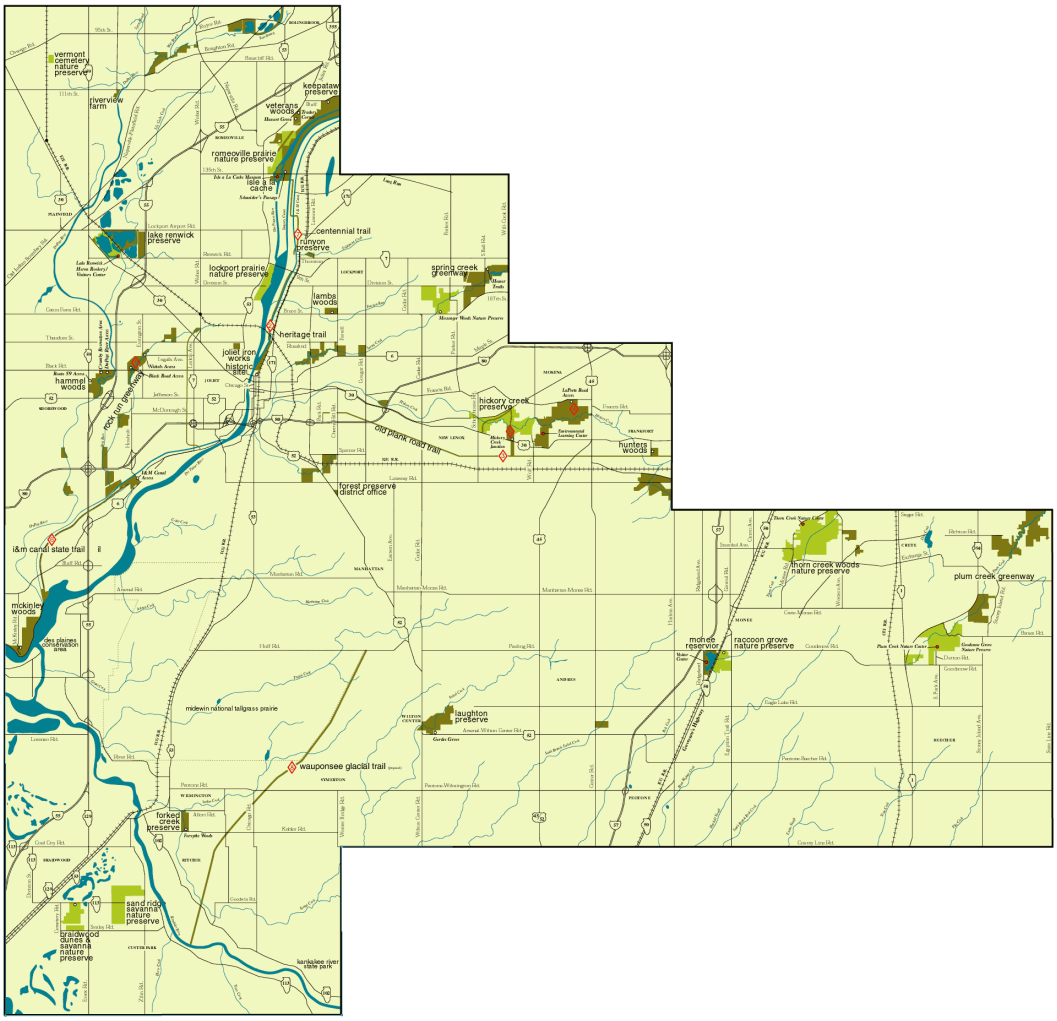
Will County Center for Community Concerns



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024

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Will County Center for Community Concerns

community Action

Providing Hope Through Self-Sufficiency

Part I
Community Action
Plan Summary

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN SUMMARY

The Will County Center for Community Concerns' mission is to assist and enable low and moderate-income individuals to obtain the opportunities needed to prepare themselves for self-sufficiency. As the Community Action Agency serving Will County, and through the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) versatility, we strive to coordinate efforts and network with other social service entities to accommodate those in need better.

CSBG funding enables Will County Center for Community Concerns to collaborate with other agencies for referral of services, coordinate case management for homeless and at-risk clients, provide HUD-certified housing counseling services, weatherization, and home rehab/repair, LIHEAP, assist financially with emergency assistance, employment support services, homeless services, and provide education on landlord/tenant relationships. CSBG funding includes school supplies, financial literacy classes, food baskets, scholarships, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA). CSBG funding also supports the Riverwalk Homes Food Pantry and MorningStar Mission “Jump on the Bus” back to school program.

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) makes this responsive planning process possible. To our knowledge, CSBG is the only government grant that offers the flexibility of local planning. CSBG contributes a substantial amount to the operational costs of the Agency, enabling us to administer over $14,126,168.00 in federal, state, and private program funds in 2022. CSBG also drives the outreach and networking efforts for the entire Agency.

The Agency's Board of Directors, management, and staff continuously evaluate agency programs and assess client needs to seek new and innovative ways to address Will County's poverty problems. We determine customers' needs by accepting comments, suggestions, and surveys from clients, board members, and other entities throughout the year. Customers complete a Needs Assessment Survey at the intake point, and responses are collected and evaluated throughout the year. In addition to paper surveys, the Agency hosts focus groups to gain perspective on the needs of specific demographic groups; senior citizens, veterans, parents of young children, and people experiencing homelessness. The Agency favors this largely client-driven planning process because it allows for flexibility in programmatic planning. We identified needs from over 950 customer surveys. Some of those included: Budgeting/Money Management; Financial Assistance with Utilities; Finding Permanent Employment; Getting Food; Finding Affordable Housing; Obtaining a High School/GED, and Setting Goals for their Family.

Through the coordination of the Will County Center for Community Concern's Board of Directors, involvement with the local social services agencies, municipalities, educational institutions, and churches, the needs of the Community are constantly evaluated to design programs that address needs specific to Will County. The significance of coordinating services within the county enables Will County Center for Community Concerns to determine appropriate programs that will offer quality services to Will County residents.

Needs Assessment

Data was collected using the following methods:

- Census data
- American Community Survey
- Community Commons website
- Websites including Illinois Department of Employment Security, Will County Center for Economic Development, Workforce Services Division, Will County Health Department and Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) Collaborative, National Low Income Housing Coalition, and Illinois State Board of Education
- Various publications
- Verbal/written input collected from the Board of Directors and staff via surveys, board meetings, and manager/staff meetings
- Voluntary client surveys
- Focus groups
- County-wide service provider network – includes Will County Continuum of Care, social service network meetings, Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce events, and other informal networking.

For this report, needs are arranged in the following categories: Employment, Education, Financial/Legal Issues, Housing, Food & Nutrition, Parenting/Family Support, Transportation, Health, and Basic Needs.

Service Delivery System

The service delivery system data was compiled through information from the following resources:

- Networking with other service providers
- Networking through the Community Services Council of Will County
- Workforce Services Division of Will County
- Advertising from other service providers
- Various referral listings from other service agencies
- HMIS reporting system

Linkages

Will County Center for Community Concerns' outreach efforts include advertising all programs in county newspapers, local cable television, public service announcements, informational flyers, and brochures. In 2023, our outreach has increased at community events. Will County Center for Community Concerns participated in job expos, health fairs, back-to-school events, food pantries, community events, and senior fairs. WCCCC partners with the Will County Regional Office of Education to bring housing information services to families with school-aged children identified as being at risk of homelessness. WCCCC hosted the annual "Healthy Homes/Healthy Families" expo in April 2023 to educate our residents about physical health, financial health, energy conservation, and home safety. Most clients learn about WCCCC through word of mouth, a referral from other service providers, or outreach events. WCCCC's outreach staff works with other service providers directly to access additional resources for the clients.

Coordination

Will County Center for Community Concerns is also a member of the Community Services Council of Will County, South West Suburban Philanthropic Network, the Emergency Food and Shelter Board, and the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce.

WCCCC has coordinated efforts and projects with various agencies, including Workforce Center of Will County, Regional Office of Education, Salvation Army, Illinois Department of Human Services, St. Vincent DePaul Thrift Store, Senior Services Center of Will County, Will County Continuum of Care, MorningStar Mission, Catholic Charities/Daybreak Center, Cornerstone Services, Riverwalk Apartments, and Holsten Enterprises, Will County Community Development Division, City of Joliet, Employment & Employer Services, as well as internal programs which include IHWAP and LIHEAP.

Funding for our Home Repair Program is made available through partnerships with private businesses and foundations such as the Aileen S. Andrews Foundation, Full Circle Foundation, Wintrust Financial Corp, Mary & James Maragos Charitable Fund, Joliet Bank & Trust, and D'Arcy Motors.

Innovative Community and Neighborhood–Based Initiatives

The U. S. Department of Agriculture describes a food desert as: "Urban neighborhoods and rural towns without ready access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food. Instead of supermarkets and grocery stores, these communities may have no food access or are served only by fast-food restaurants and convenience stores that offer few healthy, affordable food options." To address this need in Joliet's Broadway and Cass/Jackson Street areas, WCCCC partnered with Riverwalk Homes and Holsten Enterprises to support a "HEAL" Healthy Eating and Life Style Garden and Food Pantry to provide food for the residents of Riverwalk Homes and the surrounding Community. The pantry has served over 500 households in the Community.

WCCCC has received grants from IHDA to administer the National Foreclosure Mediation Counseling Program, Illinois Rental Repayment Program, and Housing Stability Counseling Program to help with the Coronavirus pandemic relief efforts. WCCCC has developed a partnership with the Will County Foreclosure Mediation Court to allow our housing counselors to be on-site two days per week to resource homeowners facing foreclosure. Our housing counselors also provide on-site services at the LaSalle, Kankakee, and Grundy County foreclosure mediation courts.

Youth Programming

In 2022, CSBG supported Morning Star Mission's "Jump on the Bus" Program. This program provides low-income households with clothing and school supplies to prepare the children to return to school. The Agency participated in the Catholic Charities/Daybreak Center "Back to School" Program, a daylong event that provides information, school supplies, medical screenings, and other services to low-income families. WCCCC participated in two events helping students affected by homelessness. One in collaboration with Will County Regional Office of Education and one with Crete School District. We attended eight other back-to-school events in the area. WCCCC also provided college scholarships for thirteen students.

Outcomes

Will County Center for Community Concern's assessment of surveys, Board, staff, client input, and community involvement identified several needs. These include employment, education, financial/legal, housing, food/nutrition, parenting/family support, transportation, health, and basic needs.

Will County Center for Community Concerns is addressing these problems through such programs as:

- Job Training/Coaching Program

- Emergency Assistance (financial assistance with mortgage, rent, water bills, employment support, and prescriptions)
- Scholarship Program
- Volunteer Income Tax Program (VITA)
- Homeless Services
- Financial Literacy (Housing/Income Management)
- Housing Counseling
- Holiday Food Baskets/Food Pantry/Nutrition
- Family & Community Development (Goal Setting & Self-sufficiency)
- Information & Referral (Other Supportive Services/Agencies)

Other programs administered by the Agency are:

- Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program (IHWAP)
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- HUD Housing Counseling
- IHDA Homeowner Accessibility Program
- IHDA Home Repair and Accessibility Program
- IHDA National Foreclosure Prevention Program
- IHDA National Foreclosure Prevention Program Graduated
- IHDA Single Family Rehab & Roof Replacement Program
- IHDA Illinois Rental Repayment Program
- IHDA Housing Stability Counseling Program
- Will County Community Development Block Grant Program
- Will County Tenant-Based Rental Assistance
- Nicor Utility Assistance
- Home Repair Program
- Financial Literacy Education
- Homebuyer Education Classes

Client issues we can't address internally are referred to other agencies to serve their needs better and help move them toward self-sufficiency.

Part II

Needs Assessment

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Community Demographics

This plan's statistics and data were compiled from the 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Decennial Census 2010-2020, and the US Census Bureau.

Household type, Race, Urban or Rural

According to the 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 689,704 people comprise 232,395 households. Of this, 174,356 family households are residing in the county. The county's racial makeup is 72.02% white, 11.3% black or African American, 5.56% Asian, 0.37% Native American/Alaska Native, 0.08% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 5.95% from other races alone, and 4.7% from two or more races. Those of Hispanic or Latino origin make up 17.7% of the population.

Household type

Of the 232,395 households, 75% were Family Households. Of that, 75%, 59.7% were married couples living together, 11.2% had a female householder with no husband present, and 24.9% were non-families. Of those non-family households, 20.6% of all households consisted of individuals living alone.

Of the 232,395 households, 80,792 people in these households are under the age of 18.

The age breakdown as a percentage of the total population in Will County is as follows:

Under-five years:	5.8%
5-9 years:	6.3%
10-14 years:	7.9%
15-19 years:	7.5%

(Source: 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates)

According to the 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, the average household size was 2.93 people, and the average family size was 3.42. The median age was 38.1 years.

Age, Gender, Veteran Status, Disability

The 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, the ratio of male to female citizens is almost 50/50 (49.6% Male / 50.4% Female), with 24.9% of those persons under the age of 18, 62%% of them between 18 and 64, and 13.1% aged 65 or older. Disabled persons make up 61,636, or 9% of the population. Veterans make up 27,670, or 4.01% of the total population.

Population Change

According to the US Census Bureau, Decennial Census April 1, 2020-July 1, 2021, Will County has seen an increase of 0.1% in the total population, making it the 4th most populous county in Illinois

Ethnicity

According to 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, the non-Hispanic population of Will County by race is 61% white, 11.1% black or African American, 5.5% Asian, 0.1% Native American/Alaska Native, 0.5% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 0.1% from some other race alone, and 2.1% from two or more races. Those of Hispanic or Latino origin make up 18.9% of the population.

Language

According to the 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 79.8% of Will County residents live in an English-only speaking household, and 20% or 131,078 people live in a home where another language is spoken. Of this group, 12% speak Spanish, 4% speak other Indo-European languages, 2% speak Asian, and Pacific Island languages, and 1% speak different languages.

Community and Client Surveys

Will County Center for Community Concerns has identified community needs using data compiled from various reports and agency-administered surveys. The DCEO-provided surveys sent to our networking agencies, municipalities, churches, and educational institutions allow us to capture their opinions on areas of need in our Community.

Our surveys touched on employment opportunities, availability of child care, issues impacting children and youth, the availability of emergency services, and medical and dental care. Other topics included wellness programs, public transportation, challenges facing low-income residents, needs specific to senior citizens, and other educational or financial assistance areas. We asked our customers to describe how well our Community met the needs of its low-income families and individuals.

In July of 2022, WCCCC asked the Board of Directors, agency staff, and community partners (including local municipalities, networking agencies, educational institutions, businesses, and churches) to complete a Community Needs Assessment survey to identify service gaps and other unmet needs.

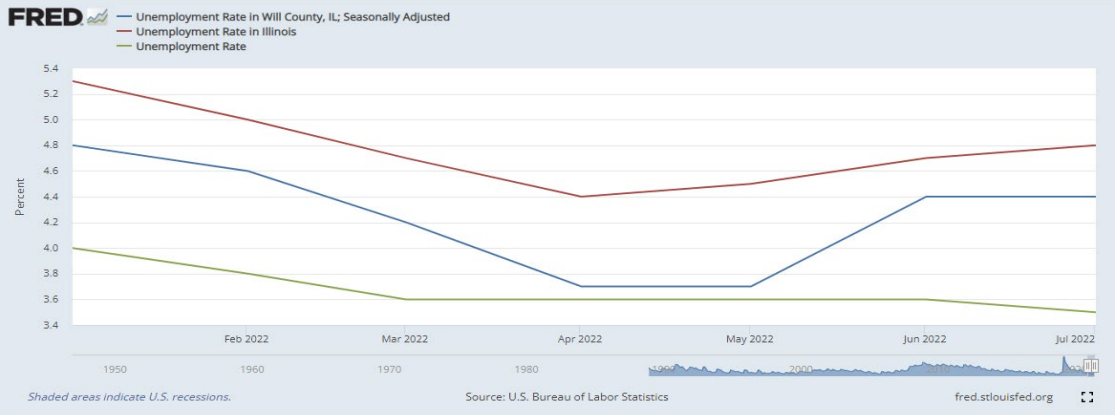
Client surveys have been collected from January 2022 through August 2022 to determine the needs we should address in 2023. The surveys will help inform program planning and the creation of local partnerships to meet identified needs and areas of concern. Client surveys are completed and submitted by clients at the time of application and offered to all program applicants.

Clients indicate their needs in employment, education, financial and legal issues, housing, food and nutrition, child care and development, parenting, family support, transportation, health, and basic needs. These surveys collect basic information on the client and include a brief Customer Satisfaction Survey. Client comments are always a consideration in developing programs to meet Will County's needs and improve support services offered by the Agency.

According to our stakeholder surveys, financial assistance and housing were the predominant needs in Will County. While childcare, employment, and health/mental health followed. The surveys help Will County Center for Community Concerns know if our services meet our county's needs.

Employment/Economic Development

According to the Will County Workforce Investment Board, the unemployment rate for Will County as of June 2022 is 4.4%. The current unemployment rate of Will County is slightly lower than the Illinois rate of 4.7% and is showing an increase over the past few months, increasing from 3.7% in May to 4.4% in June.



(Source: Will County Workforce Board www.willcountyworkforceboard.com and the Illinois Department of Employment Security https://ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/laus/current-monthly-unemployment-rates.html)

The median family income for Will County (2021) is $90,800. The per capita income (2021) is $37,967.

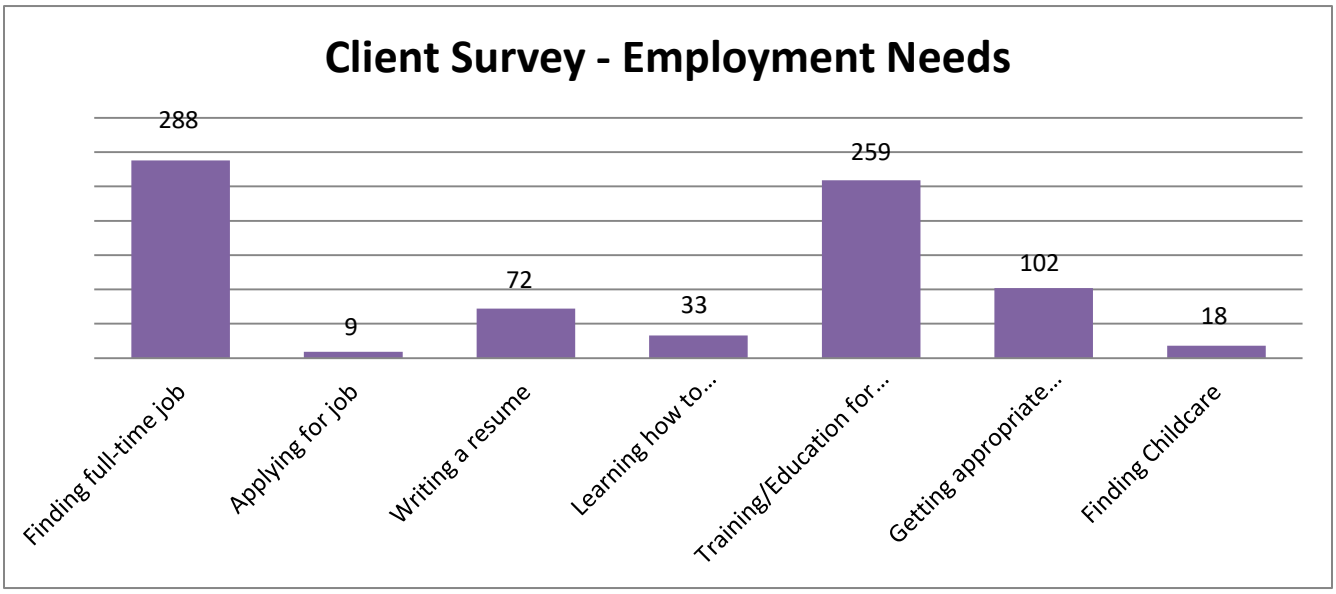
According to the 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) for Will County, Illinois, is 6.8%, or 46,353 people. An estimated 3.2% of the population (21,760 people) live at or below 50% of the federal poverty level, and 11.6% (79,436 people) live at or below 150% of the FPL.

According to the 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, 7.8% of females and 5.9% of males in Will County live at or below 100% of the federal poverty level. Of the 46,353 people living in Will County below the poverty level, 34.9% (16,205) are under 18 years old, 53.2% (24,689) are 18-64 years old, and 11.7% (5,459) are over 65.

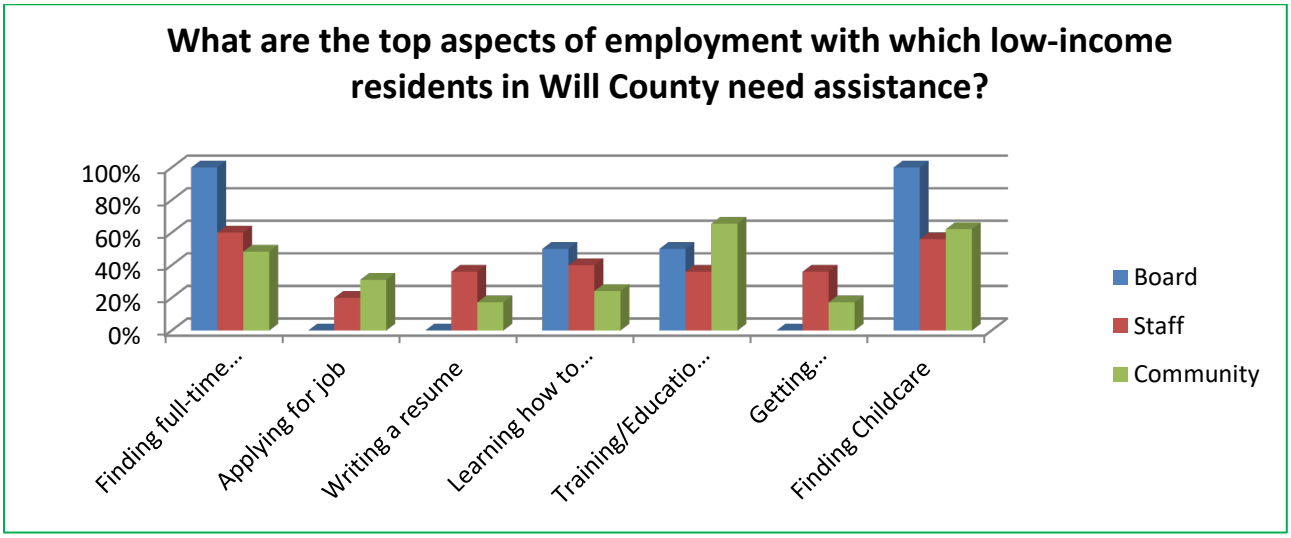
	Will County, Illinois		
	Total		Below poverty level
Label	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate
Population for whom poverty status is determined	680,639	±1,666	43,665
AGE			
Under 18 years	167,126	±770	15,301
Under 5 years	39,634	±239	4,581
5 to 17 years	127,492	±780	10,720
Related children of householder under 18 years	166,681	±839	14,856
18 to 64 years	422,472	±1,295	24,148
18 to 34 years	142,002	±1,024	9,839
35 to 64 years	280,470	±572	14,309
60 years and over	133,020	±2,349	6,695
65 years and over	91,041	±677	4,216
SEX			
Male	335,824	±1,504	19,387
Female	344,815	±708	24,278

Unemployment (and underemployment) creates financial instability and barriers to insurance coverage, health services, healthy food, and other necessities. *(Source: www.communitycommons.org)*

WCCCC's Client Needs Assessment asked our clients to indicate their needs as related to employment. The top 3 responses from our customer survey suggest that our customers need training/education for a job, finding a full-time job, and getting appropriate clothing or equipment for the job.



Surveys from our Community, Board of Directors, and Staff show that respondents agree with the clients about the barriers to employment in Will County.



Through our case management and one-time assistance program, WCCCC can provide employment support to CSBG-eligible households by providing uniforms, work shoes, or tools. If customers face a

hardship, Emergency Assistance funds can be used to purchase or repair a car, as long as the applicant can prove employment or the promise of jobs to overcome a transportation barrier.

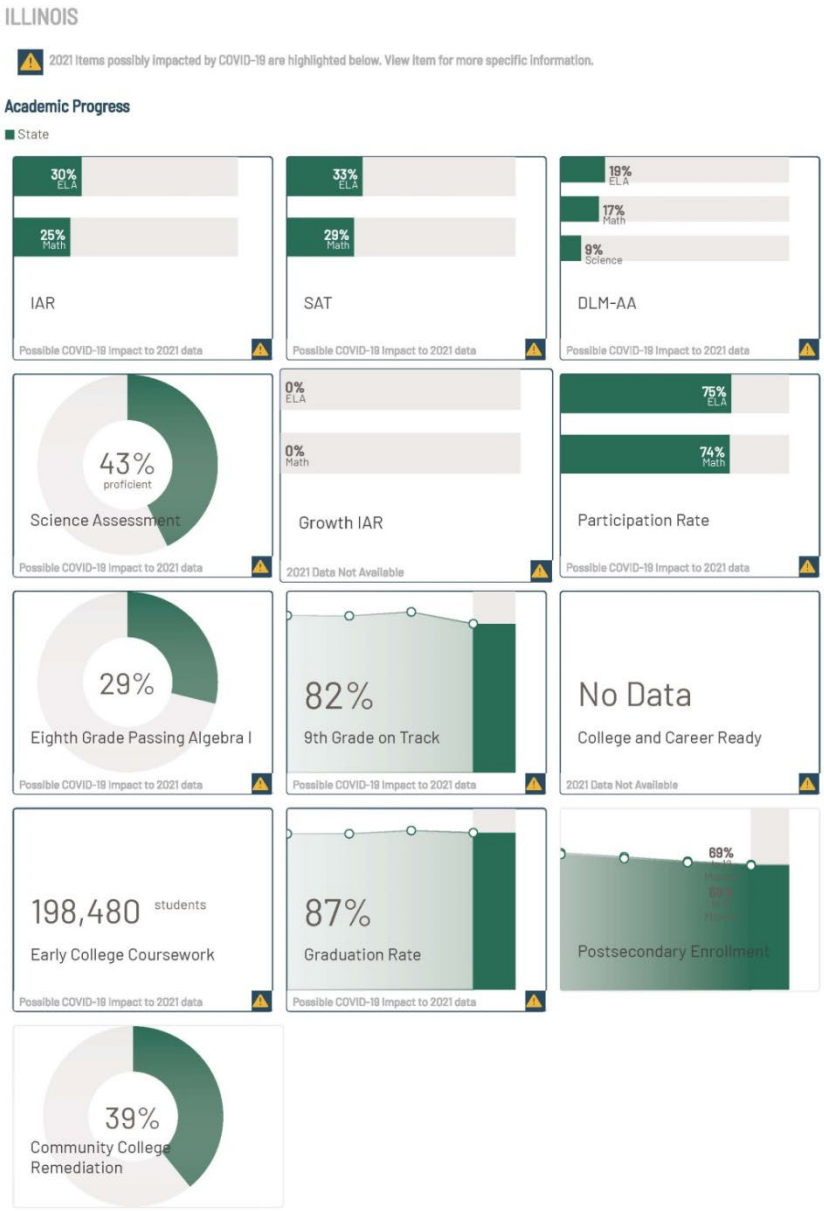
WCCCC has partnered with Cornerstone Services, Inc. to provide job coaching and on-the-job training to CSBG-eligible Cornerstone clients with developmental or physical disabilities. Trainees are assigned to a worksite with the ultimate goal of preparing them to enter the workforce. Cornerstone Services has partnered with Walgreens stores and a local hotel to give the trainees practical on-the-job experience.

WCCCC has an MOU with WIOA Will County Workforce Services Division to provide the following: outreach, intake, orientation for job seekers, skills and support need assessments and information on the availability of supportive services and referrals. The WIOA One-Stop Center is located directly across from WCCCC, making it convenient to refer customers seeking assistance. Will County Center for Community Concerns has an Employment Coordinator who works with customers on writing resumes, interviewing skills, the application process, and job searching. The Employment Coordinator also refers customers to Workforce Services for job skills training.

WCCCC partnered with WIOA Will County Workforce Services Division to house and manage the "Clothes 4 Work" closet. The "Clothes 4 Work" closet is a collection of donated business-appropriate attire. It is available to people who have job interviews or have secured a job but need work clothing until they have funds to purchase their work wardrobe.

Education

Will County has 34 school districts and four universities/community colleges. The 2021 Illinois School Report Cards published by the Illinois State Board of Education yielded the following information for the school districts within Illinois:

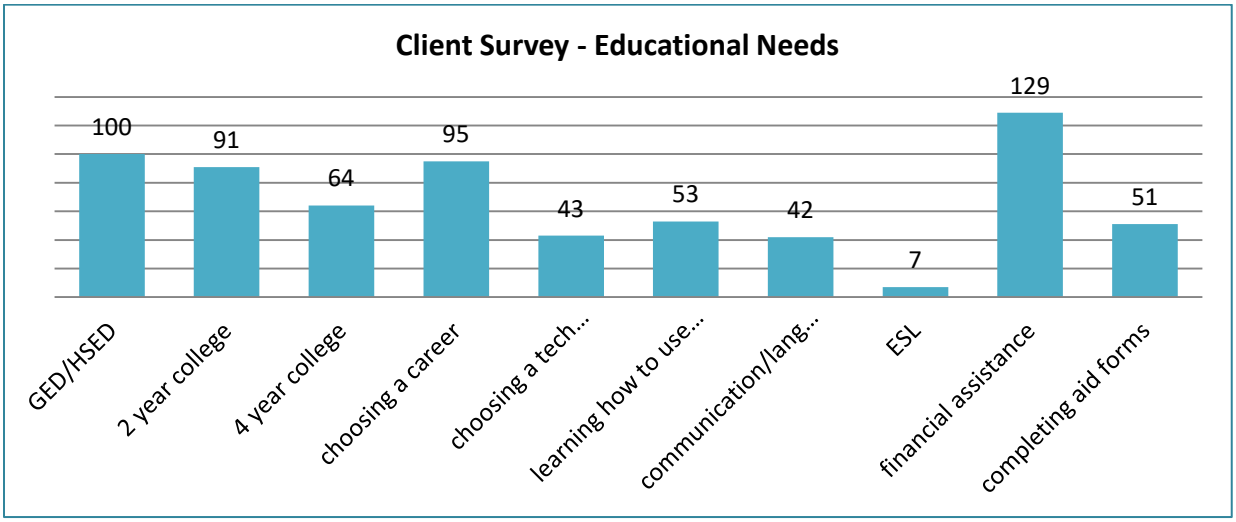


According to the 2020 American Community Survey 1-year estimates, 90.45% of Will County's population are high school graduates or have obtained a higher degree.

The 2020 American Community Survey 1-year estimates that 10.6% of Will County residents aged 18 to 24 have not graduated from high school. The poverty rate for people aged 25 and over without a high school diploma or equivalency is 14.3%. The poverty rate for that same group drops to 7.8% if they graduate high school or obtain a GED. Poverty rates fell to 5.3% with the achievement of some college or

an associate's degree. They drop even lower, 2.5%, for those with a bachelor's degree or higher. They demonstrate that education is critical to moving individuals out of poverty.

WCCCC's Client Needs Assessment asked our clients to indicate their needs as related to education. The top three responses suggest that our customers need financial assistance, obtaining a GED/HSED, and choosing a career.



WCCCC offers $1,000 scholarships yearly to CSBG-eligible persons pursuing higher education at an accredited school in Illinois. Scholarships are to obtain certifications that may lead to immediate employment or pursue an Associate's or Bachelor's degree.

Suppose a student needs to obtain a high school equivalency certificate. In that case, they are referred to the Connect to Your Future Program, administered through the Will County Workforce Development Division and Joliet Junior College: http://www.jjc.edu/workforce-development/Pages/MyFuture.aspx.

The Connect to Your Future program is open to youth ages 18-24 that have earned their high school diploma or GED and meet income eligibility guidelines. Connect to Your Future program provides occupational training in high growth-high-demand occupations in Will County.

Services include occupational skills training, career assessments, one-on-one and small group mentoring and academic advising, work readiness workshops, and placement into employment. This program provides no-cost GED testing for eligible students. The Will County Regional Office of Education website also provides information on GED and equivalency testing in Will County.

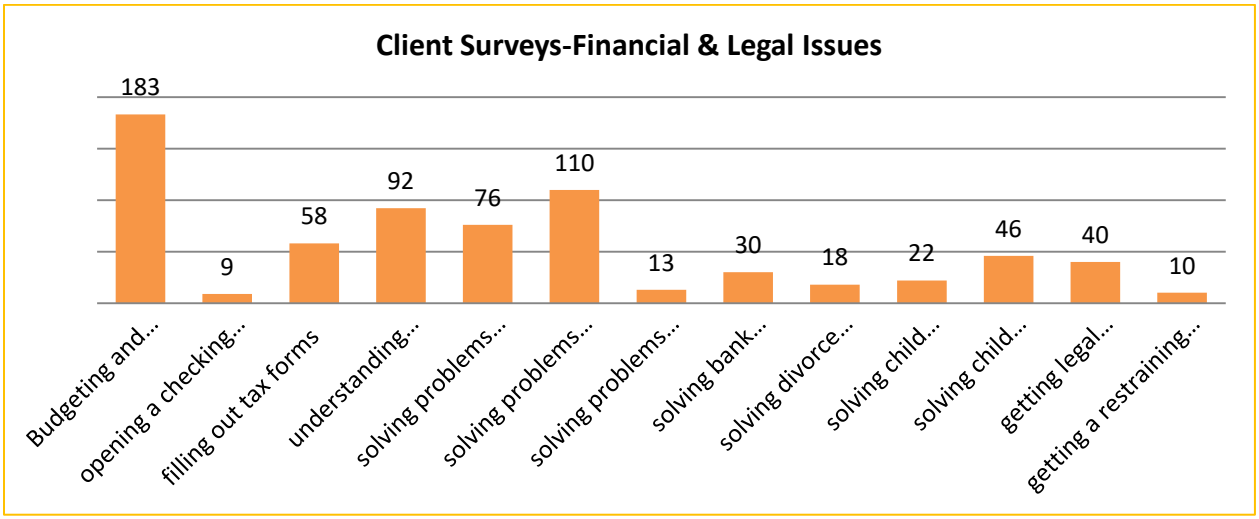
Students who need assistance completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) are directed to Joliet Junior College. JJC offers workshops about the application process for students in both English and Spanish. Information about other scholarship opportunities is also available at these workshops.

To meet the needs of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students, JJC employs a Latino Outreach and Retention Specialist to assist first-generation and Spanish-speaking families attain their education goals. WCCCC partners with MorningStar Mission and Catholic Charities/Daybreak Center to help prepare younger students for school. MorningStar Mission's "Jump on the Bus" program provides students with backpacks, school supplies, and uniforms or school clothes. The staff helped register and qualify families applying for this program. WCCCC distributed flyers at Catholic Charities/Daybreak Center's "Back to

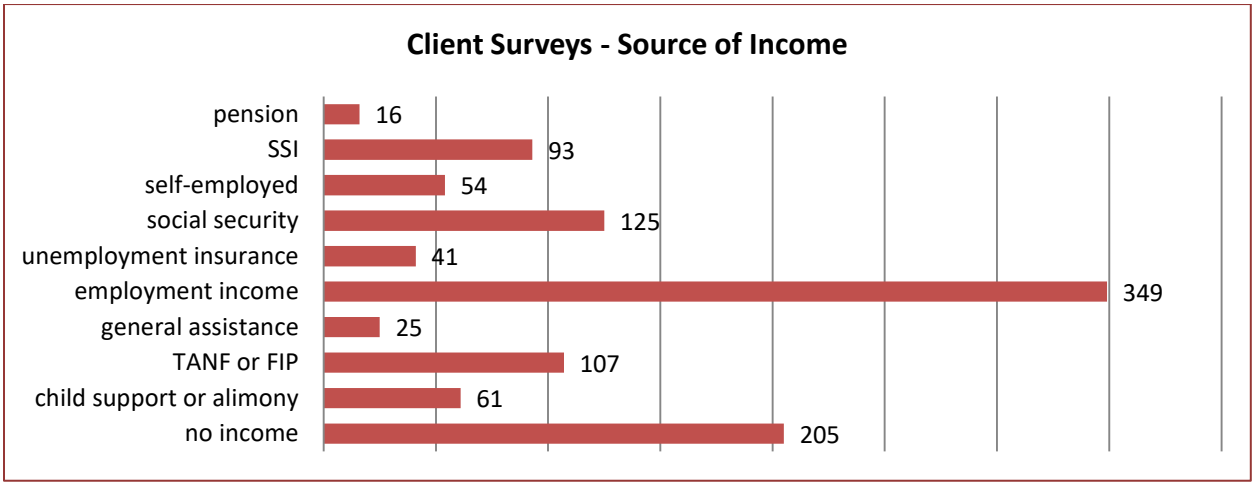
School Fair" to give families with school-aged children resources on various types of assistance they may be eligible to receive.

Financial/Legal Issues

WCCCC's Client Needs Assessment asked our clients what financial or legal issues they needed help with. The top responses from our client need assessment indicate that our customers need help with budgeting and money management, solving problems with utility companies, and understanding their credit scores.



WCCCC asked about their client's source of income. The survey indicated the top three sources of income are employment income and social security, and 205 people stated they had no income.



WCCCC partners with local banks to offer an 8-hour financial literacy class. The classes are divided into two 4-hour sessions. Participants will learn how to manage their money, improve their credit history, use strategies to control their debt, and identify and avoid predatory lending practices. CSBG-eligible participants who attend the entire class can receive a $100 check or savings account upon graduation.

Customers, who require legal assistance, are referred to Prairie State Legal Services. Prairie State Legal Services offers free legal services for low-income persons and those aged 60 and over who have serious

civil legal programs and need help to solve them. Their resources focus on helping clients in public benefits, family law, housing law, health care, guardianship and power of attorney, income benefits, tax law, and education issues.

WCCCC is a Low Income Tax Assistance Coalition member and has been a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site for several years. The staff and volunteers receive training through an IRS-sponsored certification program. In 2023, WCCCC filed federal returns at no cost for 410 households, ensuring they received the maximum allowable tax refund without paying to have their returns accurately prepared and filed.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program

Housing

RealtyTrac published the following data specific to Will County, Illinois:

Will County, IL Market Overview

The median home price in Will County, IL, is $330,542. There were 11,371 home sales in Will County, IL over the past 12 months. The median residential Will County, IL home value for transactions over the previous year is $292,215. The number of current listings in Will County, IL is 354, and the percentage of properties for sale is 13.9%. The county has 2,186 foreclosures, 4 bank owned properties, 163 headed for auction, and 354 properties for sale.

Active Residential Inventory

2,540

Total Inventory

Recently Sold Properties

7,624

Sold (Last 6 Months)

Foreclosures (2,186)	86.1%
Pre-foreclosures (2,019)	79.5%
Bank Owned (4)	0.2%
Auctions (163)	6.4%
For Sale (354)	13.9%

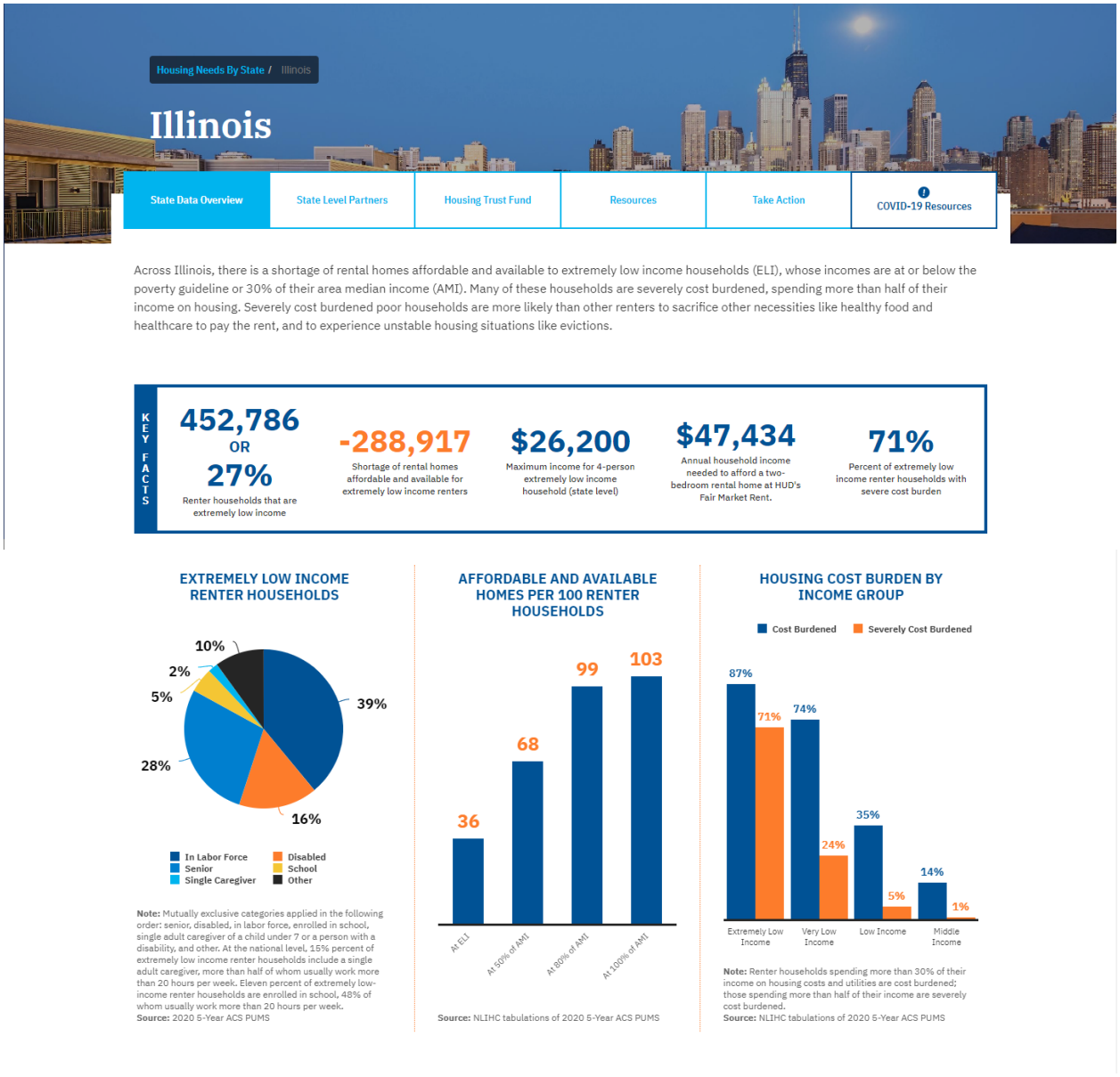
According to the 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Will County has 245,246 housing units, and 94.8% (232,395) are occupied. 81.4% of Will County's housing units are owner-occupied; 18.6% are renter-occupied. Overall, 38.8 % of all housing units were built before 1980. Those units constructed before 1980 could have lead paint. Will County has 33.4% of owner-occupied units built before 1980.

The percentage of renter-occupied housing built before 1980 rises to 57.3%, suggesting that renters are more often living in aged housing with the potential for lead paint contamination.

Of the total occupied housing units in Will County, only 1.85% of the units are considered overcrowded (i.e., more than 1.01 occupants per room). Of the occupied units in Will County, 0.8% are substandard, having at least one of the following conditions: lack of complete plumbing and full kitchen facilities.

In Will County, 26.2% of homeowners with a mortgage payment pay more than 30% of their income for housing. At the same time, more than 50.5% of renters pay more than 30% of their income for rent. *(2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates).*

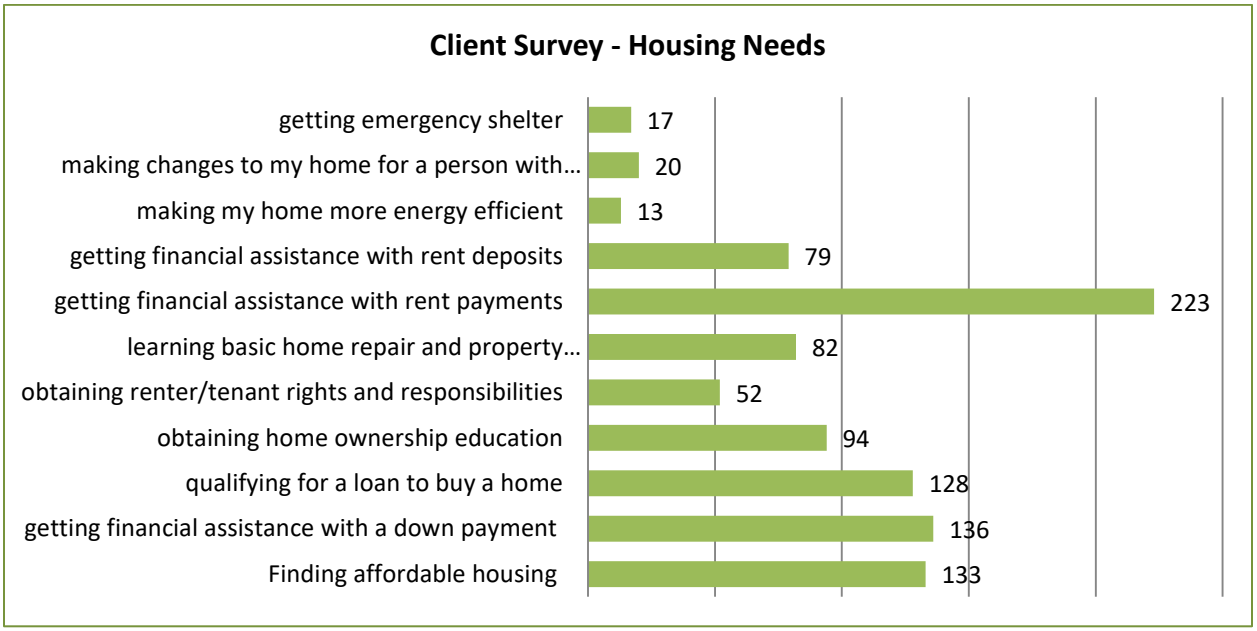
The National Low Income Housing Coalition published the following data:



According to the Will County 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, housing problems and cost burdens continue to affect the county's low-income residents, despite Will County's high percentage of ownership vs. rental households. Even though homeownership is seemingly more attainable today than in the past, there is still an affordability gap, even for moderate-income families.

According to the City of Joliet's 2020-2024 Five-Year Consolidated Plan, there is a need to improve the quality of the housing stock in the Community. Increasing the amount of decent, safe, sound, and accessible housing for homeowners, renters, and homebuyers is affordable to low-and moderate-income persons and families.

WCCCC's Client Needs Assessment asked our clients to indicate their needs related to housing. The top responses from our customer survey suggest that our customers need help getting financial assistance for rent payments and down payments. Families also needed help finding affordable housing and qualifying for a loan to buy a home.



In 2023, the Will County Continuum of Care conducted a street count as part of the annual Point in Time Count. In this effort, Will County Center for Community Concerns, the 2023 Point in Time count, identified 343 homeless persons. There were 131 people in emergency shelters, 104 in transitional housing, and 98 unsheltered (on the street).

In June of 2022, United Way of Will County became the lead agency for Will County Continuum of Care. Having the Continuum of Care operate under the same organization as the 211 call center seemed most advantageous. WCCCC is still a participant in the Continuum of Care. WCCCC Executive Director remains on the ranking committee for their NOFA Grant. Will County Center for Community Concerns will continue to provide services to our homeless customers. WCCCC has received funds through Will County to administer the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program. The program offers rental assistance for up to 24 months for households who have recently completed a transitional housing or shelter program. The funds help with security deposits, rent, and utilities not included in the rent. Families may be required to pay a percentage of their income for rent.

Of those requesting assistance, most would benefit from limited interventions – like Rapid Rehousing, Move-in Assistance, Housing Identification, or other mainstream or community-based resources – to resolve their homeless crisis. A smaller portion needed a supportive housing option. Homeless-focused

resources are available to households headed by persons with a disabling condition who have experienced long-term homelessness.

WCCCC has a privately-funded Home Repair program to address code violations or repairs to avoid eviction of the homeowner. The funds help those residents who fall outside of the guidelines of a grant-funded program.

The Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program (IHWAP) grants provide funding to make homes more energy-efficient, reducing their utility bills. In addition to insulation and other energy-conservation measures, this program offers the repair or replacement of heating systems and the installation of energy-efficient appliances.

In addition to IHWAP funding, the Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies has contracted with Resource Innovations in conjunction with Nicor and ComEd to provide additional funding for Home Weatherization and Energy Saving. This program expansion will allow WCCCC to nearly double the number of homeowners we can assist in a given year. The Agency expects to receive this funding for the next five years.

ComEd® Energy Efficiency Program

nicor GAS Energy Efficiency Program
USING ENERGY WISELY FOR A BETTER FUTURE™

WCCCC has received funds through Will County to administer the HOME Rehab Owner-Occupied Rehab program. The program provides rehab work on owner-occupied homes to address roofing and structural deficiencies or repairs necessary to address code violations. Rehabilitation work will include but is not limited to electrical, plumbing, roof, and structural measures.

WCCCC administers Illinois Housing Development Agency (IHDA) Programs.

WCCCC supports seniors and the disabled through the IHDA Home Accessibility Program (HAP). By subsidizing the cost of home modifications, seniors and the disabled can continue to thrive in their own homes with residential improvements for their safety and comfort, allowing them to continue living at home. The maximum benefit per customer is a $25,000 zero interest loan forgiven over five years.

WCCCC assists low-income homeowners through the IHDA Single-Family Rehabilitation Program (SFR). Homeowners who need repairs to their homes to remove health and safety hazards or roof repair/replacement, only if the house does not have other apparent health and safety issues. The maximum benefit per customer is $45,000 or $16,500 for the roof only - a zero interest loan forgivable over five years.

WCCCC assists low-income homeowners through the IHDA Home Repair and Accessibility Program (HRAP). Homeowners who need full home repair, accessibility repair, or roof only repairs. The maximum benefit per customer is $51,750 (repair and accessibility) or $24,725 (roof) - a zero interest loan forgivable over five years.

WCCCC administers IHDA's Foreclosure Prevention Program and Foreclosure Prevention Program Graduated Fund for Will County. IHDA provides grants to housing counseling agencies approved by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development for capacity building, operational expenses, pre- and post-purchase counseling, financial literacy counseling, foreclosure counseling and education, and staff/counselor training. In 2022, WCCCC participated in IHDA's Illinois Rental Repayment Program (ILRPP) and Housing Stability Counseling Program (HSCP) for households experiencing hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

WCCCC partners with the counties of Will, LaSalle, Kankakee, and Grundy as a part of the Foreclosure Mediation Programs to provide no-cost housing counseling to homeowners who have received a foreclosure filing and are summoned to Foreclosure Mediation Court. A HUD-certified housing counselor is at court on scheduled days to provide on-site foreclosure prevention counseling and schedule appointments for residents who need more comprehensive counseling services.

Will County Center for Community Concerns has been a HUD-approved housing counseling agency since 1993. Our Housing Counselors also become HUD-certified housing counselors. These are the new requirement for agencies that are providing housing counseling services. Our housing counseling counselors offer various services, including loss mitigation counseling, pre- and post-purchase counseling, home equity conversion, or mortgage counseling, and teach financial literacy and homebuyer education classes.

WCCCC does have funds to provide emergency rental assistance to CSBG-eligible households. WCCCC and Daybreak Shelter work together to coordinate and refer families needing rental services.

Financial Literacy classes are available to customers who have applied for CSBG financial assistance. The 4-hour Financial Literacy class addresses money management, budgeting, landlord/tenant relations, fair

housing rights, and tenant rights and responsibilities. The classes are offered continually (2 times each month) in a group setting or one-on-one as requested. Households enrolled in other rental or housing assistance programs may be required to attend.

WCCCC administers the Emergency Food and Shelter Program, which assists with gas, electricity, and water. The EF&S Program also funds shelter programs at Catholic Charities/Daybreak Center, Guardian Angel Community Services, MorningStar Mission, and Crisis Center for South Suburbia.

Food/Nutrition

According to the US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, more than 31.83% of Will County residents live in census tracts designated as food deserts, slightly less than twice the state's rate of 17.69. Of the low-income population, 6.85% have low food access, likely due to the distribution of the low-income population in larger municipalities. There are food pantries and soup kitchens located throughout the county.

MEALS on WHEELS AMERICA

According to the Will County Meals on Wheels 2020 Annual Report, the Agency served over 7365 people over 60 daily meals five days per week. There is a waiting list of ZERO pre-qualified persons over 60 waiting to receive meals.

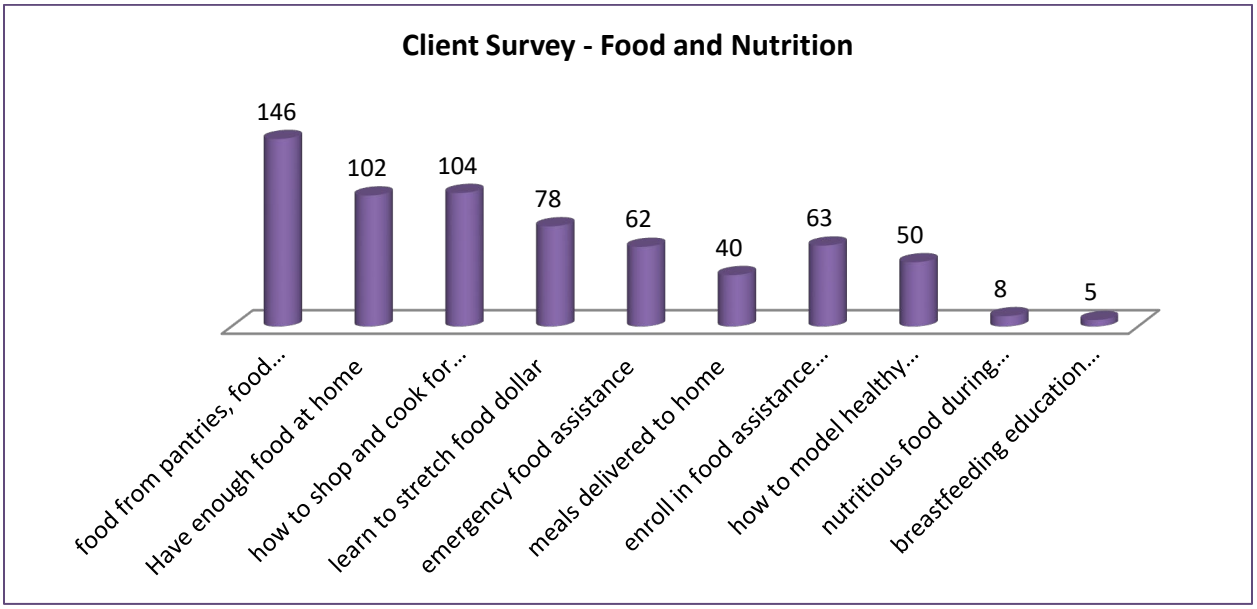
The WIC program for expectant/new mothers and their children is available through the Will County Health Department. According to the Will County Health Department's 2021 Annual Report, the WIC program served 8000 clients in 2021, providing food and nutrition education to all participants.

The US Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service 2011 reported 102 WIC-authorized food stores in Will County. A 2020 USDA Food and Nutrition Services database search shows that Will County has 386 SNAP-authorized retailers. Per the 2018 American Community Survey, 9.0% of Will County households receive SNAP benefits.

SM SNAP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Putting Healthy Food Within Reach

WCCCC's Client Needs Assessment asked our clients to indicate their needs as related to food and nutrition. The top responses from our customer survey suggest that our customers receive food from pantries and food banks. They also want to learn how to cook for healthy eating and are having difficulties having enough food at home.



The 2020 American Community Survey shows 232,395 households in Will County. Of these households, 14.2 % receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Cash Public Assistance Income, or Food Stamps or SNAP benefits. Spark reports that 38.1% of students in Will County are eligible for the free or reduced lunch program.

The Northern Illinois Food Bank website allows a search by zip code to locate a pantry or soup kitchen near a client's home, and through their Summer Meals Program, families have access to breakfast, lunch, and snacks for their children at thirteen sites throughout Will County. The school lunch program also provides free or reduced-cost lunches for low-income children.

Several food co-ops and distribution sites in Will County coordinate food pantries and meals throughout the area. When requested, we distribute a list of food pantries and soup kitchens to clients.

Will County Center for Community Concerns provides food to CSBG-eligible households directly at three events. WCCCC partners with the Will County Regional Office of Education to host the Families in Transition events in the spring and late summer. The Northern Illinois Food Bank's Mobile Pantry is on-site and provides produce, meats, and pantry staples to up to 150 households for each event.

The Healthy Homes/Healthy Families event hosted by WCCCC provides income-eligible households with food from the Mobile Pantry. In December, CSBG-eligible households with children aged 16 or younger are registered for our Holiday Basket Program to provide food and outerwear. WCCCC distributed food for a holiday meal and other staples to the families. WCCCC serves 130 families for this event.

Further, to address the need for food in Joliet's Broadway and Cass/Jackson Street areas, WCCCC has partnered with Riverwalk Homes and Holsten Enterprises to support the "HEAL" Healthy Eating and Life Style Garden and Food Pantry. They provide food for the residents of Riverwalk Homes and the surrounding Community.

In 2021, Catholic Charities provided meals weekly through Shepherd's Table. Catholic Charities provided 31,795 nights of housing and emergency shelter, in addition to breakfasts and dinners to shelter residents. They also served 18,939 people through their mobile food pantry.

Source: Publications (catholiccharitiesjoliet.org)

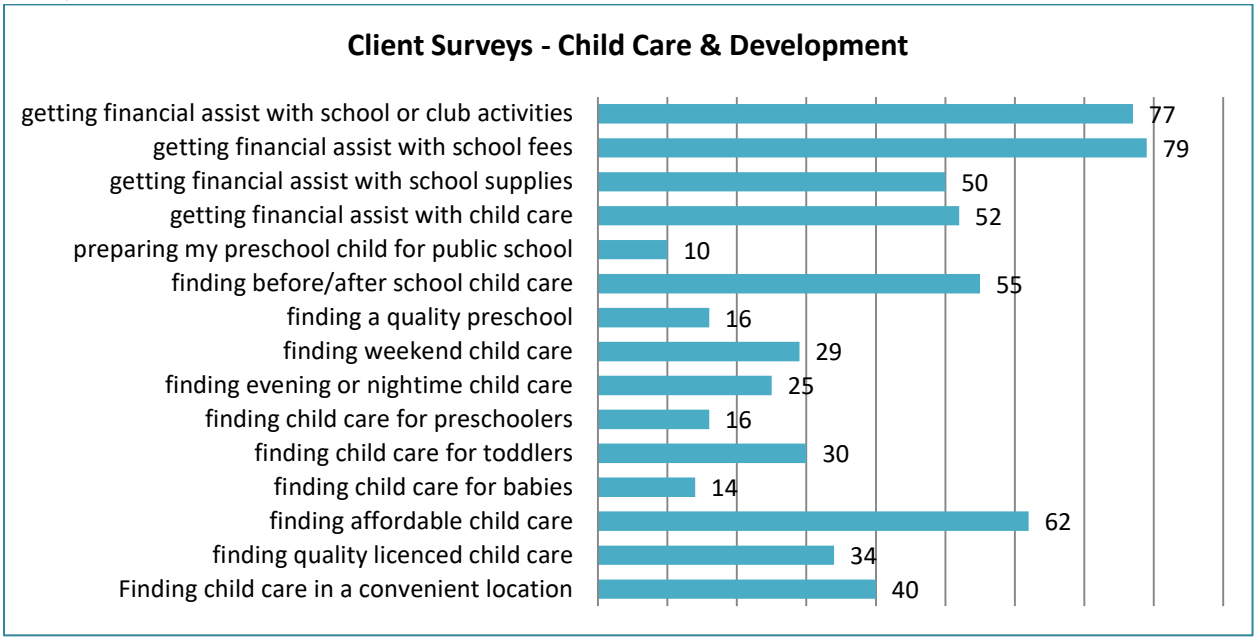
The Emergency Food & Shelter Program of Will County provides funds for food to Catholic Charities/ Daybreak Center, MorningStar Mission, the Northern Illinois Food Bank, and the Visitation & Aid Society.

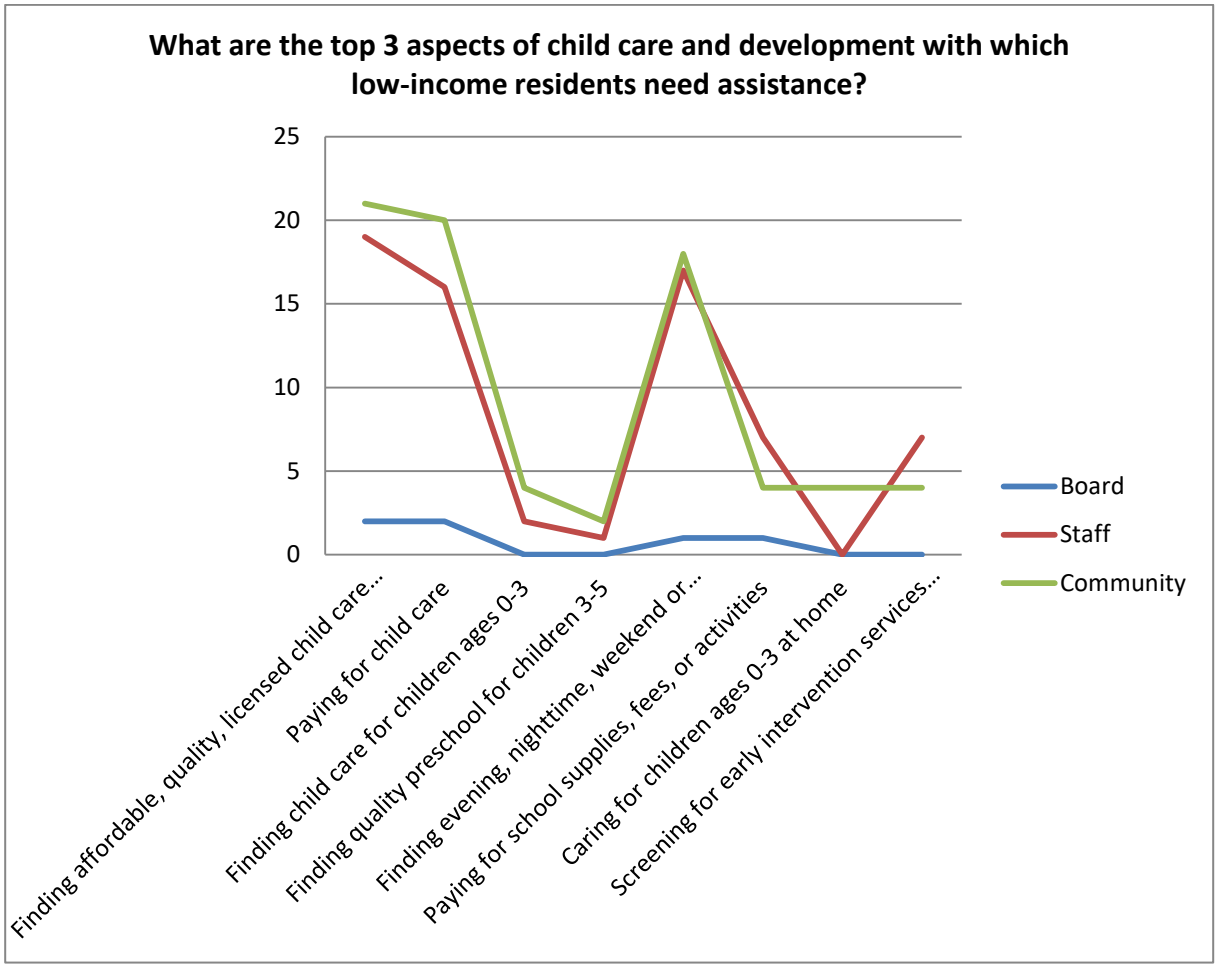
Parenting/Family Support

According to data from the Will County Needs Assessment 2020, 19.2% or 91,148 people of Will County residents aged 18 and older report receiving insufficient social and emotional support. Social and emotional support is critical for navigating the challenges of daily life and is also linked to educational achievement and economic stability.

Source: *The Will County MAPP Collaborative: Will County Community Needs Assessment 2020 (arcgis.com)*

WCCCC's Client Needs Assessment asked our clients who have children under 18 living with them what developmental needs they have. The responses show a need for financial assistance with school fees, clubs, and activities.

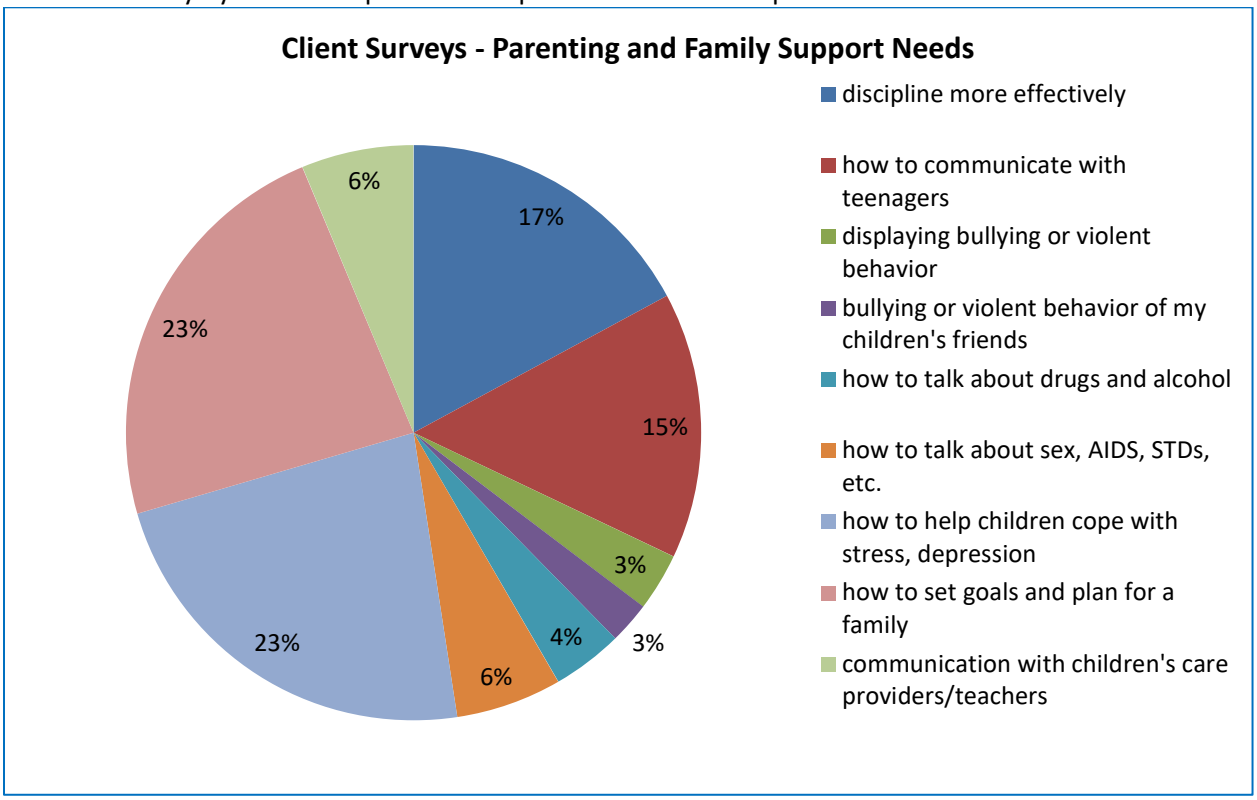




WCCCC refers families seeking assistance with child care to Child Care Resource & Referral. CCR & R assists families with identifying safe, appropriate, convenient child care and can help eligible households with the cost of child care.

Through Family and Community Development, specially trained and certified staff provides intensive case management to promote self-sufficiency in the family. Working one-on-one with a family can formulate goals and define the steps needed to achieve these goals. Goal planning is a continual process through which clients are given cash incentives and assistance with bill payments upon reaching short and long-term goals.

WCCCC's Client Needs Assessment asked our clients who have children under 18 living with them what support they need. The predominant need identified was learning how to set goals and plan for a family, followed closely by how to help children cope with stress and depression.



WCCCC partners with the MorningStar Mission "Jump on the Bus" program and Catholic Charities/ Daybreak Center's "Back to School Fair" to prepare young students for school. Together we distribute school supplies, backpacks, clothing, and uniforms to qualified youth. The "Back to School Fair" also provides information to parents on community services such as legal assistance, employment, and financial needs, and students may participate in dental and vision screenings, haircuts, school physicals, and asthma and lead screenings. Both "Jump on the Bus" and "Back to School" fairs are held annually in August.

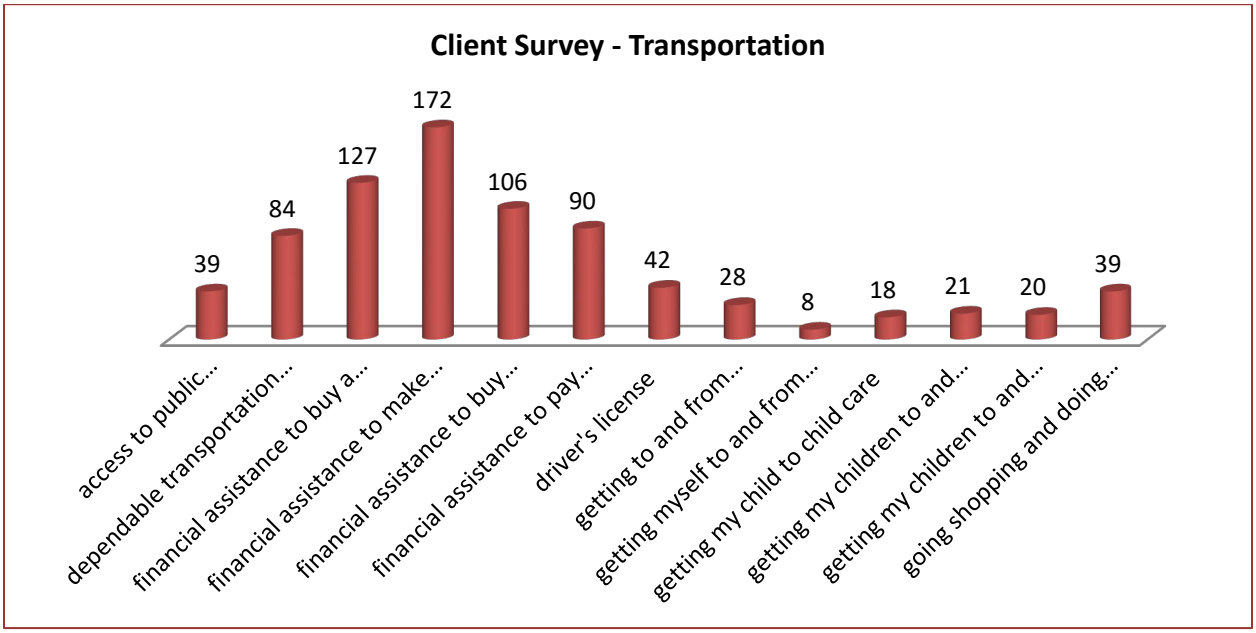
Illinois law requires school fees to be waived for all students whose parents cannot afford them. This law includes but is not limited to children eligible for free lunches or breakfast and households with a significant loss of income due to severe illness or injury or unusual expenses such as fire, flood, or storm damage. Schools, at the time of enrollment, must receive the fee waiver document in writing. For

unaccompanied homeless youth, the school's homeless liaison should assist the child in obtaining a fee waiver. Parents seem to be often unaware of this option for aid.

Transportation

Will County does have some public transportation, including passenger rail service to the Chicago area and public buses. Most people, 80.8%, drive a personal vehicle to work, and another 6.5% of workers carpool. Only 3.6% of workers over 16 use public transportation to commute to work. Limited bus routes, especially for second and third-shift workers, are inadequate.

WCCCC's Client Needs Assessment asked our clients what their transportation needs are:



According to the 2020 American Community Survey, most households have private vehicles. 11.5% have one available, 42.6% have two cars, and 44.8% have three or more vehicles. Of the 232,395 households in Will County, only 1.1% do not own a car.

Most people in Will County (87.3%) travel to work by car, either alone or in a carpool. Pace Bus offers fixed route bus transportation, Dial A Ride for seniors and persons with disabilities, ADA Paratransit, and Call N Ride for the general public is available in west Joliet.

In 2022, the Community Needs Assessment survey asked if our customers had access to public transportation. The results showed that 4.9% of our customers needed assistance to access public transport. Most of WCCCC's customers indicated they needed help making car repairs.

Through WCCCC's Homeless Services Department, bus passes are available to eligible customers as a temporary means of getting them to work, attend classes, or medical appointments.

WCCCC anticipates expanding the availability of passes through regular outreach at the downtown branch of the public library and MorningStar Mission and Guardian Angel Community Services residents to reduce the barrier to obtaining transportation. Catholic Charities/Daybreak Center also distributes

bus passes to their shelter participants. Senior Services Center of Will County provides bus passes for the Pace Dial A Ride to eligible senior citizens.

Health

The Will County MAPP (Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships) Collaborative issued a report that assessed the community health needs of Will County. The information, taken from Will County Community Health Needs Assessment and Plan 2020, is the source of the following data:

Health Resource Availability:

- Will County has three hospitals, three health centers, multiple outpatient treatment centers, dialysis facilities, nursing homes, home health providers, and other outpatient treatment centers to serve the needs of residents.
- A new 100-bed behavioral health hospital opened in 2019, addressing the gap for these previously existing services for Will County residents.
- A Veteran's Clinic opened in March 2013 to expand healthcare services for veterans.
- Three new FQHC (Federally Qualified Health Center) have been added in Will County: Aunt Martha's in Joliet, Visiting Nurses' Association in Bolingbrook, Joliet and Romeoville, and Will County Health Center in Joliet.
- There is a shortage of primary care physicians, mental health providers, and dental health providers in Will County.

Behavioral Risk Factors:

- Adults
  - 29% of those with high blood pressure are not taking the necessary medication.
  - The number of current smokers in Will County has decreased but is still higher than the HHS Healthy People 2020 target.
- Youth
  - Alcohol is the primary substance used among students in all grades (8^{th}-12^{th} grade).
  - The use of cigarettes and marijuana increased as the grades improved, and E-cigarette use is higher than cigarettes and marijuana combined.
  - The intake of fruits and vegetables remained roughly the same as grades increased.
  - The prevalence of obesity varied slightly but not significantly across all grades.

Environmental Health:

- Will County ranked toward the bottom of all counties in the state regarding environmental health. Will County ranked below the 50^{th} percentile in the following factors:
  - Safety of drinking water

  - Number of fast-food restaurants
  - Limited access to healthy foods
- Nearly 31.8% of the Will County population has low access to food. This number is higher than the state (17.7%) or national (19.04%) numbers.
- In Will County, the number of supplemental nutrition assistance programs (SNAP) authorized food stores per 100,000 people is nearly half the statewide or national totals.

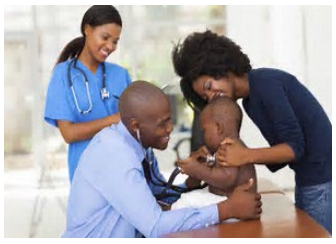
Social and Mental Health:

- Will County needs coordination and linkage to mental health services.
- Mental health disorders contributed to 8.1% of all Will County hospitalizations in 2014.
- In 2009, the crude rates for drug and alcohol-related emergency room visits were above Illinois rates.

Maternal and Child Health:

- The infant mortality rate for African Americans was 2.3 times higher than for Whites in 2018.
- The low birth weight for Will County is 8%, which is better than Illinois and the US.
- Very low birthweight for African American women is approximately four times higher than Whites in 2018.
- In 2018, African American mothers were twice as likely to receive late or no prenatal care than White mothers.
- Alcohol and tobacco use during pregnancy has shown a steady decline of 8% between 2018 and 2019

(Source: www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh, http://dph.illinois.gov/, and hwww.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr70/nvsr70-02-508.pdf)



Death, Illness, and Injury:

- Heart Disease was the leading cause of death in Will County, accounting for 20.2% of total deaths, closely followed by Cancer at 19.5% in 2020
- Lung Cancer is the most common cause of Cancer death for Will County residents.
- COVID-19 was the third leading cause of death in 2020, with 10.9% of total deaths.

Source: Death Statistics | IDPH (illinois.gov)

In addition to these findings, there are growing concerns about the number of drug overdoses plaguing Will County.

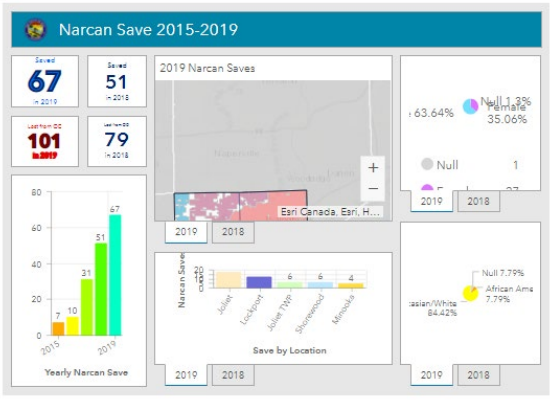
- In 2020, there were 285 unnatural deaths, of which 147 were accidental overdoses.
- In 2020, there were 35 heroin deaths in Will County. By 2021, the number of heroin deaths had decreased to 24.

- According to the Will County Coroner's Office, in 2021, there were 147 accidental drug overdoses; 111 included heroin or fentanyl. In 2021 - from January 1 to August 2, there were 71 unintentional drug overdoses; 61 had heroin or fentanyl.

Source: Drug OD Deaths - Website Report.xlsx (illinois.gov), Will County Coroner (willcountyillinois.com), and 2019 annual report final.pdf (willcountyillinois.com)

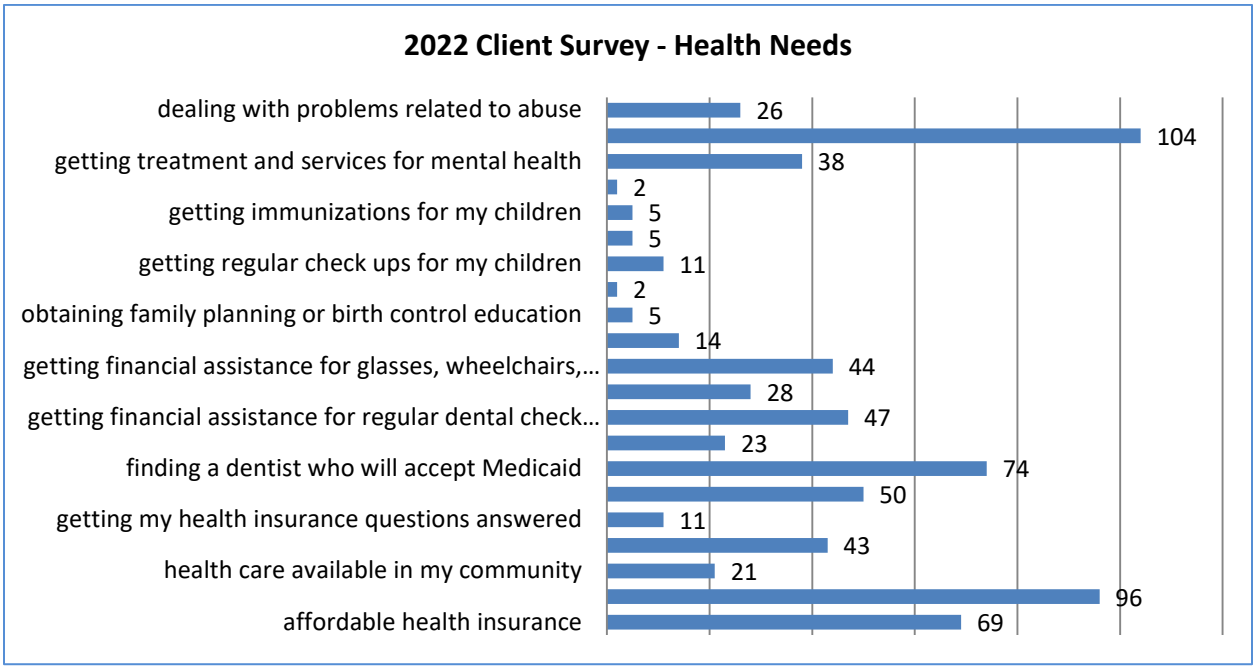
The Will County Executive's Office launched the Substance Use Initiative, which supports the prevention, harm reduction, distribution of Narcan, and recovery services for citizens affected by the opioid epidemic. In 2019, the initiative reported the use of Narcan – a medicine that blocks the effects of opioids and reverses an overdose – has saved 67 people in 2019 and 51 people in 2018 throughout Will County.

Lives Saved by Narcan



According to the 2020 American Community Survey, of the total civilian non-institutionalized population of Will County, an estimated 5.1% (34,923 people) are uninsured. Of this 5.1%, this includes 89.6% or 31,290 adults over 18, and the remaining 10.4% or 3,633 are children under 18.

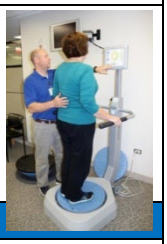
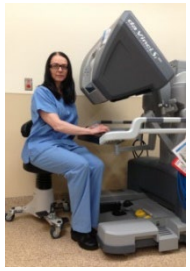
WCCCC's Client Needs Assessment asked our clients what their health needs are:



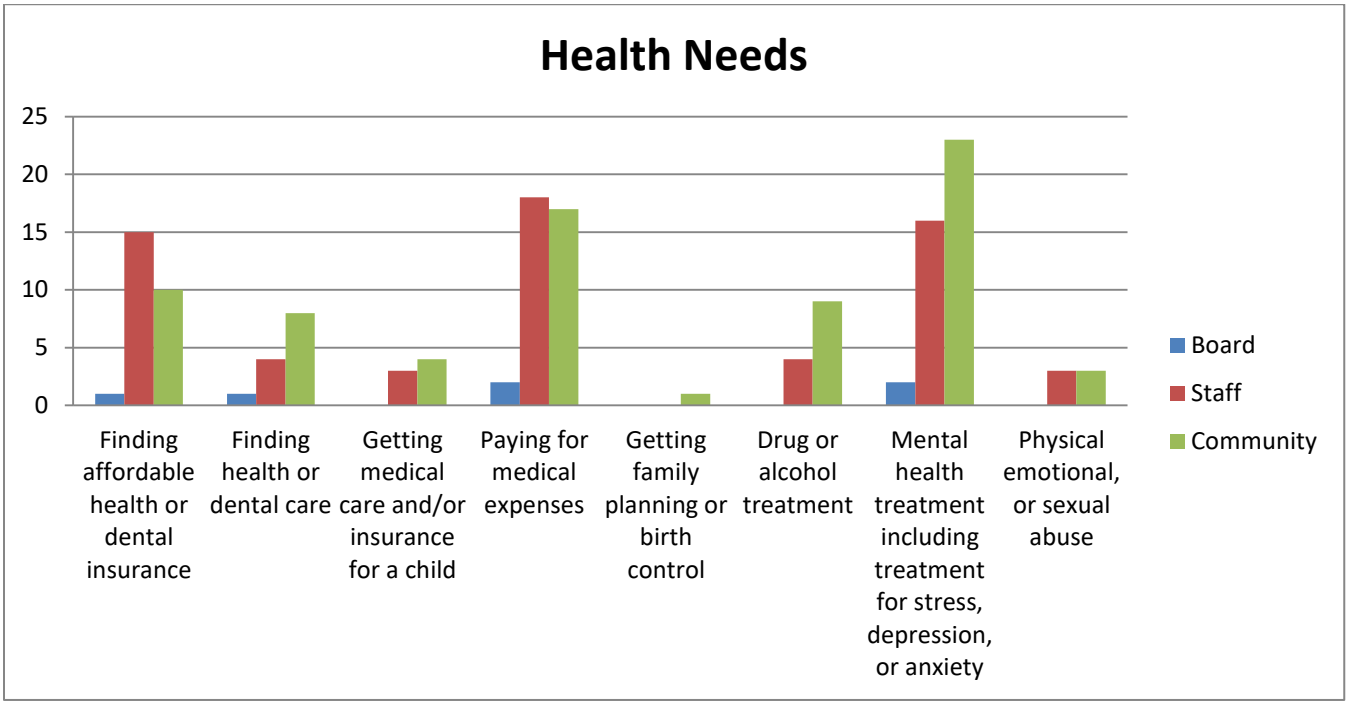
According to the 2020 American Community Survey, health insurance or a lack thereof is a significant issue in Will County. An estimated 13.1% of the Hispanic population is uninsured. Other populations with high numbers of uninsured persons are persons with less than a high school education (20.6%); unemployed persons (10.6%); and persons who worked less than full time, year-round (9.6%). An estimated 11.1% of the population under 138% of the poverty threshold is uninsured. For those between 138% and 399% of the poverty threshold, an estimated 8% are uninsured.

According to the 2020 American Community Survey, of households with income under $25,000, an estimated 8.9% are uninsured; at the following income level between $25,000 and $49,999, that percentage increased to an estimated 9.8%. An estimated 78.9% of the insured population have private health insurance; 26.3% have public insurance, including Medicare, Medicaid, or VA Health Care.

The following information is courtesy of the Will County Health Department (2020):

Access to Dental and Primary Care	
Insurance Coverage	
Issue	*Target Population*
10.36% of the Will County adult population under 65 were uninsured in 2016, which has decreased in the past five years. 16.43% of the Hispanic/Latino people in Will County reported no health insurance coverage, compared to 5.42% of the non-Hispanic/Latino population.	• Males • African American and Asian • Hispanic ethnicity • 60432, 60433, 60484 ZIP codes 
Provider Availability	
Issue	*Target Population*
Will County has 391 primary care physicians, yielding a population ratio to primary care physicians of 1,800:1 compared to 1,240:1 for Illinois. Will County has 366 dentists, delivering a proportion of the people to dentists of 1,830:1 compared to 1,310:1 for Illinois. 15.9% of adults in Will County report not having at least one person they consider their primary care provider. One Community on the East Side of Joliet designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration has shortages of primary care, dental care, or mental health providers.	• 60433 ZIP code • Non-white males, ages 25-44 with an income less than $35,000 
Preventable Hospital Visits	
Issue	*Target Population*
Will County's ambulatory care sensitive condition discharge rate was 69 per 1,000 Medicare enrollees in 2014, higher than Illinois (59) and the US (38) but has decreased since 2010. Ambulatory care-sensitive conditions include pneumonia, dehydration, asthma, diabetes, and other diseases, which are preventable if adequate primary care resources are available and accessed by those patients.	• Medicare beneficiaries

The survey completed by the Board of Directors, agency staff, and the Will County community showed that low-income residents' top three health needs are mental health treatment, paying medical expenses, and finding affordable insurance.



The responses to the 2022 surveys indicate that for our low-income customers, getting treatment and services for mental health is significant. Those enrolled in Medicaid face the challenge of finding providers who will take their insurance.

Clients needing medical and dental assistance receive referrals to the Will-Grundy Medical Clinic, the Will County Health Department's Community Health Center, and Aunt Martha's Health Centers. The Will County Health Department has Affordable Care Act counselors to assist individuals in applying to the Marketplace for health insurance or Medicaid. Free pregnancy screenings, maternity and baby clothes, and diapers are available through Birthright of Joliet.

The Will County Community Health Center accepts more than 30 medical and 10 dental plans. The Center provides primary and dental care and has a Mobile Dental Van to provide services throughout the county. Bus passes may be available for households needing transportation to the Center for medical or dental care.

The Will-Grundy Medical Clinic is the only free clinic in the area for those with no insurance and limited financial resources. The Will-Grundy Medical Clinic provides medical and dental services and patient education. Other services are wellness programs, exercise classes, nutrition counseling, and monthly mental health seminars.

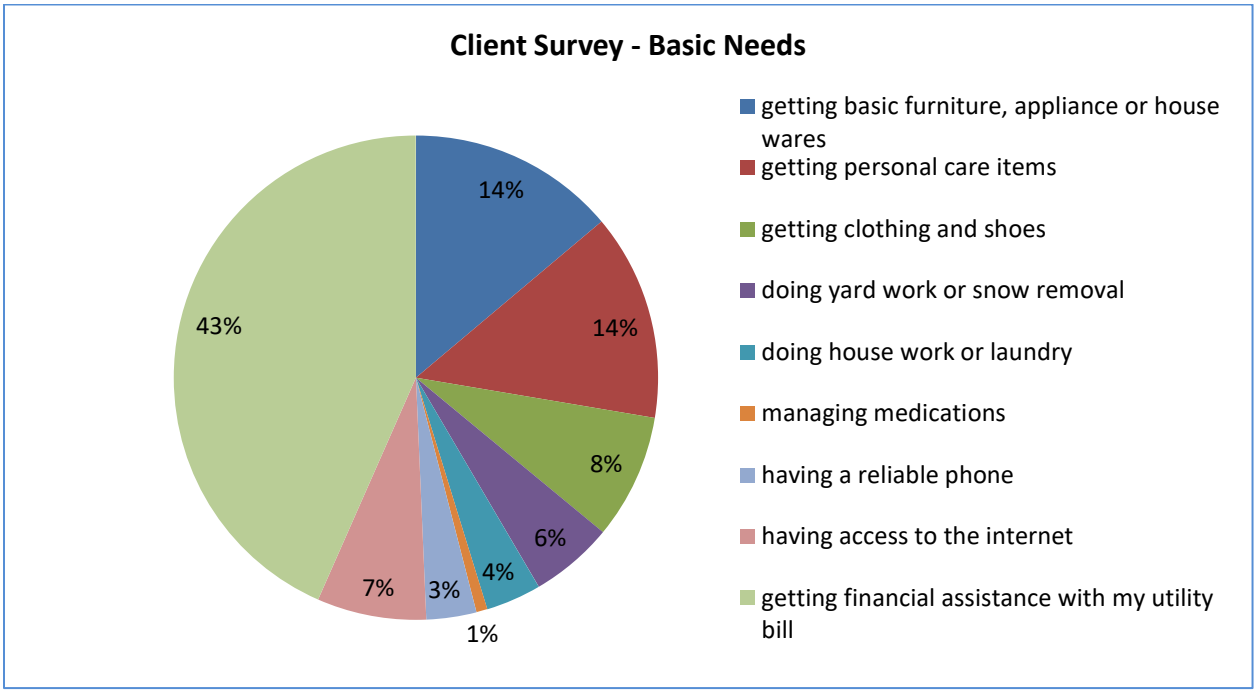
Due to funding shortages, Will-Grundy Medical Clinic no longer sees children. Under the State Health Plan (AllKids), children can receive insurance benefits. The Clinic does not serve individuals who have insurance, Medicare or Medicaid, US Veteran Health Benefits, or have income over the WCMC guidelines.

Aunt Martha's has health centers on the east and west side of Joliet and locations in Cook County closer to eastern Will County residents. They offer primary medical care, dental care, mental health care, women's health care, substance abuse care, HIV/AIDS & STD services, and insurance & benefits enrollment.

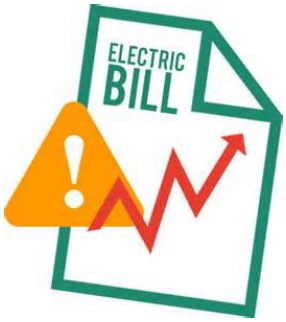
There are three VNA Healthcare Clinics in Will County, one on the west side of Joliet, one in Bolingbrook, and a third in Romeoville. These locations offer primary health care for adults and children and accept patients with Medicare, Medicaid, and private or no insurance. The clinics also offer wellness classes.

Basic Needs

In addition to gathering information about specific needs such as Employment, Education, Housing, etc., our survey asked our clients to tell us about their families' most significant challenges and basic needs.



Assistance with utility bills is available through a variety of programs. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps income-eligible households pay home energy bills. LIHEAP either pays through a direct payment to the utility vendor or through the Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP), where customers pay a percentage of their income toward their utility bill, earning a monthly benefit for each on-time payment they make. LIHEAP also provides for the repair or replacement of non-operational heating systems.



Through the LIWAP program, funds can provide income-eligible households with water bill assistance.

Through the Emergency Food & Shelter program, Will County households can receive help with their gas, electric, water bills, food, and shelter. WCCCC received allocations in Phase 38 for $25,000.

WCCCC uses the funds to provide utility assistance. Other EF&S grant recipients include MorningStar Mission, which receives funds to purchase food. Catholic Charities receives funds for rental services, and the Northern Illinois Food Bank uses EF&S funds to provide food to local shelters and food banks.

Clients who indicate a need for household goods or furniture are given a voucher for free merchandise at St. Vincent DePaul Resale Shop. St. Vincent has two locations in Joliet, one on the east side and another on the west side. CSBG staff interview customers to determine needs and issue vouchers as part of our Information & Referral program.

WCCCC maintains a small amount of donated personal hygiene items at our office for customers who have an immediate need for them. Staff can create a “kit” that suits specific needs or requests, drawing from a stock of soap, shampoo, deodorant, razors, tissue, and other personal items. Diapers are available at no cost through Birthright of Joliet.

WCCCC has partnered with WIOA Will County Workforce Services Division to house and manage the “Clothes 4 Work” closet. The closet is a collection of donated business-appropriate attire provided to people who have job interviews or have secured a job but need work clothing until they have funds to purchase their work wardrobe. Donations of clothing that may not be suitable for job interviews or work are kept aside and given to customers who need clothing.

Will County Center for Community Concerns
2023 Needs Assessment Survey

Will County Center for Community Concerns is studying the needs of low-income people in Will County. Results from the survey will be considered by WCCCC for planning, developing, and delivering agency activities, services, and initiatives.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Please answer each question by checking the appropriate box or boxes. If a question does not apply to you, please leave it blank. **"Community" is defined as the Will County neighborhood or city where you work.**

Your Name (Optional): _____

Your Title: _____

1. **What Will County community do you work in?** _____

2. **Which group is your closest professional affiliation? (What community stakeholder group do you belong to?) Select the one that best describes your group:**
   - ☐ Government
   - ☐ Education
   - ☐ Business Community
   - ☐ Church/Religion
   - ☐ Service Organization
   - ☐ Health Care
   - ☐ Public housing
   - ☐ Private Housing
   - ☐ First Responder
   - ☐ Neighborhood Association
   - ☐ Other: _____ _____

3. **What are the primary age groups served by your business or organizational affiliation? (Check all that apply)**
   - ☐ Children ages 0-5
   - ☐ Children ages 6-12
   - ☐ Youth ages 13-20
   - ☐ Adult ages 21-30
   - ☐ Adult ages 31-50
   - ☐ Adult ages 51-61
   - ☐ Adults ages 62 and older

4. **What are the approximate income level groups served by your business or organizational affiliation? (Check all that apply for a family of four)**
   - ☐ Very Low Income (Less than or =$24,600)
   - ☐ Low income (Less than or =$39,500)
   - ☐ Low/Moderate Income (Less than or =$63,200)
   - ☐ Unknown

5. **What is the ethnicity of the people served by your business or organizational affiliation? (Check all that apply)**
   - ☐ American Indian
   - ☐ Alaskan Native
   - ☐ Asian
   - ☐ Black or African American
   - ☐ Hispanic or Latino
   - ☐ Native Hawaiian
   - ☐ Pacific Islander
   - ☐ White
   - ☐ Other: _____ _____

6. **Are there full-time living wage employment ($15 per hour or higher) opportunities available in your Community?**
   - ☐ There are an insufficient number of opportunities.
   - ☐ There are a sufficient number of opportunities.
   - ☐ There are an excessive number of opportunities.
   - ☐ There are not any opportunities.
   - ☐ Unsure

7. **Why do you believe people have problems getting or keeping a full-time living wage job? select all that apply:**

☐ jobs are not available
☐ physical or mental disabilities
☐ need better communication,
people/customer job skills
☐ language barriers
☐ need better technical job skills
☐ health issues
☐ need child care
☐ lack of education
☐ transportation
☐ substance abuse issues
☐ other

8. **Are child care programs (during the day, Monday through Friday) for low-income families available in your Community?**

☐ There are an insufficient number available.
☐ There are a sufficient number available.
☐ There are an excessive number available.
☐ There are not any available.
☐ Unsure

9. **Are child care programs (evenings, nights, and weekends) for low-income families available in your Community?**

☐ There are an insufficient number available.
☐ There are a sufficient number available.
☐ There are an excessive number available.
☐ There are not any available.
☐ Unsure

10. **Are pre-school programs (including Head Start programs) for low-income families available in your Community?**

☐ There are an insufficient number available.
☐ There are a sufficient number available.
☐ There are an excessive number available.
☐ There are not any available.
☐ Unsure

11. **Are affordable child and youth (ages 5 to 17) activities or after-school programs available in your Community?**

☐ There are an insufficient number available.
☐ There are a sufficient number available.
☐ There are an excessive number available.
☐ There are not any available.
☐ Unsure

12. **In your Community, in which areas do you believe youth (ages 12 to 17) need information, education, guidance, or assistance? select all that apply:**

☐ after school supervision
☐ school attendance
☐ birth control
☐ affordable school/community activities
☐ learning disabilities
☐ behavior disorders
☐ tutoring
☐ mentoring/ leadership/ volunteering
☐ finding employment
☐ gang participation
☐ obesity
☐ sexually transmitted diseases
☐ substance abuse/tobacco
☐ teen parenting
☐ mental health
☐ physical health and dental issues
☐ none apply

13. **Are there adequate levels of non-medical emergency services available in your community?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

14. **Are there a sufficient number of emergency shelters available in your Community?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

15. **Are there adequate levels of medical services available for low-income people in your community?**

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

16. **Are there adequate levels of <u>dental services</u> available for low-income people in your community?**
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

17. **Are there adequate levels of <u>wellness (nutrition, exercise, etc.) programs</u> available for low-income people in your community?** ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

18. **Are there adequate levels of <u>public transportation</u> options (cabs, taxis, buses, trolleys, etc.) available in your Community**? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

19. **Are the homes in your community in good repair?** ☐ most are ☐ some are ☐ few are ☐ none are ☐ unsure

20. **Which of the following issues do you believe are the greatest challenges low-income families and individuals currently face? select all that apply:**

☐ education
☐ child care
☐ living wage employment
☐ mental health services
☐ job training
☐ teen pregnancy
☐ family/child abuse
☐ medical care access
☐ housing
☐ substance abuse
☐ language barriers
☐ dental care access
☐ budgeting
☐ transportation
☐ health food selection
☐ health care costs
☐ parenting
☐ family violence
☐ special needs children
☐ credit card debt
☐ child support
☐ chronic illness
☐ energy/utility costs
☐ financial literacy/planning
☐ legal issues/services
☐ none apply

21. **Which of the following areas do you believe low-income families and individuals need assistance to achieve or maintain self-sufficiency? select all that apply:**

☐ employment
☐ mental health
☐ substance abuse treatment
☐ medical care
☐ job training
☐ literacy
☐ financial literacy/planning
☐ family/child abuse
☐ housing
☐ transportation
☐ energy/utility costs
☐ language barriers
☐ child care
☐ legal issues/services
☐ family planning
☐ none apply

22. **Which of the following areas do you believe the elderly (seniors) in your Community need assistance to remain in their homes? select all that apply:**

☐ housework
☐ yard work/snow removal
☐ home repairs
☐ energy/utility costs
☐ managing medications
☐ grocery shopping
☐ preparing meals
☐ laundry
☐ financial assistance
☐ tax preparation/legal issues
☐ access to transportation
☐ none apply

23. **Of the following, which of these do you believe low-income families and individuals need information, education, guidance, or assistance:**

checking and savings accounts..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
credit card debt..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
credit repair..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
payday loans..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
car <u>title</u> loans (**not** a car purchase loan)..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
budgeting or money management issues ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
filing tax returns (Earned Income Tax Credit) ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
obtaining loans ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
property tax exemptions..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
rent reimbursement claims..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
home energy/utility cost issues ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure
landlord/tenant issues ..... ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=poor/poorly, 3=fine/good, and 5=excellent), please rate the following:

24. **How would you rate your relationship with the community action agency in your Community? (Will County Center for Community Concerns is the Community Action Agency for Will County)**
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ no relationship

25. **How well is Will County Center for Community Concerns meeting the needs of low-income families and individuals?**
☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ unsure

26. **What do you believe causes poverty?**
[please provide an answer on a separate sheet if needed]

27. **What community improvement initiative would you like your Community to address?**
[please provide an answer on a separate sheet if needed]

28. **What would you solve if you had $1,000,000 to solve a community issue?**
[please provide an answer on a separate sheet if needed]

Customer Satisfaction Survey

1. I was helped promptly. ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A (not applicable)
2. I was treated with respect. ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A
3. The staff were friendly and helpful. ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A
4. I got the information or the services I needed. ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A
5. I was informed about other agencies or community services. ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A
6. I would recommend your Agency to family and friends. ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ N/A
7. What is ONE thing you would change about the services you received from our Agency?

UPDATED 08-2022 -- This guide is compiled and distributed by the Will County Center for Community Concerns, the Community Action Agency serving Will County. Funding for the Agency is received from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity and private donations. If you wish to seek assistance from any sources listed in this guide, we suggest you call first to ensure the resource can help you.
Services listed are subject to change without notice.

Child Care

Child Care Resource and Referral
801 North Larkin Avenue Suite 202
Joliet IL 60435
Joliet: 815-741-1163 8am- 4:30pm M-F
Outside Joliet: 800-552-5526

Head Start Catholic Charities
1655 Weber Rd
Crest Hill IL 60403
815-723-3053

Drug/Alcohol Rehab

Presence/ St. Joseph Medical Center:
815-725-7133

Silver Cross Hospital:
815-300-7032

Stepping Stones
1621 Theodore St
Joliet IL 60435
815-744-4555

MorningStar Mission
350 E
Washington St
Joliet IL 60433
815-722-5780

Education

Aunt Martha's Youth Services
409 West
Jefferson Street
Joliet IL 60435
815-768-8750

Joliet Job Corps
1101 Mills Road
Joliet IL 60433
815-727-7677

Learning and Skills Center
1256 West
Jefferson Street
Joliet IL 60435
815-744-8670

Peter Claver Center
172 South
Chicago Street
Joliet IL 60436
815-722-6361

Workforce Services
2400 Glenwood
Avenue
Joliet IL 60435
815-727-4444
Job training
Case
management

Joliet Junior College
IET Program
815-280-1526

Joliet Junior College cont'd
Early School
Leaver's Program
815-280-1460
For high school
dropouts (ages
16-21)
Small Business
Development
Center
815-280-1400
Start your own
business

Employment

Dislocated Workers
Workforce Services
2400 Glenwood Avenue
Joliet IL 60435
815-727-4444

Prisoner Release Ministry
815-730-8541

Division of Adult and Family Services
JJC City Center Campus
214 North Ottawa, Room 300
Joliet IL 60432
815-280-1333
Divorced, widowed, separated, or single-parent females only.

Experience Works
Toll-Free: 800-368-7569
PO Box 456
Marseilles IL 61341

IL Dept. of Employment Security
250 North Chicago Street
Joliet IL 60432
815-740-5100

Food/Meals

MorningStar Mission
350 East Washington St
Joliet IL 60433
815-722-5780
3- meals a day Mon. – Sat.
2-meals on Sunday

FISH
(Groceries)
PO Box 2354
Joliet IL 60434
Call for appt
815-722-3344

HELP Food Pantry
(Groceries)
Catholic
Charities
611 Cass Street
Joliet IL 60432
815-774-4663

Illinois Dept of Human Services (DHS)
(Food Stamps)
45 East Webster
Joliet IL 60432
815-740-5350

Food/Meals continued

Second Baptist Church
(Meal)
156 S Joliet St
Joliet IL 60436
815-726-3731
Every Thursday, 12-4 pm

Shepherd's Table (Meal)
Catholic Charities
Daybreak Center
611 E Cass St
Joliet IL 60432
815-774-4663
Breakfast and Lunch
(Mon, Tue, Wed, & Fri)

Health Care

WIC Clinic
1-800-WIC-FOOD

Joliet: 501 Ella Ave
815-727-8524

Bolingbrook: 323
Quadrangle Dr
815-679-7010

Wilmington: 401 E Kahler
Rd
815-727-8524

Senior Services Center
Of Will County
251 North Center Street
Joliet IL 60435
815-723-9713
Prescriptions

USF
Health and Wellness
Center
311 North Ottawa
Joliet IL 60432
815-740-3399
Healthcare, Counseling

Will County
Community Health
Center
1106 Neil Avenue
Joliet IL 60433
815-727-8670
Clinic

Will-Grundy Medical
Clinic
213 East Cass Street
Joliet IL 60432
815-726-3377
For those with no
insurance or medical card

Housing/Shelter

Catholic Charities Daybreak
Center
611 East Cass Street
Joliet IL 60432
815-774-4663
Limited rent/mortgage payment,
shelter for homeless

City of Joliet – Neighborhood
Services
150 West Jefferson Street
Joliet IL 60432
815-724-4090
Home repair loans – JOLIET
residents only

Evergreen Terrace Apartments
350 North Broadway
Joliet IL 60435
815-722-7515
Subsidized apartments

Community Service Council of
Northern Will County
440 Quadrangle Dr, Unit C
Bolingbrook, IL 60440
815-886-5000
Housing Counseling
Will/DuPage County residents only
@Spanish Community Center
309 N Eastern Ave
Joliet IL 60432
815-886-5000 ext. 1004
Tuesday & Thursday 8 am -4 pm

Guardian Angel Comm Svcs
168 North Ottawa Street
Joliet IL 60435
815-729-1228
Domestic violence shelter,
counseling

Joliet Housing Authority
6 South Broadway
Joliet IL 60436
815-727-0611
Section 8, public housing

MorningStar Mission
350 East Washington St
Joliet IL 60433
815-722-5780
Male-only emergency shelter.
Women & children/family program.

Veterans Assistance
Commission of Will County
2400 Glenwood Ave 1st Floor
Joliet IL 60435
815-740-8389
Limited financial assistance for
VETERANS only.

Will County Center for
Community Concerns
2455 Glenwood Avenue
Joliet IL 60435
815-722-0722
Counseling & limited
rent/mortgage, home
weatherization, limited home
repairs

Utilities

Salvation Army
300 Third Avenue
Joliet IL 60433
815-726-4834
NICOR sharing must not be receiving LIHEAP

Will County Center for Community Concerns
2455 Glenwood Avenue
Joliet IL 60435
815-722-0722
LIHEAP payment assistance – lights, gas

Other Resources

American Red Cross
1293 Windham Parkway
Romeoville, IL 60446
630-378-0344
Victims of fire or natural disaster only.
Must call within 24 hours of the disaster.

Crisis Line of Will County
815-722-3344
24-hr INFO/referral service

Cornerstone Services
800 Black Road
Joliet IL 60432
815-727-6666

DHS Office of Rehabilitation Services
1617 West Jefferson Street
Joliet IL 60435
815-730-4200

IL Bureau of
Child Support Enforcement
16 West Cass Street, 4th Floor
Joliet IL 60432
815-740-3061

IL Dept. of Human Services
45 East Webster
Joliet IL 60432
815-740-5350

Will County Legal Assistance Program
116 North Chicago Street #301
Joliet IL 60432
815-727-5123

Social Security Administration
552 Houbolt Rd
Joliet IL 60431
866-783-7302

Spanish Community Center
309 North Eastern Avenue
Joliet IL 60432
815-727-3683

Disability Resource Center
77 North 129th Infantry Drive
Joliet, IL 60435
815-729-0162
TTY: 815-729-2085
VRS: 815-768-2582

Township Offices

Channahon
25461 S Fryer St
Channahon IL 60410
815-467-2569

Crete
1367 Wood St
Crete IL 60417
708-672-8279

Custer
37131 Essex Rd
Wilmington IL 60481
815-458-2252

DuPage
241 Canterbury Ln
Bolingbrook IL 60440
630-759-1317

Florence
18385 W Commercial St
Wilmington IL 60481
815-478-3150

Frankfort
11008 W Lincoln Hwy
Frankfort IL 60423
815-469-4907

Green Garden
25510 S Center Rd
Monee IL 60449
815-469-4222

Homer
14350 W 151st St
Homer Glen IL 60491
708-301-0522

Jackson
P.O. Box 355
Elwood IL 6021
815-423-5771

Joliet
175 W Jefferson St
Joliet IL 60432
815-726-4781

Lockport
222 E Ninth St
Lockport IL 60441
815-838-0380

Manhattan
P.O. Box 127
Manhattan IL 60442
815-478-3123

Monee
26124 S Egyptian Tr
Monee IL 60449
708-534-6020

New Lenox
1100 S Cedar Rd
New Lenox, IL 60451
815-485-6431

Peotone
8212 W Kennedy Rd
Peotone IL 60468
708-258-9192

Plainfield
22525 W Lockport Rd
Plainfield IL 60544
815-436-8308

Reed
440 N Division St
Braidwood IL 60408
815-458-6068

Troy
25448 Seil Rd
Shorewood IL 60404
815-744-1968

Washington
30200 Town Center Rd
Beecher IL 60401
708-946-2026

Wesley
21399 W Ballou Rd
Wilmington IL 60481
815-476-7869

Wheatland
4262 Tower Ct
Naperville IL 60564
630-851-3952

Will
30317 S Will Center Rd
Peotone IL 60468
708-258-3060

Wilmington
30515 S Kavanaugh Rd
Wilmington IL 60481
815-476-9272

Wilton
28722 S Elevator Rd
Manhattan IL 60442
815-478-5507

Frequently Requested Phone Numbers:

St. Vincent De Paul	(815) 722-1140
Senior Service for 60+ years old or 50 if medical problems	(815) 723-9713
State Medicare/Medical	(800) 252-8942
CEDA	(800) 571-2332
Court House	(815) 727-8400
Will County	(815) 722-5515
Guardian Angel	(815) 729-0930
PACE Paratransit	(800) 244-4410
Birthright of Joliet	(815) 725-3411
U.S. Dept. of Veteran's Affairs	(815) 744-0492

Part III
Service Delivery System

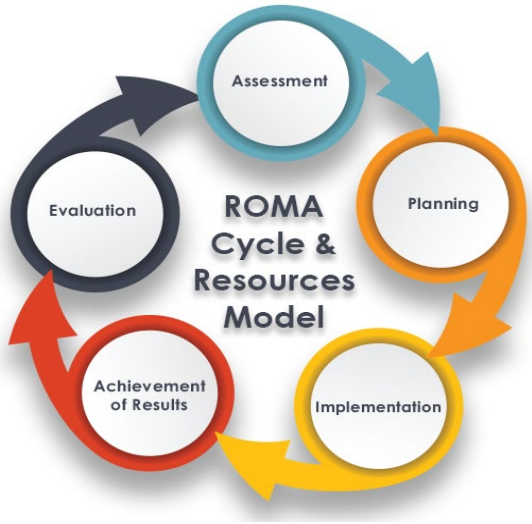
Service Delivery System

Will County has a robust service delivery system. Most agencies participate in the Will County Continuum of Care, Community Services Council of Will County, or the informal interagency network and share information frequently. There is minimal competition for funds. All agencies seem to cooperate very well, even occasionally referring each other to funding sources.

Though service delivery is fragmented, with the HMIS for the Homeless Initiative, it is easier to track client referrals and follow up on clients. Client Service Representatives can better piece together fragments of the client's history due to effective networking and the HMIS.

To better serve our clients, we have implemented a centralized intake model. We have fully trained all staff to take all CSBG programs, homeless services, LIHEAP, and Weatherization applications. We have found this successful because clients can apply for all services with only one visit to our agency.

More than 50% of our Customer Service Representatives are trained as Family and Community Development Specialists. The remainder of the CSRs will receive Family and Community Development training when training becomes available. We have two certified ROMA implementer and one trainer on staff. All WCCCC managers and staff receive Introduction to ROMA training.



Many agency offices are in the City of Joliet. For most of the county, Joliet is accessible by public transportation; however, the public transportation system is scant, and most people get services through a private car or cab. We advise those who do not live near the Agency (Northern, Eastern, and Southern Will County) to visit various outreach sites where the WCCCC is regularly.

Information about scheduled outreach dates is made known to the public via our website, Facebook page, and when a customer calls and inquires. Those in need in Eastern Will County also rely on their township offices and churches for assistance. Will County utilizes church and volunteer civic organizations whose resources are, for the most part, untapped by the social services network. The United Way of Will County started a volunteer referral service in 1997 to coordinate appeals for volunteers.

There has been increased cooperation throughout the county's social service agencies to serve low-income households better. This network and the HMIS/Service Point system track clients' services. We

can determine the effectiveness of low-income services by tracking clients through this system. After the referral, we can follow the services rendered. Will County Center for Community Concerns clients who might need services we can't provide will receive a list of other agencies that offer additional resources.

To fulfill services in outlying areas of the county, WCCCC has set up specific days for outreach. The outreaches are hosted in University Park, Bolingbrook, Braidwood, Wilmington, Frankfort, New Lenox, Plainfield, Lockport, Monee, and Crete Townships for at least one day, in some cases, twice a week during the LIHEAP program year.

Part IV
Linkages

Description of Linkages

The Will County Center for Community Concerns provides information and referral to anyone seeking assistance. Regardless of income, those who walk in or call the agency receive information or a referral to assist them in any way we can.

The agency has initiated a more intensive outreach effort to better inform residents of program availability and ensure proper referral of customers to other agencies to meet their needs. In 2002, the agency became a partner in HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) through the Will County Continuum of Care coordination. It tracks homeless or at-risk customers that other social service agencies have serviced. After applying at a participating agency, the customers' information is recorded into the HMIS system. Upon referral to other agencies, agencies can see the services offered and if there are additional needs.

Customers sign a *Release of Information.* In turn, we can share their information with other participating agencies. Services other agencies have rendered are entered, and any monetary assistance. It is an effective tracking/case management tool, allowing staff to track a customer's referrals to another agency. A coordinated assessment allows for standardized access for all individuals and a referral and housing placement process to ensure that people experiencing homelessness receive appropriate assistance with immediate and long-term housing and service needs.

WCCCC is a Latino/Hispanic Coalition member agency and partners with the Spanish Community Center to ensure that non-English speaking residents are aware of available services and programs. At expos and fairs, outreach and educational materials are provided in English and Spanish to serve the Will County community best. The University of St. Francis in Joliet offers document translation services upon request.

Coordination with county newspapers and local online publications (e.g., the Patch) has improved in publishing press releases and news articles for the availability of programs. WCCCC places digital billboard ads in the area to promote the programs offered at the agency. WCCCC also has an active presence on Facebook for outreach and program announcements. Outreach efforts with low-income multi-family housing buildings, senior citizen buildings, Senior Services, the Disability Resource Center,

and other entities have assisted in supplying residents with information regarding WCCCC programs. They have helped set up available sites for the Will County Center for Community Concerns to come to their facilities to assist customers who may have difficulty accessing transportation to our main facility.

On a specific day of each month, WCCCC hosts outreaches throughout the county. Housing In-Take Counselors receive applications in Eastern Will County at Monee Township, Crete Township, Frankfort Township, and University Park Towne Center; Northern Will County at DuPage Township, Plainfield Township, Lockport Township, and New Lenox Township; Southern Will County once a month in Braidwood at the Fossil Ridge Library and the Wilmington Library. Other locations cooperate to host events with the Senior Services Center of Will County, Housing Authority of Joliet, senior/disabled residences, and other townships and community centers throughout the month.

Outreach to the homeless population is provided monthly with the Will County Continuum of Care near downtown. Homeless Services staff can speak with and provide referrals and services to the “street homeless” congregating in the downtown area.

In 2022, the Agency again participated in the annual “Back to School Fair,” hosted by Catholic Charities/Daybreak, distributing flyers at their drive-by event. WCCCC has also participated in other Back to School events in the surrounding communities.

Part V
Coordination

Coordination

Internal services are coordinated within the agency, with the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and the Illinois Home Weatherization Program funded through Health and Human Services. Customers, who apply for one of the agency programs, will be notified of all agency programs. If the need is present, applications are taken for other programs simultaneously, not to make customers return for another appointment. This notification process is performed for all programs except Housing Counseling unless a housing counselor provides the initial intake.

In 2023, the agency received foundation grants/donations from Cathedral Area Preservation Association, Charities Aid Foundation America, Channahon Township, D'Arcy Motor, DOT Foods, Exelon, Friends of Frank Fleischer, Full Circle Foundation, Jackson Township, Jeanie Young, Midland States Bancorp, Monee Township, Ozinga Bros., Paul Boetto, Plainfield Township Ray & Vicki Soliman, Sheryl Jaquays, The Guzior Family Foundation, Tina Pourroy, Township of Lockport, Village of Bolingbrook, Village of Elwood, Will County Siding & Windows, and Wintrust Financial Corp.

WCCCC has Memoranda of Understanding with many social service agencies in the county and the township offices to formalize our partnerships and better serve those that need assistance. MOUs are in place with the following social service agencies:

- Agape Missions: provides services to formerly incarcerated individuals and people with HIV/AIDS.
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Will & Grundy County: provides one-to-one mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of youth.
- Catholic Charities/Daybreak Center: provides emergency food, shelter, case management, and support services to those in need.
- Child Care Resource & Referral: promotes and facilitates affordable, quality child care.
- Cornerstone Services: provides comprehensive services to people with developmental disabilities, mental illnesses, and physical disabilities.
- Disability Resource Center: informs persons with disabilities of their rights, educates them about their responsibilities, provides support services, promotes advocacy, and raises community awareness about disability issues.
- Guardian Angel Community Services: offers services to individuals and families through the Dillard Harris Educational Center, Exchange Club Center, Foster Care, Groundwork, Partner Abuse Intervention Program, Sexual Assault Service Center, and Suzy's Caring Place.
- G.W. Buck Boys and Girls Club of Joliet: provides services to young people enabling them to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.
- Housing Authority of Joliet: promotes adequate and affordable housing free from discrimination
- IL Department of Human Services: assists with self-sufficiency, independence, and health by providing integrated services.
- The City of Joliet Neighborhood Services Division: dedicated to maintaining and expanding quality affordable housing opportunities.
- MorningStar Mission: provides emergency food, shelter, case management, and support services.
- Salvation Army: equips the community with the tools necessary to live productive lives
- Senior Services Center of Will County: assists senior citizens through programs designed to maintain health and wellness and remain independent.
- The Spanish Community Center: provides a broad range of programs, services, and space for meetings and other organized events.
- Stepping Stones Treatment and Recovery: provides professional alcohol and drug treatment.

- Trinity Services: provides services and support to persons with disabilities, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and mental health needs.
- United Way of Will County: improves people's lives by mobilizing the community.
- Veterans Assistance Commission of Will County: provides interim or emergency financial assistance for basic living expenses for honorably discharged veterans and their families.
- Will County Regional Office of Education: serves as the intermediary between the IL School Board of Education and local schools; administers GED testing and homeless services.
- Will-Grundy Medical Clinic: provides free medical and dental care to adults who have no insurance.
- Workforce Services Division of Will County: the purpose is to outline the vision, services, resource contributions, and other commitments to support the Workforce System of Will County.

WCCCC also has Memoranda of Understanding with our townships which offers General Assistance funds; referrals are made between the township offices and WCCCC as needed.

External agency coordination:

- Stepping Stones Treatment Center
  1621 Theodore Street, Joliet, IL 60435
  Provide clinical services and recovery support; both inpatient and outpatient, for individuals seeking treatment for drug addiction.
- Riverwalk Homes and Holsten Enterprises Food Pantry
  350 North Broadway St., Joliet, IL 60435
  Provides nutritious food and promotes healthy living and eating to low-income residents.
- St Vincent DePaul Resale Store
  *307 N Chicago Street, Joliet, IL 60432
  *1820 W Jefferson Street, Joliet, IL 60435
  Shop provides vouchers for free merchandise. WCCCC staff performs the intake and issues vouchers as part of our Information & Referral program.
- MorningStar Missions "Jump on the Bus"
  350 E Washington Street, Joliet, IL 60433
  Sponsorship program to service 60 CSBG eligible youth by supplying school supplies for the upcoming school year.
- Illinois Bureau of Child Support Enforcement
  16 W Cass Street, 4th Floor, Joliet 60432
  Staff addresses child support with all single-parent households with children to ensure that they are getting child support and makes referrals to Child Support Enforcement as appropriate.
- Employment and Employer Services
  223 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 1005 Chicago, IL 60606
  Provides job search, placement, and employment verification; has office onsite at WCCCC. WCCCC staff do initial intake and refer individuals to E & ES for enrollment and service.
- Cornerstone Services, Inc.
  777 Joyce Road, Joliet IL 60436
  Job coaching and on-the-job training for persons with developmental disabilities
- Workforce Services Division of Will County
  2400 Glenwood Avenue, Joliet IL 60435
  WCCCC houses the "Clothes4Work" closet. Professional clothing is provided at no cost to individuals interviewing for work or beginning a new job.

Internal agency coordination resources:

The agency administers the following programs, funded by non-CSBG sources:

- Housing Counseling – HUD
- Emergency Fund – Private Donations
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program – Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity funded
- Illinois Home Weatherization Program – Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity funded
- Utility Funded Weatherization Program – ComEd and Nicor with Resource Innovations
- Home Repair program – various foundations, businesses, and individuals
- ComEd Special Hardship Program – ComEd through the Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies
- Emergency Food and Shelter Program – United Way of Will County
- Tenant-Based Rental Assistance – Will County
- Foreclosure Prevention Program – Illinois Housing Development Authority
- LIKE Program (Energy Efficiency Kits) – the University of Illinois at Chicago
- Single-Family Rehabilitation and Roof Repair – Illinois Housing Development Authority
- Home Accessibility Program (HAP) – Illinois Housing Development Authority
- Home Repair and Accessibility Program (HRAP) – Illinois Housing Development Authority

Agency participation with local groups consists of:

- Member of the Community Services Council of Will County
- Member of Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Member of Southwest Suburban Philanthropic Network
- Participates in planning/evaluation of projects for other groups, including the local Head Start, DHS, and the Will County Center for Economic Development
- WCCCC is named on the HUD website and other HUD-approved agencies throughout the state as a HUD-approved Housing Counseling agency
- Partner with the St. Vincent DePaul Resale Shop by screening customers for eligibility and issuing vouchers to purchase necessary household or clothing items
- WCCCC participates annually in the Back to School Fair (Catholic Charities/Daybreak Center)
- We give presentations at Chamber expos and various job and informational fairs held throughout the county

Part VI
Innovative Community and Neighborhood-Based Initiatives

Innovative Community and Neighborhood-Based Initiatives

WCCCC partners with the counties of Will, LaSalle, Kankakee, and Grundy as a part of their Foreclosure Mediation Programs to provide no-cost housing counseling to homeowners who have received a foreclosure filing and a summons to Foreclosure Mediation Court. A trained housing counselor is at court on scheduled days to provide on-site foreclosure prevention counseling and schedule appointments for residents who need more comprehensive counseling services.

- WCCCC has received a $400,000 award through Will County to administer a tenant-based rental assistance program.
- WCCCC has received a $132,500 award through IHDA to administer the Foreclosure Prevention Program and the Foreclosure Prevention Program Graduated.
- WCCCC has received a $250,000 award through IHDA to administer the Home Accessibility Modification program for seniors and the disabled.
- WCCCC has received a $500,000 award through IHDA to administer the Home Repair and Accessibility program.
- WCCCC has received a $604,000 award through IHDA to administer the Single-Family Rehabilitation + Roof program.
- WCCCC has received a $29,842 HUD grant for Housing Counseling.
- WCCCC has received a $25,000 award for local Emergency Food and Shelter funds for utility assistance.
- WCCCC has received a $543,643 award through Will County to administer the Down Payment Assistance program.
- WCCCC has received a $348,000 award through Will County to administer Rd 3 Cannabis Sales Tax program.
- WCCCC has received a $125,000 award through IHDA to administer the Home Assistance Fund for mortgage assistance.
- WCCCC has received a $148,200 award through IACAA to administer the Barriers to Employment Retention program.

During 2022/2023, CSBG helped to fund the following community-based initiatives:

- WCCCC partners with Old Plank Trail Community Bank and Old National Bank to provide Financial Literacy Education to give families and individuals the tools to manage their financial resources better.
- Holiday Food Baskets: During the Christmas season, Holiday Food Baskets are given to 125 CSBG-eligible households with children 16 or younger.
- Jump on the Bus: WCCCC partners with MorningStar Mission to provide 60 children with school supplies for the 2023-2024 school years.

The agency participates in the following fairs and events. Some of these events recur annually:

- Lockport Community Resource Round Table: Sponsored by Shepherd of the Hill Church
- Together We Serve – Community Resource Fair: Sponsored by Mayor Mary Alexander-Basta
- Kids Fair: Sponsored by Will County Executive
- Senator Joyce Senior Fair: Sponsored by Senator Joyce
- Financial Literacy Night: Sponsored by Catholic Charities
- Healthy Families Healthy Homes Community Day: Sponsored by WCCCC
- Lockport Township Community Fun Day: Sponsored by Lockport Township Government
- Pershing Elementary Mobile Food Pantry: Sponsored by McKinney Vento
- Riverwalk – Women's Health Fair: Sponsored by Holstein Human Capital
- Lockport Township Senior Expo: Sponsored by Lockport Township Government
- St. John Lutheran Church in Joliet Food Distribution: Sponsored by St. John Lutheran Church
- Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Food Distribution: Sponsored by Northern IL Food Bank
- Community Fair: Sponsored by Child Care Resource & Referral
- Back to School Fair: Sponsored by Rep. Natalie Manley

- Back to School Fair: Sponsored by Catholic Charities
- National Night Out: Sponsored by University Park
- Community Fair: Sponsored by Dupage Township
- Troy School District Back to School Fair: Sponsored by Troy School District
- Kidz Fest Joliet: Sponsored by Joliet City Center Partnership
- Valley View Back to School Fair: Sponsored by Valley View School District
- Wilimington Sharefest: Sponsored by Sharefest Will County
- Pershing Elementary Back to School Fair: Sponsored by Pershing Elementary School
- Riverwalk Health Fair: Sponsored by Holstein Human Capital Development
- 815 Youth Day: Sponsored by Joliet Unity Movement
- Community Resource Fair: Sponsored by Minooka High School
- Riverwalk Back to School Fair: Sponsored by Holstein Human Capital Development
- University Park Back to School Fair: Sponsored by University Park
- Senior Fair: Sponsored by YMCA Plainfield
- Holiday Basket Event: Sponsored by WCCCC

Part VII
YOUTH PROGRAMMING

In 2023, WCCCC supported MorningStar Mission's "Jump on the Bus" program by providing clothing and school supplies for 60 CSBG-eligible school-age children as we have in the past. Eligible children receive clothing, shoes, and a backpack full of school supplies for the new school year. We also assist in the application and distribution process. WCCCC also participates in Catholic Charities/Daybreak Center's "Back to School Fair," which provides children from low-income households with back-to-school supplies, medical and dental exams, haircuts, and other services.

In 2022, the agency was able to supply 341 children with warm coats, hats, and gloves as a part of our holiday food basket. The agency also receives donations to provide each child age 16 years or younger with a gift for the holiday.

The agency also refers customers to youth-focused service providers, including Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana, Salvation Army, Child Care Resource and Referral, and Will County Children's Advocacy Center.

Part VIII
Outcomes

EMPLOYMENT

Problem Statement: ***Lack of on-the-job training for low-income and vulnerable populations to enable them to secure employment.***

1.031 Job Search

National CSBG Goal 1: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Measurable Outcomes: Job Placement: Unemployed adults over the age of 18 who obtained and maintained employment for at least 30-90 days (up to a living wage)
(1.02, 1.02.A, 1.05, 6.01.C)

Coordination: WCCCC will partner with WIOA and local businesses.

Desired Outcome: Customers will connect with employment opportunities and maintain employment.

Education and Cognitive Development

Problem Statement: ***Advancement in technology requires workers to have higher education to attain a higher-paying job. The number of low to semi-skilled jobs continues to decrease. Service jobs mostly pay much less than the $15.00 per hour needed to afford a two-bedroom apartment.***

2.021 School Supplies

National CSBG Goal 1: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Measurable Outcome: School Supplies: Youth (1^{st}-8^{th} grades) who are achieving at basic grade level (academic, social, and other school success skills) (2.04.B)

Youth (9^{th}-12^{th} grades) demonstrated improved positive approaches toward learning, including improved attention skills. (2.03.C)

Coordination: Partner with MorningStar Mission for the Jump on the Bus Program to provide clothing, backpacks, and school supplies to CSBG-eligible students.

Desired Outcome: To better prepare children for school with clothing and educational supplies.

2.061 Educational Financial Assistance

National CSBG Goal 1: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Measurable Outcome: Adults who demonstrated improved primary education (2.06)

Individuals who made progress to a post-secondary degree (2.09, 2.11)

Coordination: Joliet Junior College, Lewis University, Governor's State University, University of St. Francis, Rasmussen College, Healthcare Training Institute, and Genesis Healthcare – advertising to students and Workforce Development to verify accredited Illinois Educational Institutions.

Desired Outcome: Individuals will progress toward a post-secondary or vocational education program. Eventually, obtain a certificate or degree increasing their possibilities for adequate employment.

Income, Infrastructure, and Asset Building

Problem Statement: ***The necessities of life: shelter, utilities, food, transportation, clothing, etc., are not affordable to those on fixed incomes and the "working poor."***

3.011 Training and Counseling Services

National CSBG Goal 1: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Measurable Outcome: Individuals who opened a savings account or IDA (3.03)

Individuals engaged with the community action agency who report improved financial well-being (3.08)

Coordination: Financial Management Program: Old Plank Community Trail Bank and First Midwest Bank give a presentation on banking and open accounts for all participants upon class completion. These accounts have no minimum balance and no monthly fees. First Midwest Bank also provides funding for customer accounts.

Desired Outcome: Low-Income people become educated on managing their finances and become more self-sufficient

3.031 Asset Building (VITA)

National CSBG Goal 1: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Measurable Outcome: Individuals who increase their savings (3.04)

Individuals engaged with the community action agency who report improved financial well-being (3.08)

Coordination: The Low-Income Tax Assistance Coalition (LITAC) group. It includes the IRS, United Way of Will County, Spanish Community Center, Catholic Charities, Senior Services Center of Will County, Childcare Resource & Referral, Prairie State Legal Services, Center for Economic Progress, and Joliet Junior College. The IRS provides all the training, software for electronic filing, etc.

Desired Outcome: To provide VITA Program to assist low- to moderate-income (generally, $55,000 and below) individuals and families to prepare their federal and state income taxes and inform customers about the availability of additional tax credits and benefits available to them. This program is a free service provided by certified volunteers/agency employees who receive training to help prepare basic and advanced tax returns.

Housing

Problem Statement: ***Low income coupled with the high cost of living presses many into crisis. Low-income households are not able to save for unforeseen circumstances. Because of that, they sometimes cannot pay their rent, mortgage, car repairs, child care, and prescriptions or obtain required work clothes or equipment. Budgeting is a major obstacle in most cases. Education on tenant rights and responsibilities is needed. Without emergency services, some households will find themselves in a more vulnerable state. Homeowners need education on their rights and obligations and the possible options from their lenders and, in some cases, financial assistance.***

4.011 Housing Payment Assistance

National CSBG Goal 1: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Measurable Outcome: Households who obtained safe and affordable housing (4.02, 4.02.A)

Advoided Eviction (4.05)

Avoided Foreclosure (4.06)

Coordination: WCCCC receives referrals from Salvation Army, Daybreak Shelter, Veterans Assistance Commission, Morning Star Mission, Stepping Stones Rehab, St Vincent De Paul Resale Stores, mortgage companies, Will / Grundy Center for Independent Living, The City of Joliet, Will County, Habitat for Humanity, Joliet Housing Authority, Will County Township offices, various churches and others organization for emergency services for customers.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for training and certification of the program.

Desired Outcome: To help assist vulnerable households remain in housing.

Other services/programs available to further address issues in low-income households:

- Continue IHWAP (Weatherization program) to help preserve warmth and cut utility costs.
- Continue work with Continuum of Care for homeless prevention.
- Continue work with Will County Legal Assistance Program in Mediation Court.

(Some of these services/programs do not have a corresponding CSBG work program)

Health and Social/Behavioral Development (includes nutrition)

5.071 Nutrition and Food/Meals

National CSBG Goal 1: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Measurable Outcome: Individuals who demonstrated improved physical health and well-being. (5.02B)

Coordination: Referrals to the Department of Human Services. Maintain referrals to food pantries and other food sources.

Desired Outcome: To help supply needed nutritious food and winter clothing item to low-income families.

5.072 Nutrition and Food/Meals

National CSBG Goal: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Measurable Outcome: Individuals who demonstrated improved physical health and well-being (5.02B)

Coordination: Holsten Human Capital Development is the management company for Riverwalk Homes, Northern Illinois Food Bank, the primary vendor for nutritional food, and local grocery stores.

Desired Outcome: Families become healthier and help stabilize houses in crisis from lack of nutritional food.

Services Supporting Multiple Domains

Problem Statement: ***Low-income persons are often unaware of the resources available. Some also have difficulty accessing services for various reasons.***

7.011 Case Management

National CSBG Goal 1:	Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.
Measurable Outcome:	Unemployed adults who obtained employment (up to a living wage) (1.02)
	Individuals who achieved and maintained the capacity to meet basic needs for 90 days (3.01)
	Individuals engaged with the community action agency who report improved financial well-being (3.08)
	Households who obtained safe and affordable housing (04.02)
	Households who maintained safe and affordable housing for 90 days (4.02.A)
	Households who avoided eviction (4.05)
	Households who avoided foreclosure (4.06)
	Individuals who demonstrated improved physical well-being (5.02)
	Enhanced ability to engage (6.01.C)
Coordination:	WCCCC receives referrals from Salvation Army, Daybreak Shelter, Veterans Assistance Commission, Morning Star Mission, Stepping Stones Rehab, St Vincent De Paul Resale Stores, mortgage companies, Will / Grundy Center for Independent Living, The City of Joliet, Will County, Habitat for Humanity, Joliet Housing Authority, Will County Township offices, various churches and others organization for services for customers.
	Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for training and certification of the program.
	First, Midwest Bank and Old Plank Trail Bank help to facilitate financial literacy classes.
	Child Care Resource and Referral, DHS, IDES, and IETC/Workforce Development Council for referrals, Work'n Gear for equipment, various auto repair shops, uniform retail stores, and dealerships to assist with any barriers.
	Make referrals to various pharmacies that accept vouchers. Educate customers on Wal-Mart four dollar prescription plan, Pharmaceutical Assistance Program, Will-Grundy Medical Clinic, Medicare Prescription Drug Program, and the National Hook-Up for Black Women for additional DCA funds for customers' prescriptions.

Desired Outcome: To help the vulnerable household with unforeseen expenses that could ultimately avoid a severe crisis.

Other services/programs available to further address issues in low-income households:

- Continue IHWAP (Weatherization program) to help preserve warmth and cut utility costs.
- Continue work with Continuum of Care for homeless prevention.
- Continue work with Will County Legal Assistance Program in Mediation Court.

7.031 Referrals

National CSBG Goal 1: Individuals and Families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Measurable Outcome: Enhanced ability to engage (6.01.C)

Coordination: Townships offices in Will County, other social service agencies and various volunteer groups for information on smaller, more local resources. Will County Continuum of Care and Interagency Network provides a countywide view of services available in the area.

Desired Outcome: Low-Income persons will receive information on resources and programs available in Will County

9.011 Agency Capacity Building

National CSBG Goal 00: CSBG Eligible Entity Capacity Building

Measurable Outcome: Agency activities that increase the agency's capacity. (00.01, 00.02)

Coordination: Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity and Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies.

Desired Outcome: We provide our Board members training on duties and responsibilities as required by Organizational Standards. The staff receives ongoing development/training (including ROMA).

10.01 Disater Relief

National CSBG Goal :

Measurable Outcome: Homeless and obtained temporary shelter. (4.01)

Enhanced ablitity to engage. (6.01.C)

Coordination:	Red cross, customer insurance company (if applicable),
Desired Outcome:	Provide temporary relief in for customers in need.