

MID FLORIDA COMMUNITY SERVICES, INC.

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2021

**MID FLORIDA
COMMUNITY SERVICES, INC.**



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Executive Summary

Background

Mid Florida Community Services, Inc., is a Community Action Agency serving Hernando, Sumter, Pasco, Lake, Citrus, Polk, and Volusia Counties with headquarters located in Hernando County. Established in 1968, Mid Florida Community Services, Inc. (MFCS), has been dedicated to eliminating the causes of poverty and promoting self-sufficiency through a comprehensive service delivery approach.

During FY 2019-20 (October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020) MFCS provided services to 26,215 individuals and 10,525 families across the Agency's service area.

The purpose of MFCS' 2021 Community Needs Assessment is to identify urgent needs that are facing the communities we serve, enabling MFCS to continue adapting programs and services and to set organizational goals that best meet community needs.

Methodology and Process

The MFCS 2021 Community Needs Assessment was conducted during February through June 2021, in collaboration with MFCS staff, MFCS clients, MFCS Governing Board members, the community-at-large, and key informants and community partners (community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private and public sectors, and educational institutions).

Data collection methods included: Steering Committee planning sessions; review of program operations; program-level data from Agency programs; needs assessments and other data gathered from county and community organizations; MFCS staff; MFCS clients; MFCS Governing Board members; the community-at-large; key informants and community partners (community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private and public sectors, and educational institutions); information from publicly available data sources (United Way of Florida; United Way agencies throughout the MFCS service area; U.S. Census Bureau; Florida Department of Economic Opportunity); and, through a Community Assessment conducted by MFCS' Head Start/Early Head Start program in early 2020.

Due to the public health emergency associated with COVID-19, focus groups were not conducted or utilized. Digital surveys were administered to a variety of groups and sectors to collect data. Surveys were completed by the general population; MFCS staff; MFCS Governing Board members; MFCS clients; and, key informants and community partners (community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private and public sectors, and educational institutions). Additionally, the 2021 Steering Committee met virtually throughout the process.

The targeted service area included the communities of Hernando, Sumter, Pasco, Lake, Citrus, Polk, and Volusia Counties which represents a population of approximately 2,702,546 residents.

Key Findings

As a result of the Community Needs Assessment process, five needs emerged as the most critical for the MFCS service area:

1. Affordable housing
2. Basic needs/crisis prevention
3. Food insecurity
4. Transportation
5. Communication and outreach regarding community resources

Affordable Housing – Individual, Community, and Family Need

In addition to being mentioned in the Community Assessment conducted by MFCS' Head Start/Early Head Start program in early 2020, affordable housing revealed itself as the number one concern amongst the Steering Committee and all sectors and groups alike that were surveyed, with 31% of 477 survey respondents citing that affordable housing was a need that impacted them and/or their family. Further, based on data collected from 2-1-1 and United Ways throughout the MFCS service area, housing and shelter was a top request category. From October 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021, 18,866 requests were made for housing and shelter assistance, with 8,010 of the requests being specifically for rent assistance (2-1-1 Counts).

According to the National Low-Income Housing Coalition (2021), "In Florida, the Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,290. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities – without paying more than 30% of income on housing – a household must earn \$4,302 monthly or \$51,619 annually. This level of income translates into an hourly Housing Wage of \$24.82," making Florida the twelfth most expensive state as it relates to hourly Housing Wage. Median household income data throughout the MFCS service area tells us that this wage is higher than what most households in MFCS' service area are earning.

Basic Needs/Crisis Prevention – Individual, Community, Family, and Agency Need

The need to bridge the gap for basic needs/crisis prevention services ranked second as a critical need in the MFCS service area. This key finding was also identified as a need in reviewing Community Health Improvement Plans conducted throughout the MFCS service area, with a focus on improving mental health and increasing access to quality health services for everyone.

As stated in the Community Assessment conducted by MFCS' Head Start/Early Head Start program in early 2020, "many residents in MFCS' service area do not have sufficient optimal health outcomes and experience negative health factors." Specific to the overall health of the counties that makeup the MFCS service area, a majority of the counties (Lake, Pasco, Polk, and Sumter) are ranked in the higher-middle range of counties in Florida; Hernando and Volusia fall into the lower-middle range of counties; while Citrus is among the least healthy counties in Florida.

Additionally, unmet fundamental, basic needs – lack of food and shelter – contribute to negative health factors and lead to crisis. Crisis prevention support, or emergency support, is needed to help an individual or family mitigate crisis situations. From October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2020, MFCS provided emergency support in the form of energy assistance to

10,166 households to restore or prevent their electricity from being disconnected and provided emergency assistance to 1,318 households for things such as rent or mortgage payments, car repairs, temporary shelter, or medical care.

Food Insecurity – Individual, Community, Family, and Agency Need

Feeding America defines food insecurity as “a lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy life.” This can be something that is temporary experience for a household; or, unfortunately, something that can last quite a while.

Vulnerable populations, much like those that MFCS serves, are no strangers to having inconsistent access to nutritious foods or being unsure as to where they will find their next meal. Healthy nutrition is a critical need for the development of not only children but also older adults, and everyone in between.

Information from survey respondents coupled with data from County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (2021) states 15.5% of the population of MFCS’ service area, on average, experiences food insecurity, while nearly 11% on average have limited access to healthy foods, making food insecurity the third-ranked critical need.

“... Food insecurity remains a problem for many Florida children. A U.S. Census Bureau survey of Florida households from June and July this year found that 14 percent of adults reported that their kids were not eating enough because the household could not afford food” (Mower, 2021).

In 2019, 6.7% of seniors living in Florida were experiencing food insecurity, as compared to the 7.2% of seniors experiencing food insecurity nationwide. “Food insecure seniors are more likely to develop nutrition-related health problems, which is particularly problematic given the unique health, financial, and nutritional challenges that can come with aging” (Feeding America, 2020).

Transportation – Individual, Community, Family, and Agency Need

The cities and counties that comprise the MFCS service area have a makeup of both rural and urban areas. The percent of households of all races/ethnicities without a vehicle in the MFCS area nears 6%, despite the fact that many errands require the use of a vehicle, public transportation is minimal, and there is minimal bike infrastructure in place.

Because of limited public transportation options and the limited walkability factor, many choose to work in close proximity to their home. Over time, this can equate to lost wages because it limits one’s access to opportunities for economic improvement and further education and enrichment. Additionally, limited public transportation options could prolong negative health outcomes as residents struggle to access service providers.

Lack of transportation – whether it be use of public transportation; relying on another person for transportation; limited access to a personal vehicle; not owning a vehicle – contributes to the inability of an individual or a household to earn, learn, and thrive.

A majority of survey respondents cited accessibility – limited routes, aging personal vehicles, limited public transportations, and proximity to bus stops – as causing reliable transportation to be a critical need.

MFCS staff who completed the survey noted that costs such as fares, vehicle maintenance/repairs, insurance, gas, and upfront costs to own a vehicle acted as a barrier to reliable transportation for those we serve.

Communication and outreach regarding community resources – Individual, Community, Family, and Agency Need

Generally speaking, many respondents cited being unaware of available community resources to address needs, and offered that communication and outreach regarding such services was needed. In reviewing feedback received from survey respondents, there are a number of reasons an individual or family could be unaware of available community resources. For example, they've never experienced a need before and are unsure from who to seek assistance; the person seeking assistance gets easily overwhelmed; they can't find an organization to help with their specific situation; organizations that exist to meet their need have exhausted available funding; or, they aren't sure how to qualify for assistance.

More specifically, however, is that individuals or families in need experience competing needs which prevents them from finding resources. In other words, survey respondents from a transportation-disadvantaged-household were limited in their ability to travel to an agency for assistance.

Another interesting finding as it pertains specifically to the assistance that MFCS offers through its programs and services was that survey respondents were unfamiliar with MFCS as a human services organization; in fact, only 183 of 477 (38.4%) respondents were familiar with MFCS. On the other hand, when asked what they thought of when they heard the name Mid Florida Community Services, survey respondents said: a bank or credit union (22.6%); health care related (12.9%); legal services (7.8%); homelessness (9%); or, they were not familiar with MFCS (42%).

Causes and Conditions of Poverty

As a result of the Community Needs Assessment process, the following emerged as causes and conditions of poverty:

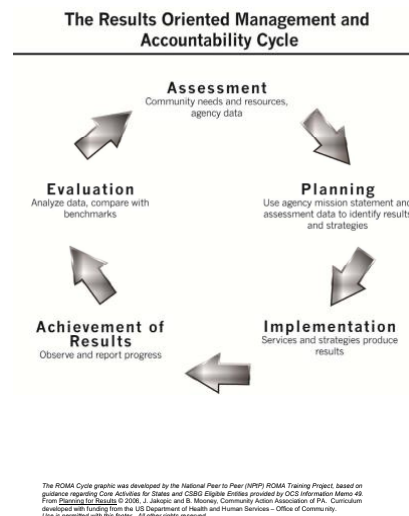
1. Income limits
2. Employment status and opportunity
3. Lack of transportation
4. Housing costs
5. Unmet basic needs

Recommendations and Conclusion

As a result of the Community Needs Assessment process, MFCS has developed the following recommendations:

- Develop **enhanced communication** protocols and Agency messaging to promote greater organizational visibility in the communities we serve; to increase awareness of the programs and services that MFCS offers; to strengthen brand imaging/awareness in the communities we serve; and, to explore new and creative ways to disseminate information out into the community.
- Continued focus on building **community partnerships** in an effort to better serve vulnerable populations. Such partnerships create the opportunity for MFCS to not only leverage agency services to increase access to comprehensive services at MFCS sites, but also act as bridge to opportunity in the event a client has a need that MFCS does not or cannot directly meet.
- **Review program design** as a strategy to focus on the development of the whole client. Offering more comprehensive wraparound services – much like a support system – to clients for extended periods of time could help empower clients to work through environmental factors that could otherwise create or reestablish barriers to self-sufficiency.
- Establish **supplemental unrestricted funding sources** that will enable MFCS to address issues and concerns especially pertaining to vulnerable citizens that would otherwise not be covered due to program eligibility criteria.

The Results Oriented Management and Accountability Model, as depicted below, is a performance management tool utilized by Community Action Agencies throughout the network. Upon completion of this assessment, MFCS will continue to utilize the remaining phases of the cycle: planning, implementation, observe the achievement of results, and evaluation to strengthen, adapt, and/or adjust service delivery in an effort to address the top five emerging needs identified in this assessment.



Introduction

Mid Florida Community Services, Inc., is a Community Action Agency serving Hernando, Sumter, Pasco, Lake, Citrus, Polk, and Volusia Counties with headquarters located in Hernando County. Established in 1968, Mid Florida Community Services, Inc. (MFCS), has been dedicated to eliminating the causes of poverty and promoting self-sufficiency through a comprehensive service delivery approach for over 50 years.



The **Mission** of MFCS is: To strengthen partnerships, mobilize resources, and provide integrated services that promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families in the communities in which they live.

To that end, we **envision** our community working together to reduce poverty. Individuals and families are empowered; strengthened; have sufficient money for food and housing; and, they can meet their own needs by utilizing their talents, potential, and passions. All sectors within the communities we serve are engaged, including low-income populations, and play an active role in reducing poverty and helping low-income individuals and families become fully self-sufficient. We are a leader, advocate, and voice for low-income individuals and families.

History of Community Action

Community Action is a multidimensional approach to addressing self-sufficiency. Developed as part of the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act and President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty", the purpose of Community Action was to fight poverty by making communities more responsive to the needs and interests of the poor by mobilizing resources and bringing about a greater institutional sensitivity. The 1964 Economic Opportunity Act created the Office of Economic Opportunity led by Sargent Shriver, who was the driving force behind legislation that focused on anti-poverty programs and the creation of Community Action Agencies.

While the strategic approach to eliminating poverty has changed course since the inception of the Community Action concept, the Mission remains the same. The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program serves as the cornerstone of Community Action, and the legislated national performance goals are used as a framework to develop and monitor performance outcomes on the life-changing services and opportunities that are being offered to the communities we serve.

Goal 1: Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

Goal 2: Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.

Goal 3: People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.

Community Action challenges stakeholders to create solutions that don't just help people stay afloat, but build lives of stability, dignity, and, whenever possible, prosperity.

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.

Community Needs Assessment

A Community Needs Assessment is a comprehensive and systematic process for creating a profile of the needs and resources of a given community or target population. This comprehensive and systematic process provides a snapshot of the needs, available resources, and gaps within communities served. Ultimately, the Community Needs Assessment forms the link between the Mission of the agency and how services will be delivered in order to achieve outcomes.

Agency Profile

MFCS is a robust local force reaching children, seniors, individuals, and families with life-changing services that create pathways to opportunity and prosperity. MFCS utilizes a multidimensional approach to addressing self-sufficiency, such as:

- Connecting individuals and families to approaches that help them succeed** – including high quality education programs for children, utility assistance for seniors, and so much more.
- Promoting community-wide solutions** to seemingly stubborn challenges – whether it is the lack of transportation for the transportation disadvantaged, or helping individuals secure employment at a livable wage.
- Sharing expertise** with national, state, and local leaders looking for evidence on what works to promote greater economic opportunity for children, seniors, individuals, and families.

Today, MFCS operates eight programs across a vast service area that spans from the west coast to the east coast of Florida, totaling over 7,500 square miles.

- **Children's Advocacy Center of Hernando County:** This program provides a child-friendly facility that responds to children who are victims of sexual abuse, physical abuse, threatened harm, drug-endangerment, mental injury, neglect, and/or witnesses of domestic violence. They utilize a nationally-recognized multidisciplinary team approach.
- **Family Self-Sufficiency Program:** The Family Self-Sufficiency Program works to eliminate the barriers that prevent low-income people from moving from poverty to self-sufficiency. The program assists highly-motivated individuals seeking new career opportunities to gain the education and job skills needed to secure employment at a sustainable living wage.
- **Head Start/Early Head Start:** This program is a federally-funded preschool program that promotes the school readiness of low-income children ages birth to 5 years of age by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development.
- **Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program:** The goal of this program is to prevent interruption of electric and gas service for low-income households, particularly those living with children under five years of age, seniors, and disabled individuals.
- **Emergency Home Energy Assistance for the Elderly Program:** This program is designed to assist and prevent interruption of electric and gas service for low-income households with at least one member aged 60 or older experiencing a heating or cooling emergency.
- **Emergency/Support Services:** Assistance is available to low-income individuals and families facing a crisis situation due to an unexpected circumstance that negatively impacted the family's financial stability.

- Senior Services: Programs offer a wide array of services designed to support aging seniors in their efforts to live independently in their own homes, improving their ability to function, and avoiding costly placement in long term care facilities.
- Transportation Services: This program is Hernando County's designated Community Transportation Coordinator providing safe, efficient, cost effective and quality transportation services for transportation disadvantaged citizens of Hernando County.
- Weatherization Assistance Program: The goal of this program is to reduce energy costs for low-income families, particularly the elderly, disabled and those with children under age 12, by improving the energy efficiency of their homes while ensuring their health and safety.

Community Profile

Population

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's latest *Annual Estimates of the Resident Population* for July 1, 2019, the MFCS service area was home to a total population of approximately 2.7 million residents as shown in Table 1.

	April 1, 2010		Population Estimate (as of July 1)				
	Census	Estimates Base	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Citrus County, Florida	141,236	141,230	142,804	145,415	147,682	149,657	153,843
Hernando County, Florida	172,778	172,778	182,459	186,704	190,582	193,920	194,515
Lake County, Florida	297,052	297,047	334,913	345,432	356,720	367,118	383,956
Pasco County, Florida	464,697	464,705	509,937	525,141	539,090	553,947	561,891
Polk County, Florida	602,095	602,073	665,823	685,368	706,597	724,777	725,046
Sumter County, Florida	93,420	93,420	122,009	124,995	128,719	132,420	129,752
Volusia County, Florida	494,593	494,596	528,453	537,868	546,101	553,284	553,543
Florida	18,801,310	18,804,564	20,613,477	20,963,613	21,244,317	21,477,737	21,538,187
TOTAL MFCS Service Area	2,265,871		2,486,398	2,550,923	2,615,491	2,675,123	2,702,546
<small>Note: The estimates are based on the 2010 Census and reflect changes to the April 1, 2010 population due to the Count Question Resolution program and geographic program revisions. All geographic boundaries for the 2019 population estimates are as of January 1, 2019. For population estimates methodology statements, see http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/technical.</small>							
<small>Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019 (CO-EST2019-ANNRES-12) Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division - Release Date: March 2020</small>							

Population Density

The cities and counties that comprise the MFCS service area are just as diverse as the residents of the region. Having a makeup of both rural and urban areas, the population density (Table 2.) of the MFCS service area is approximately 436.68 persons per square mile, an increase of nearly 24 persons per square mile since the Agency's 2018 Community Needs Assessment was conducted.

Table 2. Population Estimate and Population Density 2020

Area	Population Estimate as of July 1, 2020	Total Land Area (Square Miles)	Population Density (Per Square Mile)
Total Service Region	2,702,546	6,188.82	436.68
Citrus County	153,843	581.89	264.39
Hernando County	194,515	472.83	411.38
Lake County	383,956	940.88	408.08
Pasco County	561,891	747.64	751.55
Polk County	725,046	1,796.76	403.53
Sumter County	129,752	547.64	236.93
Volusia County	553,543	1,101.18	502.68
 Florida	 21,538,187	 53,638.93	 401.54

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, August 2021

Population by Gender Demographics

Table 3. depicts the population by gender throughout the MFCS service area. The average for MFCS' entire service area is also representative of that of the state of Florida.

Table 3. Population by Gender, by County, MFCS Service Area 2019

County	Male	%	Female	%
Citrus	72,006	49.0%	77,651	51.0%
Hernando	93,392	48.0%	100,528	52.0%
Lake	178,930	49.0%	188,188	51.0%
Pasco	270,067	49.0%	283,880	51.0%
Polk	355,540	49.0%	369,237	51.0%
Sumter	65,348	49.0%	67,072	51.0%
Volusia	269,471	49.0%	283,813	51.0%
Total Service Area	1,304,754	49.0%	1,370,369	51.0%
Florida	10,498,005	49.0%	10,979,732	51.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019, Table S0101

Population by Race and Ethnicity Demographics

Tables 4. and 5. break down the population of each MFCS service area county by ethnicity and race. As shown in Table 5, 74% of the population throughout the MFCS service area is white (not Hispanic or Latino), 11% of the population throughout the MFCS service area is black (not Hispanic or Latino), while 18% are Hispanic or Latino.

Table 4. Population by Ethnicity and Race MFCS Service Area by County

	Citrus	Hernando	Lake	Pasco	Polk	Sumter	Volusia	Total Service Area	Florida
Not Hispanic or Latino									
White Alone	130,458	147,308	249,615	402,218	410,125	112,624	390,405	1,842,753	11,378,457
Black or African American	4,710	10,098	37,311	31,589	106,158	8,097	56,349	254,312	3,272,904
American Indian and Alaska Native	443	371	972	1,456	2,613	1,444	824	8,123	42,758
Asian Alone	2,561	1,931	7,703	14,880	12,156	1,358	10,365	50,954	587,358
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	128	225	172	318	88	0	54	17,850	13,927
Some Other Race Alone	464	1,073	2,566	310	3,531	48	933	8,925	82,214
Two or More Races	1,727	4,138	7,391	11,560	11,704	995	11,405	48,920	436,490
Hispanic or Latino	9,166	28,776	61,388	91,616	178,777	7,854	82,949	460,526	5,663,629

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Demographic and Housing Estimates 2019, Table DP05

Table 5. Percentage of Population by Ethnicity and Race, Total MFCS Service Area

Total Service Area	
Not Hispanic or Latino	
White Alone	74%
Black or African American	11%
American Indian and Alaska Native	<1%
Asian Alone	2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	<1%
Some Other Race Alone	<1%
Two or More Races	2%
Hispanic or Latino	18%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Demographic and Housing Estimates 2019, Table DP05

Population by Age Demographics

Table 6. illustrates the 2019 U.S. Census Estimate by Age for the MFCS service area broken down by county. The median age for the MFCS service area is 50.6, while the statewide median age is 42.4. Comparatively, Sumter County has the highest median age while Polk County has the lowest median age of 40.2, which is 10.4 years less than the overall MFCS service area.

Polk County has the largest estimates for those under 18 years of age, age 18 to 64 years, and those aged 65 years and older.

Table 6. 2019 U. S. Census Estimate by Age for the MFCS Service Area by County

Age	Citrus	Hernando	Lake	Pasco	Polk	Sumter	Volusia	Service Area	Florida
Under 5 years	5,763	8,518	16,852	28,364	41,626	2,441	26,102	129,666	1,131,148
5 to 9 years	4,986	9,920	19,584	31,298	40,163	2,418	28,236	136,605	1,123,648
10 to 14 years	7,456	11,319	20,548	32,636	49,982	2,287	25,969	150,197	1,258,247
15 to 19 years	5,589	10,204	19,744	32,149	45,268	3,789	29,079	145,822	1,213,809
20 to 24 years	5,732	9,283	17,183	27,301	43,455	3,099	31,027	137,080	1,266,383
25 to 29 years	6,202	8,750	19,637	29,407	49,118	2,590	33,136	148,840	1,396,238
30 to 34 years	6,069	10,980	19,450	31,384	46,352	3,423	31,922	149,580	1,371,822
35 to 39 years	5,592	11,189	21,513	37,870	43,646	5,640	29,740	155,190	1,340,665
40 to 44 years	6,310	8,550	19,451	32,040	42,923	3,074	28,810	141,158	1,271,585
45 to 49 years	7,536	11,543	20,924	35,422	43,517	3,169	31,817	153,928	1,344,652
50 to 54 years	8,802	12,420	22,490	35,578	42,076	4,604	34,832	160,802	1,363,582
55 to 59 years	11,267	13,670	22,186	37,969	45,033	6,885	40,828	177,838	1,475,419
60 to 64 years	12,963	14,306	28,652	37,123	42,593	10,217	44,590	190,444	1,422,341
65 to 69 years	16,328	15,178	27,885	36,032	42,642	17,948	40,583	196,596	1,311,397
70 to 74 years	12,517	12,379	24,194	32,170	40,435	26,061	36,079	183,835	1,151,686
75 to 79 years	12,442	12,157	22,154	29,700	29,450	18,389	25,574	149,866	887,311
80 to 84 years	8,384	6,457	12,707	16,085	19,975	11,671	17,274	92,553	586,739
85 years and over	5,719	7,097	11,964	11,419	16,523	4,715	17,686	75,123	561,065
Under 18 years	21,813	35,776	69,561	111,956	159,139	9,100	96,732	504,077	4,231,955
18 to 64 years	127,844	158,144	297,557	441,991	565,638	123,320	456,552	2,171,046	17,245,782
65 years and over	55,390	53,268	98,904	125,406	149,025	78,784	137,196	697,973	4,498,198
Median Age (years)	57.2	49.1	47.1	44.3	40.2	68.9	47.0	50.6	42.4

Source: 2019 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Table S0101

Population by Household Demographics

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2019 American Community Survey, there are 2,533,111 households (Table 8.) in the MFCS service area with the average household size being nearly 2.5 people for housing units that are either owner-occupied or renter-occupied (Table 7.).

Noteworthy is that Polk County has the most diverse household types in the MFCS service area. For example, Polk County is home to the most “white alone”, “black or African American alone”, and “some other race alone” households. While Volusia is home to the most “American Indian and Alaska Native alone” households; and, Pasco County has the most “Asian alone” households.

Table 7. Average Household Size in MFCS Service Area

	Citrus	Hernando	Lake	Pasco	Polk	Sumter	Volusia	Total Service Area	Florida
Total:	2.28	2.44	2.61	2.57	2.98	2.06	2.47	2.49	2.66
Owner Occupied	2.25	2.41	2.61	2.58	2.87	2.05	2.46	2.48	2.67
Renter Occupied	2.42	2.53	2.60	2.55	3.23	2.13	2.51	2.57	2.66

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Average Household Size of Occupied Housing Units, 2019, Table: B25010

Table 8. Population by Household Type, MFCS Service Area

	Citrus	Hernando	Lake	Pasco	Polk	Sumter	Volusia
White Alone							
Family Households	110,287	145,312	245,836	405,824	455,379	92,818	346,943
Married couple family	83,731	105,746	187,524	293,130	316,394	80,707	259,009
Male householder, no spouse present	5,794	10,667	20,294	32,831	42,345	3,163	31,799
Female householder, no spouse present	20,762	28,899	38,018	79,863	96,640	8,948	56,135
Non-family households	27,272	27,511	52,260	75,131	93,317	23,143	91,791
Black or African American Alone							
Family Households	3,253	8,072	31,174	24,375	87,418	3,336	43,895
Married couple family	1,607	5,139	17,086	14,921	38,985	1,827	19,278
Male householder, no spouse present	455	1,193	2,202	2,020	8,676	550	5,070
Female householder, no spouse present	1,191	1,740	11,886	7,434	39,757	959	19,547
Non-family households	604	966	3,877	4,013	13,009	1,212	9,885
American Indian and Alaska Native Alone							
Family Households	188	432	942	1,159	1,612	261	1,709
Married couple family	188	352	852	556	1,105	261	1,176
Male householder, no spouse present	0	20	27	287	383	0	44
Female householder, no spouse present	0	60	63	316	124	0	489
Non-family households	117	80	166	472	419	51	293
Asian Alone							
Family Households	1,981	1,991	5,956	11,832	10,396	588	6,975
Married couple family	1,387	1,633	4,972	9,398	8,516	588	5,616
Male householder, no spouse present	379	0	220	1,064	1,153	0	241
Female householder, no spouse present	215	358	764	1,370	727	0	1,118
Non-family households	289	88	1,126	687	1,035	87	1,580
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone							
Family Households	0	182	227	165	61	0	156
Married couple family	0	16	84	119	61	0	156
Male householder, no spouse present	0	0	94	46	0	0	0
Female householder, no spouse present	0	166	49	0	0	0	0
Non-family households	34	0	0	22	23	0	49
Some Other Race Alone							
Family Households	387	1,818	6,094	6,129	17,552	621	16,038
Married couple family	299	989	3,770	4,247	12,451	596	10,333
Male householder, no spouse present	0	163	787	456	1,547	0	2,040
Female householder, no spouse present	88	666	1,537	1,426	3,554	25	3,285
Non-family households	48	109	252	500	2,269	24	1,524
Total Service Area							
Family Households	2,099,374						
Married couple family	1,494,805						
Male householder, no spouse present	176,010						
Female householder, no spouse present	428,179						
Non-family households	433,737						
Total Households in MFCS Service Area	2,533,111						

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Household Type, 2019, Tables: B11002A; B11002B; B11002C; B11002D; B11002E; B11002F

Population by Veteran Composition

A subset of the general population of the MFCS service area is the Veteran population. Sumter County shows the highest Veteran population at 17% of the population, almost double Florida's percentage of total Veteran population.

Consistently across the county-specific data, the 18-34 age range category shows the least number of male and female Veterans. Further, male Veterans aged 65 years and older are

predominant in the MFCS service area while female Veterans are predominant in the 35-64 age range category.

Table 9.

	Veteran Population by County							
	Citrus	Hernando	Lake	Pasco	Polk	Sumter	Volusia	Total Service Area
	16,867	21,599	35,172	46,470	51,210	20,605	49,814	241,737
% of total population	14%	14%	12%	11%	9%	17%	11%	11%
Total Male Veterans	15,846	19,924	31,705	42,626	47,777	19,969	45,160	223,007
18 to 34 years	470	793	1,166	3,365	3,902	482	1,439	11,617
35 to 54 years	2,093	3,232	5,248	7,977	8,227	1,624	7,673	36,074
55 to 64 years	1,456	2,756	5,390	6,489	6,974	1,817	7,888	32,770
65 to 74 years	5,969	5,387	9,396	11,880	14,190	7,929	13,868	68,619
75 years and over	5,858	7,756	10,505	12,915	14,484	8,117	14,292	73,927
Total Female Veterans	1,021	1,675	3,467	3,844	3,433	636	4,654	18,730
18 to 34 years	44	129	299	513	209	0	411	1,605
35 to 54 years	265	616	1,499	1,228	641	0	1,547	5,796
55 to 64 years	490	671	827	1,507	1,451	144	1,780	6,870
65 to 74 years	149	107	351	220	851	186	403	2,267
75 years and over	73	152	491	376	281	306	513	2,192

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Population Division, 2019 Table B21001

Poverty Profile

Poverty Guidelines

The U.S. Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) are used by MFCS program staff to determine client eligibility for assistance from certain programs that receive federal funding. MFCS program staff consider the FPG when assisting clients through: Community Services Block Grant programs, Head Start/Early Head Start, and the Weatherization Assistance Program.

Figure 1. depicts the 2021 Federal Poverty Guidelines in effect as of January 13, 2021. Depending on the program or guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the use of percentage multiples – 200 percent of the FPG, for example – could be used when determining eligibility.

2021 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Persons in family/household	Poverty guideline
1	\$12,880
2	\$17,420
3	\$21,960
4	\$26,500
5	\$31,040
6	\$35,580
7	\$40,120
8	\$44,660
For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,540 for each additional person.	

Figure 1.

Figure 1 Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2021 Federal Poverty Guidelines. January 13, 2021.

Poverty Rates in MFCS Service Area

“People and families are considered poor when they lack the economic resources necessary to experience a minimal living standard” (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.).

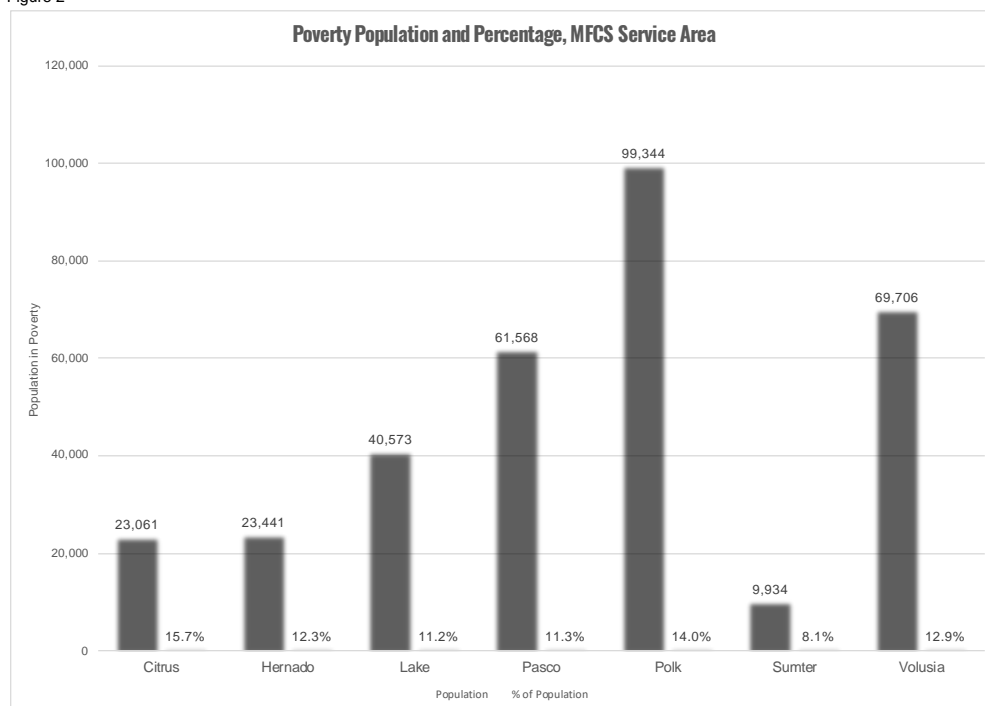
12.2% of MFCS’ service area population is reported to be in poverty. Notably, Citrus County has the highest percent of population in poverty (Table 10, Figure 2.).

Table 10. Poverty Population and Percentage, MFCS Service Area

County	Total Population	Polulation in Poverty	Percent Population in Poverty
Citrus	146,830	23,061	15.7%
Hernando	190,472	23,441	12.3%
Lake	362,014	40,573	11.2%
Pasco	546,086	61,568	11.3%
Polk	709,779	99,344	14.0%
Sumter	122,539	9,934	8.1%
Volusia	542,036	69,706	12.9%
Total Service Area	2,619,756	327,627	12.2%
Florida	21,048,884	2,664,772	12.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019 Table S1701

Figure 2



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019, Table S1701

Table 11. shows comparative data from 2018 regarding the percentage of households that were in poverty throughout MFCS's service area.

Table 11. ALICE Households in MFCS Service Area, 2018 Point-in-Time Data

County	Percentage of ALICE Households	Percentage of Households in Poverty
Citrus	39%	15%
Hernando	37%	15%
Lake	35%	10%
Pasco	32%	13%
Polk	37%	14%
Sumter	27%	8%
Volusia	33%	12%
Florida	33%	13%

Source: ALICE Threshold, 2007-2018, American Community Survey, 2007-2018

Poverty by Gender Demographics

The population below poverty level by gender throughout the MFCS service area and state of Florida is shown in Table 12.

Similar to the state data, less males than females live below the poverty level within the MFCS service area. The average percentage of the male population living in poverty in the MFCS service area is half of a percentage point lower than the state overall, while the average percentage of females living in poverty in the MFCS service area is almost one full percentage point higher than the state's average.

Table 12. Population Below Poverty Level by Gender MFCS Service Area

County	Male	%	Female	%
Citrus	9,967	14.1%	13,094	17.2%
Hernando	10,272	11.2%	13,169	13.3%
Lake	15,034	8.6%	25,539	13.7%
Pasco	27,130	10.2%	34,438	12.3%
Polk	43,142	12.5%	56,202	15.5%
Sumter	4,064	7.2%	5,870	8.8%
Volusia	32,349	12.2%	37,357	13.5%
Total Service Area	141,958	11.0%	185,669	14.0%
Florida	1,178,787	11.5%	1,485,985	13.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Poverty Status in the past 12 months, 2019, Table: S1701

Poverty by Age Demographics

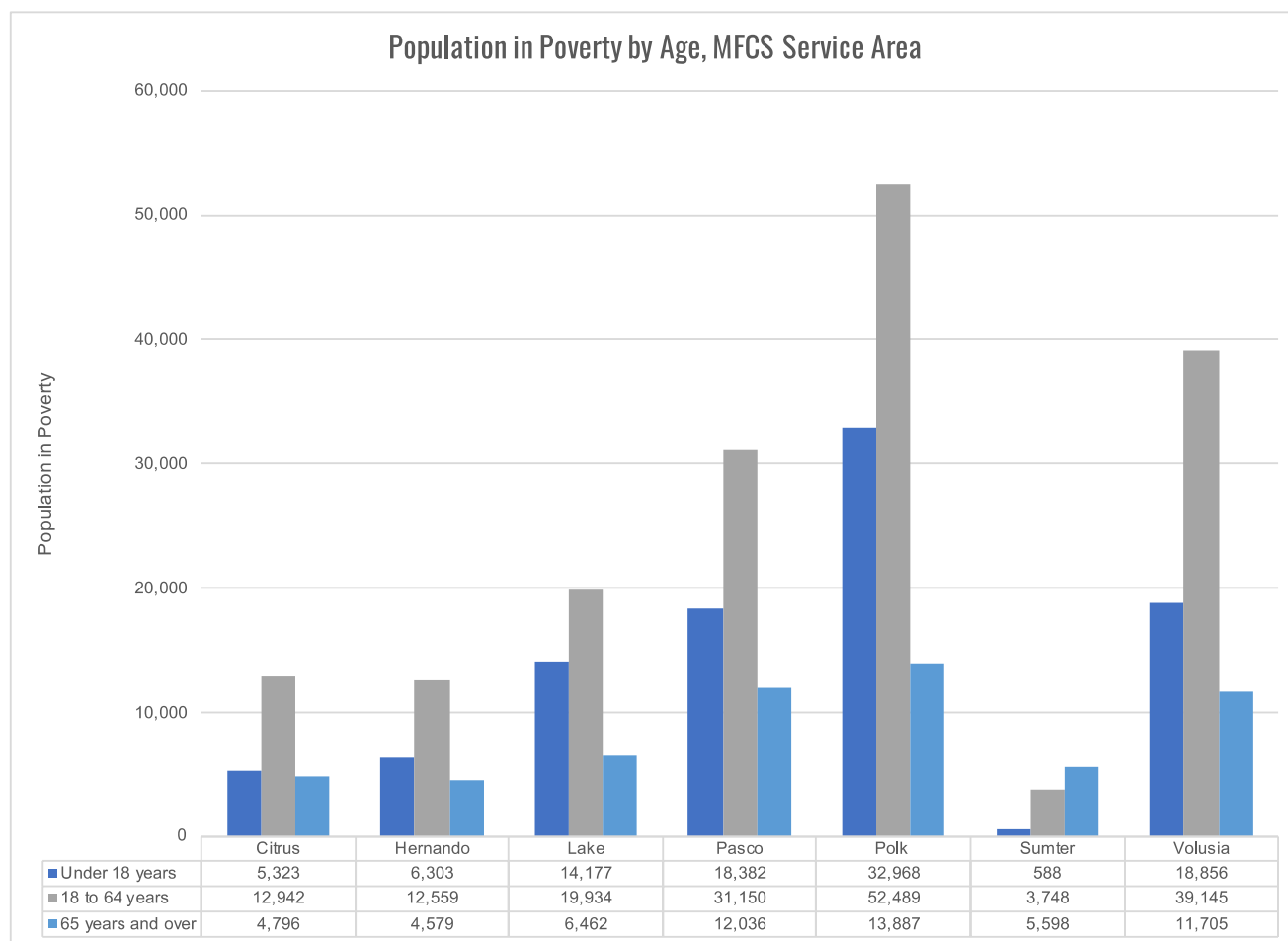
Figure 3. illustrates poverty rates as broken down by age. Children under five years of age living in the MFCS service area is the largest population in poverty, as a percentage of the

population. Service area-wide, 26.8% of those under five years of age are living in poverty. This is seven percentage points higher than those under five years of age in Florida.

Consistently, across the MFCS service area, those that makeup the 18-64 age demographic category tend to experience poverty the most. This was also the case for this age demographic during the Agency's last Community Needs Assessment (2018).

Overall, the populations in poverty by age are very similar to that of the state of Florida, with the exception of children under five years of age.

Figure 3



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019, Table S1701

Poverty by Race and Ethnicity Demographics

Table 13. illustrates the populations in poverty by race and ethnicity. Of all counties in the MFCS service area, Citrus County shows the largest population of White alone residents living below the poverty level; Hernando County shows the largest population of Black or African American alone residents living below the poverty level; and, Citrus County has the largest population of Hispanic/Latino residents living below the poverty level.

Table 13.

Population in Poverty by Race/Ethnicity MFCS Service Area

	Citrus		Hernando		Lake		Pasco		Polk		Sumter		Volusia		Total Service Area		Florida	
	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level	Below Poverty Level	% Below Poverty Level
White Alone	20,498	15.1%	18,794	11.3%	30,678	10.4%	50,071	10.7%	66,387	12.4%	9,397	8.2%	48,129	11.2%	243,954	11.3%	1,722,533	10.9%
Black or African American Alone	N	N	2,810	26.4%	7,640	20.0%	3,736	11.5%	20,972	19.7%	N	N	10,771	19.4%	45,929	19.4%	658,052	19.8%
American Indian and Alaska Native Alone	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	8,659	15.1%
Asian Alone	N	N	N	N	N	N	776	5.2%	1,204	9.3%	N	N	1,478	14.2%	3,458	9.6%	59,434	10.0%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	2,319	14.5%
Some Other Race Alone	N	N	N	N	N	N	3,122	36.6%	7,569	20.6%	N	N	5,917	18.1%	16,608	25.1%	123,028	17.4%
Two or More Races	N	N	N	N	272	2.9%	3,635	19.7%	1,570	9.4%	N	N	3,393	24.1%	8,870	16.2%	90,747	14.7%
Hispanic or Latino (any race)	8,836	25.5%	4,061	14.4%	11,935	19.6%	13,350	14.8%	33,772	19.2%	798	13.7%	12,700	15.5%	85,452	17.5%	876,809	15.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019 Table S1701

N = No data available

The data from Citrus County – showing that they have two race/ethnicity populations living below the poverty level – correlates with the county’s overall percent of population living in poverty, as shown in Table 14. above. Further, Citrus County’s population of Hispanic/Latino residents living below the poverty level has increased since MFCS conducted its last Community Needs Assessment in 2018.

Compared to State data also on Table 13., considering the entire service area of MFCS, the population of White alone residents living in poverty is higher than that of the State; the population of Black or African American alone residents is just slightly less than that of the statewide percentage living below poverty level; but, residents from the Hispanic/Latino population living in poverty is nearly two full percentage points higher in the MFCS service area than the state as a whole.

Within MFCS’s service area there is, overall, a smaller population of residents with Hispanic/Latino heritage, but a larger percent of that small population is living below the poverty level.

Barriers to Self-Sufficiency

“America is a country of paradox: the world’s greatest wealth together with deeply entrenched poverty in its many forms including homelessness, hunger, unsafe water, under-provisioned schools, and unaffordable energy, transport, health, and other basic needs (Sachs, n.d.).”

As a result of the Community Needs Assessment process, five needs emerged from the surveys as the most critical for the MFCS service area:

1. Affordable housing
2. Basic needs/crisis prevention
3. Food insecurity
4. Transportation
5. Need for communication and outreach

Causes and Conditions of Poverty

Why does poverty exist? Based on feedback received through the Community Needs Assessment process it is evident that a lack of resources – lack of living wage jobs, changing employment status, lack of affordable housing, lack of access to quality education, lack of transportation, lack of access to healthcare providers, varying environmental factors – drives poverty.

Income Limits

Income limits are directly related to each need that was identified through the 2021 Community Needs Assessment process. Why? Because if someone can't afford housing, transportation, food, or to meet their basic needs, they can't thrive.

United Way of Florida identifies "ALICE" households, which refers to those in our communities that are **asset limited, income constrained, and employed**. This population represents those who are working, but due to child care costs, transportation challenges, high cost of living, and so much more, are living paycheck to paycheck, and just narrowly miss being able to qualify for services from agencies like MFCS. While not in poverty, ALICE households are unable to afford basic needs. "ALICE households are as diverse as the general population, composed of people of all ages, genders, races, ethnicities, and they live in all counties in Florida – urban, suburban, and rural" (United Way of Florida, 2020, p. 1).

Table 14. illustrates the median household incomes within MFCS' service area, all of which are less than the statewide averages. Throughout the MFCS service area, females have a median household income considerably less than those of males. The difference between the median household income of female and male non-family households is greatest in Sumter County, with male non-family households bringing home \$25,000 more than female non-family households.

Further, Black or African American alone households have a median household income that ranges between \$13,000 - \$15,000 less than White alone (not Hispanic or Latino) and Hispanic or Latino (of any race) households.

Table 14. Median Household Income MFCS Service Area by County

Median Household Income	Citrus	Hernando	Lake	Pasco	Polk	Sumter	Volusia	Total Service Area	Florida
Families									
Married Couple Families	66,577	65,983	79,747	81,248	71,464	77,506	75,888	74,059	84,758
Married Couple with children under 18 yrs	82,463	72,664	94,057	101,380	78,300	75,902	76,990	83,108	90,059
Female, no spouse present	28,726	37,567	28,332	40,122	34,411	37,935	41,082	35,454	40,698
Female, no spouse present w/children under 18 yrs	21,737	29,147	21,671	29,040	28,493	55,118	30,092	30,757	31,677
Male, no spouse present	43,856	46,682	52,418	53,583	50,388	60,641	46,551	50,588	51,951
Male, no spouse present w/children under 18 yrs	50,382	43,876	51,093	50,127	42,448	-	43,364	46,882	45,112
Non-Family									
Female	22,007	23,760	33,352	29,524	27,014	28,659	29,537	27,693	37,292
Male	32,306	35,505	40,919	35,468	36,388	54,066	36,254	38,701	42,653
Households									
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	51,487	51,073	61,099	54,575	54,831	61,527	56,289	55,840	65,149
Black or African American	23,787	40,964	51,658	57,952	39,256	23,809	47,116	40,649	44,039
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	51,136	60,787	50,406	54,759	59,366	53,339	46,995	53,827	52,497

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019, Table S1903

Additionally, from September 30, 2020, through June 30, 2021, 3,021 MFCS clients served reported zero income for their level of family income, and 180 MFCS clients reported that their level of family income was 150% or less of the Federal Poverty Guideline.

Educational attainment is also a factor in how much one can earn. Table 15. shows the highest levels of education received by residents throughout MFCS' service area.

25.1% of males aged 18-64 in the MFCS service area have received a high school diploma or equivalent, while 10% of females aged 18-64 have received a high school diploma or equivalent.

Pasco and Volusia Counties report the most males aged 18-64 having a Bachelor's degree while Pasco and Polk Counties report the most females aged 18-64 having a Bachelor's degree. Still, on average, 3.5% more males than females in the MFCS service area have received a Bachelor's degree.

The level of educational attainment aligns with the patterns seen in Table 15. regarding median household incomes and that females have a median household income considerably less than those of males.

Table 15. Educational Attainment by Sex by Age MFCS Service Area

	Citrus	Hernando	Lake	Pasco	Polk	Sumter	Volusia	Total Service Area	% Total Service Area	Florida	% Florida
Male	61,215	75,801	142,236	212,158	273,818	60,736	221,101	1,047,065		8,337,993	
18 to 64 years:											
Less than 9th grade	564	702	5,198	3,734	9,838	902	5,466	26,404	3.0%	146,569	1.8%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	4,354	4,175	7,226	12,126	17,429	2,377	13,588	61,275	5.9%	564,907	6.8%
High school graduate (includes equivalent)	13,656	18,835	33,636	54,340	75,584	10,939	55,276	262,266	25.1%	19,658,892	23.6%
Some college, no degree	8,360	14,757	21,791	34,076	38,528	3,151	36,895	157,558	15.1%	1,322,298	15.9%
Associates degree	1,909	4,376	9,834	14,342	19,656	1,406	17,434	68,957	7.0%	573,149	6.9%
Bachelor's degree	3,000	5,594	13,291	25,767	20,112	3,276	21,179	92,219	8.8%	1,098,869	13.2%
Graduate or professional degree	1,997	23,189	5,886	8,850	9,340	1,269	8,786	59,317	5.7%	535,934	6.4%
65 years and over											
Less than 9th grade	1,128	1,300	1,234	2,036	4,468	262	1,943	12,371	1.0%	121,628	1.5%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	1,870	2,166	4,079	4,579	6,688	1,643	3,961	24,986	2.3%	141,022	1.7%
High school graduate (includes equivalent)	6,621	7,106	11,301	18,580	21,463	8,490	19,320	92,881	8.9%	522,538	6.3%
Some college, no degree	7,152	6,264	11,497	13,481	11,802	7,382	13,173	70,751	6.8%	383,604	4.6%
Associates degree	2,017	2,021	4,111	4,034	5,947	2,652	5,526	26,308	2.5%	145,246	1.8%
Bachelor's degree	3,819	3,677	7,221	9,603	9,936	9,419	10,679	54,354	5.2%	386,992	4.7%
Graduate or professional degree	3,819	2,510	5,931	5,196	8,619	6,960	7,875	40,910	3.9%	326,345	3.9%
Female	66,629	82,343	1,555,321	229,833	291,820	62,584	235,451	2,523,981		8,910,789	
18 to 64 years:											
Less than 9th grade	707	1,246	1,296	3,379	6,839	252	2,239	15,958	0.7%	192,247	2.2%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	3,663	4,482	8,275	10,323	15,150	614	7,805	50,312	2.2%	414,157	4.7%
High school graduate (includes equivalent)	9,307	16,136	29,674	44,068	68,917	7,579	48,493	224,174	10.0%	1,647,946	18.5%
Some college, no degree	9,202	14,668	22,060	36,958	53,493	6,705	40,942	184,028	8.1%	1,401,034	15.7%
Associates degree	4,822	6,737	13,866	21,369	37,511	2,038	23,227	109,570	4.9%	792,233	8.9%
Bachelor's degree	4,938	7,556	17,678	30,243	30,761	3,721	24,324	119,221	5.3%	1,323,031	14.9%
Graduate or professional degree	3,406	3,294	4,672	8,570	10,619	1,178	13,702	45,441	2.0%	669,318	7.5%
65 years and over											
Less than 9th grade	960	765	2,325	2,672	5,322	399	2,669	15,112	1.7%	181,105	2.0%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	2,201	3,271	3,693	5,568	7,368	924	5,259	28,284	1.3%	185,646	2.1%
High school graduate (includes equivalent)	9,647	11,123	18,995	30,195	30,440	13,301	27,603	141,304	6.3%	825,711	9.3%
Some college, no degree	7,509	6,028	11,345	12,819	15,346	9,269	14,889	77,205	3.4%	482,434	5.4%
Associates degree	2,716	2,655	4,918	6,114	5,419	4,183	7,855	33,860	1.5%	195,247	2.2%
Bachelor's degree	3,660	3,074	7,011	5,542	9,094	8,447	10,061	46,889	2.1%	346,833	3.9%
Graduate or professional degree	2,657	1,308	5,242	4,987	7,113	5,453	6,383	33,143	1.5%	253,847	2.9%

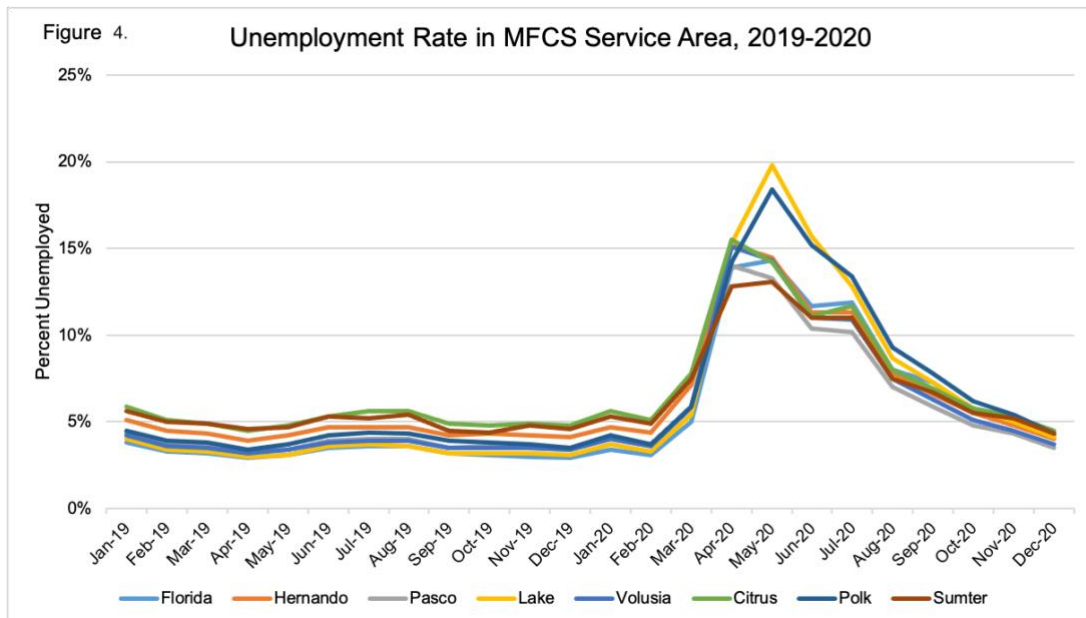
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019, Table: B15001

Income limits impact one's ability to access safe, affordable housing and reliable modes of transportation; creates barriers to accessing health care providers; and, limits access to technology, resources, and quality education and job training.

Employment Status and Opportunity

Data retrieved from MFCS client demographics show that from September 30, 2020, through June 30, 2021, 373 clients reported to be working full-time; 228 clients reported to be working part-time; and, 2,110 clients reported being unemployed.

Figure 4. shows the unemployment rate throughout the MFCS area from January 2019 through December 2020.



Source: CareerSource Pasco Hernando and Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. 2019-2020 Unemployment Rate in MFCS Service Area.

Further conversation with CareerSource Pasco Hernando (D. Hamilton, personal communications, July and September 2021) illustrates that from January through December 2020, there were 664,786 jobs available within the MFCS service area, while the reported workforce – those working or looking for work – totaled, on average, at least 713,449 (in Volusia, Lake, Hernando, Pasco Counties alone). These figures alone demonstrate that there aren't enough employment opportunities within the MFCS area for those working and/or looking for work within the MFCS service area.

Since the workforce exceeds the amount of available in-county employment, many people – more than 25% of the workforce in each County, with the exception of Sumter County workers – have to leave their county of residence to find employment. This creates a scenario in which outbound commuters – those who reside in one county but travel to another county for work – need reliable transportation and can't always rely on public transportation due to limited routes and schedules.

The impact of low-wage employment on one's ability to thrive and achieve self-sufficiency is long term. Earners get stuck in a vicious cycle of either staying in (or moving) to low-wage job after low-wage job. The low-wage-earners are unable to seek higher education or job training due to added costs (program cost, childcare, transportation). It can seem and feel impossible for these earners to have any extra dollars to save in case of an emergency; to go toward medical expenses; to go toward extra household expenses; or to repair a troublesome car so they can keep their job.

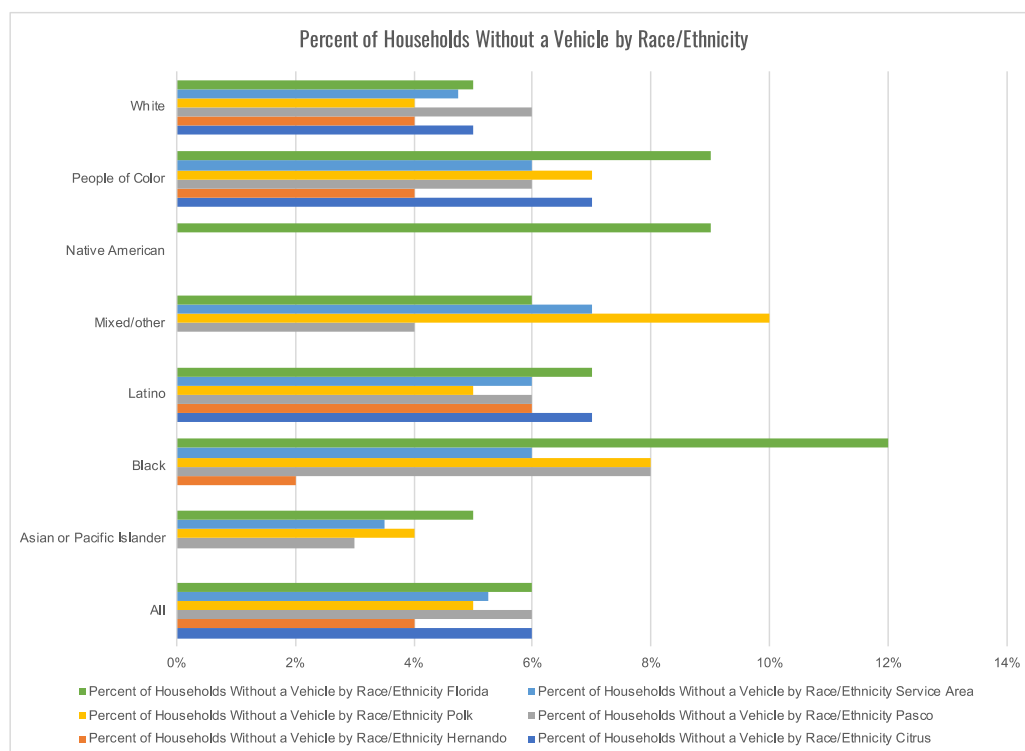
Transportation

"Many people who don't have cars are already part of a marginalized group" (Leary, 2020). Based on feedback received from respondents through the MFCS Community Needs Assessment survey process, individuals and/or households are carless due to being low-income and unable to afford the upfront costs and maintenance of a car; unable to drive for medical and/or disability-related reasons; or, are unable to obtain a driver's license.

Utilizing public transportation options and relying on others for transportation assistance is an option, although both have their challenges. “The transportation options that exist for people without cars were already imperfect – they’re time consuming, don’t cover many areas, and can be inaccessible and unsafe ...” (Leary 2020). In fact, 141 survey respondents cited inaccessibility, limited routes, being unable to get to desired destination, and proximity to public transportation options as barriers. Further, each county in the MFCS service area, with the exception of Polk County, offer only one public transportation provider. Often times, due to the time-consuming nature of public transportation, undue demands are placed on people’s time since they are expending so many hours in commute. These extra hours take them away from household and family needs, and create undue stress leading to negative health outcomes.

Public transportation operates, generally, on fixed routes; however, “demand-response services – which allow individuals to arrange a ride to and from specific locations ... – are essential for families and older residents with no means to reach healthcare, groceries, and other crucial services” (Bellis, 2020).

Table 16



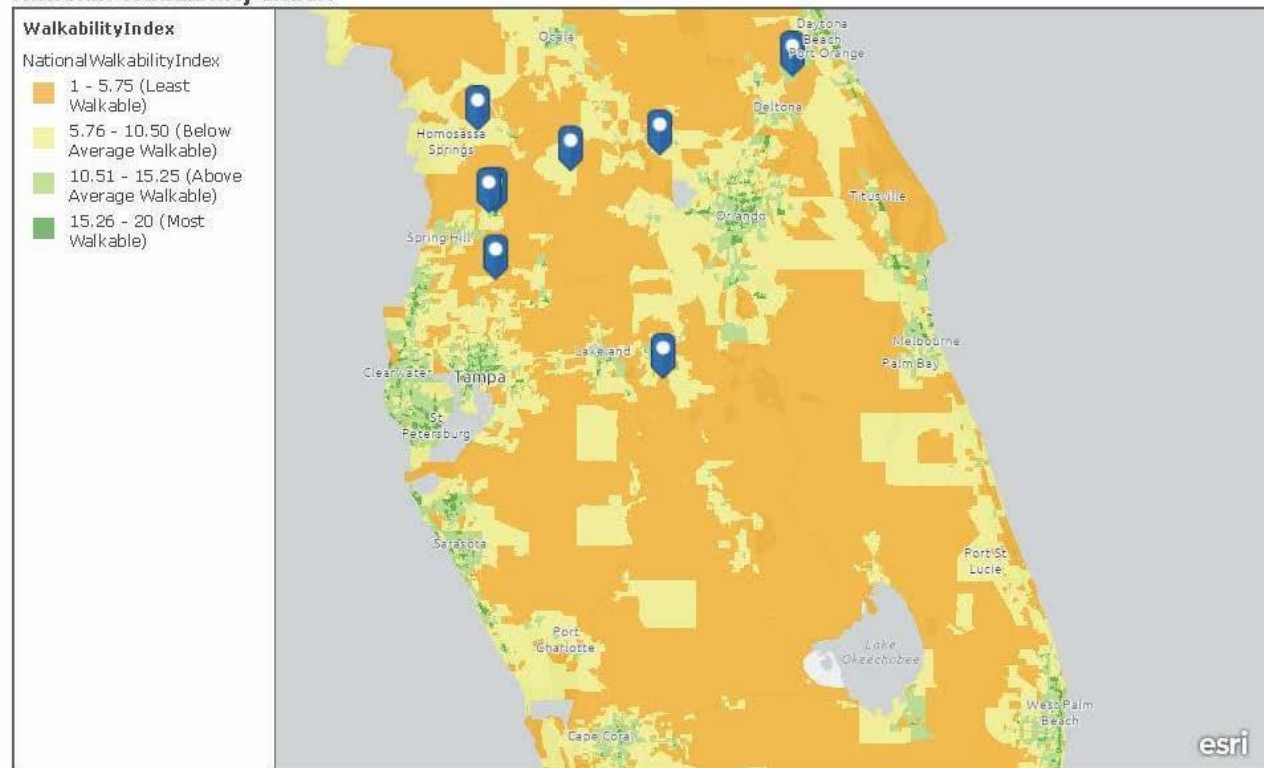
Source: IPUMS USA | National Equity Atlas, 2019

Table 16., a data snapshot from 2019 of the MFCS

service area, shows the percent of households without a vehicle by race/ethnicity. It should be noted that, overall, Florida saw a small increase in auto availability in 2019 according to the Florida Department of Transportation when carless households decreased to 6.1% from 6.2% in 2018.

The National Walkability Index (Figure 5.) maintained by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency shows that the counties that make up the MFCS service area, overall, are below average walkable with some walkable pockets. Additionally, Walk Score (2021) reports that almost all errands within the MFCS service area require a car; it is possible to get on a bus in the MFCS service area, but transit is minimal; and, minimal bike infrastructure exists.

Figure 5.
National Walkability Index



EPA's National Walkability Index: provides walkability scores based on a simple formula that ranks selected indicators from the Smart Location Database that have been demonstrated to affect the propensity of walk trips. The dataset covers every block group in the nation, providing a basis for comparing walkability from community to community. This dataset's universal coverage at the block group level makes it easy to use as input into scenario planning, modeling, and other community analysis. The National Walkability Index dataset ranks each block group relative to all other block groups in the United States, but individuals can use downloadable data to construct an index for a smaller universe of block groups, like a state, metropolitan area, or city.

University of South Florida, FDEP, Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, NPS | University of South Florida, FDEP, Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, NPS | EPA Office of Community Revitalization with Urban Design 4 Health and EPA National Geospatial Support Team

Unreliable transportation perpetuates an individual's inability to learn, earn, and thrive thus continuing a life of poverty. Carless households are more likely to experience food insecurity, have lower educational attainment, and experience negative health outcomes.

Housing Costs

Of 477 respondents surveyed, 248 out of 368 respondents specifically cited "affordability" as a barrier to affordable housing. Based on feedback from these respondents, "affordability" included reasons such as: the cost to rent/own; rising monthly costs; demand; or, income/wages versus cost of housing.

Specific to MFCS' service area, the average fair market rent for a two-bedroom rental is \$963. Further, the average annual income needed to afford a two-bedroom rental at fair market rent is \$44,440 (\$3,703 monthly, or \$21.36 hourly). On average, the estimated hourly wage of earners in the MFCS service area is \$13.60 and the average monthly rent affordable at this wage is \$707. Based on these calculations (Table 18.), the average earner in the MFCS service area cannot afford to rent a two-bedroom apartment within MFCS' service area; in fact, renters in the MFCS service area need to earn an additional \$7.77 per hour to afford a 2 - bedroom at Fair Market Rent.

As a point of comparison, Table 17. shows the average annual wages by county in MFCS' service area during 2020. The average annual wages for the service area are less than the average annual income needed to afford a two-bedroom rental at fair market rent as stated by the National Low-Income Housing Coalition (2021).

Table 17. 2020 Wages by MFCS Service Area County

County	Average Annual Wages - 2020
Citrus	\$40,312
Hernando	\$40,925
Lake	\$42,000
Pasco	\$44,186
Polk	\$46,724
Sumter	\$45,796
Volusia	\$44,392
Total Service Area	\$43,476
Florida	\$87,480

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Labor Market Statistics, Quarter Census of Employment & Wages

Table 18. Average Renter Wage vs. Cost of Housing Wage

	Citrus	Hernando	Lake	Pasco	Polk	Sumter	Volusia	Total Service Area	Florida
Housing Cost @ FMR per month	895.00	1,271.00	1,321.00	1,271.00	1,023.00	946.00	1,050.00	1,111.00	1,290.00
Affordable 2 BR @ Current Average Renter Wage	657.00	683.00	701.00	765.00	839.00	586.00	718.00	707.00	920.00
Average Renter Shortage per month	(238.00)	(588.00)	(620.00)	(506.00)	(184.00)	(360.00)	(332.00)	(404.00)	(370.00)
Minimum Wage*	8.65	8.65	8.68	8.65	8.65	8.65	8.65	8.65	8.65
Average Renter Wage	12.63	13.14	13.47	14.72	16.14	11.27	13.81	13.60	17.69
2-Bedroom Housing Wage @ FMR	17.21	24.44	25.40	24.44	19.67	18.19	20.19	21.36	24.82
Hourly wage increase needed to afford 2 BR @ FMR	4.58	11.30	11.93	9.72	3.53	6.92	6.38	7.77	7.13

FMR - Fiscal Year 2021 Fair Market Rent

* Based on current minimum wage effective January 2021, Next increase \$10/hr effective September 30, 2021

Source: National Low-Income Housing Coalition 2021

Unmet Basic Needs

“Reducing the stress of poverty can save lives”, says Goldblum (2020). Impoverished, vulnerable populations experience greater unmet basic needs. For example, these populations are less likely to be able to take time off of work when they’re feeling ill because lost work equals lost wages, and simply put, they can’t afford to be out of work. Being out of work exasperates the already existing struggle to make ends meet, to diaper their children, to keep the lights on, and to put food on the table.

Health and wellness and access to quality care is a top unmet basic need. As stated in the Community Assessment conducted by MFCS' Head Start/Early Head Start program in early 2020, “many residents in MFCS' service area do not have sufficient optimal health outcomes and experience negative health factors.”

According to data obtained from County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (2021), the average number of mentally unhealthy days being reported across the MFCS service area is 5.0 days as compared to the statewide average of 4.2 days, an increase of nearly one full day above the statewide average. 14.9% of population within the MFCS service area is uninsured; 20% of the children in MFCS' service area are living in poverty; and, the MFCS service area has 50% less mental health service providers per resident than the statewide average. Most shocking, though, is that the MFCS service area has 74.5% less primary care physicians per resident than the statewide average.

Table 19. Health Rankings by MFCS Service Area Counties

	Citrus	Hernando	Lake	Pasco	Polk	Sumter	Volusia	Total Service Area	Florida
Health Outcomes (out of 67 counties)	55	39	30	32	29	28	40	253	
Uninsured	15%	16%	15%	15%	15%	12%	16%	15%	16%
Primary Care Physicians	1,970:1	1,930:1	1,490:1	1,740:1	2,080:1	2,680:1	1,490:1	1,911:1	1,380:1
Dentists	3,050:1	2,850:1	2,050:1	2,830:1	2,930:1	3,400:1	2,070:1	2,740:1	1,650:1
Mental Health Providers	1,510:1	1,220:1	1,110:1	1,200:1	1,070:1	2,500:1	700:1	1,330:1	590:1
Children in Poverty	25%	19%	18%	16%	21%	22%	20%	20%	18%
Children in Single-Parent Homes	31%	23%	26%	25%	30%	27%	29%	27%	29%

Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, 2021

Having a makeup of both rural and urban areas, another factor that is directly related to a resident's ability to access quality care within the MFCS service area is transportation. Whether or not a resident is transportation disadvantaged will determine how far and often one can travel to receive care from a service provider.

An overwhelming number of client respondents commented that reasons such as access to quality care; access to quality coverage options; healthcare/insurance being cost prohibitive; lack of resources/information; lack of providers; unable to access/qualify for coverage due to program eligibility; unable to access providers due to proximity/distance; or, lack of employer-sponsored insurance all or in part contributed to existing gaps in service for this finding.

"The impacts of barriers to primary care, mental health care and dental care can be seen in steady rises in physical, mental and oral health problems" (WellFlorida Council, 2020a).

Food insecurity, or not knowing where one's next meal is coming from, is also a major unmet need within the MFCS service area. Not only is Citrus County among the least healthy counties in Florida, it is the least healthy county in the MFCS service area. Further, Citrus County is the most food insecure county in MFCS' service area, and has the largest population of food insecure children at 23.6% of the population under 18 years old (Table 20., Table 21).

Table 20.

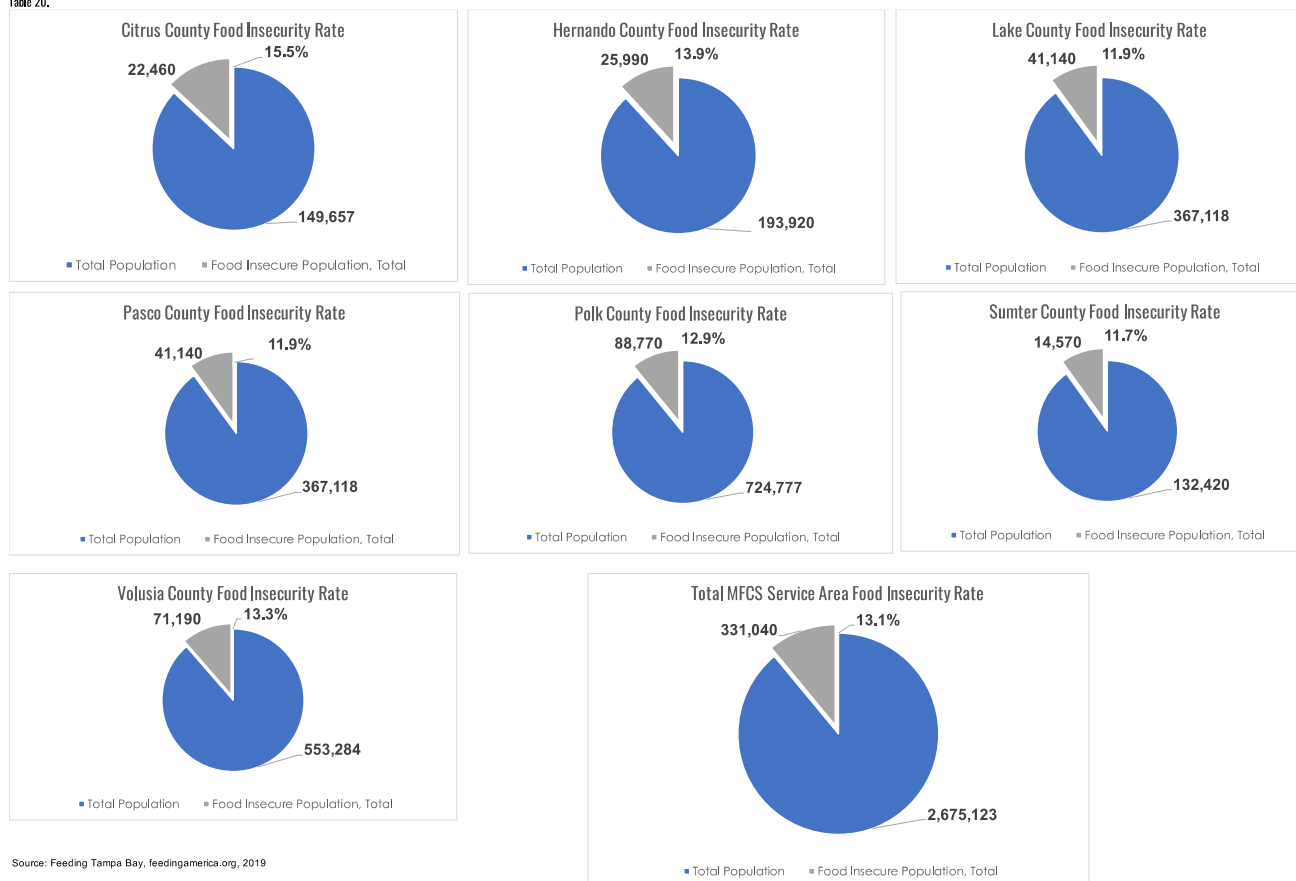


Table 21. Food Insecure Children

Report Area	Population Under Age 18	Food Insecure Children, Total	Child Food Insecurity Rate
Citrus	21,813	5,090	23.6%
Hernando	35,776	6,680	19.4%
Lake	69,561	11,750	17.6%
Pasco	111,956	17,720	16.6%
Polk	159,139	29,540	19.3%
Sumter	9,100	1,780	19.6%
Volusia	96,732	17,820	17.7%
Total Service Area	504,077	90,380	19.1%

Source: Feeding Tampa Bay, feedingamerica.org, 2019

Another vulnerable population struggling with hunger and food insecurity in the MFCS service area are seniors age 60 and older. Feeding America (2021) reports that, in 2019, 6.7% of seniors in Florida experienced food insecurity, while the average food insecurity rate in the two metropolitan areas that exist in the MFCS service area – Tampa/St. Pete/Clearwater and Orlando – totaled 7.4%

Similarly, cost of food and food access contribute to the food insecurity rate in MFCS' service area. There are only 637 grocery store establishments to serve MFCS' service area population of 2,675,123 (Table 22.).

Table 22. Food Access - Grocery Stores MFCS Service Area

	Total Population	Number of Establishments	Establishments, rate per 100,000 Population
Citrus	149,657	33	22.05
Hernando	193,920	37	19.08
Lake	367,118	76	20.70
Pasco	553,947	124	22.38
Polk	724,777	185	25.53
Sumter	132,420	18	13.59
Volusia	553,284	164	29.64
Total Service Area	2,675,123	637	23.81
Florida	21,477,737	6,435	29.96

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Community Business Patterns, 2019, Table CB1900CBP

“The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program serves as the primary source of nutrition assistance for low-income people monthly (Table 23.). It increases food purchasing power for eligible households with benefits that can be used to buy food at authorized retail grocery stores and farmers markets across the country” (USDA). To that end, even though 118,254 households in MFCS' service area receive assistance through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, participants still report “affordability of food” as a barrier (USDA, 2021).

Table 23. Households Receiving SNAP by Poverty Status - MFCS Service Area

County	Households Receiving SNAP	Households Receiving SNAP Percent	Households Not Receiving SNAP	Households Receiving SNAP Below Poverty	Households Receiving SNAP at or Above Poverty Level
Citrus	6,634	10.3%	57,814	3,411	3,223
Hernando	10,737	13.6%	68,018	4,224	6,513
Lake	15,125	10.9%	124,067	6,762	8,363
Pasco	23,582	11.1%	189,274	8,648	14,934
Polk	32,872	13.8%	205,757	13,278	19,594
Sumter	2,457	4.1%	57,001	868	1,589
Volusia	26,847	12.2%	192,604	10,002	16,845
Total Service Area	118,254	10.9%	894,535	47,193	71,061
Florida	935,759	11.8%	6,970,073	365,381	570,378

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019, Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP) Table S2201

According to the Official USDA Food Plans (2021), on a low-cost food plan preparing all meals and snacks at home, families of four – a couple and two children – can expect to spend between \$771 per month (children ages two to five years of age) or \$914 per month (children ages six to 11 years of age) on average. This is an increased cost from June 2020 when families of four – a couple and two children – could expect to spend between \$758 per month

(children ages two to five years of age) or \$899 per month (children ages six to 11 years of age) on average.

It should be noted that cost of food and access to food were among the top contributing factors to food insecurity according to survey responses from 213 respondents out of 312.

Crisis prevention is an unmet basic need. Food and shelter are fundamental basic needs, and without those needs being met it can create crisis, chaos, and burden for individuals and families. Individuals and families in need of crisis prevention support have likely experienced an unexpected circumstance – this could be any individual or family at any time, but unexpected circumstances create greater crises for those who are already impoverished. Meeting basic needs of those requiring crisis prevention support could include assistance with past due rent or mortgage payments to prevent homelessness; assisting with past due utilities; helping to purchase food for the household; cash assistance to help a mother diaper her child; emergency car repairs so that the earner can continue to travel to work; or, help receiving basic medical care.

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APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 2

General Population/Community Survey

Community Survey (*visible to respondents*)

Preview link:

<https://aytm.com/preview/vdJouYuW76F9k4tD>

Questions

1. What Florida county do you live in?

[\[radio buttons\]](#)

Answer options

1. Hernando County
2. Sumter County
3. Pasco County
4. Lake County
5. Volusia County
6. Citrus County
7. Polk County
8. N/A *[EXIT survey]*

2. How many people live in your home?

[\[radio buttons\]](#)

Answer options

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. 6
7. 7
8. 8+

3. Please check the income level that best describes the total income of everyone living in your home.

[\[radio buttons\]](#)

Answer options

1. \$12,880 or less
2. \$12,881 - \$17,420
3. \$17,421 - \$21,960
4. \$21,961 - \$26,500
5. \$26,501 - \$31,040
6. \$31,041 - \$35,580
7. \$35,581 - \$40,120
8. \$40,121 - \$44,660
9. More than \$44,661

General Population/Community Survey

Community Survey (*visible to respondents*)

Preview link:

<https://aytm.com/preview/vdJouYuW76F9k4tD>

4. **Using each rank number only once**, on a scale of 1 to 6, please rank the following six needs in your community in order of **greatest** need (with **1 being the greatest need**)

[form] [subquestion randomization]

1. Affordable housing | $_{{1-6}}$ [Required]
2. Reliable transportation | $_{{1-6}}$ [Required]
3. Food insecurity (cost of food, access to food/food resources) | $_{{1-6}}$ [Required]
4. Basic needs/crisis prevention (mental wellness; access to affordable insurance/healthcare) | $_{{1-6}}$ [Required]
5. I don't know of any available community resources that address my needs. | $_{{1-6}}$ [Required]
6. I can't find any community resources that address my needs. | $_{{1-6}}$ [Required]

5. In your own words, Please describe what are the barriers to the following needs?

[form]

1. Affordable housing | [Required]
2. Reliable transportation | [Required]
3. Food insecurity (cost of food, access to food/food resources) | [Required]
4. Basic needs/crisis prevention (mental wellness; access to affordable insurance/healthcare) | [Required]
5. I don't know of any available community resources that address my needs. | [Required]
6. I can't find any community resources that address my needs. | [Required]

6. Do any of these needs impact you or your family?

[checkboxes] [min 1] [max OFF]

Answer options

1. Affordable housing
2. Reliable transportation
3. Food insecurity (cost of food, access to food/food resources)
4. Basic needs/crisis prevention (mental wellness; access to affordable insurance/healthcare)
5. I don't know of any available community resources that address my needs.
6. I can't find any community resources that address my needs.
7. No, these needs don't impact me or my family.

7. Are you, or a member of your household, a member of the Military or a Military Veteran?

[radio buttons]

Answer options

1. Yes
2. No

General Population/Community Survey

Community Survey (*visible to respondents*)

Preview link:

<https://aytm.com/preview/vdJouYuW76F9k4tD>

8. Is there anything we did not ask that you want to add regarding community needs, self-sufficiency, and/or poverty?

[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)

9. What do you think of when you hear the name Mid Florida Community Services? (Check all that apply.)

[\[checkboxes\]](#) [\[min 1\]](#) [\[max OFF\]](#)

Answer options

1. Bank/credit union
2. Health care-related (insurance, vision, health & wellness)
3. Homelessness
4. Community services (Head Start, Senior Services, energy assistance, etc.)
5. Entertainment venue
6. Legal services
7. An incorporated city in Florida
8. Realty services
9. I am not familiar with Mid Florida Community Services
10. Other *[Optional OE]*

Order details

- Completes: 400

Included Traits (quota N=400 Geo filters)

- Country: United States
- Location: Regions/States/Counties: Florida
- Gender: Males and Females
- Age Range: 18 - 65+ years old
- Language: English
- Education: No college, Some college, 2yr degree, 4yr degree, Grad school degree, Professional degree
- Employment: Full time, Part time, Retired, Student, Unemployed
- Relationship: Single, Engaged, Living with a significant other, Married, Divorced, Widowed, It's complicated
- Income: \$0 to \$500k+
- Ethnicity/Race: Asian, Black / African-American, Hispanic / Latino / Spanish, Indian-American, Native American, White / Caucasian, Multiracial, Other Race
- Career: Accounting/Finance/Banking, Advertising/Graphic design, Arts and entertainment, Clerical, Healthcare, Hospitality, IT, Legal, Management, Military, Public safety, Real estate, Retail, Small business owner, Student, Other
- Parental status: no children, 1 child, 2 children, 3 children, 4 children, 5+ children

MFCS Governing Board

MFCS Governing Board Community Needs Survey
(visible to respondents)

Preview link:
<https://aytm.com/preview/4ZDX7dKgm7sZfbjJ>

Questions

1. Question #1

[instruction]

Hello Governing Board Members: As active members of your communities and valued members of the MFCS Board, we are asking that you help us identify the needs that are facing the communities we serve by completing a short survey. Your industry knowledge, caring concern for the the communities we serve, and input will be invaluable to us as we plan programs and services, and set goals for our organization.

Please base your responses on your knowledge of the needs of low-income individuals within the MFCS service area. Please complete the survey prior to May 12, 2021. There are no right or wrong answers, and all responses are anonymous.

2. What county do you live in?

[radio buttons]

Answer options

1. Hernando
2. Pasco
3. Polk
4. Citrus
5. Lake
6. Sumter
7. Volusia

3. As active members of your communities and valued members of the MFCS Board, please help us identify the needs in your communities by ranking the following on a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being the **greatest** need.

[form]

1. Affordable housing | _{1-6} [Required]
2. Reliable transportation | _{1-6} [Required]
3. Basic needs/crisis prevention (mental wellness; access to affordable insurance/healthcare | _{1-6} [Required]
4. Food insecurity (cost of foods; access to food/food resources | _{1-6} [Required]
5. Individuals aren't aware of any available community resources that address their needs | _{1-6} [Required]
6. Individuals can't find any community resources that address their needs | _{1-6} [Required]

MFCS Governing Board

MFCS Governing Board Community Needs Survey
(visible to respondents)

Preview link:

<https://aytm.com/preview/4ZDX7dKgm7sZfbjJ>

4. **Using each rank number only once**, on a scale of 1 to 6, please rank the following six needs in your community in order of **greatest need** (with **1 being the greatest need**)

[\[form\]](#)

1. Affordable housing | *[Required]*
 2. Reliable transportation | *[Required]*
 3. Basic needs/crisis prevention (mental wellness; access to affordable insurance/healthcare | *[Required]*
 4. Food insecurity (cost of foods; access to food/food resources | *[Required]*
 5. Individuals aren't aware of any available community resources that address their needs | *[Required]*
 6. Individuals can't find any community resources that address their needs | *[Required]*
5. In your opinion, what circumstances typically create the biggest challenges for those struggling to achieve self-sufficiency?
[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)
6. What are some of MFCS' strengths in terms of meeting the needs of families in our communities?
[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)
7. What are some ways MFCS needs to improve in meeting the needs of families in our communities?
[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)
8. Is there anything we did not ask that you want to add regarding community needs, self-sufficiency, and/or poverty?
[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)

Order details

- Completes: 20

MFCS Staff

MFCS Staff Community Needs Survey (*visible to respondents*)

Preview link:

<https://aytm.com/preview/P7GFv3nnKrF0b4hx>

Questions

1. Question #1

[instruction]

Hello Team! You are receiving this survey because of your caring concern for the clients and communities that MFCS serves. The information you provide through completion of this survey will help us as we plan programs and services, and set goals for our organization.

Please base your responses on your knowledge of the needs of clients within the MFCS service area. Please complete the survey prior to May 12, 2021. There are no right or wrong answers, and all responses are anonymous.

Thank you for your input and participation.

2. In which county/counties do you work? (Please check all that apply.)

[checkboxes] [min 1] [max OFF]

Answer options

1. Hernando
2. Pasco
3. Lake
4. Sumter
5. Volusia
6. Citrus
7. Polk

3. Which MFCS department/program area do you work in?

[radio buttons]

Answer options

1. Community Services
2. Transportation
3. Children's Advocacy Center
4. Weatherization
5. Head Start/Early Head Start
6. Senior Services
7. Operations / Administration / Finance / Human Resources
8. Other (Information Technology; Maintenance)

4. Using each rank number only once, on a scale of 1 to 6, please rank the following six needs in your community in order of **greatest** need (with **1 being the greatest need**)

[form]

MFCS Staff

MFCS Staff Community Needs Survey (visible to respondents)

Preview link:

<https://aytm.com/preview/P7GFv3nnKrF0b4hx>

1. Affordable housing | _{1-6} [Required]
2. Reliable transportation | _{1-6} [Required]
3. Food insecurity (cost of food; access to food/food resources) | _{1-6} [Required]
4. Basic needs/crisis prevention (mental wellness; access to affordable insurance/healthcare) | _{1-6} [Required]
5. Individuals aren't aware of any available community resources that address their needs | _{1-6} [Required]
6. Individuals can't find any community resources that address their needs | _{1-6} [Required]

5. What are the barriers to the following needs?

[form]

1. Affordable housing | [Required]
2. Reliable transportation | [Required]
3. Food insecurity (cost of food; access to food/food resources) | [Required]
4. Basic needs/crisis prevention (mental wellness; access to affordable insurance/healthcare) | [Required]
5. Individuals aren't aware of any available community resources that address their needs | [Required]
6. Individuals can't find any community resources that address their needs | [Required]

6. What are some of MFCS' strengths in terms of meeting the needs of families in our communities?

[open ended] [mandatory]

7. What are some ways MFCS' needs to improve in meeting the needs of families in our communities?

[open ended] [mandatory]

8. We know you're an expert in your program, but did you know MFCS offers these other programs and services? Please check those you knew about.

[checkboxes] [min 1] [max OFF]

Answer options

1. Senior Programs (meal sites; delivered meals; emergency heating/cooling assistance)
2. Early learning programs 4-5 yr olds; infant to 3 yr olds care/learning
3. Continuing education assistance (college; trade school; etc)
4. low-income energy assistance (assistance with heating/cooling bill payment)
5. counseling/therapy to child victims of physical or sexual abuse
6. improving energy efficiency in qualified homes
7. life sustaining transportation; medical appointments; veteran transportation

MFCS Staff

MFCS Staff Community Needs Survey (*visible to respondents*)

Preview link:

<https://aytm.com/preview/P7GFv3nnKrF0b4hx>

9. Is there anything we did not ask that you want to add regarding community needs, self-sufficiency, and/or poverty?

[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)

Order details

- Completes: 400
- Total words: 315

Included Traits ()

- Language: English

MFCS Client and Family Survey

MFCS Client and Family Survey (*visible to respondents*)

Preview link:
<https://aytm.com/preview/1bjp38RPUQWvq748>

Questions

1. What Florida county do you live in?

[\[radio buttons\]](#)

Answer options

1. Hernando County
2. Sumter County
3. Pasco County
4. Lake County
5. Volusia County
6. Citrus County
7. Polk County
8. N/A *[EXIT survey]*

2. How many people live in your home?

[\[radio buttons\]](#)

Answer options

1. 1
2. 2
3. 3
4. 4
5. 5
6. 6
7. 7
8. 8+

3. Please check the income level that best describes the total income of everyone living in your home.

[\[radio buttons\]](#)

Answer options

1. \$12,880 or less
2. \$12,881 - \$17,420
3. \$17,421 - \$21,960
4. \$21,961 - \$26,500
5. \$26,501 - \$31,040
6. \$31,041 - \$35,580
7. \$35,581 - \$40,120
8. \$40,121 - \$44,660
9. More than \$44,661

MFCS Client and Family Survey

MFCS Client and Family Survey (visible to respondents)

Preview link:
<https://aytm.com/preview/1bjp38RPUQWvq748>

4. **Using each rank number only once**, on a scale of 1 to 6, please rank the following six needs in your community in order of **greatest need (with 1 being the greatest need)**.

[form] [subquestion randomization]

1. Affordable housing | $_ \{1-6\}$ [Required]
2. Reliable transportation | $_ \{1-6\}$ [Required]
3. Food insecurity (cost of food, access to food/food resources) | $_ \{1-6\}$ [Required]
4. Basic needs/crisis prevention (mental wellness; access to affordable insurance/healthcare) | $_ \{1-6\}$ [Required]
5. I don't know of any available community resources that address my needs. | $_ \{1-6\}$ [Required]
6. I can't find any community resources that address my needs. | $_ \{1-6\}$ [Required]

5. In your own words, please describe what the barriers are to the following needs?

[form]

1. Affordable housing | [Required]
2. Reliable transportation | [Required]
3. Food insecurity (cost of food, access to food/food resources) | [Required]
4. Basic needs/crisis prevention (mental wellness; access to affordable insurance/healthcare) | [Required]
5. I don't know of any available community resources that address my needs. | [Required]
6. I can't find any community resources that address my needs. | [Required]

6. Do any of these needs impact you or your family? Please check all that apply.

[checkboxes] [min 1] [max OFF]

Answer options

1. Affordable housing
2. Reliable transportation
3. Food insecurity (cost of food, access to food/food resources)
4. Basic needs/crisis prevention (mental wellness; access to affordable insurance/healthcare)
5. I don't know of any available community resources that address my needs.
6. I can't find any community resources that address my needs.
7. No, these needs don't impact me or my family.

7. Are you, or a member of your household, a member of the Military or a Military Veteran?

[radio buttons]

MFCS Client and Family Survey

MFCS Client and Family Survey (*visible to respondents*)

Preview link:

<https://aytm.com/preview/1bjp38RPUQWvq748>

Answer options

1. Yes
2. No

8. Is there anything we did not ask that you want to add regarding community needs, self-sufficiency, and/or poverty?

[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)

9. What do you think of when you hear the name Mid Florida Community Services? (Check all that apply.)

[\[checkboxes\]](#) [\[min 1\]](#) [\[max OFF\]](#)

Answer options

1. Bank/credit union
2. Health care-related (insurance, vision, health & wellness)
3. Homelessness
4. Community services (Head Start, Senior Services, energy assistance, etc.)
5. Entertainment venue
6. Legal services
7. An incorporated city in Florida
8. Realty services
9. I am not familiar with Mid Florida Community Services
10. Other *[Optional OE]*

Key Informants and Community Partners (June)

Key Informants and Community Partners Community (visible to respondents)

Preview link:
<https://aytm.com/preview/IJnJA6OUdkwEe4eB>

Questions

1. Question #1

[instruction]

Dear Community Partners, Stakeholders, and Key Informants: You are receiving this survey because of your industry knowledge and caring concern for the communities we serve. You can help Mid Florida Community Services, Inc., identify the needs that are facing the communities we both serve by completing a short survey. Your input will be invaluable to us as we plan programs and services, and set goals for our organization.

Please complete the survey prior to June 30, 2021. There are no right or wrong answers, and all responses are anonymous.

Thank you for your input and participation.

2. Which of the following counties does your organization serve?

[checkboxes] [min 1] [max OFF]

Answer options

1. Hernando
2. Sumter
3. Pasco
4. Lake
5. Citrus
6. Polk
7. Volusia

3. Describe the focus areas/services your organization provides to low-income populations in your service area.

[open ended] [mandatory]

4. Rank the following needs in your community in order of **greatest** need (with "1" being the greatest need).

[form]

1. Affordable housing | _{1-6} [Required]
2. Reliable transportation | _{1-6} [Required]
3. Food insecurity (cost of food; access to food/food resources | _{1-6} [Required]
4. Basic needs/crisis prevention (mental wellness; access to affordable insurance/healthcare | _{1-6} [Required]
5. Individuals aren't aware of any available community resources that address their needs | _{1-6} [Required]
6. Individuals can't find any community resources that address their needs | _{1-6} [Required]

Key Informants and Community Partners (June)

Preview link:

<https://aytm.com/preview/IJnJA6OUdkwEe4eB>

Key Informants and Community Partners Community (*visible to respondents*)

5. Did these needs exist before March 2020?

[\[radio buttons\]](#)

Answer options

1. Yes
2. No

6. Since March 2020, how have these needs become more critical to the populations you serve?

[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)

7. What circumstances do you think create the biggest challenges for those struggling to achieve self-sufficiency?

[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)

8. Of the things being done to address poverty in your community, what do you think is helping the most?

[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)

9. What services are needed to address the most important needs or challenges facing clients?

[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)

10. Is there anything that we did not ask that you want to add regarding community needs, self-sufficiency, and/or poverty?

[\[open ended\]](#) [\[mandatory\]](#)