CLARK COUNTY
COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM

2015 Share Hunger Response Hot Meals Program

2015 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Helping People. Changing Lives.
community Action PARTNERSHIP
AMERICA'S POVERTY FIGHTING NETWORK

CLARK COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COUNCILORS

Marc Boldt, Chair
Jeanne Stewart, District 1 Julie Olson, District 2
David Madore, District 3 Tom Mielke, District 4

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends of Community Action:

Clark County has nearly 55,000 individuals in poverty. The Department of Community Services has been working to better coordinate and integrate health and human services through Early Adopter for full Medicaid integration to improve people's physical and social well-being. The Department partners with several nonprofit organizations to provide programs that help families attain economic security. The following are two examples of the extensive programs that serve those most in need:

- The Homeless Employment Navigator program through Columbia River Mental Health Services works with people experiencing homelessness to gain employment by providing employment focused supports. Individuals receive employment and educational training plans, vocational assessments and resume development. Of the 100 individuals assisted in 2015, all obtained skills required for employment, 62 obtained employment with 45 of those individuals maintaining employment for at least 90 days; and,

- The Share, Salvation Army and Janus Youth Ending Family Homelessness programs served 50 households with rent assistance and supportive services. All families were recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and were supported through a collaboration of service providers including Partners in Careers, WorkSource, YWCA, DSHS and school district homeless liaisons. Over 92% of the households maintained housing stability for at least six months.

The Community Action Program conducts a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) every three years to better understand the service gaps and common challenges in the community for funding prioritization. The CNA includes information about the current demographics of people living below the Federal Poverty Limit, an analysis of the causes and conditions of poverty, and community feedback via a Survey of Needs completed by people who are low-income. The next CNA will be conducted during the summer of 2016 and we hope you will participate.

Thanks to the volunteers and staff of the many organizations that collaborate with Community Action, we continue to provide innovative services to improve the lives of those in our community.

Sincerely,

Vanessa R. Gaston, Director
Clark County Department of Community Services

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Community Action Advisory Board....4

2015 Board Members....4

From the Board Chair....4

Community Action....5

Funding....6

Access....8

Health....10

Housing....11

Safety....15

Self-Sufficiency....17

Poverty in Clark County....19

Community Data....22

Partnerships....24

Contact Information....25

COMMUNITY ACTION ADVISORY BOARD

The Community Action Advisory Board (CAAB) is comprised of nine members representing a cross-section of the community. Board members include citizens who are low-income or have experienced poverty, elected public officials, and representatives from the private sector.

The Advisory Board conducts a Needs Assessment and Survey of Needs to provide direction for making recommendations for funding programs sponsored by community-based organizations. All services funded through the CAAB must address essential human needs and assist in moving people towards self-sufficiency.

2015 BOARD MEMBERS

Elected Officials:
- Mavis Nickels, District 1
- Julie Rotz, District 2
- Anne McEnerny-Ogle, District 3

Citizen Representatives:
- Melodie Pazolt, District 1
- Armando Herrera, District 2
- Paula Martin, District 3

Representatives of the Low-Income Community:
- Lydia Sanders, District 1
- Jessica Ghiglieri, District 2
- Sheree Thun, District 3

FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends of Community Action:

The CAAB works in conjunction with staff to address the causes of poverty in Clark County. Every attempt is made to remove barriers to self-sufficiency. With limited resources and an abundance of challenges, the CAAB, with excellent staff support, has been successful at identifying programs that assist with meeting basic needs such as food and shelter. By utilizing innovative models of support service and best practices such as Trauma Informed Care, the CAAB and Clark County Department of Community Services staff has been able to make programs available that address long-term, multi-generational poverty.

The Report to the Community provides information that will increase the public's awareness of poverty related issues in Clark County. I wish to thank County staff for their support and hard work on behalf of the Board and all residents of Clark County.

Sincerely,
Lydia Sanders, Chair
2015 Community Action Advisory Board

COMMUNITY ACTION

The Promise of Community Action: Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

Source: Community Action Partnership

Objectives of the Clark County Community Action Program:

- To promote institutional and community changes which address the causes of poverty, and to remove barriers to self-sufficiency faced by low-income communities, families, and individuals;

- To reduce the impact of poverty on communities, families, and individuals by providing resources for services which are responsive to their needs;

- To promote innovative approaches to addressing the causes and impacts of poverty in the community;

- To serve as a catalyst for community efforts to leverage additional resources which address the causes and impacts of poverty; and

- To make recommendations or take other action on any other subject as referred by the Commissioners or jointly by the Commissioners and one or more city governments.

Source: Clark County Community Action Advisory Board By-laws

FUNDING

Clark County's Community Action Program is comprised of many funding sources focused on providing services to households with moderate, low, and very low incomes.

Local

Clark County receives local funding from property taxes and document recording fees. Local funding is dedicated for specific types of programs that aim to end homelessness and support domestic violence survivors.

- House Bill (HB) 2060 Document Recording Fee
- House Bill (HB) 2163 Document Recording Fee
- House Bill (HB) 1359 Document Recording Fee
- Human Services Fund
- Marriage License Fee

State

The Washington State Department of Commerce provides funding to the County for programs that help end homelessness and meet community members' basic needs.

- Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG)
- Community Services Block Grant-State (CSBG-State)

Federal

Clark County receives grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Services include rental assistance, development of affordable housing, energy assistance, home weatherization, and self-sufficiency programs.

- Community Services Block Grant-Federal (CSBG-Federal)
- Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG)
- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Weatherization (WX)

The Value of Volunteers

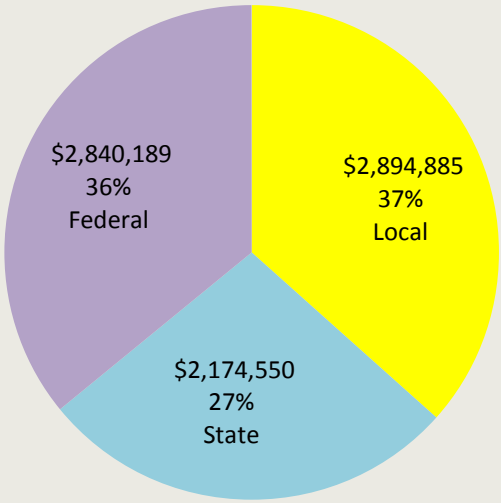
The Clark County Community Action Program had 28 individuals who are low-income participate in formal community boards or provide input on decision-making and policy-setting through Community Action efforts.

In 2015, programs funded through Community Action utilized nearly 55,665 volunteer hours to help operate their programs. This is equivalent to 27 full-time positions at a value of nearly $1.3 million.

FUNDING (continued)

2015 Community Action Funding

2015 Funding Sources



ACCESS

Navigating complex systems can be challenging. The following programs provide guidance to households seeking services.

Community Education

- Community Housing Resource Center, Foreclosure Assistance Program
- Rent Well Tenant Education

Information and Referral

- 211info

Homeless Services

- Council for the Homeless, Housing Solution Center (HSC)
- Janus Youth Programs, The Perch
- Janus Youth Programs, Yellow Brick Road
- Share, Bridging the Gap

Targeted Populations

- Community Services Northwest, SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR)

In 2015, the Washington State minimum wage was **$9.47** per hour. However, the living wage for a single adult with one child was **$24.30**.

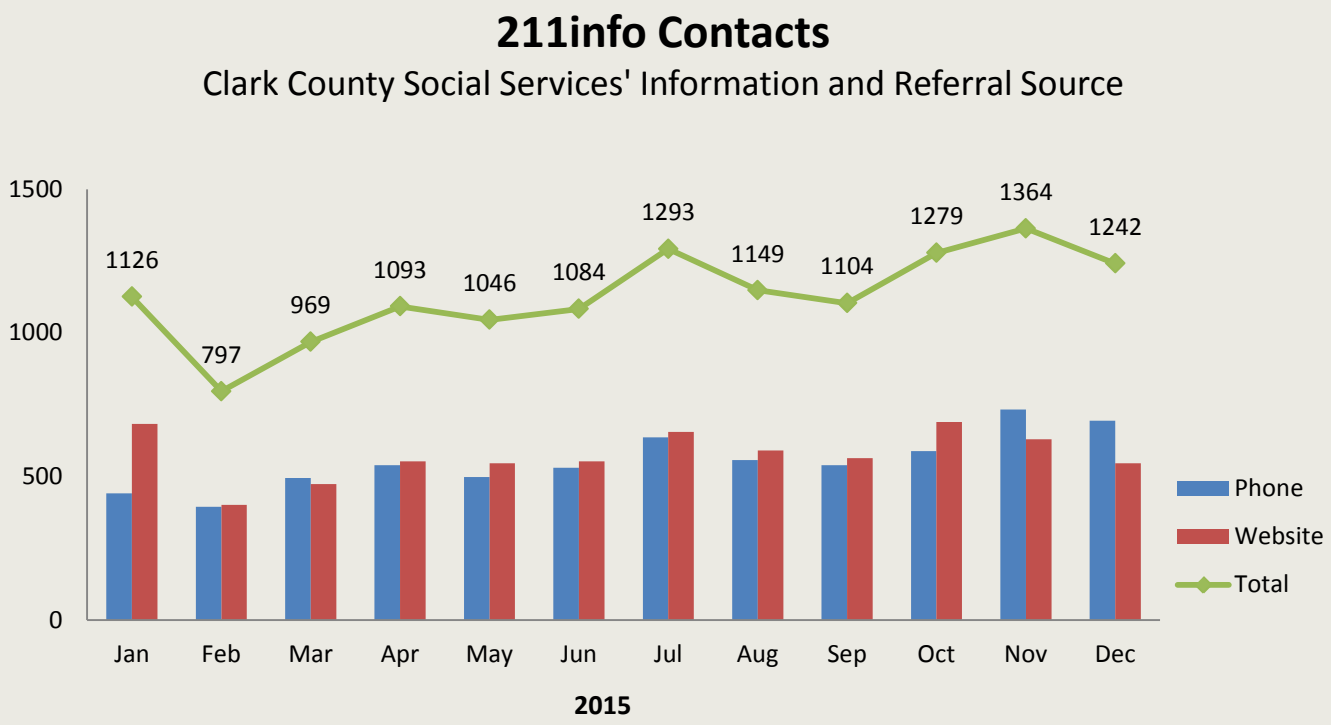
Sources:
Washington State Department of Labor & Industries

U.S. Dept. of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (calculated using CPI for 2nd half of 2015).

Success Story

When "Shannon" met staff at the Council for the Homeless Housing Solutions Center (HSC) she was living doubled up at a friend's home with her adult daughter and her grandchild. With over ten people in a two bedroom home, the housing situation was not sustainable and Shannon and her family needed to move out. Shannon was struggling to find housing rental options because of owed debt to a landlord and a poor credit report. The HSC connected Shannon to the Community Housing Resource Center (CHRC) who helped her negotiate the landlord and credit debt down, then pay off the debts using private funds. Once the housing barriers were resolved the HSC helped Shannon identify leads on apartments to rent and strategies to successfully rent in a tight market. Now, after pooling resources she and her two kids, plus her granddaughter are living together in a stable housing situation.

ACCESS (continued)



The Housing Solutions Center (HSC)

The HSC was created in 2013 to serve as the community's coordinated entry and assessment response to homelessness. The HSC assesses the housing barriers for those needing housing and places them in the most appropriate type of assistance, when available.

Over the course of 2015, the HSC screened 3,321 households for eligibility and placement in 38 different housing and shelter programs. Based on the screenings, the HSC placed 1,178 households in emergency shelter, 206 households in short-term motels, and 616 households into rent assistance housing programs.

The housing navigation focus of the HSC, which helps people connect to mainstream resources in the community, like behavioral health support, DSHS assistance and/or clothing, served 799 households. In addition, 157 households were stably housed as a result of their work with the navigation program.

HEALTH

Clark County's Community Action Program supports programs promoting good health. According to the last Community Action Survey of Needs conducted in 2013, respondents indicated that food and dental services were the top two community needs.

Food Assistance

- Clark County Food Pantries
- Clark County Food Bank, Fresh Alliance
- Share, Backpack Program
- Share, Hot Meals
- Share, Summer SLAM

Dental Services

- New Day Dental, First Impressions

Success Story

New Day Dental provides free dental services in partnership with the Free Clinic of Southwest Washington for people in search of employment and working with local employment programs. "Jessica" is a single mother of seven who had severe decay and chipping of her front tooth causing her to lack confidence in public. Once her dental needs were met, Jessica was able to secure full time employment as a Certified Nursing Assistant making $11.10 per hour.

In 2015, the Clark County Food Bank distributed **5 million** meals to **28,000** families through a network of **34** partner agencies. Of those receiving food, **36%** were children and **18%** were seniors.

Source:
Clark County Food Bank

HOUSING

Housing assistance is provided through several types of programs: emergency shelter/motel vouchers, transitional housing, prevention, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing. Each program targets a specific demographic of those in need, but all must meet strict income and housing status guidelines.

Emergency Shelter/Motel Vouchers

Emergency shelters provide congregate living facilities where households may reside for up to 90 days. Motel vouchers provide up to 90 nights of shelter in a local motel for highly vulnerable households.

- Council for the Homeless Housing Solutions Center, Coordinated Motel Vouchers Program
- Janus Youth, The Oaks Shelters
- Share, Emergency Shelters (Share Orchards Inn, Share Homestead, Share House)
- YWCA, SafeChoice Domestic Violence Shelter
- Winter Hospitality Overflow (WHO)

Transitional Housing

Transitional housing provides a congregate or single unit living facility where households may reside for up to 24 months.

- Second Step Housing, Resident Self-Sufficiency Program

Prevention

Prevention programs provide rent assistance and supportive services to households who are at-risk of homelessness to prevent them from becoming homeless. Households assisted include those who have three-day pay or vacate notices or those who are couch-surfing with family or friends. Assistance is provided for up to 24 months.

- Impact Northwest, Homelessness Prevention & Stabilization Program
- Janus Youth, Bridges Program
- The Salvation Army, Moving Forward Together Program
- The Salvation Army, Dislocated Families Fund
- Share, Prevention Re-Housing Options for Self-Sufficiency (PROS) Program
- Share, Fresh Approach to Stable Transitions (FAST) Program
- Share, Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) Program

In September 2015, the Clark County rental vacancy rate was **3.5%.** This compares to Washington State's vacancy rate of **3.4%.** The Fair Market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Clark County was **$944**.

Sources:
Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies, University of Washington, WA Apartment Market, Fall 2015

U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), https://www.clark.wa.gov/sites/all/files/community-services/HOME/2015IncomeandRentLimitswithutilityallowance.pdf.

HOUSING (continued)

Rapid Re-housing (RRH)

Rapid re-housing (RRH) programs provide rent assistance and supportive services to households who are homeless. The programs move households into stable housing and assist them for up to 24 months. Households assisted include those who are living in cars, on the street, in places not meant for habitation, or in emergency shelters.

- Community Services NW, Re-Entry Housing Program
- Janus Youth, The Alliance Project
- Janus Youth, The Nest Program
- The Salvation Army, Ending Family Homelessness (EFH) Program
- Share, Prevention Re-Housing Options for Self-Sufficiency (PROS) Program
- Share, Ending Family Homelessness (EFH) Program
- Share, Ending Family Homelessness (EFH) Match Program
- Share, Fresh Approach to Stable Transitions (FAST) Program
- Share, Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) Program

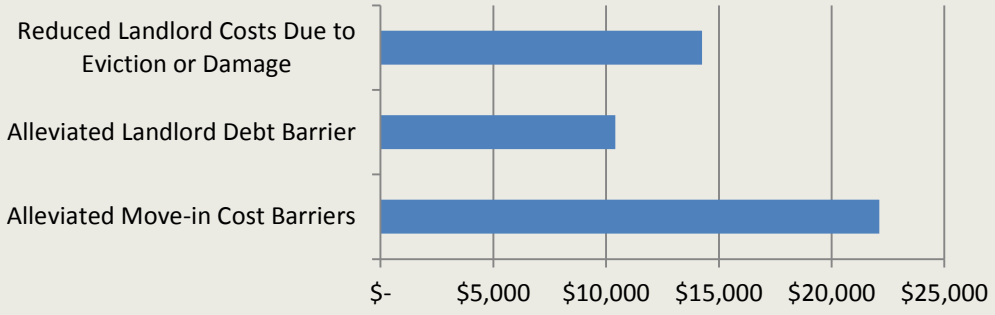
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Permanent supportive housing (PSH) programs provide long-term, non-time limited, scattered-site or site-based housing with ongoing supportive services for households who are most vulnerable and have living on the streets for an extended period of time. Vulnerabilities may include serious mental health symptoms, co-occurring disorders, and chronic health challenges. Many people served through PSH are chronically homeless.

- Community Services NW, Re-Entry Permanent Supportive Housing Program
- Community Services NW, Welcome Home Program
- Share, ASPIRE Program
- Share, Bridging the Gap Program

Landlord Risk Mitigation Funds

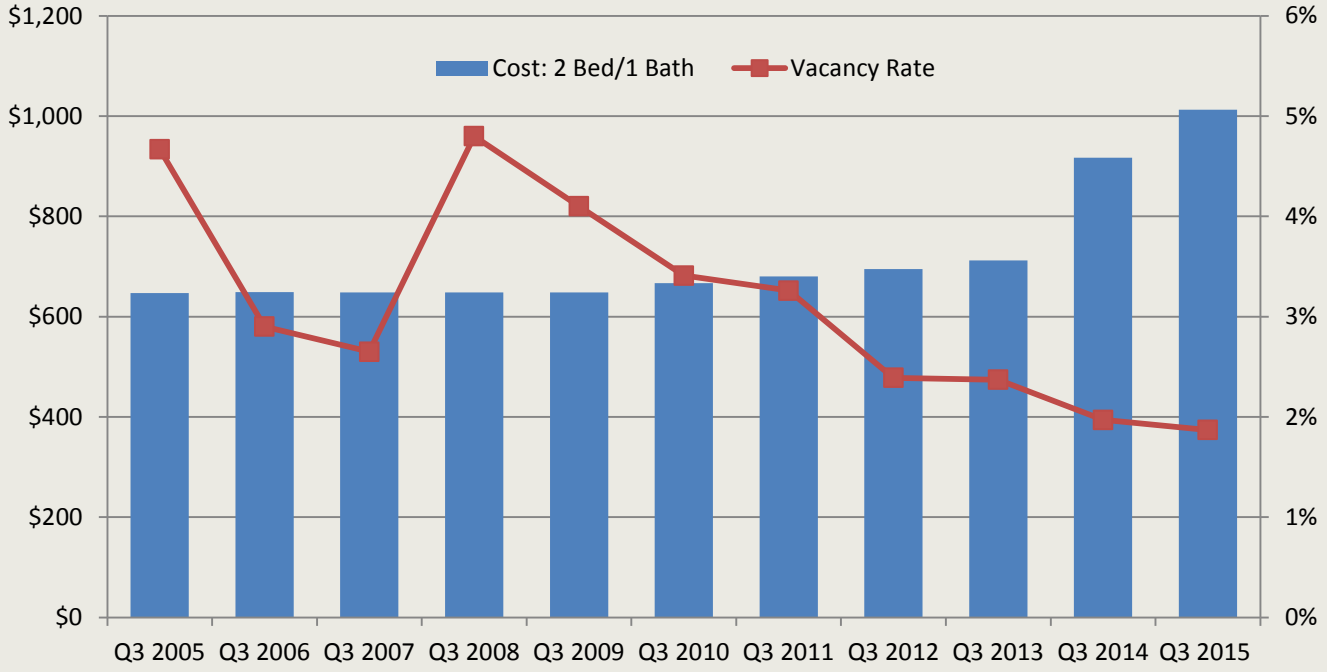
A Landlord Risk Mitigation Fund has been provided to each agency that provides County-funded Prevention, RRH, and/or PSH programs to households who are at-risk of homelessness or are homeless. Landlord Risk Mitigation Funds must be used as a tool to increase or sustain the number of housing options for program-eligible households with multiple barriers to obtain stable housing.



HOUSING (continued)

Vacancy Rate and Average Rent (2 Bed/1 Bath units)

Vancouver, WA 2004-2014

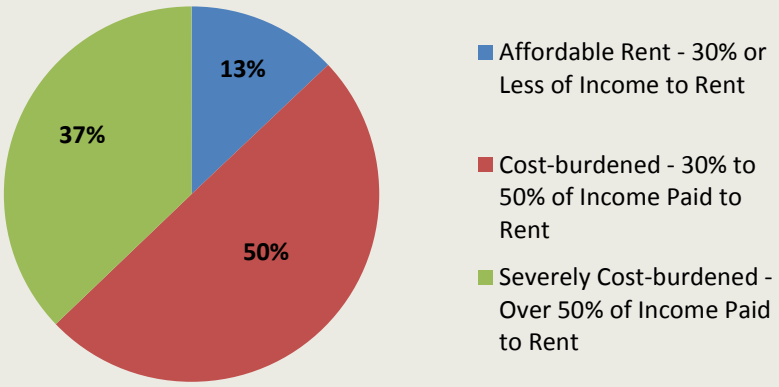


Source: Norris, Beggs & Simpson, Multifamily Reports

From 2013-2015, rents increased an average of 42%

2015 Clark County Renters
0% - 50% Area Median Income (AMI)

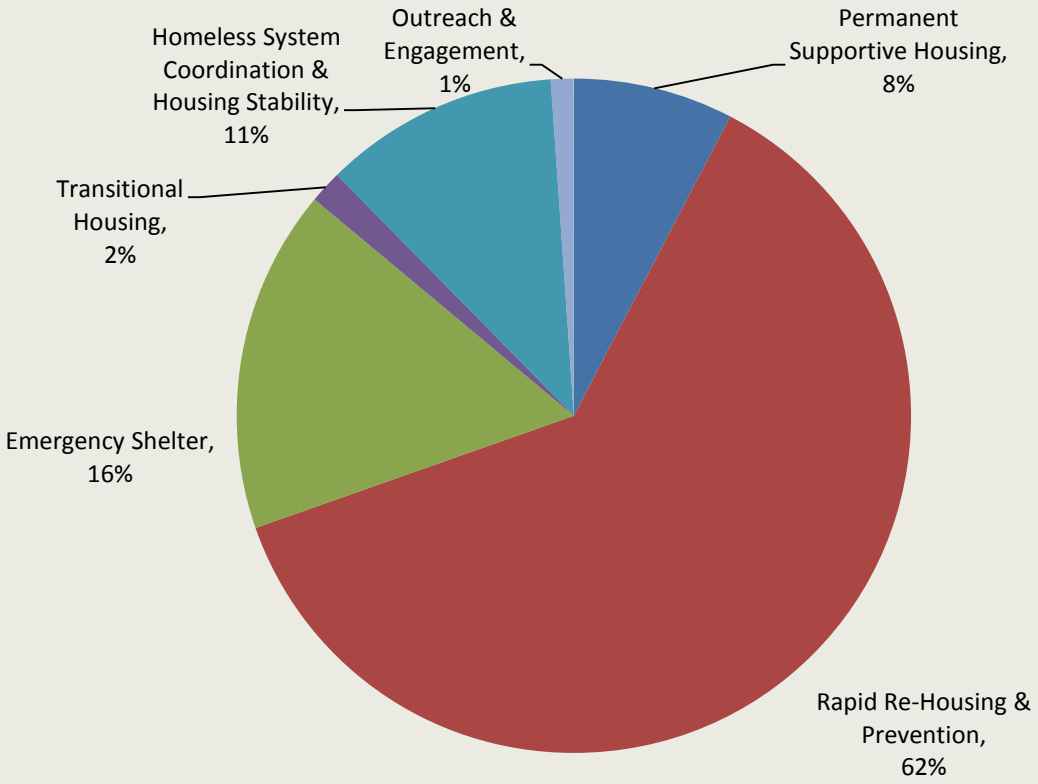
Total: 19,695 Households



Source: 2015 Washington State Housing Needs Assessment, Clark County

HOUSING (continued)

2015 Funding Allocation



Success Story

"Jackie" entered the Bridges Program after receiving a notice to vacate her property. Jackie's troubles began when her husband was incarcerated and she faced the daunting task of finding a job and child care for her two children, one of whom has health complications. She had no idea where to start and had no money to pay her rent. The Bridges Program was able to quickly act as a liaison between Jackie and the landlord to negotiate a longer move-out period. Then, they worked with Jackie to re-house her family in a new, stable apartment and identify safe childcare for her children while she searched for a job. By partnering with WorkSource, after just a few months, Jackie was able to obtain almost full-time employment and remain stably housed after over a year. Lastly, her husband was released from jail early because he had a release address to go home to and exhibited good behavior.

SAFETY

Clark County provides increased safety through domestic violence and stalking advocacy, homeless outreach and energy assistance programs.

Advocacy

- YWCA, SafeChoice Domestic Violence Advocacy

Energy Assistance

- Clark County, Other Emergency Services (Heating Repair)
- Clark Public Utilities, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Success Story

"Julia" and her young son came to the SafeChoice domestic violence shelter after fleeing a five year abusive marriage. She had endured many forms of abuse including financial, emotional, and physical. The family received food, clothing and hygiene items while in shelter. At the beginning of their stay, Julia utilized the Child Advocacy Program frequently so she could meet with advocates for safety planning and support. She worked closely with the Family Support Advocate receiving parental support, housing assistance, and other resources. During their stay, Julia was able to secure safe child care, buy a car, and participate in an employment assistance program resulting in nearly full time employment. Julia and her son were referred to a local housing program and secured safe and stable housing. For every $1 spent to help Julia, the return on investment is $3.65.

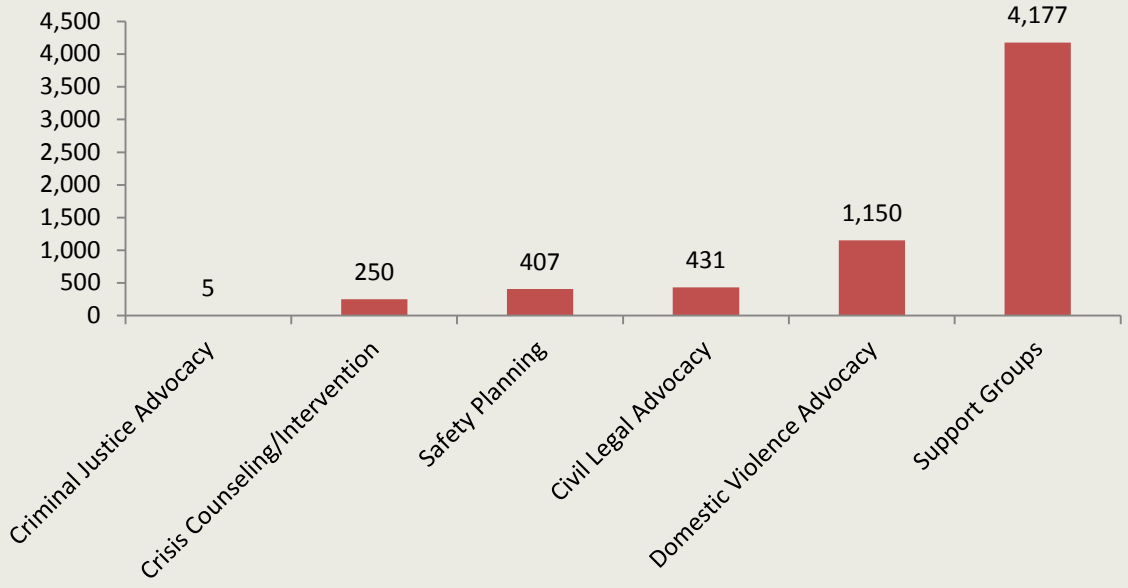
In 2015, Clark County, working in tandem with Clark Public Utilities, provided **4,033** households with assistance in heating their homes. **85%** utilized electricity as their main heat source; **12%** were gas customers and **3%** used other sources such as wood, propane, or oil.

Source:
2015 LIHEAP Client Characteristics Report, WA Dept. of Commerce

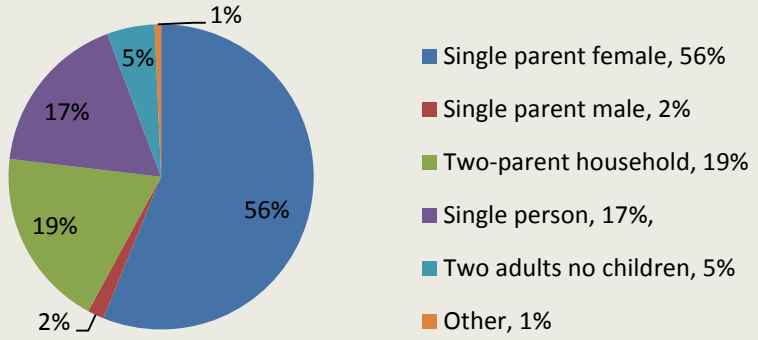
SAFETY (continued)

YWCA SafeChoice Program Advocacy

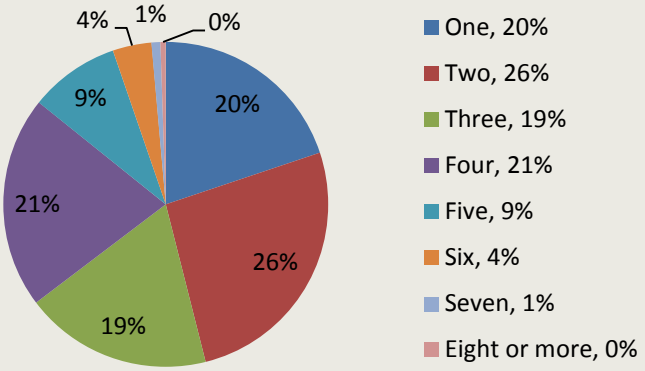
1,026 Individuals received advocacy services



Family Types Accessing SafeChoice Domestic Violence Programs



Size of Families Accessing SafeChoice Domestic Violence Programs



SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Self-Sufficiency programs assist participants and their families make choices that will lead to self-reliance. Programs help people reduce barriers to move towards employment and stable housing.

Education and Employment

- Big Brothers Big Sisters, Finish Strong
- Columbia River Mental Health, Homeless Employment Navigator (HEN)
- Partners in Careers, YouthFirst

Financial

- Share, Individual Development Account (IDA) Program

Legal Assistance

- Volunteer Lawyers, Homeless Court
- Volunteer Lawyers, Volunteer Lawyers Program
- Washington Department of Veteran Affairs, Veterans Incarcerated Project
- YWCA, SafeChoice Domestic Violence Program

Clark County's December 2015 unemployment rate was **4.8%.** Washington State's unemployment rate was **5.8%,** and the national average was **5.2%.**

Source:
U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Success Story

"Travis" is a 14-year old high school student participating in Big Brothers Big Sisters' Finish Strong program where youth at risk of not graduating are paired with adult mentors. Travis comes from a single parent family while his step-dad is in jail. Travis has been diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome and is enrolled in an Individual Education Program due to his academic struggles. Travis' mentor has accompanied him to Finish Strong events such as the Washington State University Vancouver tour and regularly talks to Travis about school, grades and his future goals. Due to the support Travis received from his mentor, he is interested in participating in the Running Start program and wants to become an electrician.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY (continued)

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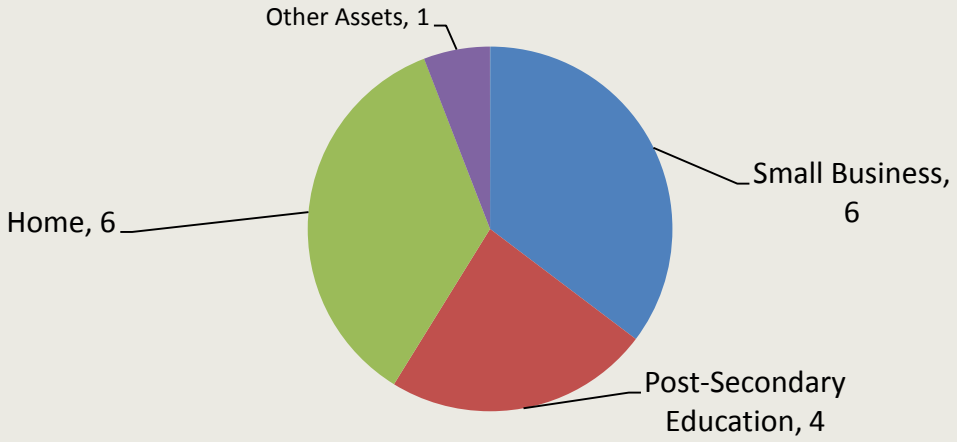
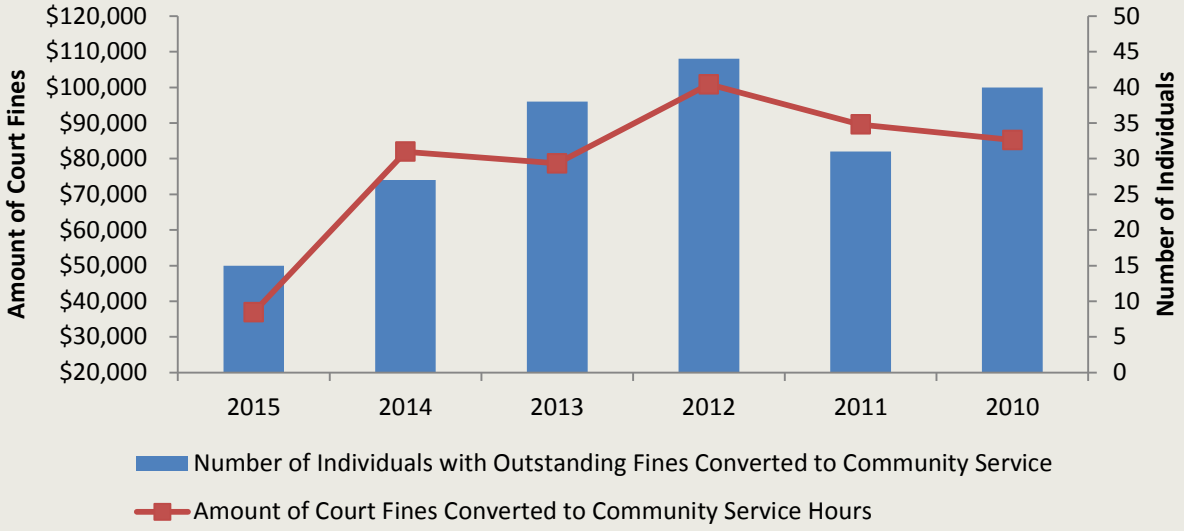
Share IDA 2015 Program Purchases

17 Households Completed the Two-year Program

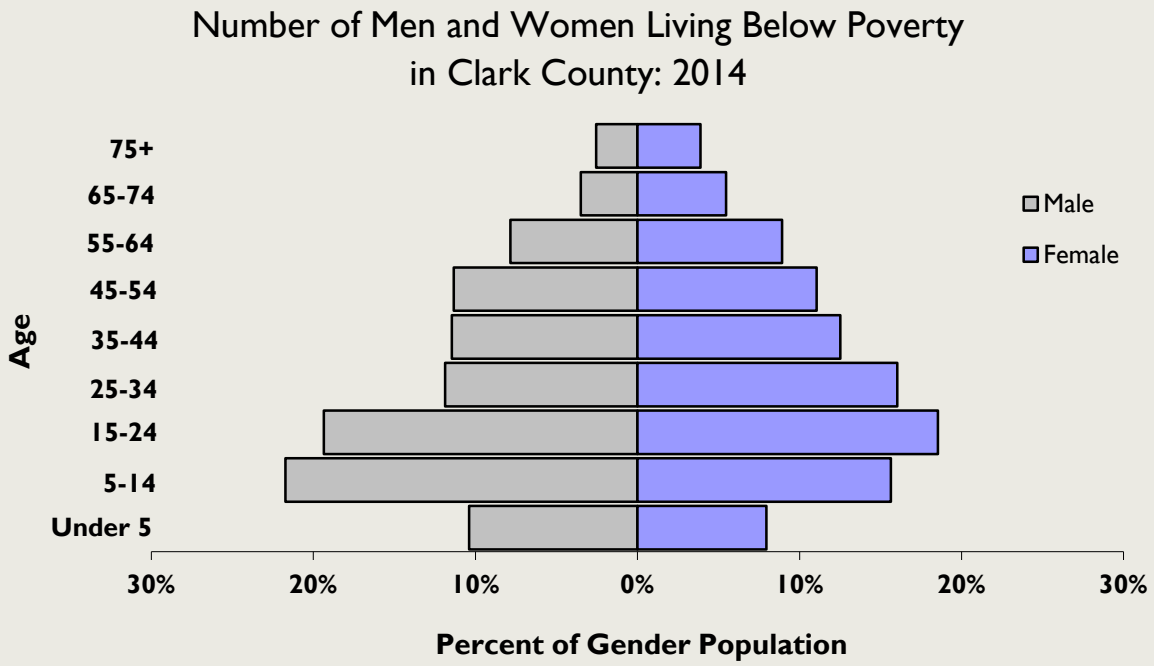


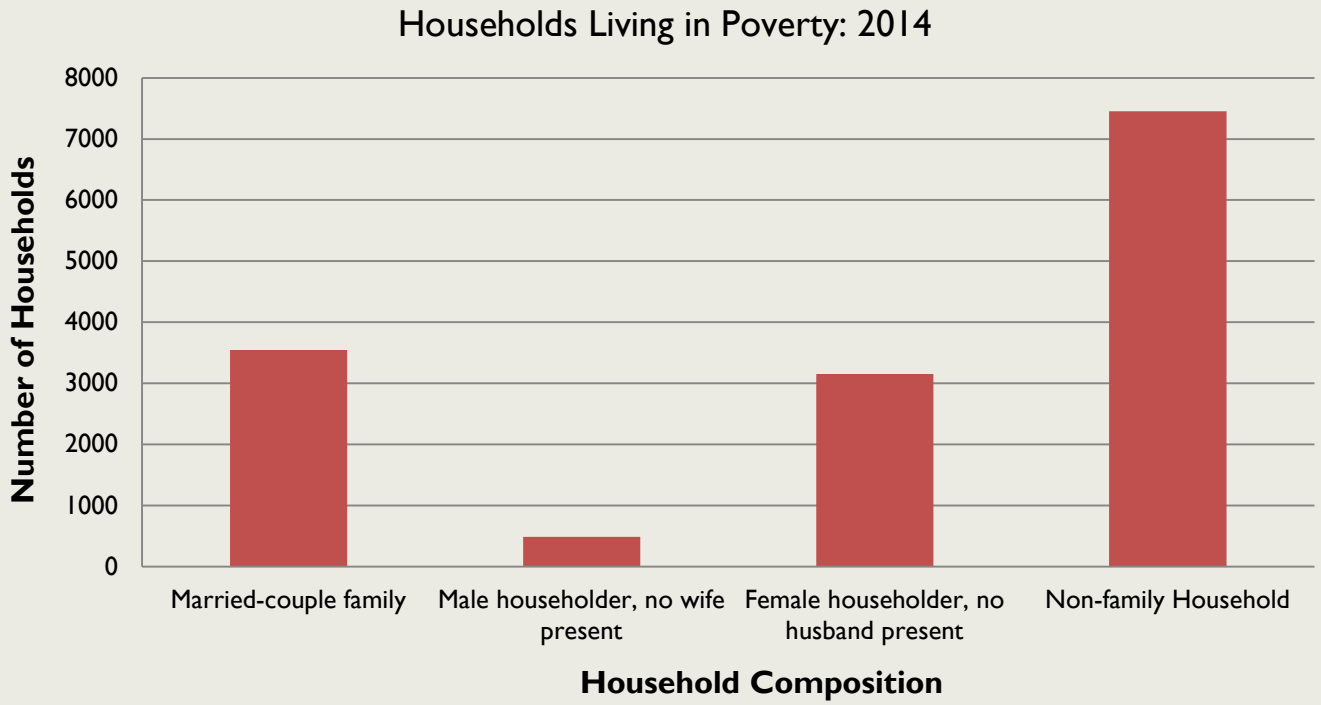
Volunteer Lawyers Program Homeless Court Converted Fines



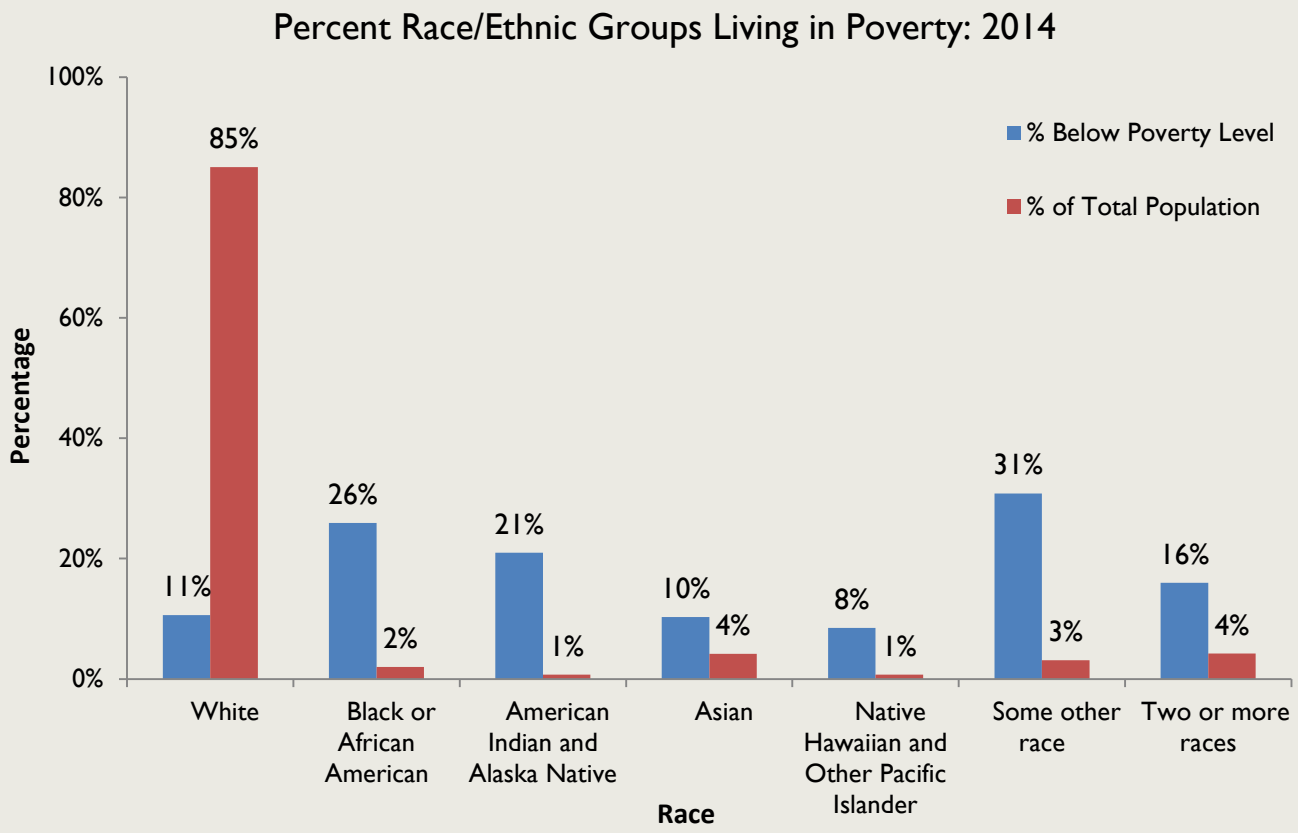
POVERTY IN CLARK COUNTY

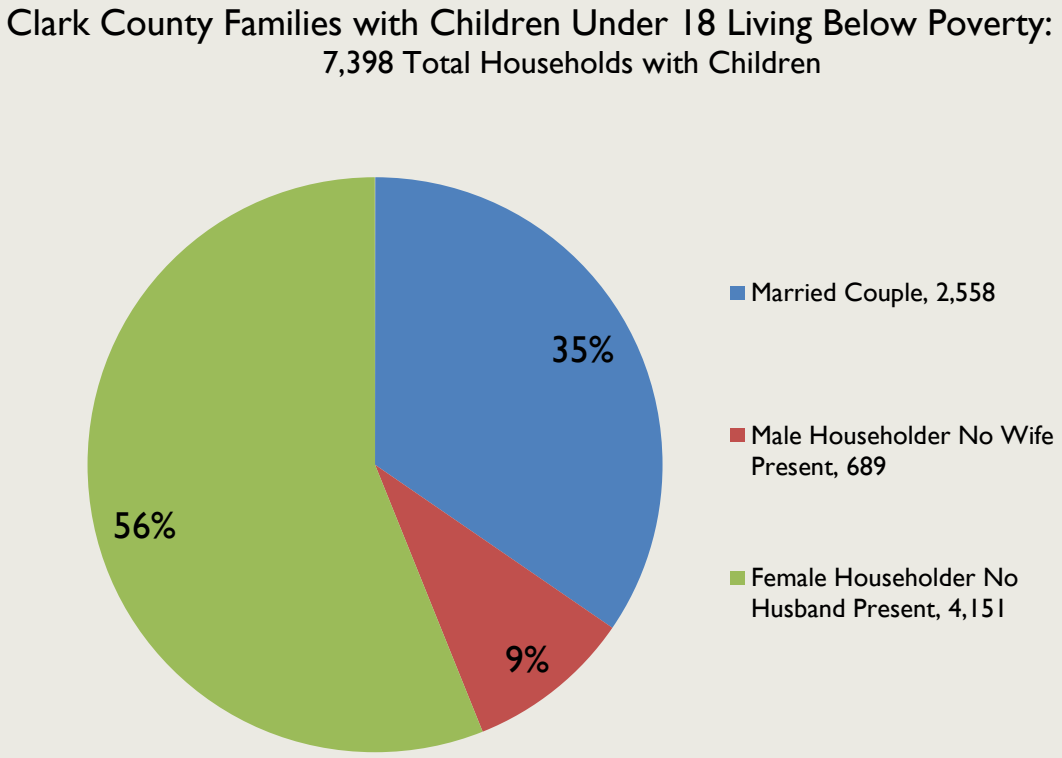
Based on the most recent American Community Survey data from 2014, there were over 14,600 households in Clark County who earned less than the Federal Poverty Level adjusted for family size. This equals $24,250 per year, or approximately $2,000 per month, for a family of four.



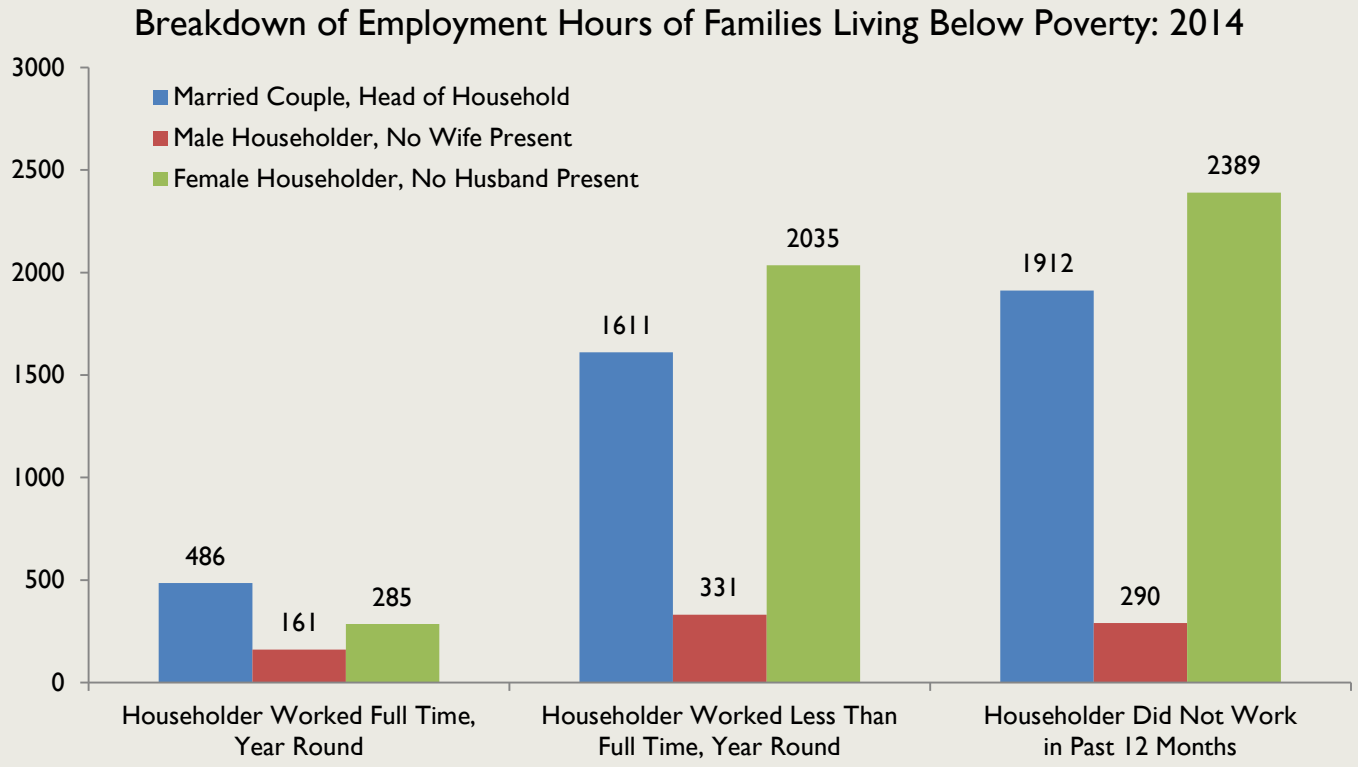


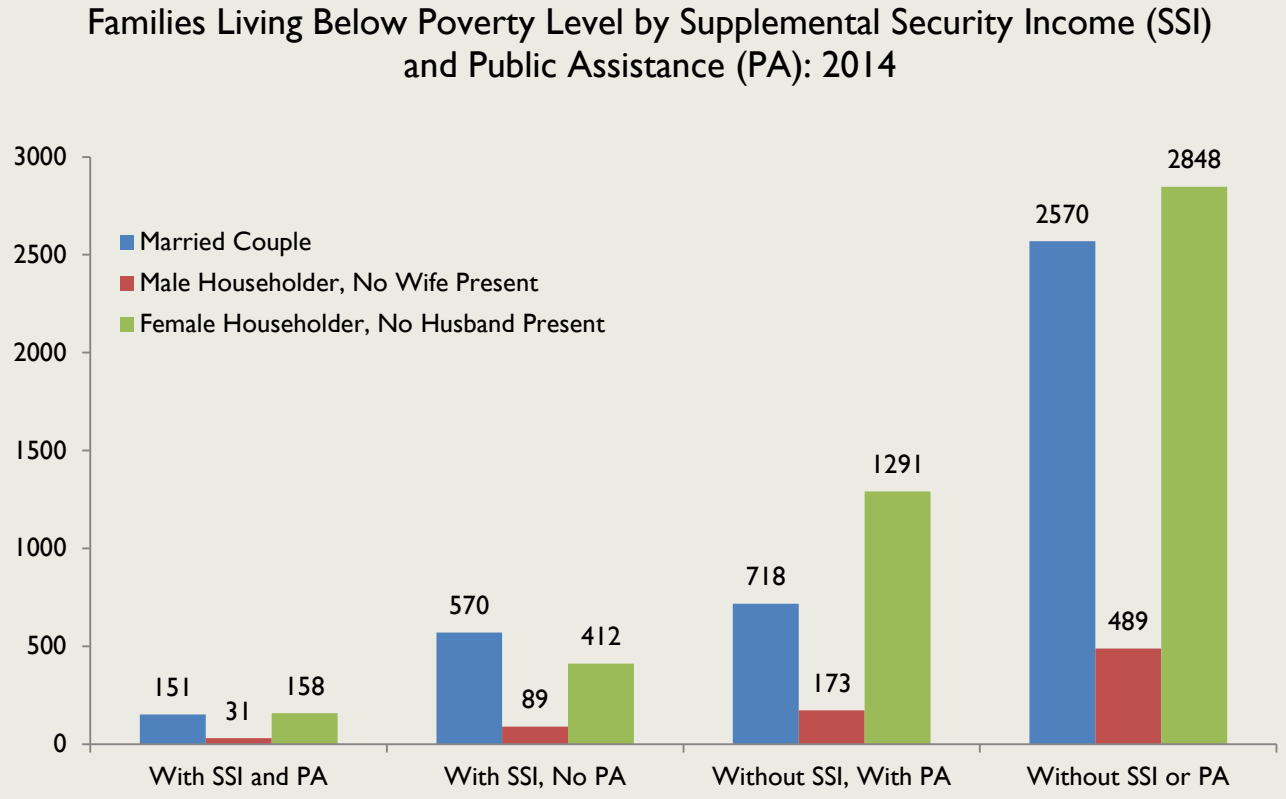
POVERTY IN CLARK COUNTY (CONTINUED)





POVERTY IN CLARK COUNTY (CONTINUED)



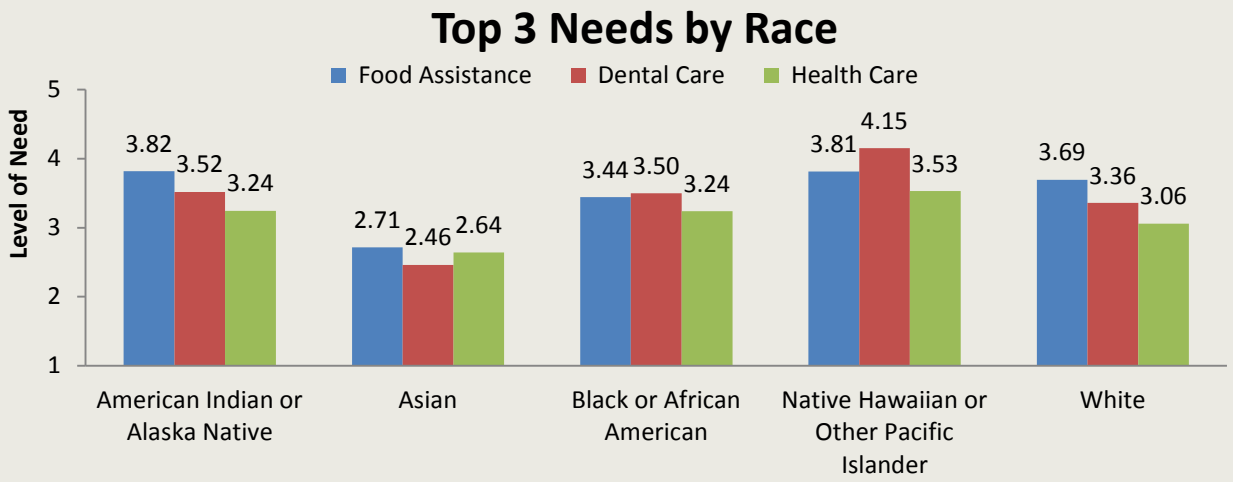


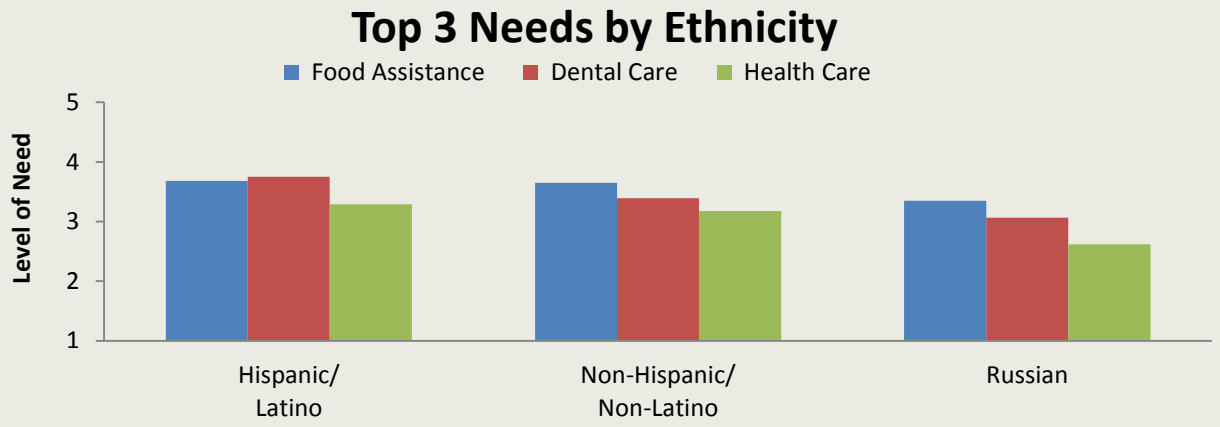
COMMUNITY NEEDS SURVEY DATA

Clark County conducts a Survey of Needs assessment every three years. Participation is completely voluntary. Below are the results from the survey completed in summer 2013, with 816 responses. Households were asked to rank their need in 25 categories. Five represents the highest level of need, and zero represents no need. Average income of all respondents equals $1,220.10 per month. To view the complete Community Needs Assessment for Community Services Block Grant funding in Clark County, visit https://www.clark.wa.gov/community-services/community-action-documents.

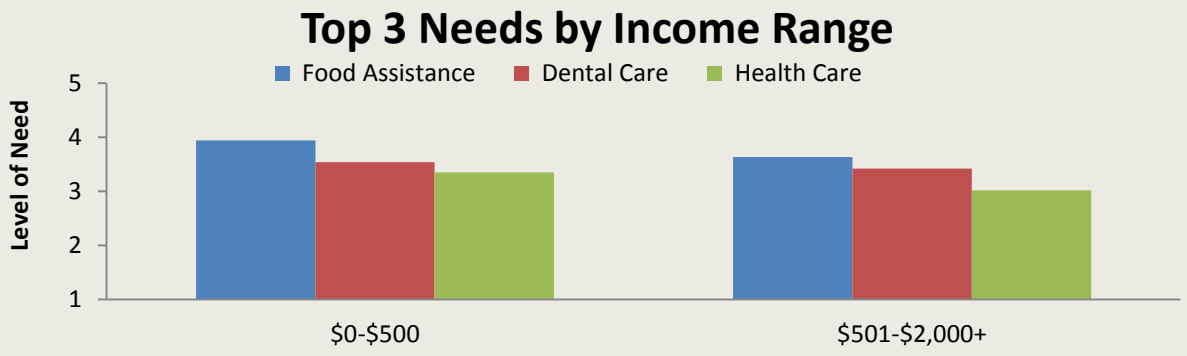
Top Five Household Needs

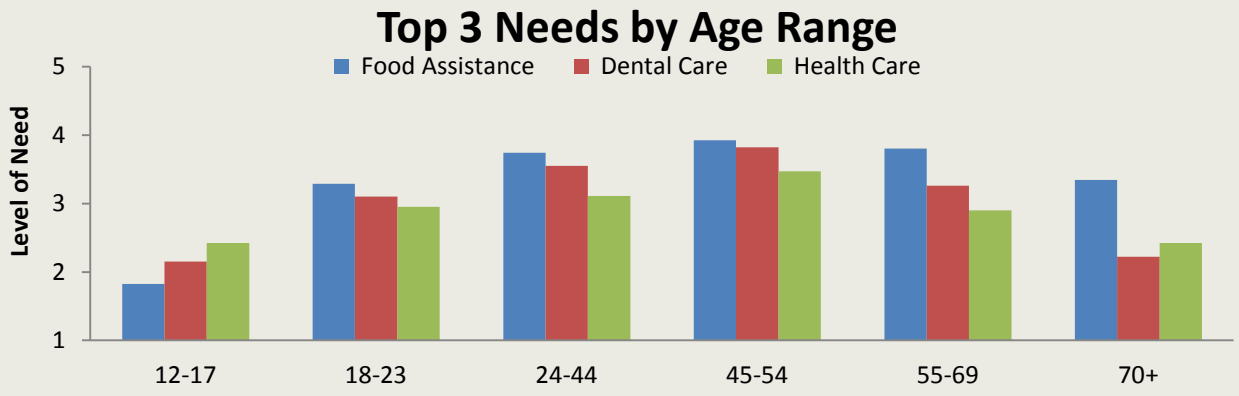
Food Assistance
Dental Care
Health Care
Prescription Medication
Clothing

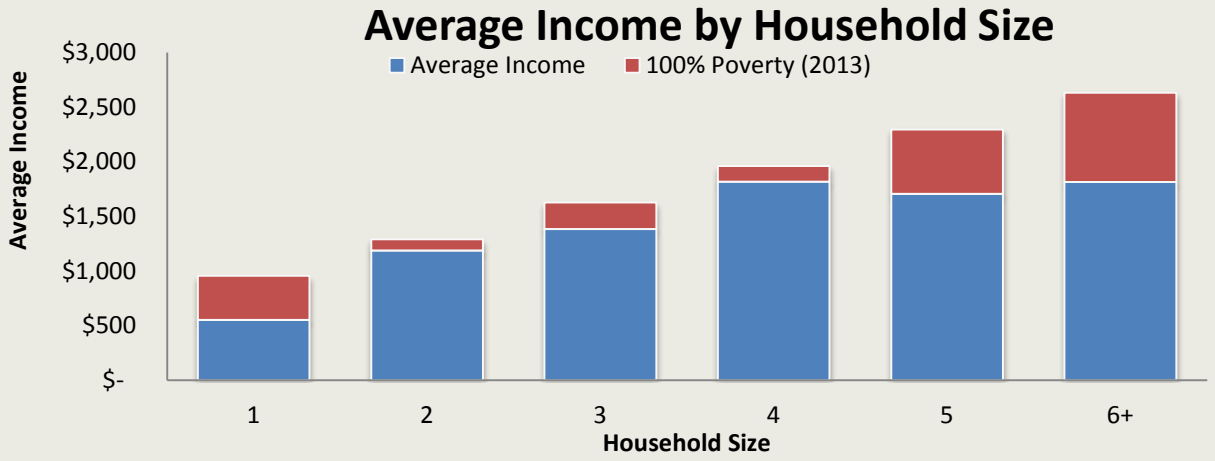




COMMUNITY NEEDS SURVEY DATA (continued)







PARTNERSHIPS

FAITH BASED

Friends of the Carpenter
360-750-4752
www.friendsofthecarpenter.org

Lutheran Community Services NW
360-694-5624
www.lcsnw.org/vancouver

The Salvation Army
360-892-9050
www.vancouver.salvationarmynw.org

St. Andrew Lutheran
360-892-7160
www.salcvan.org

St. Joseph's Catholic
360-696-4407
http://stjoevan.org/

St. Paul Lutheran
360-693-3531
www.stpaulvancouver.com

St. Vincent DePaul
360-694-5388
www.svdpvancouverusa.com

HEALTH SERVICES

Free Clinic of SW Washington
360-313-1390
www.freeclinics.org

New Day Community Dental
360-892-7107
www.newdaydental.org

NON-PROFIT

211info
2-1-1
www.211info.org

Big Brothers Big Sisters
360-891-8382
www.bbbsnorthwest.org

Clark County Food Bank
360-693-0939
www.clarkcountyfoodbank.org

Columbia River Mental Health
360-993-3000
www.crmhs.org

Community Housing Resource Center
360-690-4496
www.homecen.org

Community Services NW
360-397-8484
www.communityservicesnw.org

Consumer Voices are Born (CVAB)
360-397-8050
http://www.cvabonline.com/

Council for the Homeless
360-993-9561
www.councilforthehomeless.org

Housing Solutions Center
360-695-9677
www.councilforthehomeless.org

ESD 112
360-750-7500
www.esd112.org

Impact NW
503-988-6000
http://impactnw.org/

Inter-Faith Treasure House
360-834-4181
www.ifth-cw.org

Janus Youth Programs
503-233-6090
www.janusyouth.org

Lifeline Connections
360-397-8246
www.lifelineconnections.org

Metropolitan Family Service
503-232-0007
www.metfamily.org

Partners in Careers
360-696-8417
www.partnersincareers.org

Second Step Housing
360-993-5301
www.secondstephousing.org

Share
360-448-2121
www.sharevancouver.org

SW WA Workforce Development Council
360-567-1070
www.wwdc.org

Volunteer Lawyers Program
360-695-5313
www.ccvlp.org

YWCA Clark County
360-696-0167
www.ywcaclarkcounty.com

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Battle Ground School District
360-885-5300
www.battlegroundps.org

Camas School District
360-335-3000
www.camas.wednet.edu/

Evergreen School District
360-604-4000
www.evergreenps.org

Vancouver School District
360-313-1000
www.ridgefieldsd.org

GOVERNMENT

City of Vancouver
360-487-8600
www.cityofvancouver.us

Department of Commerce
360-725-4000
www.commerce.wa.gov

Department of Social & Health Services (DSHS)
800-737-0617
www.dshs.wa.gov

Vancouver Housing Authority
360-694-2501
www.vhausa.com

WA Healthcare Authority
800-562-6906
www.hca.wa.gov

CONTACT INFORMATION

More information about the Community Action Program, as well as plans and reports referenced in this document, can be found online:

http://www.clark.wa.gov/community-action

Staff for these programs work for Clark County's Department of Community Services and can be reached by calling (360) 397-2130.

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