incorporates written, oral, and other forms of input that capture diverse feedback from constituents, community-based organizations, and the communities themselves.

PNSB uses a variety of methods and tools to gather insight and feedback from the Latino community, CBOs, and other entities that assist in planning and refining strategies and approaches, and gauging the effectiveness and acceptance of its interventions:

1. Periodic surveys and focus group discussions with different priority groups.
2. Informal meetings with community members at large, partner and collaborating public and private sector organizations, and patients and clients that have received PNSB services.
3. Gathering “street intelligence” and insight from Community Health Workers who are “on the ground” day in and day out interacting with community members.
4. Feedback and requests from representatives from media outlets.
5. Discussions and strategy sessions with decision-makers and political leaders.

Project 2004491: African American Health Program

Funding amount: \$1,701,809

Project Expenditure Category: 1.8

Project Overview

The African American Health Program has been around since 1999. For this new initiative with ARPA funding, we will be finding a new vendor to support the COVID-19 Pandemic efforts because of contractual requirements. The COVID-19 Pandemic reinforced health care challenges and structural barriers that have been previously identified in the County. There is an opportunity to build infrastructure within the area of Public Health that is more geared toward the black community, including the possibility of a black physician network. Eligibility requirements are generally a barrier for the black community in seeking services; however, this program could open up the opportunity for the whole community inclusively. This project, however, has not been without challenges:

- Messaging that is culturally appropriate relating to vaccine, testing, and protective health measures.
- Messaging that highlights the history of vaccine experiences and hesitancy.
- Serving the entire spectrum of black populations within the County.
- Significant time and effort that went into the start-up phase of the project.
- Not a broad range of healthcare providers that are black or black serving in the County.
- Trying to find entities that can manage this type of funding and move within the structure. Any for profit partners are prohibited from using this type of funding, which is a challenge since many of those partners are already familiar with the County. In addition, there were challenges in the inability to leverage the same assets who had existing relationships with the new funding requirements.

More information can be found on the project website: <https://www.aahpcovid.com/>

Use of Evidence

Use of Evidence for this project will be evaluated and presented as appropriate in future reports.

Performance

KPIs for this project are in development and future reports will be updated to include them.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

By definition, the African American Health Program COVID Response Program exists to eliminate COVID-19 related disparities and inequities among the African American communities in Montgomery County.

Project 2004492: Asian American Health Initiative

Funding amount: \$1,150,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.8

Project overview

The funding supports a partnership with a lead agency operating in the county to develop, administer and monitor a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to award grants to community-based entities serving Asian American Pacific Islander (AAHPs) communities in Montgomery County to provide education, outreach, mental health/social service support and access to COVID 19 testing and vaccination. The RFP amount is \$1 million with the extra cost going toward the lead agency's administrative, planning and reporting responsibilities. The special appropriation was approved in July of 2021. A contract with the lead agency is worked on and the funding is not accessible by the lead agency as of August 25, 2021. The plan is to have the RFP released by the lead agency in October of 2021 and awards given to CBOs by November of 2021.

The grants to be awarded to community-based entities are intended to support below services:

- Developing linguistically and culturally appropriate outreach materials related to COVID to reach diverse subgroups of AAPIs in the county
- Connecting AAPI residents to supportive services with transportation to and from vaccination, interpretation and post-vaccination queries
- Adding social workers/case workers to connect residents to critical services offered by the government, such as filing for unemployment, rental assistance, child care subsidies, small business loans to counter negative impact resulting from income loss
- Offering consultation to AAPI residents to establish health care homes and mental health services when appropriate to combat stress and stigma perpetrated by deliberate misinformation
- Empowering AAPI residents to report incidents of anti-Asian hate crime, harassment incidents to appropriate authorities
- The administrative duties of the lead agency will include:
 - Establish data system to collect, aggregate and analyze data related to key performance metrics related to grants to CBOs
 - Evaluate effectiveness of COB activities, provide technical assistance where needed

The grants are meant to build capacity within the AAPI community in the county. There is not a great community-based infrastructure to serve and respond to emergencies of any kinds within the AAPI community. Therefore, one of the primary themes of the development of the RFP is a low barrier process to strengthen emerging organizations so they may become viable in the long run and will be able to become strong partners to county government to adequately serve the community.

Use of Evidence

Use of Evidence for this project will be evaluated and presented as appropriate in future reports.

Performance

KPIs for this project are in development and future reports will be updated to include them.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

By definition, the Asian-American Health Initiative COVID Response Program exists to eliminate COVID-19 related disparities and inequities among the AAPI communities in Montgomery County.

Project 2004395: Therapeutic Recreation Services

Funding amount: \$750,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.10

Project overview

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services offers a wide array of services through school-based programming. This connection to children and their families has highlighted significant concerns around the negative psychological impact of COVID-19 and the need to help students re-acclimate to interacting normally with peers and general society with the lifting of the stay-at-home orders and the learn from home environment. In response, the department will leverage its work in therapeutic recreation, which is designed to enhance healthy cognitions and increase the participant's ability to constructively view the events that take place in one's life—and, ultimately, to create a mindset that leads to healthy lifestyle via diet, sleep, and exercise.

Therapeutic recreation is about using physical movement and activity to holistically enhance the youth's ability to confront and regulate mental and behavioral challenges and find productive coping mechanisms. The sessions, which typically last between 1 and 2 hours, are intended to occur weekly throughout the calendar year. Relevant program activities include:

- Nature walks and hikes
- Arts and crafts projects in the office
- Fishbowl discussions (grouping the students and everyone discussing certain topics),
- Sport activities
- Clinician-led group conversations
- Community outings for our students who are isolated from community events and activities (pool days, county parks, etc.)

This program commenced in the Spring of 2021. Given the in-person nature of the activities, it was deferred until the pandemic had sufficiently abated. The intention is to continue this program beyond FY22. This program is delivered primarily by contracted partners, including the City of Rockville and Sheppard Pratt.

The intended outcomes of the program include the following:

- Students will identify and manage complex emotions via disclosure personal anxieties, goals, hopes, and fears both with peers and with facilitators,
- Students will manage negative emotions towards COVID-19 and in-person learning and learn how to re-engage with the community,
- Students will build and practice skills that foster peer-to-peer and adult-to-student relationships,

- Students will actively participate in therapeutic recreation activities on a consistent basis, and
- Families and students will be empowered to engage with and participate in community-based activities.

To promote equity, the eligibility requirements for the program were kept flexible for youth in the catchment area to allow access to any youth who would benefit from face to face therapeutic recreation services and who would otherwise have difficulty accessing these types of services (due to fiscal or other barriers). In addition, in order to ease access and participation, transportation and, if needed, meals are provided.

Performance

Therapeutic Recreation programming is evaluated at the completion of sessions. A questionnaire is provided for participants to give feedback in areas such as increased functioning in both school and home, increased self-esteem, and improved ability to identify feelings and their impact on thoughts and behavior. The questionnaire also includes an option to comment on what they learned, what was most helpful and what, if any, recommendations would be made. The program will use the Pediatric Symptom Checklist as a pre-and post-survey.

Using this survey, the program will track outcomes defined as the percent of youth and family members receiving mental health promotion and/or prevention services who report one or more of the following:

- Increased knowledge of behaviors, lifestyles, activities, and/or interpersonal skills that promote mental health and wellness
- Increased knowledge of risk factors and early symptoms of mental health problems in youth (and where to seek assistance if symptoms are identified)
- Increased participation in/use of activities that improve mental health and wellness.
- Increased knowledge and/or application of problem-solving and coping skills

The program has set a target of 80 percent or higher for each of those key performance indicators. The program will also report on the number of participants to help track the outputs of the program.

Use of Evidence

Current interventions draw from an array of practices. Peer-to-peer engagement and support strategies are based upon the [evidence-based practice of peer support; literature and resources](#).

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

In collaboration with the County's Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, disaggregated demographic data related to outcomes will be reported.

Project 2004406: Mobile Health Clinic

Funding amount: \$620,859

Project Expenditure Category: 1.12

Project overview

COVID-19 has highlighted the need for greater capacity to provide health and human services directly in hard-to-reach and vulnerable communities throughout the County. In response, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services is establishing a Mobile Services Unit that will travel across the County to provide health and social care services, with the explicit mission of bridging health and social disparities. The unit will connect residents to integrated services that will span: Immunizations (COVID-19, flu, TB, School Health) and Testing (COVID-19, TB, HIV/STD); Preventive Screening and Referrals (oral health, physical health, mental health); Exams and Treatment (maternal health, crisis, HIV/STD); Health Education and Health Fairs (range of topics); and Enrollment and Eligibility for State and County Benefits (food stamps, child care subsidies, etc.).

This project seeks to advance the County's goal of Thriving Youth and Families by alleviating health disparities and improving health outcomes, including by increasing access to somatic mental health care and decreasing the spread of disease in the community. The project also seeks to address the upstream factors that impact health beyond healthcare delivery by additionally providing access to socioeconomic resources. In addition, the project seeks to foster strategic and trusted relationships with community partners (e.g., Service Hubs) to collectively address health disparities across Montgomery County.

This project is currently completing the planning phase, having (1) determined the steps for the procurement process in collaboration with Fleet Management; (2) determined the services to be provided to define the preliminary vehicle specifications; (3) and discussed and toured mobile service unit vehicle experiences with other Maryland jurisdictions. In August, the proposed program design was presented to and validated by the Department of Health and Human Services' Senior Leadership Team, which also led to the formation of a cross-department workgroup to coordinate access to a wide spectrum of DHHS services beyond public health, across children and family services; homeless services; aging and disabilities services; and behavioral health services. This planning is currently being translated into specifications for procurement.



Figure 2. Pictures of mobile service unit vehicles operated by peer jurisdictions

The contracting for a vehicle is expected to take a year. Once a contractor has been selected, the team will initiate the hiring of staff. The unit is expected to be staffed by up to 5 full-time equivalents, including such roles as a nurse practitioner, a clinical social worker, community health workers, and a driver also serving as an administrative aid. Subsequently, the full implementation of the mobile services unit and staff are expected in late FY22 / early FY23.

Equity considerations sit at the core of this project, which seeks to expand the County government’s capacity to proactively address disparities in health care and health care access. To do so successfully, the Mobile Health Unit will make extensive use of data to target underserved and hard-to-reach communities as well as communities experiencing poor health outcomes. This targeting will be informed by an extensive evidence base developed by the department’s epidemiology team, which includes the upcoming Health Equity report and the Zip Code Health Ranking Project.

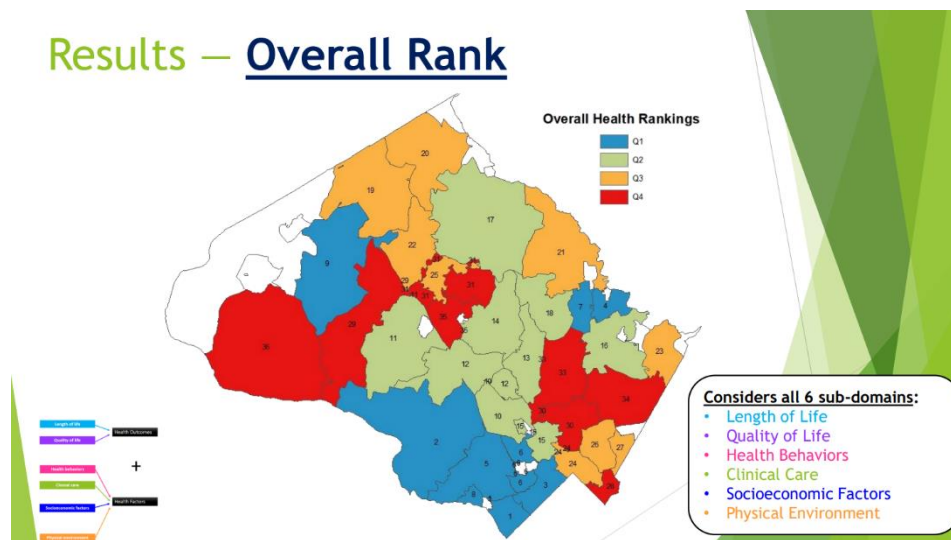


Figure 3. County Zip Codes and their Health Ranking

Performance

As part of the design phase, the project has proposed the following key performance indicators, which will be refined as the project moves into the implementation phase:

- Number of residents served by the Mobile Health Unit
- Number of events organized/attended
- Percent of residents served who connected to additional health and human services in the six months following initial engagement (ex: dental services, food stamps, behavioral health support, child care subsidies, rental assistance, etc.).
- Percent of residents served in (or from) high-need and vulnerable communities as defined by community indicators of social vulnerability (CDC) and healthcare access.

The department will leverage its integrated case management system (eICM) and electronic health records (EHR) system to track client engagements and support the reporting required for the measures above.

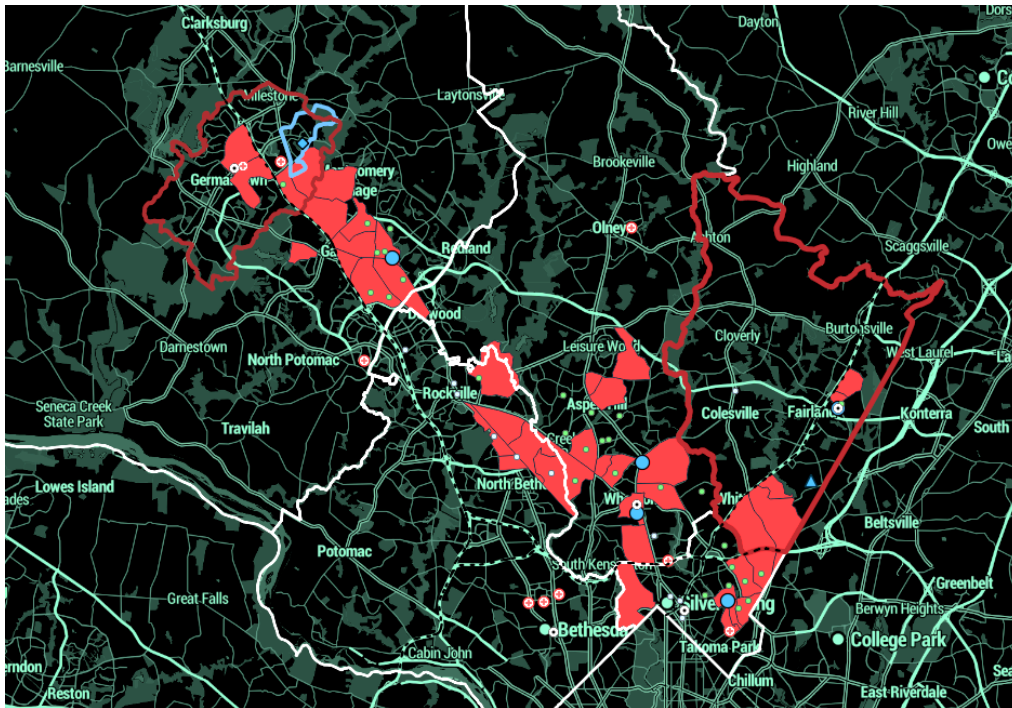


Figure 4. Map of County Census Tracts that Score in the Top 20% on the CDC Social Vulnerability Index

Use of Evidence

The project design was preceded and informed by extensive research on industry best practices, that included reviewing and touring mobile service unit vehicles operated by peer jurisdictions and an extensive review of the available literature. The unit will use in-depth data and analytics to target the most vulnerable neighborhoods, including by drawing from the County's Zip Code Health Ranking Project.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

In collaboration with the County's Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, disaggregated demographic data related to outcomes will be reported.

Project 2004407: Provide for Health and Human Service Hubs to Promote Equity

Funding amount: \$3,600,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.12

Project overview

With the closing of most traditional service delivery locations during the pandemic, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services recognized the need to establish a network of alternative service access points, with a particular focus on addressing the considerable needs in the County's hardest hit and most impoverished communities. In response, the department partnered with eight community-based organizations to launch Service Consolidation Hubs in mid-2020 that bring together County government and a range of nonprofit partners to serve Montgomery County residents in need with food and other basic necessities. Pre-COVID-19, the County was home to over 60,000 residents experiencing food insecurity. The stresses of COVID-19 dramatically escalated that number as the pandemic brought unprecedented levels of unemployment.

The Hubs quickly formed a critical backbone for the County's response to COVID-19 and served as the primary access point for serving the County's most vulnerable residents. Specifically, the Hubs work with community providers and faith-based groups within the neighborhoods they serve to provide free food at weekly drive-through and walk-in distribution sites (serving upwards of 5,000-6,000 families per week); diapers and baby needs; home delivery of food, prepared meals, and other necessities for COVID-19 affected households or households experiencing emergencies or transportation barriers; and, more recently, case management to connect families to broader resources and County services (with almost 1,900 case management encounters by the end of July). In so doing, the Hubs enabled the department and its partners to continue to serve at-risk populations during the pandemic, while improving care coordination across a wide range of providers.

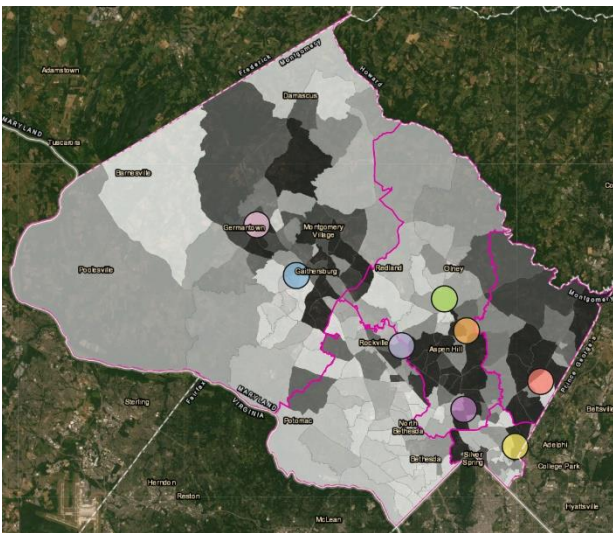


Figure 5. Map: Hub Locations and COVID Case Rate by Census Tract (darker = higher)

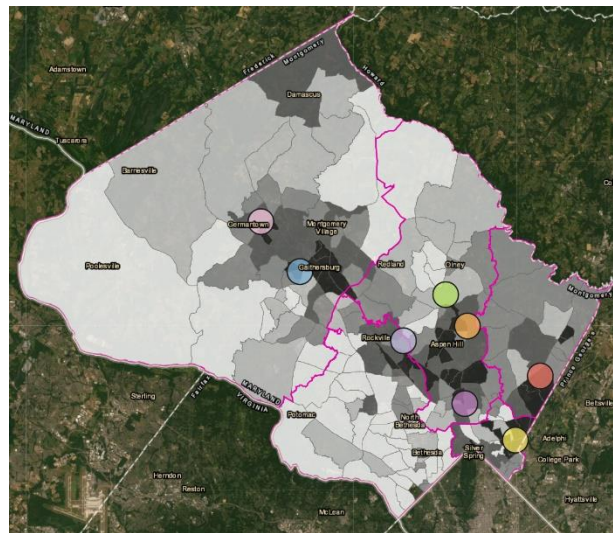


Figure 6. Map: Hub Locations and 200% Poverty Rates by Census Tract (darker = higher)

The Service Consolidation Hubs continue their mission of bridging the gap between social service providers and the clients they serve by co-locating services from government and community partners directly in the most vulnerable neighborhoods. The improved access and collaboration facilitated by the hubs have proven to be an important asset in advancing the Department's strategic priorities of "ready access", "painless navigation", and "equity." Accordingly, the County government intends to extend the work of the Hubs to support the COVID-19 recovery effort and form the foundation for a new place-based approach to delivering health and human services in the County. The funds will be used to support this transition and sustained activity.

The primary intention of this work is to ease access for clients to food distribution and care coordination services. Ultimately, it is the intended outcome of this work to stabilize supported families by giving them vital nutritional support and connecting them to other community-based and HHS-provided services. The County maintains an [online directory of the hubs and their services](#).

The department and its partners apply an equity lens to both the design and operations of the program. First, the team leveraged data to target the communities most in-need by selecting sites in neighborhoods with high COVID case rates, high levels of poverty, and high socio-economic racial disparities (see maps above). This place-based nature of the work of the Hubs ensures a focus on promoting equity in service provision, as reaching clients where they are reduces barriers to service access for all individuals within a given community. Moreover, this approach enables the partners to reach segments of the population that may typically be harder to connect with, including by utilizing trusted community organizations and churches to be the true arms and legs of the effort.

Performance

Each Hub tracks the number of households, individuals, youth, and seniors served, number of diapers distributed, number of prepared meals distributed, and pounds of non-prepared food distributed. The data is captured in individual spreadsheet and compiled/aggregated for all the sites using a central online reporting tool.

Key performance indicators that the program will report on include:

- # of households served (through food and diaper distributions and care coordination)
- # of individuals served (through food and diaper distributions and care coordination)
- Pounds of food distributed (potential, additional measure)

In addition, the department and its partners seek to implement improved data collection to help track the impact of the care coordination work to include measures of outcome. The department is also examining opportunities for conducting an in-depth evaluation of the program to help inform its long-term design and operations beyond the pandemic.

Hubs Service data from July 25 to July 30, 2021											
site	Households	children	Seniors	Individuals	Lbs. distr.	Distrib	Home deliv	COVID Hshlds	Diapers	Volunteer Hours	Case Mgmt Hshlds
Black Rock UpCounty	976	1892	386	4292	17,586	5	50	1	784	158	n/a
SENECA CREEK/Gburg	880	1487	237	3,820	23,726	9	65	0	8,019	199.5	26
Clifton Park Baptist /SS	823	1013	633	3163	23,925	7	68	0	350	130	10
Kingdom Fellowship EC	731	1083	399	2512	16,460	7	4	0	6,900	206	21
Interfaith /Twinbrook	719	1298	396	3226	19,385	5	17	0	0	192	n/a
HUGHES/Wheat on Glenmont	667	1415	335	3412	23,345	4	47	0	0	158	14
HARVEST /Olney, S.S.	509	658	214	1564	15,270	3	91	0	1700	110.5	12
OAK CHAPEL/20906	357	629	355	1522	10,710	2	41	0	5,325	85	5
TOTALS	5,662	9,475	2,955	23,511	150,407	42	383	1	23,078	1,239	88

Figure 7. Sample of weekly metrics for Service Hubs

Use of Evidence

The goal of the project, fundamentally, is to create opportunities for service access within the communities we serve. Place-based service has become an operational norm in human and social service systems across the nation. Embedding the services within the neighborhoods facing the greatest need reduces barriers and increases the likelihood of connecting potential recipients to programs and benefits they might not otherwise have access to for a variety of reasons (including transportation, language or cultural barriers, issues pertaining to trust of government, etc.). A barriers study has been commissioned within funding from the Kresge Foundation to evaluate one of our place-based initiatives. The learning that this study will afford will be leveraged to evaluate the other initiatives over time.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

In collaboration with the County's Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, disaggregated demographic data related to outcomes will be reported.

Project 2004408: Mental Health Services for Public School Students and Families

Funding amount: \$250,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.10

Project overview

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services offers a wide array of services through school-based programming. This connection to children and their families has highlighted significant concerns around the negative psychological impact of COVID-19. As a part of the response to this concern, the department is placing a renewed emphasis on mental

health services for public school students and families. These services are targeted to un- and under-insured school-aged youth who present with, or are at risk for developing, mental, emotional, or behavioral health problems that are mild to moderate in intensity, duration, and scope.

The scope of the services provided includes individual youth, family, and/or group counseling services aimed at early identification and treatment of social/emotional/behavioral health risks or problems. The goal of these engagements is to address problems before they become more significant (improving functioning and decreasing the intensity of problems/symptoms). Under this general umbrella of services, contracted mental and behavioral health service providers conduct the following activities:

- Provide screening, assessment, intake, and referral services for school-aged youth and their families.
- Offer individual, family, group and/or multi-family group counseling to youth and family members who are experiencing mild to moderate mental health problems related to their personal, social, or family well-being, using problem-solving, asset based, family-focused, evidence based and goal-oriented approaches.
- Provide programs/services that target early symptoms of mental health problems.
- Provide crisis intervention services to youth on a needed basis if suicidal ideation and/or other safety issues are presented in the course of the delivery the program services.

By increasing access to viable behavioral and mental health services for populations with limited access due to financial and insurance constraints, the program aims to improve equitable access and outcomes for public school children during this challenging time.

Performance

The intended outcome of this program is to decrease youth emotional and behavioral issues and improve psychosocial functioning as measured by an evidence-based and County-approved measure of severity, using the Pediatric Symptom Checklist [Pediatric Symptom Checklist \(massgeneral.org\)](https://www.massgeneral.org/pediatric-symptom-checklist) completed by either the youth or the parent/caregiver (based on age of the child).

In addition to tracking the number of program participants, the program will track the following key performance indicators—with a target of 70 percent or higher:

- Percent of youth participating in services experiencing a decrease in self-reported emotional and/or behavioral health problems
- Percent of youth exhibiting a decrease in emotional and behavioral issues & improvement in psychosocial functioning

Use of Evidence

The goals of the project are to enhance psychosocial functioning and decrease emotional and/or behavioral health problems for school-aged youth. In evaluating the success of the program AND individual client outcomes, contractors are using validated instruments, such as the [Pediatric Symptom Checklist \(massgeneral.org\)](https://www.massgeneral.org/pediatric-symptom-checklist).

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

In collaboration with the County's Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, disaggregated demographic data related to outcomes will be reported.

Project 2004405: Rapid Rehousing Expansion

Funding amount: \$490,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.2

Project overview

The economic consequences of COVID-19, including an unprecedented rate of unemployment, has put intensive pressure on the County's effort to end and prevent homelessness. To expand resources for proven strategies, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services is allocating additional funds for its Rapid Rehousing program to best serve our most vulnerable families who face housing instability as a result of the pandemic.

Rapid Rehousing is an intervention designed to help individuals and families to quickly exit homelessness, return to housing in the community, and not become homeless again in the near term. The core components of a rapid rehousing program are housing identification, move-in and rent assistance, and rapid rehousing case management and services. The goal of the program is to help people quickly obtain housing, increase income, and support self-sufficiency to stay housed. Rapid re-housing is offered without any preconditions, such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety. Rapid rehousing is complemented with extensive case management and cross-agency coordination to help ensure that households do not return to homelessness.

Rapid rehousing has proven to be an effective way to reduce the length of time a household experiences homelessness and increase the number of families exiting to permanent housing. In FY20, the Rapid Rehousing program served 690 households (up from 274 in FY17), with 67% exiting to permanent housing and with participants experiencing a 22% increase in income.

The funding allocated to this program is intended to be used to provide rapid rehousing to 31 additional households, including 5 households escaping domestic violence, to help meet the additional demand and pressure created by COVID-19 hardships.

Performance

Key performance indicators tracked by the Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Program and informed by [RRH National benchmarks and standards](#) will include:

- Number of households served
- Percent of households with increased income since entering rapid rehousing
- Percent of households exiting to permanent housing
- Percent of households that do NOT return to homelessness within 24 months
- Length of time families experience homelessness

Use of Evidence

The department develops strategies to solve the seemingly intractable problem of homelessness by building on previous successes, employing best and promising practices, engaging multiple stakeholders, using data to make tough decisions about resource allocation, and creating long-term systemic change. [Rapid Rehousing](#) is a proven strategy and established best practice backed by extensive research and real-world experience.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

In collaboration with the County's Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, disaggregated demographic data related to outcomes will be reported.

Project 2004398: Rental Assistance

Funding amount: \$1,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.2

Project overview

The devastating economic consequences of the pandemic and the associated unprecedented rates of unemployment have led to thousands of County residents facing deep rental debt and fearing evictions and the loss of basic housing security—while exacerbating an affordable housing crisis that predated the pandemic. To address these concerns and assist residents in need, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services has established a COVID-19 Rent Relief Program that provides short-term rental assistance to eligible households who have experienced lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has caused them to fall behind on their rent. This program draws from and braids together multiple funding streams, including ARPA funding, to raise the resources needed to serve as many impacted residents as possible.

While funds are available, the program will provide up to \$12,000 to eligible households to pay for back rent owed and/or pay for up to three months of future rent. For households below 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI), additional financial help may be available. Funds awarded will take into account any other local, state, or federal assistance received to pay rent.

To prioritize the residents with the highest need and to ensure an equitable distribution of funds, the department is committed to adopting an approach that avoids a blunt first-come first-serve prioritization. Instead, applications will be processed based on a number of criteria, including location, employment status, and eviction status. First, the department developed a [Homeless Prevention Index](#) to evaluate all neighborhoods in relation to COVID-19 impact, housing stress, and social determinants. This index will be used to prioritize assignment of applications for processing. Additionally, households who have a member that has been unemployed for the previous 90 days or households with current eviction notices or judgements from the District Court will be prioritized. This needs-based prioritization will enable the program to ensure that an equity lens is utilized, recognizing that communities of color have been significantly impacted by COVID, disproportionately experience homelessness, and are more likely to get evicted.

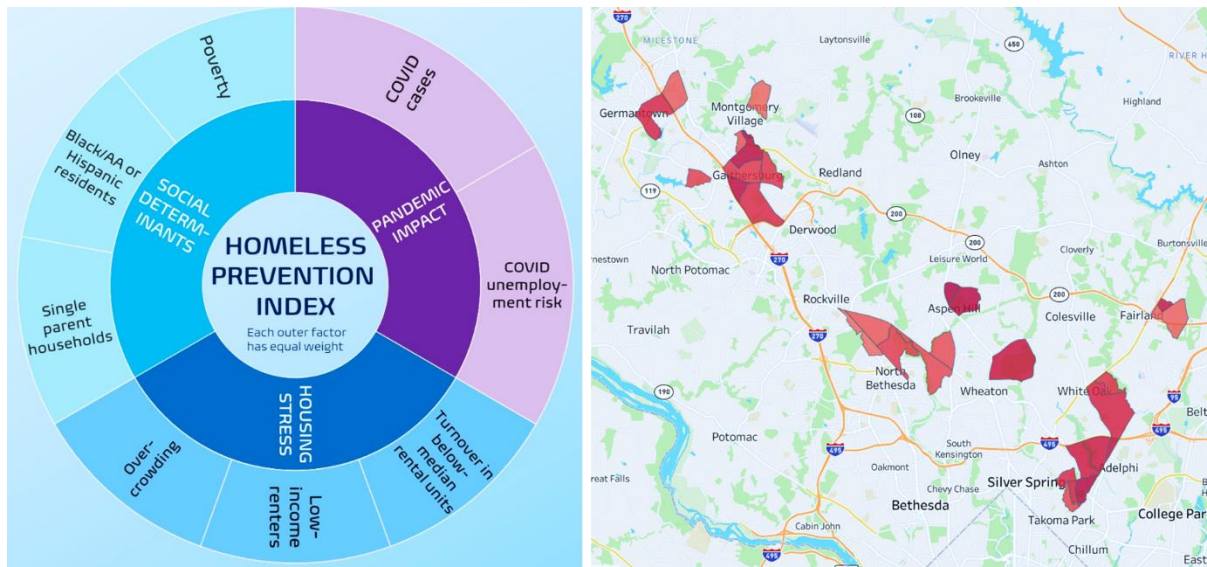


Figure 8. Montgomery County Homeless Prevention Index and Priority Neighborhoods

In addition, the department has established a partnership with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office to conduct rapid outreach to families issued a writ for eviction. This ensures that families at risk of losing their housing are made aware of the supports provided by the County to avoid eviction and homelessness.

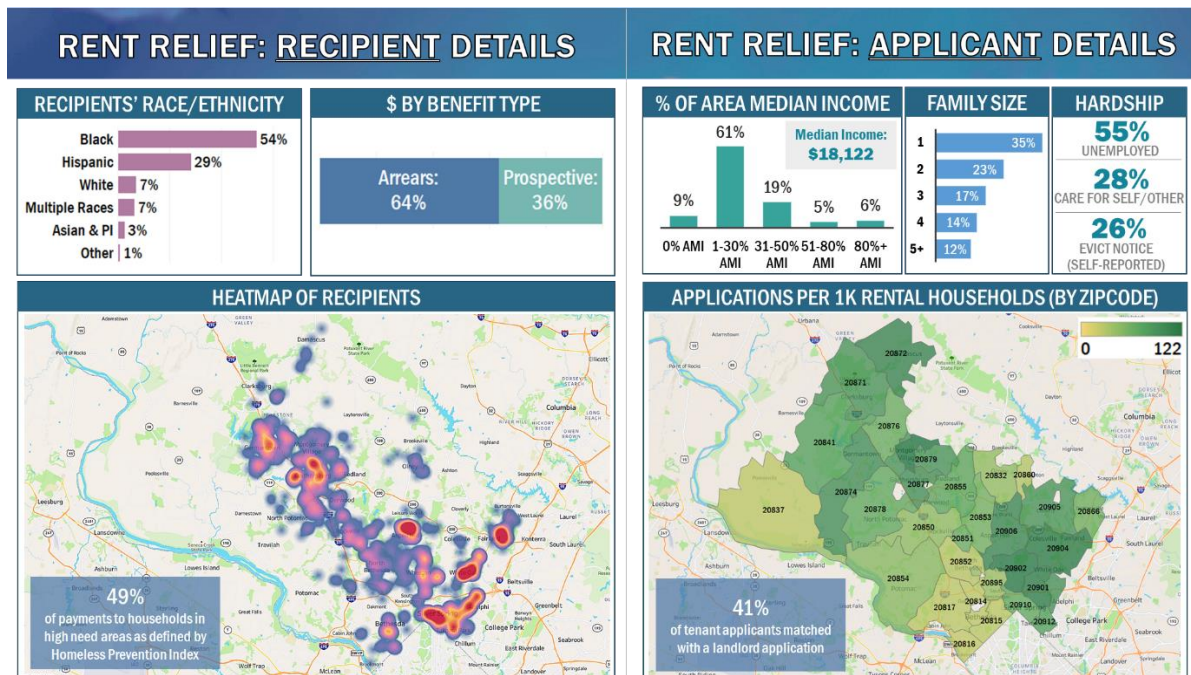


Figure 9. Profile of 2021 Emergency Rental Assistance Applicants and Beneficiaries

Performance

The emergency rental assistance program tracks detailed data on program beneficiaries that includes client demographics. Key performance indicators that will be tracked by the program include:

- Number of households approved for rental assistance
- Approved rental assistance dollars
- Percent of rental assistance dollars issued to priority neighborhoods with a high homeless prevention index
- Percent of households facing eviction that have applied for rental assistance

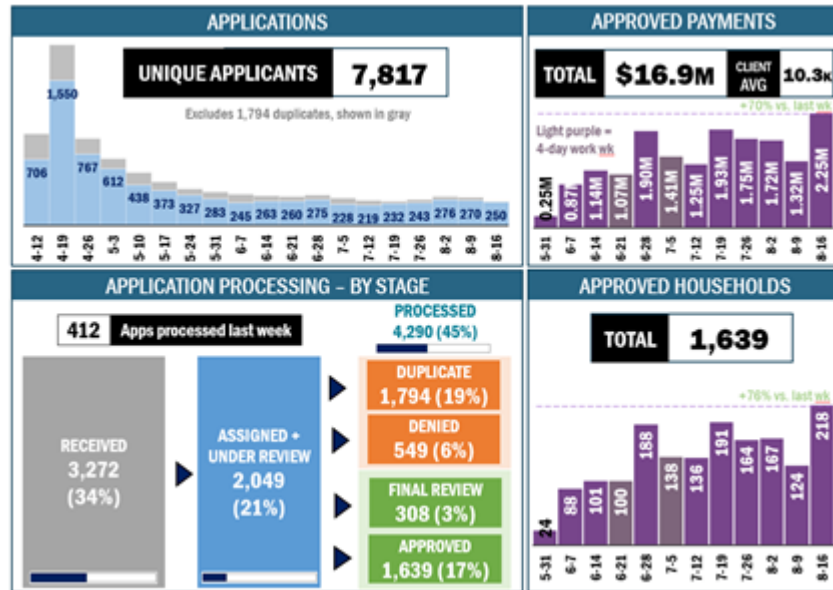


Figure 10. August 23, 2021 Snapshot of the Combined Emergency Rental Assistance Issued to County Residents for the 2021 Phase of COVID-19 Rental Assistance

Use of Evidence

The program uses national best practices and extensive data and analytics to prioritize application from residents most at risk at homelessness. This work included the development of a Homeless Prevention Index based on the current literature on risk factors for homelessness.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

In collaboration with the County's Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, disaggregated demographic data related to outcomes will be reported.

Project 2004397: Operational Aid to Conference Visitors

Bureau

Funding amount: \$804,200

Project Expenditure Category: 2.10

Project Overview

The mission of Visit Montgomery is to market and develop the County and its communities as a preferred destination for group and individual travel thereby fostering economic growth and quality of place through tourism. The organization began receiving ARPA funding July 1, 2021 to assist with the tourism and hospitality industry recovery. The CVB will continue to market the County as a destination for weekend leisure travel and youth and amateur sports events implementing print and digital advertising and sales support services to group business. These marketing efforts will assist with hotel revenues generated by booked hotel room nights. In addition, these hotel room revenues generate a multiplier effect into the local economy through visitor spending.

The Conference and Visitors Bureau (CVB) of Montgomery County, MD is funded by a 7% allocation of actualized hotel tax collections in Montgomery County. Revenues from the hotel tax from Fiscal Year 2019 to Fiscal Year 2020 decreased by 70% due to the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on the tourism and hospitality industry. The CVB will continue to market the County as a destination for weekend leisure travel and youth and amateur sports events implementing print and digital advertising and sales support services to group business. These marketing efforts will assist with hotel revenues generated by booked hotel room nights. In addition, these hotel room revenues generate a multiplier effect into the local economy through visitor spending. In addition, continued sustained funding of the CVB marketing the County as a location for recreational, leisure and entertainment opportunities will help to generate consumer spending in local shops, restaurants, hotels, and more leading to increased economic activity for businesses in the County.

These Federal funds will be used to offset the negative impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic reduction in hotel tax collections.

The funds will be used for operating costs including rent and personnel costs and print and digital advertising fees.

Use of Evidence

Use of Evidence for this project will be evaluated and presented as appropriate in future reports.

Performance

KPIs for this project are in development and future reports will be updated to include them.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

Visit Montgomery's marketing and messaging focuses on representing the diversity of Montgomery County residents through its photography, editorial, social media posts, email newsletters and video content. The marketing team manages an editorial calendar that includes landing page and blog topics that promote Montgomery County's diverse attractions and experiences. The Visit Montgomery events calendar welcomes community events from all backgrounds. [VisitMontgomery.com](https://www.visitmontgomery.com) is created on a mobile-responsive platform and the design

includes larger images and type fonts to accommodate populations with visual impairments. A language translator will be added to the website as part of the Fiscal Year 2022 upgrade.

Project 2004401: FiberNet2 Equipment Maintenance

Funding amount: \$500,000

Project Expenditure Category: 5.17

See description under Montgomery Connects Digital Equity Program.

Project 2004402: FiberNet3 Equipment Expansion and Support

Funding amount: \$700,000

Project Expenditure Category: 5.17

See description under Montgomery Connects Digital Equity Program.

Project 2004403: Montgomery Connects Digital Equity Program

Funding amount: \$100,000

Project Expenditure Category: 5.17

Project overview

The FiberNet2 funding will be used to replace FiberNet2 networking and firewall equipment to eliminate network vulnerabilities, improve business continuity, and enable the County to improve security and reliable back-up of sensitive financial data and health record data at County clinics. Equipment is expected to be purchased and installed in FY22.

FiberNet3 funding will be used for equipment, warranties and support contracts for networking equipment and data center connections that enable exponential growth in FiberNet network capacity.

Montgomery Connects Digital Equity funding will be used to support provision of digital equity training in Mandarin, expanded outreach in Spanish, enrollment of low-income residents in free computer device and home broadband discount programs, and expansion of MoCoNet service to residents. View the [Office of Broadband Programs website](#).

Use of Evidence

Implementation of network equipment will use technical key performance indicators to measure and report successful installation of equipment.

Montgomery Connects Digital Equity outcomes will include participant self-evaluation, and measure households without broadband or computers, or who have experienced income reductions due to Covid, and attempt to collect race, ethnicity, and income data in a respectful and equity manner. Programs are not based on evidence-based interventions.

Performance

KPIs for this project are in development and future reports will be updated to include them.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

Implementation of network equipment will use technical key performance indicators to measure and report successful installation of equipment.

Montgomery Connects Digital Equity funding will be used to target low-income underserved communities of color that have the lowest home internet and computer adoption rates. Outreach will be provided in Spanish, with additional ability to provide outreach in Mandarin, Amharic, Korean, French, and Vietnamese. Work is being done to partner with community organizations (including immigrant support organizations) providing food, rent, and similar Covid-assistance to promote digital equity programs. Outcomes will include participant self-evaluation, and measure households without broadband or computers, or who have experienced income reductions due to Covid, and attempt to collect race, ethnicity, and income data in a respectful and equitable manner.

Montgomery Connects Digital Equity funding is targeted to serve low-income underserved communities of color and older adult households that have the lowest home internet and computer adoption rates. See June 22, 2021 Briefing Memo to the County Council for statistical data. Partnerships are being developed to promote digital equity programs through organizations providing Covid-related food and rental assistance.

FiberNet equipment will provided expanded network capacity to enable Montgomery County Public Schools, Montgomery College, Housing Opportunities Commission, and Montgomery County Health and Human Services to better service their mission to address educational disparities, promote health services for vulnerable communities, and provide safe housing with access with high-speed broadband to allow residents to access online job services. FiberNet equipment will also enable the County to enhance cybersecurity and upgrade public facilities.

Programs are being developed and will report qualitative and quantitative data as programs are deployed.

Project 2004404: COVID Short Term line of Credit **Administrative Costs**

Funding amount: \$1,400,000

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1

Project Overview

The \$1.4 million “Short Term Line of Credit Administrative” cost estimate is to pay for financial institutions’ quarterly commitment fees on the undrawn portions of two lines of credit. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economy, the County potentially faced a sharp decline in the collection of tax revenues.

To protect the County of any significant cash flow gaps as a result of the COVID-related downturn, during FY21, the County entered into lines of credit with two financial institutions for a total of \$250 million. These lines of credit have not been utilized to date, but are available to provide cash to ensure that the County has sufficient liquidity to meet its obligations. Cash can be used to fund any of the County’s operating budget Expenditure Categories. The expenditure represented here reflects the on-going administrative costs of maintaining access to the lines of credit.

Use of Evidence

N/A

Performance

N/A

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

N/A

Project 2004396: Circuit Court Remote Proceeding **Facilitators & Schedulers**

Funding amount: \$291,432

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1

Project overview

- Due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, remote proceedings have proved to be useful and effective in facilitating the courts’ performance of core functions during the COVID-19 emergency. The remote proceeding facilitators and schedulers are responsible for the coordination and facilitation of remote video proceedings utilizing Zoom for Government, the primary video conferencing platform selected by the Maryland Judiciary.
- Video and telephone remote proceedings have taken place in the Montgomery County Circuit Court North Tower courtrooms, South Tower courtrooms, and hearing rooms, as well as chambers, offices, and within the Family Division Services. An integrated technology solution has been deployed to enable court proceedings to be conducted remotely.

- The COVID-19 pandemic created challenges for our judicial system. Virtual hearings have continued to operate on a number of hearings to save counsel and litigants travel time and expense, and save the court time, as well. Just in March 2021, 1,182 virtual hearings were held, and those hearing involved 9,251 participants.
- View [Circuit Court Operations Update Website](#).

Use of Evidence

Use of Evidence for this project will be evaluated and presented as appropriate in future reports.

Performance

KPIs for this project are in development and future reports will be updated to include them.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

In collaboration with the County's Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice, disaggregated demographic data related to outcomes will be reported.