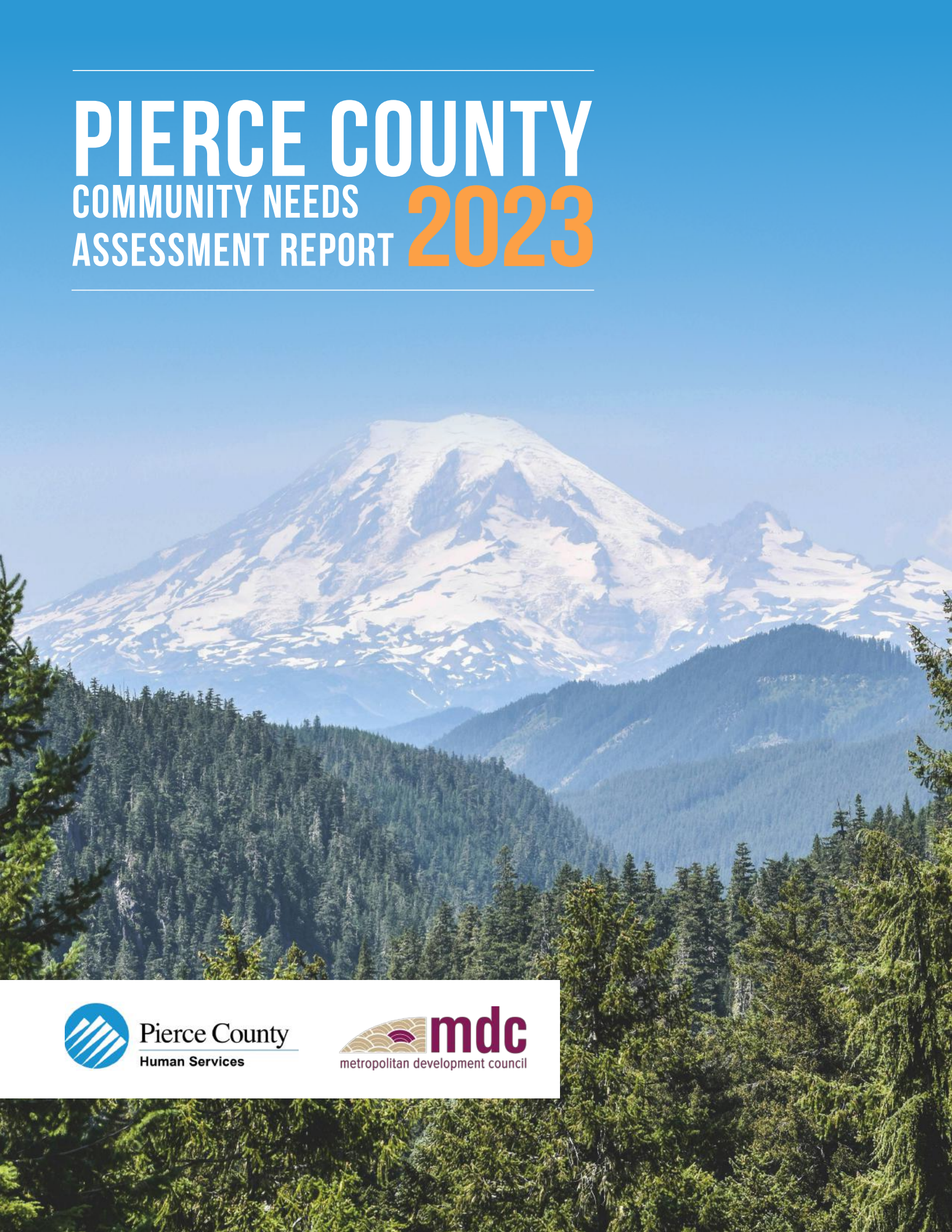

PIERCE COUNTY

COMMUNITY NEEDS
ASSESSMENT REPORT **2023**



Pierce County
Human Services



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our gratitude is extended to the community members who devoted their time and effort to participate in the *Community Needs Assessment*. The commitment involved in providing valuable feedback is acknowledged, and it is through these contributions that meaningful steps forward can be taken to address the needs of our community.

Thank you to the Pierce County data team for their valuable insights into the survey responses.

Much appreciation goes to the staff of Metropolitan Development Council and Pierce County Human Services for their dedicated administrative support during this collaborative effort.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS / PROJECT TEAM	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
CNA BENEFITS	5
METHODOLOGY	6
2023 COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT	7
PCHS COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS	8
MDC COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS	9
MDC CLIENTS SERVED 2020-2023	10-11
PCHS CAP CLIENTS SERVED 2020-2023 BY PROGRAM	12
SERVICE AREA	14
POPULATION DATA	15
SURVEY PARTICIPATION	16
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS / STRENGTHS / LIMITATIONS	17-18
RESULTS	19
PIERCE COUNTY CNA SURVEY POPULATION	21
3 DISTINCT GROUPS IDENTIFIED	22-23
CURRENT NEEDS OF RESPONDENTS BY GROUPINGS	24-34
GENERAL SURVEY POPULATION FINDINGS	28-35
NEXT STEPS	36-37
TECHNICAL NOTES	39
APPENDIX A: CURRENT NEEDS BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS	41-68
APPENDIX A: CURRENT NEEDS BY RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS	41
APPENDIX B: NEEDS AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA FOR ALL RESPONDENTS	42
APPENDIX C: MARGINAL ASSOCIATION TABLES	43
APPENDIX D: MARGINAL ASSOCIATION TABLES, ALL RESPONDENTS	44
APPENDIX E: MARGINAL ASSOCIATION TABLES, COMBINING SAMPLES WITH AND WITHOUT PAST SERVICES	45
APPENDIX F: PIERCE COUNTY COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY QUESTIONS	46-65
APPENDIX G: PIERCE COUNTY COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS	66
APPENDIX H: PCHS COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS	67-69
APPENDIX I: MDC COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS	70-71

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Community Needs Assessment (CNA) is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the needs of our community directly from the voices of its members. By listening to the community's perspectives and insights, our aim is to enhance our ability to serve them in the most effective and impactful manner possible. The CNA is conducted every three years and is designed to highlight the gaps in services, programs, and policies in Pierce County.

Recognizing the significance of collaboration and unity in addressing community needs, the 2023 CNA was conducted through a partnership between the two Pierce County Community Action Programs (CAP), the Metropolitan Development Council (MDC), which serves within the Tacoma city limits, and Pierce County Human Services (PCHS) Community Action Programs (CAP), which serves all of Pierce County, outside the city limits of Tacoma. This collaborative effort not only bridges the gap in understanding diverse community needs but also enables us to approach challenges with a holistic perspective. Moving forward, MDC and PCHS CAP are committed to maintaining this collaborative approach to better serve the multifaceted needs of our community.





CNA BENEFITS

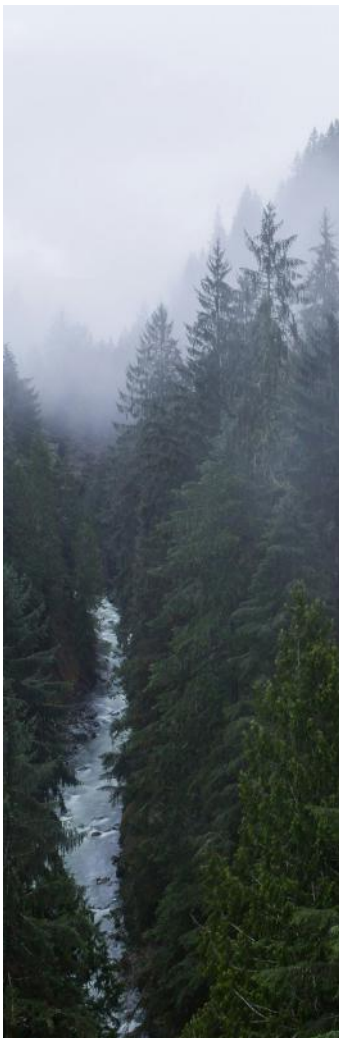
- **INFORMED DECISION-MAKING** By directly understanding the needs of the community, MDC and PCHS CAP can make more informed decisions regarding resource allocation, program development, and service delivery. This helps ensure that resources are directed where they are most needed, maximizing the impact of the organization's efforts.
- **ENHANCED COLLABORATION** Through the collaborative partnership between the two Pierce County CAP programs, MDC and PCHS CAP, the CNA fosters stronger participation and cooperation among organizations working towards community improvement. By working together and sharing insights gathered from the assessment, organizations can better coordinate their efforts and address community needs more comprehensively.
- **INCREASED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** The CNA provides an opportunity for community members to actively participate in the decision-making process and contribute to shaping the services and programs that directly impact their lives. This fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment within the community, leading to increased engagement and participation in future initiatives aimed at community improvement.



METHODOLOGY

The following data was collected through a community needs assessment conducted within Pierce County in 2023. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used.

- **A COMMUNITY SURVEY** was distributed (via paper and electronically) by local service providers, through email newsletters, social media, and news releases.
- **FOUR COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUPS**, with a total of 14 participants, were conducted around Pierce County and virtually.
- **DATA** was also gathered from the most recent census at data.census.gov



THE DATA FROM THE CNA SURVEY WAS SORTED AND ORGANIZED INTO THEMES AND CATEGORIES USING THE FOLLOWING METHODS:

- A** | Data was filtered to individuals who indicated that they had at least one need.
- B** | Anyone who checked multiple racial categories was considered to be 2 or more races.
- C** | Individuals who indicated a Hispanic Ethnicity was to be Hispanic.
- D** | All Additional/Other/Non-responses were grouped together.
- E** | After these changes, there were only 2 individuals who indicated a Middle Eastern/North African (MENA) race alone. They were put in the 'White' category because:
 - E1** | Of the small sample size, and
 - E2** | This is currently how the Census codes these responses.

2023 COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT

This Community Needs Assessment is dated April 2, 2024. The assessment is shared with the community and agency stakeholders, as well as with partner organizations, other sectors, and the community at large. The report has been distributed as follows:

- Posted on the MDC and PCHS CAP websites.
- Posted on MDC and PCHS CAP social media pages.
- Sent electronically to the Department of Commerce and partner agencies.
- Printed in hard copy for the Department of Commerce.

MDC and PCHS CAP are two of 30 Community Action Programs in the State of Washington and over 1,000 nationwide.





PCHS COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS

PCHS Community Action Programs division began in 1970 as a Community Action Agency (CAA) through the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). CSBG is a national program that was founded by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to fight poverty by providing services and supports that promote self-sufficiency and address the root causes of poverty. Federally designated Community Action Programs address anti-poverty issues with a focus on local community needs. PCHS CAP provides an array of services to support economic self-sufficiency.

PCHS COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS ARE FOR RESIDENTS LIVING OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS OF TACOMA & INCLUDE:

- ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)
- EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ECEAP)
- MINOR HOME REPAIR (FOR RESIDENTS LIVING OUTSIDE THE CITY LIMITS OF TACOMA & LAKEWOOD)
- HOME WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (WAP)



OTHER SERVICES & PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FROM PIERCE COUNTY INCLUDE:

- AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCES (ADR)
- DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PROGRAM
- EVICTION PREVENTION
- HOUSING ASSISTANCE
- TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
- VETERANS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Refer to Appendix H for a full list of PCHS program descriptions.

MDC COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS

MDC has been serving residents within the Tacoma city limits since 1964 with the goal of empowering communities with integrated social services and compassionate support so they can break free from survival mode, find stability and create a path forward.

MDC COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- ENERGY ASSISTANCE
- HOME WEATHERIZATION
- HOUSING
- BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
- CHILDCARE / FOOD
- YOUTH EDUCATION
- ADULT EDUCATION

OTHER SERVICES & PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FROM MDC INCLUDE:

- DRIVE TO ACHIEVE MOBILE SUCCESS HUB
- UPWARD BOUND
- EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTER

Refer to Appendix I for a full list of MDC program descriptions.





MDC CLIENTS SERVED 2020-2023

Total Number of Individuals	35,031
Total Number of Households	8,010
Male	14,816
Female	19,579
Other	42
Gender Unknown/Not Reported	594
Age 0 - 5	3,002
Age 6 - 13	6,957
Age 14 - 17	2,248
Age 18 - 24	3,345
Age 25 - 44	8,958
Age 45 - 54	3,162
Age 55 - 59	1,585
Age 60 - 64	1,586
Age 65 - 74	2,364
Age 75+	1,782
Age Unknown / Not Reported	42



MDC CLIENTS SERVED 2020-2023 (CONTINUED)

Disabled	7,040
Not Disabled	14,735
Disability Status Unknown / Not Reported	4,082
Health Insurance	22,683
No Health Insurance	1,725
Insurance Status Unknown / Not Reported	1,449
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin	3,352
Not Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin	22,767
Unknown / Not Reported	8,912
American Indian / Alaska Native	3,944
Asian	2,813
Black or African American	7,791
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	1,238
White	10,637
Other	1,313
Multi - Race (any 2 or more)	4,303
Race Unknown / Not Reported	2,992



PIERCE COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES CLIENTS SERVED 2020-2023 BY PROGRAM

	Home Repair	ECEAP	Weatherization	ChildReach	CARES	Energy Assistance - LIFEAP	Energy Assistance - PSE
Total Number of Individuals	489	3238	396	203	16548	15277	5482
Total Number of Households	301	754	198	203	7122	6358	2231
Male	164	1537	156	93	6819	3489	0
Female	325	1697	240	110	9691	5013	0
Other	0	1	0	0	7	4	0
Unknown / Not Reported	0	3	0	0	31	6771	5482
Age 0 - 5	16	1124	28	169	1711	1590	563
Age 6 - 13	27	599	51	34	2344	2013	0
Age 14 - 17	21	144	25	0	2410	2429	1582
Age 18 - 24	18	144	9	0	817	0	0
Age 25 - 44	40	1070	81	0	3461	0	0
Age 45 - 54	48	83	29	0	1582	3367	2288
Age 55 - 59	60	20	29	0	2840	0	0
Age 60 - 64	63	17	38	0	682	2936	1049
Age 65 - 74	117	24	66	0	25	0	0
Age 75+	79	7	40	0	651	0	0
Unknown / Not Reported	0	6	0	0	25	2942	0
Disabled	133	143	105	0	4314	3455	1167
Not Disabled	324	3057	272	0	12091	0	0
Unknown / Not Reported	32	38	19	203	143	11822	4315
Health Insurance	450	2940	365	0	15856	0	0
No Health Insurance	4	203	22	0	274	0	0
Unknown / Not Reported	35	95	9	203	418	15277	5482
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin	14	936	38	0	2339	0	0
Not Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin	460	2295	346	0	13991	0	0
Unknown / Not Reported	15	7	12	203	218	15277	5482
American Indian / Alaska Native	0	64	3	203	188	0	0
Asian	9	151	24	0	694	0	0
Black or African American	14	272	19	0	2799	0	0
Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	3	120	2	0	601	0	0
White	434	2306	289	0	7998	0	0
Other	1	76	14	0	802	0	0
Multi - Race (any 2 or more)	19	234	37	0	2837	0	0
Unknown / Not Reported	9	15	8	0	629	15277	5482



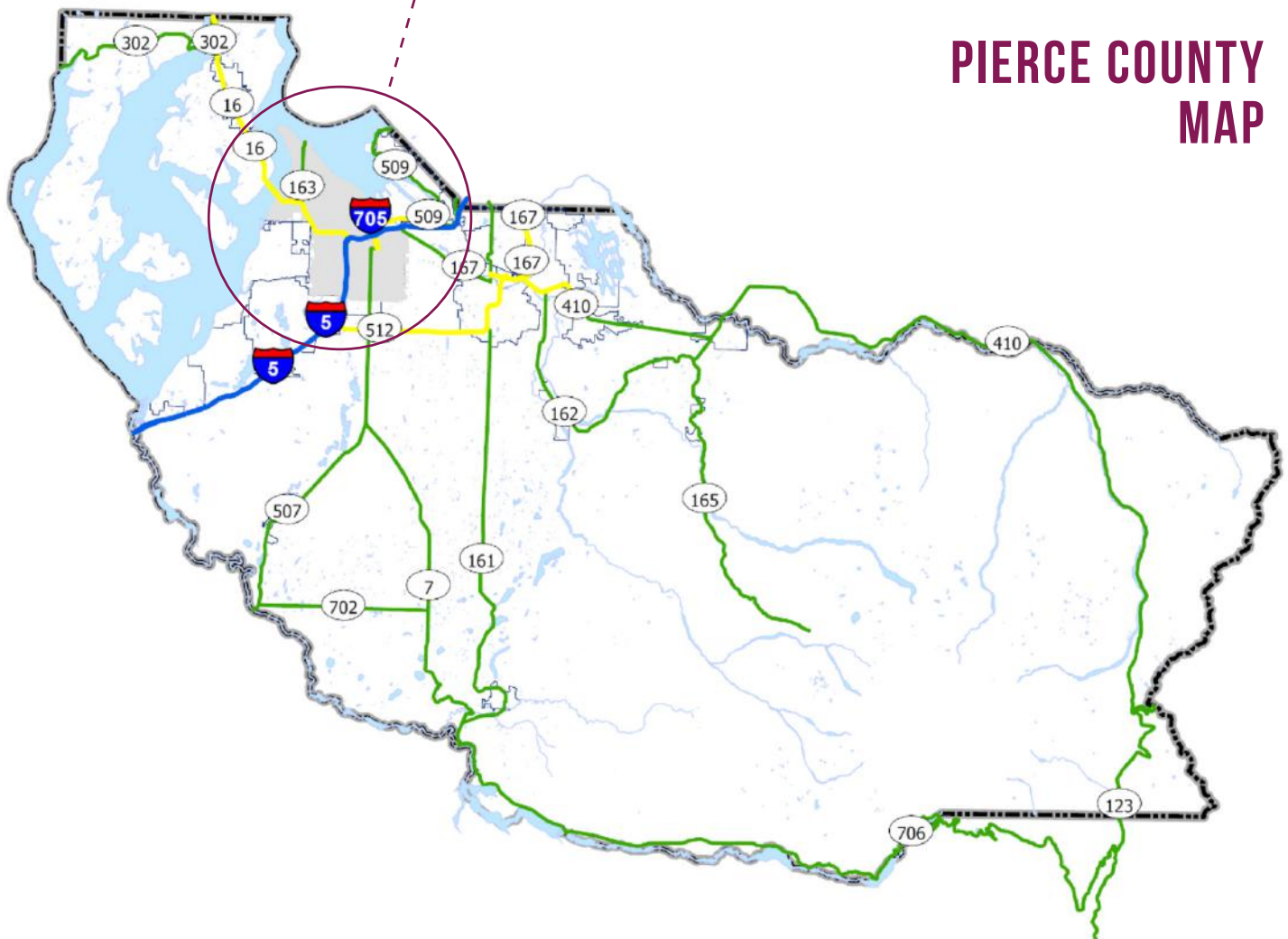
SERVICE AREA

MDC serves within the Tacoma city limits, (highlighted in gray in Figure 1) and PCHS CAP serves all of Pierce County, outside the city limits of Tacoma.

- **PIERCE COUNTY POPULATION: 921,130**
- **PIERCE COUNTY POPULATION (MINUS TACOMA): 701,784**
- **TACOMA POPULATION: 219,346**

Figure 1: Pierce County Community Action Programs Service Area

 Metropolitan Development Council (MDC) Service Area



POPULATION DATA				
	CHARACTERISTICS	PIERCE	TACOMA	SURVEY POPULATION
AGE	Under 18	21.5%	21.5%	.10%
	18-29	17.8%	17.8%	31.81%
	30-39	16%	16%	25.88%
	40-49	12.1%	12.1%	20.35%
	50-59	11.9%	11.9%	8.37%
	60+	20.7%	20.7%	12.79%
	Prefer not to answer	N/A	N/A	.0711%
RACE/ETHNICITY ¹	2 or more race / ethnicities	1.1%	1.1%	6.1%
	Additional/Other / Non-response	N/A	N/A	2.8%
	American Indian / Alaska Native	1.7%	1.7%	0.9%
	Asian	8.7%	8.7%	1.4%
	Black or African American	10.6%	10.6%	12.8%
	Hispanic, Latino or Spanish	12.3%	12.3%	30.2%
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1.1%	1.1%	0.4%
	White	61.3%	61.3%	45.4%
GENDER	Female	49.7%	49.8%	56.7%
	Male	50.3%	50.2%	39.63
	Genderqueer / Nonbinary	N/A	N/A	1.42%
	Transgender	N/A	N/A	.86%
	Additional gender/prefer not to answer	N/A	N/A	1.32%

¹ Respondents were coded as “2 or more races/ethnicities” if they selected this option on the survey or if they selected multiple races. Respondents were coded as “Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish” if they selected this option in either a question about race or a question about ethnicity. In subsequent analyses these categories are combined into “White” and “non-White”.

SURVEY PARTICIPATION

The Pierce County Community Needs Assessment survey ran from October through December 2023. The survey was administered in SurveyMonkey and offered in English, Khmer, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Samoan, Ukrainian and Vietnamese, and included 72 questions. Paper versions of the survey were available upon request. The survey was promoted through community organizations and social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. A drawing for \$25 gift cards was offered as an incentive for participants. In total there were 2,513 responses with a 58% completion rate.

Because the CNA is designed to highlight the successes and gaps in services and programs throughout Pierce County, all analyses presented in this report, unless otherwise stated, are for respondents who listed at least one need in the CNA survey. Of the 2,513 responses, 1,978 individuals indicated that they had at least one need.

Refer to Appendix F for survey questions.



FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

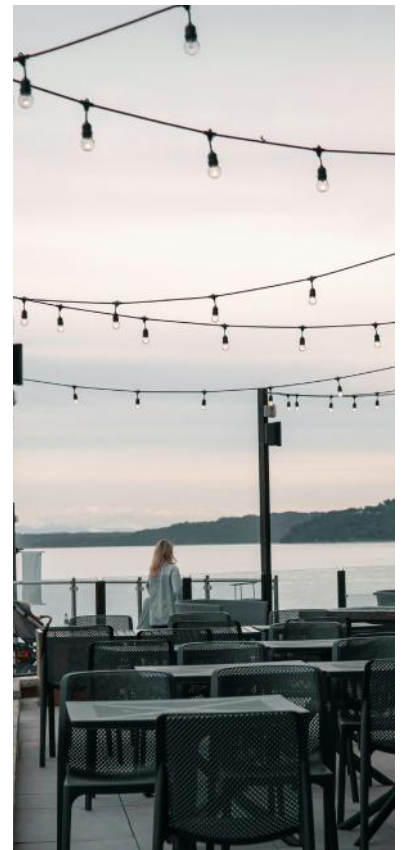
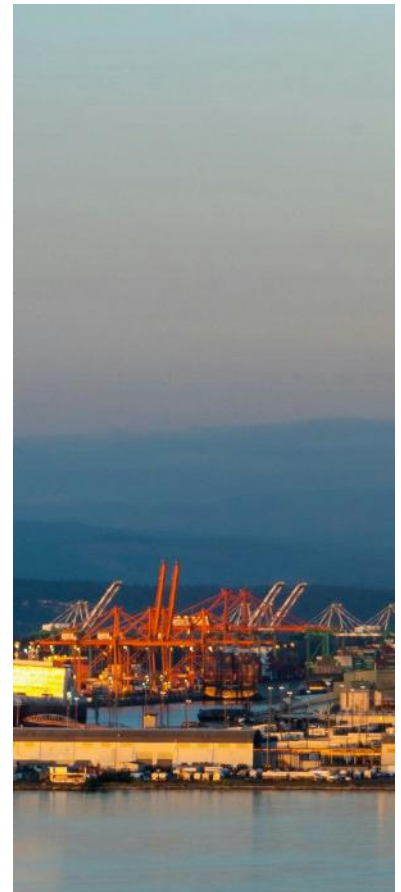
Focus group discussions were held in partnership with local community organizations and led by the CNA consultant from October through December 2023. In all, four focus groups were conducted with 14 participants. The aim of the focus groups was to collect input directly from community members in intimate group settings. These discussions were 90 minutes in length and conducted in person (2 focus groups) or virtually via Microsoft Teams (2 focus groups).

Active discussions took place in all focus groups, and each session was recorded and transcribed verbatim. Due to the limited sample size, the qualitative data from these focus groups is not included in the analysis. Nevertheless, quotes from community members who took part in the focus groups are featured throughout the report. Recruitment for focus groups occurred through MDC, PCHS CAP and other partner organization's outreach. Light refreshments were provided during each in person focus group.

Please refer to Appendix G for the list of questions used to facilitate these discussions.

STRENGTHS

The Pierce County CNA survey and focus group outreach was conducted in partnership with multiple partner organizations. More than 2,500 responses were collected. The hope is that the data gathered in this CNA will be used by organizations throughout Pierce County to better understand the needs our community faces and effectively approach solutions.



LIMITATIONS

Both the survey and focus groups utilized a convenience sampling method, relying on participants who were willing to take part. Monetary incentives were offered for participation. As a result, the findings cannot be used for the broader Pierce County population or any specific subgroup within it.

The survey sample size is inadequate for all individual subgroups, especially regarding race and ethnicity.

Survey participants could skip any question throughout the survey.

Although these results capture a portion of the Pierce County population, they might not fully encapsulate the sentiments, perspectives, and convictions of all demographics. It's essential to complement these findings with various other data sources to initiate discussions regarding the crucial next courses of action.



RESULTS

KEY FINDINGS

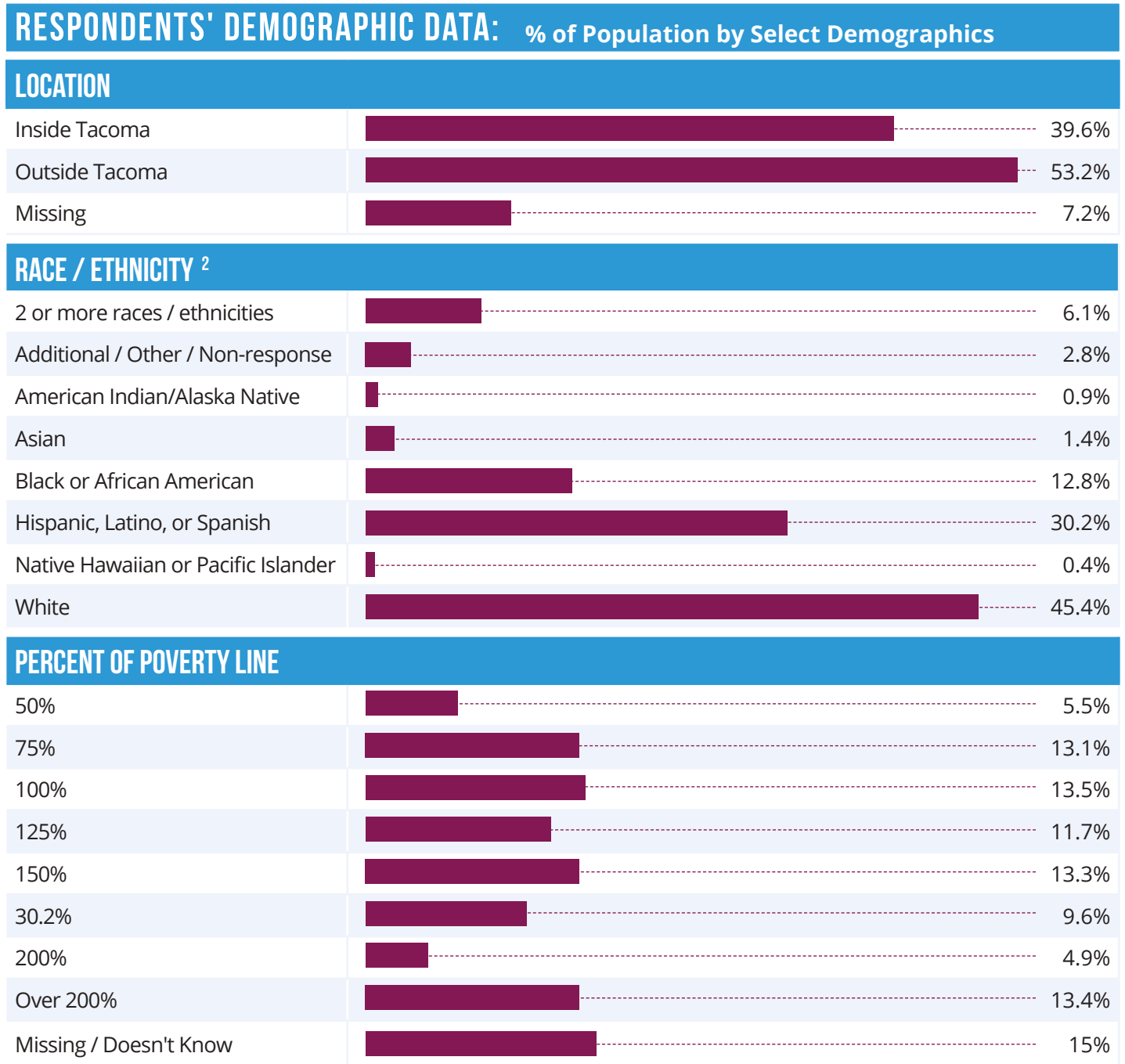
- Survey results show that approximately one out of every four respondents need behavioral health resources, food and groceries, or other health services.
- Respondents living outside of Tacoma consistently identified behavioral health needs more often than respondents living in Tacoma.
- Respondents living below 150% of the poverty line were more likely to identify needs for food and groceries compared to those above 150% of the poverty line, especially respondents who had not previously accessed services.
- The likelihood of identifying a health need varied substantively by whether a respondent had previously accessed services.
- Examining co-occurring needs shows three distinct groups of respondents: those with generalized financial needs, those with specific financial needs, and those with community-based needs.





PIERCE COUNTY CNA SURVEY POPULATION

Figure 2, "Respondents' Demographic Data", provides demographic information by location, race², and income.



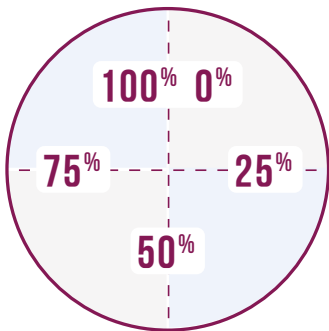
² Respondents were coded as "2 or more races/ethnicities" if they selected this option on the survey or if they selected multiple races. Respondents were coded as "Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish" if they selected this option in either a question about race or a question about ethnicity. In subsequent analyses these categories are combined into "White" and "non-White".

3 DISTINCT GROUPS IDENTIFIED

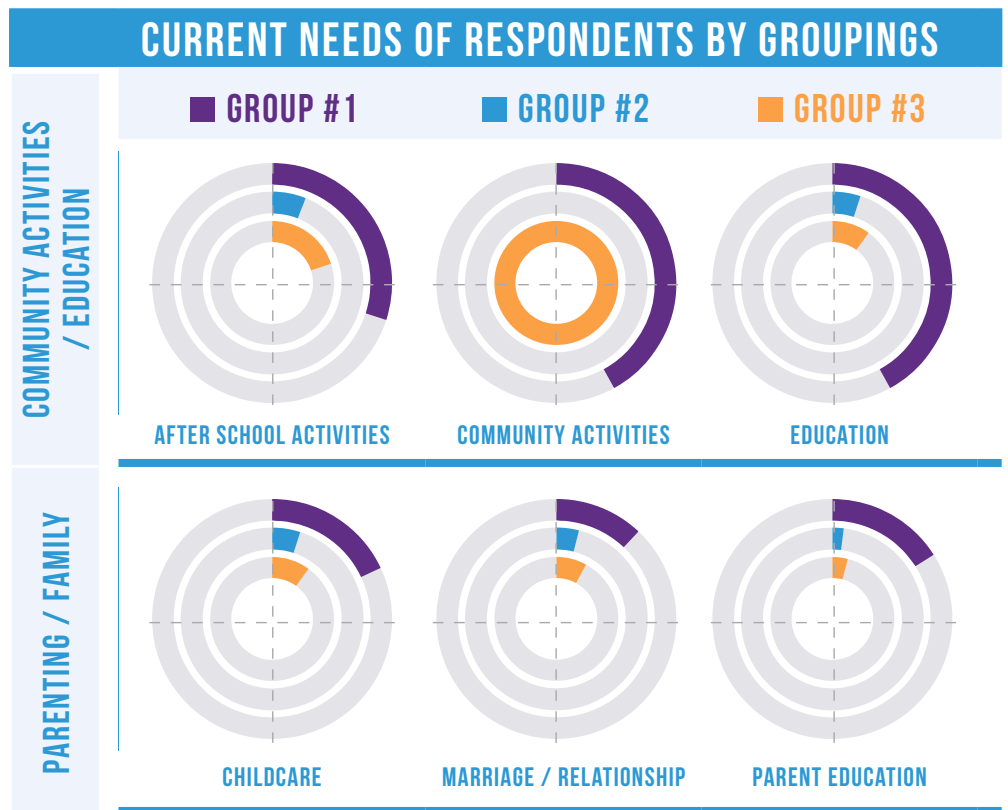
The data from the survey revealed respondents who indicated multiple needs could be placed in one of three distinct groups:

- **THOSE WITH GENERALIZED FINANCIAL NEEDS | GROUP 1**
- **THOSE WITH SPECIFIC FINANCIAL NEEDS | GROUP 2**
- **THOSE WITH COMMUNITY-BASED NEEDS | GROUP 3**

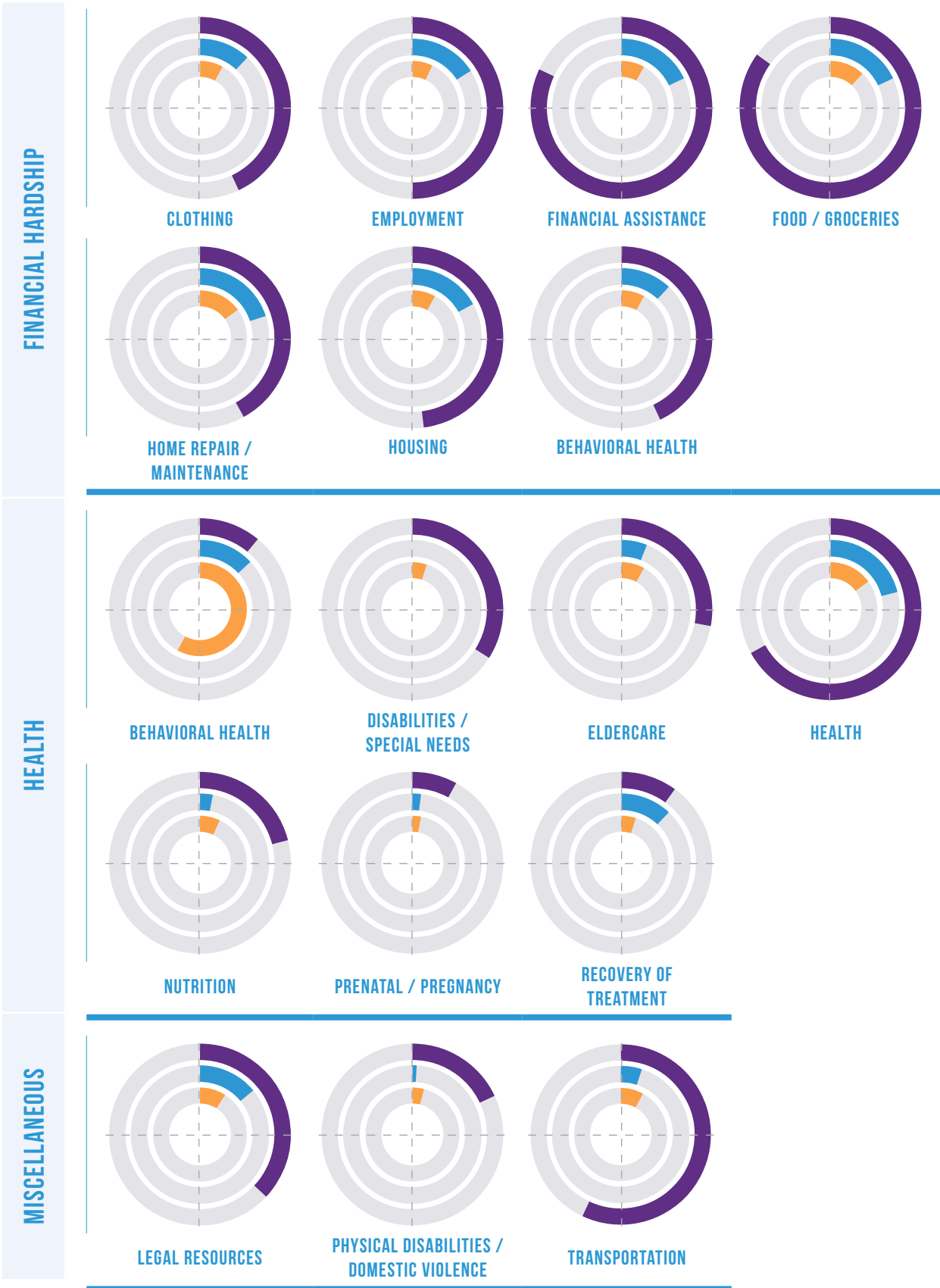
Figure 3, "Current Needs of Responsibility by Groupings", displays the overlapping needs patterns in response data by showing the percentage of respondents who identified each of the 22 needs among three distinct groups. On the left-hand side, Figure 3 groups specific needs into broader "need categories."



Circles indicate the of percentage of overall respondents; quadrant lines show the location of 0%, 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100%



CURRENT NEEDS OF RESPONDENTS BY GROUPINGS (CONTINUED)



“Inaccurate information, agencies don’t know what each other is doing, miscommunication.”

— Survey respondents answer when asked about their barriers to service

- **GROUP 1** listed 8.4 needs on average and has more generalized current needs, with a high percentage indicating needs for food/groceries, financial assistance, and health or medical needs.
- **GROUP 2** listed 2.9 needs on average and has more specific needs, although there are fewer overall needs. Particular needs include behavioral health services, health and medical, and home repairs.
- **GROUP 3** listed 2.1 needs on average, has the fewest needs overall, and their needs tend to focus on community and education, rather than financial. This group’s top needs were community activities, behavioral health services, and after-school activities.
- **GROUPS 2 AND 3** are distinguished from each other by group 2 identifying more needs in the Financial Hardship category and fewer needs in the Community Activity / Education category.



Survey respondents and focus group participants listed multiple barriers to receiving services including transportation, confusing application processes, not being able to find correct program information and income qualifications being too low.

Several survey respondents and focus group participants described their transition from meeting income requirements as highly challenging for their families. Upon no longer qualifying for assistance based on income, they encountered financial strain, which significantly impacted their ability to meet their expenses, leaving them with limited available funds.

“I don’t make enough to cover my bills, but somehow I make too much to qualify for any kind of help”

— Survey respondent

CHILDCARE ACCESSIBILITY

Given that childcare emerged as the top need among respondents residing outside of Tacoma city limits (45.45%), initiatives should be implemented to improve access to affordable and quality childcare services in this area.

ENHANCED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Respondents both inside and outside Tacoma identified behavioral health resources as a critical need (37.94% outside Tacoma, 55.08% within Tacoma). Therefore, efforts should be directed towards expanding access to mental health counseling and support services, including initiatives to reduce wait times for appointments, increase the number of available providers, and offer low to no cost services.

“My electricity bill for the winter went from \$300 to \$700... but the program that they [the electric company] kept telling everybody to use [to subsidize] had an income qualification that was so low my family could not get onto it. And we only made \$32,000 a year.”

— Focus group participant

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Financial assistance including support for energy bills, rent, and other essential expenses, emerged as a significant need for respondents in both areas (33.17% outside Tacoma, 47.47% within Tacoma). With income requirements being cited as one barrier to accessing support services in this area, programs should be developed to provide financial aid to individuals and families living outside income requirements.



COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND HOUSING

While community activities for families were identified as the top need within Tacoma city limits (56.56%), housing needs were also prominent (39.02%). Therefore, efforts should focus on providing accessible and inclusive recreational opportunities for families. Additionally, initiatives should be implemented to address housing affordability and availability, including the expansion of affordable housing options and rental assistance programs.

RESPONDENTS TOP 4 NEEDS (OUTSIDE OF TACOMA CITY LIMITS)

CURRENT NEED	% OF RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED THIS AS THEIR TOP NEED
Childcare	45.45%
Behavioral health resources (emotional well-being / counseling)	37.94%
Financial assistance (energy, rent assistance, other)	33.17%
Disabilities / special needs resources	33.00%

RESPONDENTS TOP 3 NEEDS (WITHIN TACOMA CITY LIMITS)

CURRENT NEED	% OF RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED THIS AS THEIR TOP NEED
Community activities for families (parks, recreation sports)	56.56%
Behavioral health resources (emotional well-being / counseling)	55.08%
Financial assistance (energy, rent assistance, other)	47.47%

GENERAL SURVEY POPULATION FINDINGS

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH NEEDS:

Approximately one out of every four respondents expressed a need for behavioral health resources.

LIVING OUTSIDE OF TACOMA WAS CONSISTENTLY ASSOCIATED WITH A HIGHER LIKELIHOOD OF SELECTING A HEALTH NEED THAN THOSE RESIDING WITHIN TACOMA

- Among respondents who had received services within the past 12 months, those living outside of Tacoma were 5.1% more likely to report needing behavioral health services.
- Of respondents who had not received services, those living outside of Tacoma were 9.8% more likely to indicate a need for behavioral health services.

THE PRIMARY REASONS CITED FOR NOT RECEIVING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COUNSELING FOR RESPONDENTS LIVING OUTSIDE OF TACOMA CITY LIMITS WERE:

- Lack of available openings or inability to find a provider accepting new clients (30.28%)
- Excessively long wait times for appointments (27.06%)
- Inability to afford co-pays or deductibles (25.69%)
- Lack of transportation to reach a counselor (19.27%)

“Then you get evicted because you have mental health issues, trauma and PTSD, which sometimes causes unsavory behaviors.”

— A focus group participant on how untreated mental health symptoms can have a life altering impact

THE PRIMARY REASONS CITED FOR NOT RECEIVING BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COUNSELING INSIDE TACOMA CITY LIMITS WERE:

- Excessively long wait times for appointments (46.99%)
- Lack of available openings or inability to find a provider accepting new clients (40.96%)
- Inability to afford co-pays or deductibles (31.33%)
- Counselor refusal to accept insurance or Medicaid (25.30%)

The higher identification of behavioral health needs outside Tacoma could potentially be related to access to mental health services, socioeconomic status, and community support systems. Areas outside Tacoma may face unique challenges related to mental health, which could also contribute to higher reported needs in these areas.

Moving forward it will be important to address these disparities in access to behavioral health resources, particularly for individuals residing outside the Tacoma city limits.

“Living in Fredrickson, we are neglected.”

— Survey respondent





RESPONDENTS (OUTSIDE OF TACOMA CITY LIMITS)

QUESTION 65: IN THE LAST YEAR, WAS THERE A TIME YOU NEEDED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE ABUSE) COUNSELING BUT COULD NOT GET IT?	% OF RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED THIS AS THEIR TOP NEED
Yes	45.45%
Not applicable	37.94%
No	33.17%

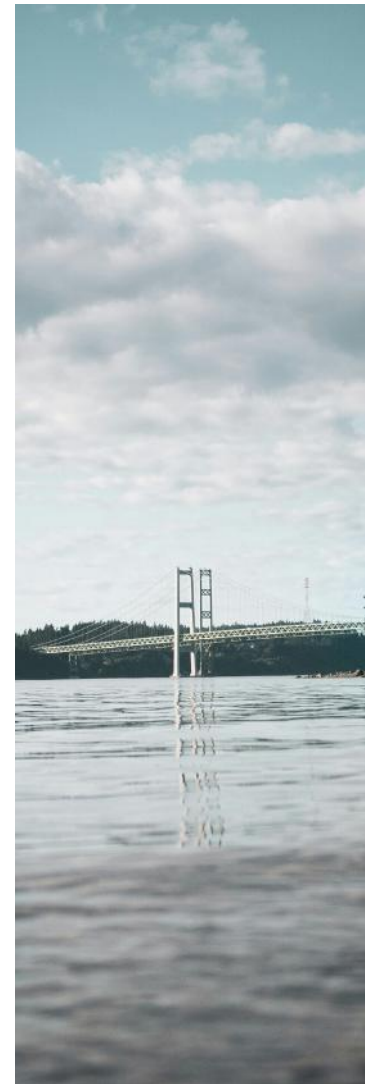
QUESTION 66: WHY WEREN'T YOU ABLE TO GET BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COUNSELING?	% OF RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED THIS AS THEIR #1 CURRENT NEED
There are no openings / I can't find a provider accepting new clients	56.56%
Too long to wait for an appointment	55.08%
I couldn't afford to pay my co-pay or deductible	56.56%
I didn't have any way to get to a counselor	55.08%



RESPONDENTS (WITHIN TACOMA CITY LIMITS)

QUESTION 65: IN THE LAST YEAR, WAS THERE A TIME YOU NEEDED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH (MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE ABUSE) COUNSELING BUT COULD NOT GET IT?	RESPONDENTS ANSWER (%)
Yes	22.72%
Not applicable	27.84%
No	49.44%

QUESTION 66: WHY WEREN'T YOU ABLE TO GET BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COUNSELING?	% OF RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED THIS AS THEIR #1 REASON FOR NOT GETTING CARE
There are no openings / I can't find a provider accepting new clients	30.28%
Too long to wait for an appointment	27.06%
I couldn't afford to pay my co-pay or deductible	25.69%
I didn't have any way to get to a counselor	19.27%





FOOD AND GROCERY NEEDS

The data from this survey indicated a substantial demand for food, groceries, and other health services within the community, with approximately one in four respondents expressing such needs. These findings underscore the significance of addressing food insecurity and healthcare accessibility as critical priorities for community support and intervention.

Moreover, the survey highlights notable disparities among respondents based on income levels and prior service utilization. Specifically, individuals living below 150% of the poverty line are disproportionately more likely to identify needs for food and groceries, particularly among those who have not previously accessed services, who were 8.5% more likely to indicate the same need. This shines light on the heightened vulnerability faced by economically disadvantaged individuals in meeting basic needs.

Addressing food insecurity is imperative to ensure the well-being of all community members. By addressing these disparities and fostering equitable access to essential resources and services, communities can work towards building a more inclusive and supportive environment for all residents, regardless of socioeconomic status.



HEALTH SERVICES NEEDS

Approximately one out of every four respondents expressed a need for other health services.

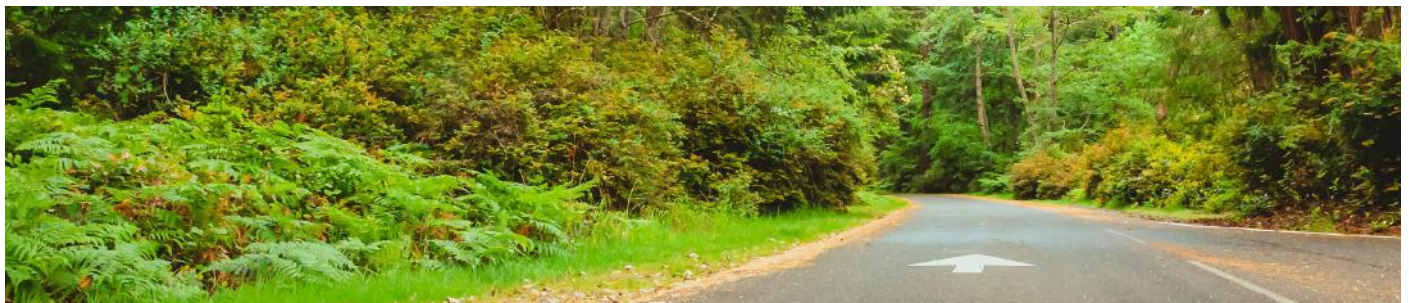
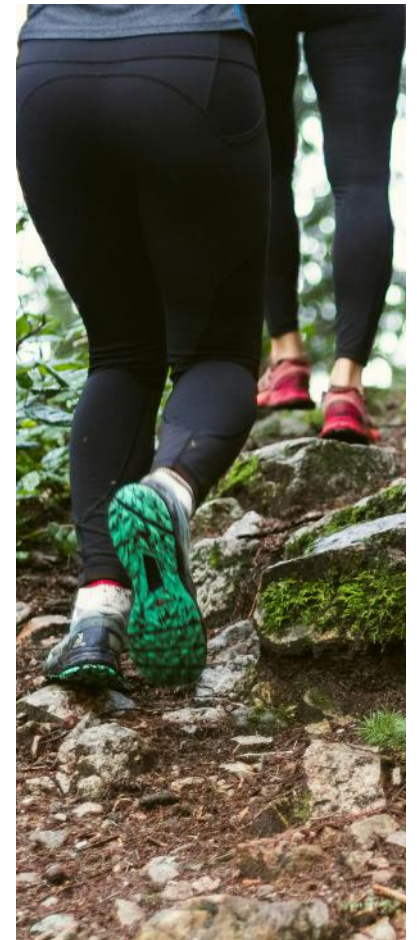
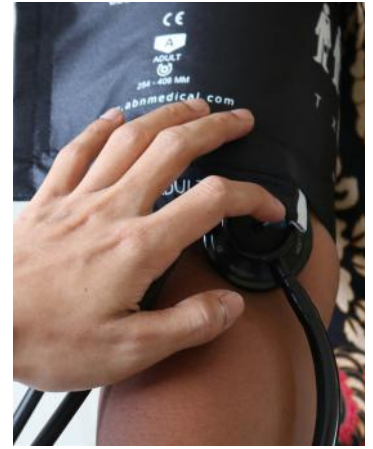
Community members throughout Pierce County reported encountering barriers to accessing healthcare. Survey data revealed that appointment wait times were identified as the primary obstacle to obtaining necessary health services.

Outside Tacoma city limits, the most common barriers reported by respondents included excessively long wait times for appointments (36.06%), inability to afford co-pays or deductibles (25.90%), lack of insurance coverage (13.94%), and fear (12.55%).

Conversely, within Tacoma city limits, respondents highlighted prolonged appointment wait times (30.29%), financial constraints regarding co-pays or deductibles (21.43%), fear (20.57%), and difficulties finding providers who accept their insurance or Medicaid (18.86%) as major obstacles to accessing healthcare.

Again, a difference in likelihood of identifying a health need varied substantially by whether a respondent had previously accessed services. Respondents who had previously received services and were living below 150% of the poverty line, were 4.9% less likely to indicate a health need. Respondents who had not previously received services and were living below 150% of the poverty line, they were 9.2% more likely to indicate a health need.

These findings again highlight the need for targeted interventions and policy initiatives aimed at reducing appointment wait times, improving affordability, and enhancing healthcare accessibility for all residents, particularly those living below the poverty line.





RESPONDENTS (OUTSIDE OF TACOMA CITY LIMITS)

QUESTION 63: WAS THERE A TIME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS WHEN YOU NEEDED TO SEE A DOCTOR BUT DID NOT?	RESPONDENTS ANSWER (%)
Yes	51.38%
No	48.62%

QUESTION 64: WHY WEREN'T YOU ABLE TO GET MEDICAL CARE?	% OF RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED THIS AS THEIR #1 REASON FOR NOT GETTING CARE
Too long to wait for an appointment	36.06%
I couldn't afford to pay my co-pay or deductible	25.90%
I didn't have insurance	13.94%
Fear	12.55%





RESPONDENTS (WITHIN TACOMA CITY LIMITS)

QUESTION 63: WAS THERE A TIME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS WHEN YOU NEEDED TO SEE A DOCTOR BUT DID NOT?	RESPONDENTS ANSWER [%]
Yes	46.30%
No	53.70%

QUESTION 66: WHY WEREN'T YOU ABLE TO GET BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COUNSELING?	% OF RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED THIS AS THEIR #1 REASON FOR NOT GETTING CARE
Too long to wait for an appointment	30.29%
I couldn't afford to pay my co-pay or deductible	21.43%
Fear	20.57%
The doctor refused to take my insurance or Medicaid	18.86%





NEXT STEPS

The CNA survey gave multiple opportunities for participants to give feedback on how services could be improved and what programs might be missing from Pierce County. Below is an overview of some of those opportunities for improvement.

WHEN ASKED: “DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIFIC FEEDBACK REGARDING THE SERVICE(S) YOU RECEIVED?” SURVEY RESPONSES INCLUDED:

“Services in Tacoma are unattainable. They are not publicized, and when someone does learn about them, there's 100 hoops to go through and confusing paperwork.”

“Income threshold is too low.”

“I received homeless transition services which helped with my deposit after being homeless with my son. They did partial, which I'm extremely grateful for, but it was extremely difficult to come up with the rest of the deposit.”

“I've also found that the reason why people give up on services is because they are not getting the proper information or updated information.”



WHEN ASKED TO “LIST THE SERVICES/PROGRAMS YOU THINK ARE MISSING IN THE COMMUNITY” RESPONDENTS SAID:

“An effective rental assistance program for people in Lakewood. A program for financial help with rent excluding Eviction Prevention.”

“Someone to do the paperwork or help us apply for programs.”

“Pierce Transit monthly passes for Aged, Blind, or Disabled (ABD) qualified individuals (similar to the subsidized annual pass provided by King County Public Health Department).”

“Training programs that are free or low cost, social interacting groups.”

“Mental health assistance programs.”

**ALTHOUGH THERE IS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT,
SURVEY PARTICIPANTS ALSO EXPRESSED
GRATITUDE FOR SERVICES AND ACKNOWLEDGED
THE HARD WORK OF SERVICE STAFF:**

“Very helpful.”

“They [service staff] are doing their best to help people with the things that people need.”

“The Customer Solutions staff were very helpful. They encouraged me to apply when I wasn't sure I'd qualify.”

“I'm very satisfied with the services that I receive from MDC. They've been very helpful when I have issues pertaining to my apartment.”



COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Collaboration will continue between MDC, PCHS CAP and other community organizations to enhance access to services and address various community needs comprehensively. Specifically focusing on behavioral health resources, food and groceries, and other health services.

This will involve working with local organizations to potentially expand services to rural areas, offer services during non-traditional work hours, and provide support to navigate available services and streamline the program application process.

Additionally, there should be a focus on reducing wait times for assistance at agency offices and introducing additional emergency assistance programs.

CONTINUED COMMUNITY FORUMS AND ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

MDC and PCHS CAP will host community forums, and bolster organizational partnerships with local health care agencies, food banks and behavioral health agencies in order to address the needs outlined within this report.



TECHNICAL NOTES

Correlated variables may confound the interpretation of the relationships between three key demographic groups: living inside versus outside Tacoma, being above or below 150% of the poverty line, and non-White versus White individuals. Logistic regression controls for these potentially confounding covariates.

In the analysis presented in this brief, logistic regression models were estimated for each of the three most common needs: Behavioral Health, Food/Groceries, and Health (medical, dental). Specifically, we estimate Equation 1.

$$\text{EQ 1: } \log \log \left(\frac{p_i}{1-p_i} \right) = \beta^T x_i$$

In equation 1, p_i represents the probability that individual i selected the need under study. x_i is a vector of individual-level covariates that control for a respondent's gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, educational attainment, family status (presence of children in the household), veteran status, and employment status. Contained within the x_i vector are the variables of interest: living inside versus outside Tacoma, being above or below 150% of the poverty line, and non-White versus White individuals.

This brief presents the average marginal associations of living outside of Tacoma relative to living in Tacoma, being non-White relative to being White, and having an income below 150% of the poverty line relative to above. Because these three variables are categorical the average marginal associations can be interpreted as the change in the probability of identifying a specific need relative to the base group.

While the textual callouts represent the average marginal associations, the individual marginal associations are plotted on the y-axis of the figures. Specifically, the graphics plot the value of the derivative of the logit function (Equation 2) for a one-unit change in the variable of interest at each point in the dataset.

$$\text{EQ 2: } p_i(x_i) = \frac{1}{1+e^{-\beta^T x_i}}$$

The survey design included clients of the Metropolitan Development Council and Pierce County Human Services and respondents from social media. Given the different sampling populations, it is believed that the results may be substantively different based on the survey channel. However, there is no clear way in the data to distinguish when a respondent responded to a social media post or a survey taken through a service connection. Future surveys should include at least one question on outreach channels.

For this reason, the analyses in this brief display results for respondents who indicated that they had received services from the Metropolitan Development Council and/or Human Services within the past 12 months, and those that had not or did not know if they had.

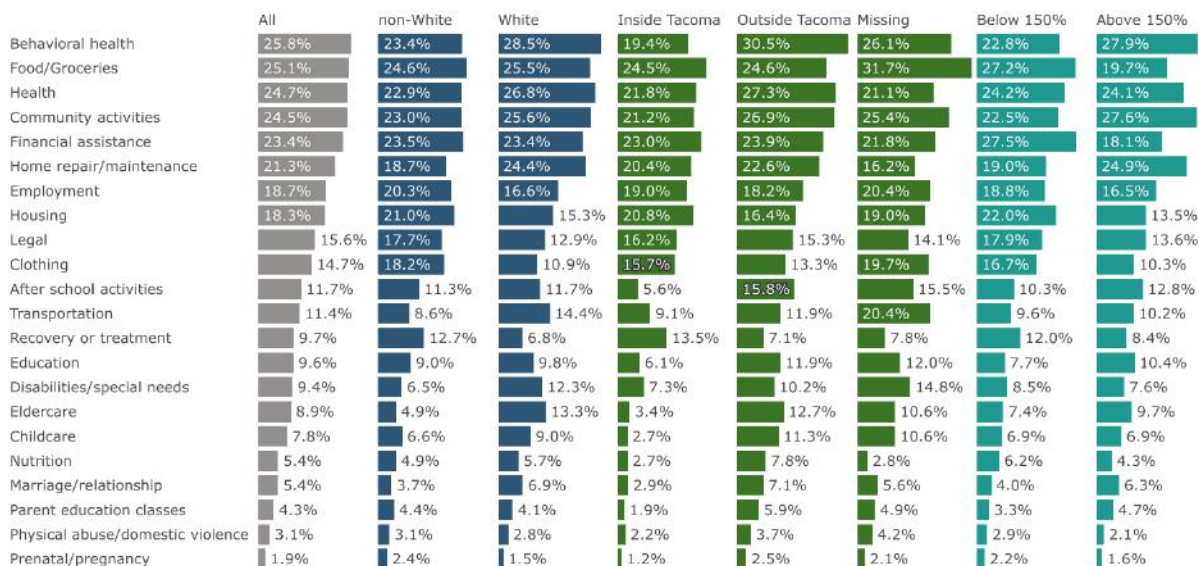


Appendix A: Current Needs by Respondent Characteristics

Figure A1 shows distinct patterns of identified needs by demographic factors.⁴ However, caution is warranted so as not to over-interpret these results. These results are bivariate comparisons of needs and demographic factors and make no effort to control for potentially confounding covariates.

Figure A1

Current Needs

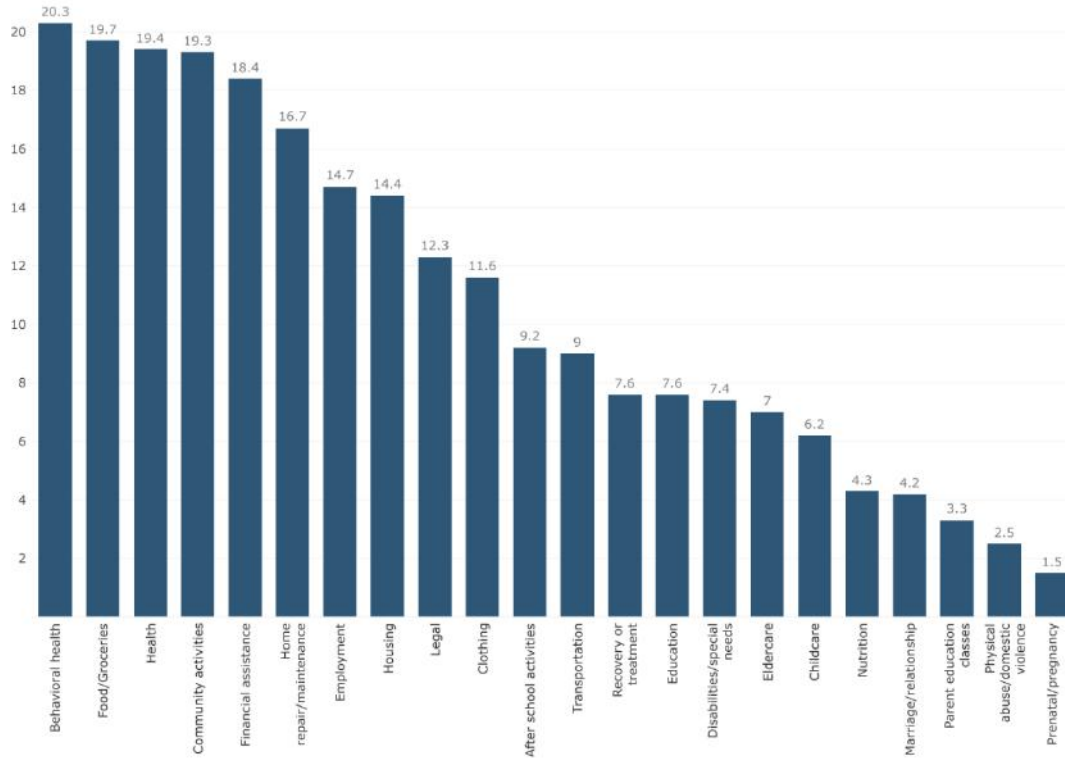


⁴ Chi-squared tests for homogeneity indicate needs are different by categories of race, income, and location.

Appendix B: Needs and Demographic Data for All Respondents

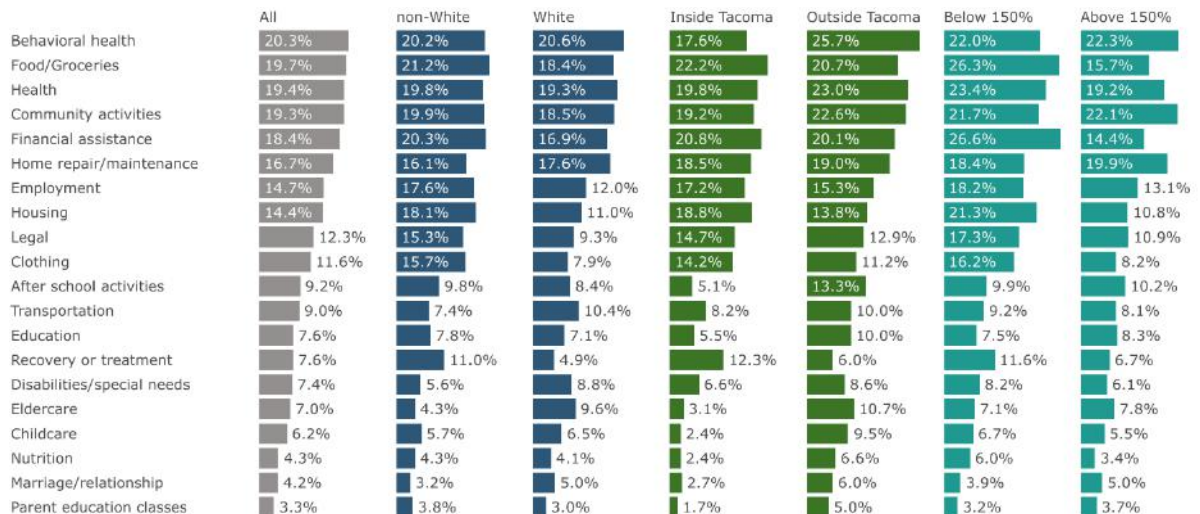
Figure B1

Current Needs: All Respondents



The following percent of people identified in each category did not select any current needs: living inside Tacoma (9.4%), living outside Tacoma (15.8%), missing location data (64.3%), individuals identifying as non-White (13.5%), individuals identifying as White (27.8%), individuals preferring not to answer questions about their race (35.6%), above 150% of the poverty line (20.1%), below 150% of the poverty line (3.3%), and individuals who did not provide income information (50.3%).

Figure B2



Appendix C: Marginal Association Tables

Table C1

Need: Behavioral Health						
	Outside Tacoma		Non-White		Below 150% of the Poverty Line	
Coefficient	0.0511	0.0976	-0.0517	0.0406	-0.0384	-0.0693
95% Confidence Interval	(-0.005, 0.107)	(0.030, 0.165)	(-0.105, 0.001)	(-0.027, 0.109)	(-0.090, 0.013)	(-0.147, 0.008)
P-value	0.0743	0.0045	0.0551	0.2417	0.1418	0.0798
Previously Received Services	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Need: Food/Groceries						
	Outside Tacoma		Non-White		Below 150% of the Poverty Line	
Coefficient	0.049	-0.0575	-0.0503	0.0458	0.0291	0.0847
95% Confidence Interval	(-0.004, 0.102)	(-0.127, 0.012)	(-0.102, 0.001)	(-0.02, 0.111)	(-0.021, 0.08)	(0.009, 0.161)
P-value	0.0677	0.1027	0.0562	0.1704	0.2617	0.029
Previously Received Services	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Need: Health (Medical, Dental)						
	Outside Tacoma		Non-White		Below 150% of the Poverty Line	
Coefficient	0.0278	0.0361	-0.0515	0.0335	-0.0486	0.0915
95% Confidence Interval	(-0.028, 0.084)	(-0.028, 0.1)	(-0.104, 0.001)	(-0.032, 0.099)	(-0.01, 0.003)	(0.014, 0.169)
P-value	0.3307	0.2699	0.0539	0.3186	0.0635	0.0206
Previously Received Services	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

Marginal effects are from logistic regressions of the listed current need against location, race, and income 0/1 indicators. Regressions also control for respondent's gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, educational attainment, family status (presence of children in the household), veteran status, and employment status. Regressions are split into populations that had and had not received services from Pierce County's Human Services and/or the Metropolitan Development Council.

Appendix D: Marginal Association Tables, All Respondents

Table D1

Need: Behavioral Health						
	Outside Tacoma		Non-White		Below 150% of the Poverty Line	
Coefficient	0.0527	0.06	-0.0483	0.0205	-0.036	-0.0194
95% Confidence Interval	(-0.002, 0.107)	(0.011, 0.109)	(-0.099, 0.002)	(-0.027, 0.065)	(-0.085, 0.013)	(-0.073, 0.034)
P-value	0.0579	0.0167	0.0617	0.3679	0.1521	0.4762
Previously Received Services	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

Need: Food/Groceries						
	Outside Tacoma		Non-White		Below 150% of the Poverty Line	
Coefficient	0.0502	-0.0475	-0.0448	0.0341	0.0287	0.0773
95% Confidence Interval	(-0.002, 0.102)	(-0.097, 0.002)	(-0.095, 0.005)	(-0.001, 0.078)	(-0.022, 0.079)	(0.024, 0.130)
P-value	0.0568	0.0589	0.0768	0.1247	0.2644	0.0042
Previously Received Services	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

Need: Health (Medical, Dental)						
	Outside Tacoma		Non-White		Below 150% of the Poverty Line	
Coefficient	0.0315	0.017	-0.0493	0.0192	-0.0467	0.0825
95% Confidence Interval	(-0.024, 0.087)	(-0.026, 0.059)	(-0.01, 0.001)	(-0.024, 0.063)	(-0.096, 0.003)	(0.028, 0.137)
P-value	0.2636	0.4331	0.0545	0.3854	0.0634	0.0032
Previously Received Services	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

Marginal effects are from logistic regressions of the listed current need against location, race, and income 0/1 indicators. Regressions also control for respondent's gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, educational attainment, family status (presence of children in the household), veteran status, and employment status. Regressions are split into populations that had and had not received services from Pierce County's Human Services and/or the Metropolitan Development Council.

Appendix E: Marginal Association Tables, Combining Samples with and without past services.

Table E1

Need: Behavioral Health			
	<u>Outside Tacoma</u>	<u>Non-White</u>	<u>Below 150% of the Poverty Line</u>
Coefficient	0.0791	-0.0248	-0.0377
95% Confidence Interval	(-0.002, 0.107)	(-0.066, 0.016)	(-0.080, 0.005)
P-value	0.0003	0.2356	0.0835
Need: Food/Groceries			
	<u>Outside Tacoma</u>	<u>Non-White</u>	<u>Below 150% of the Poverty Line</u>
Coefficient	0.0119	-0.0175	0.0524
95% Confidence Interval	(-0.030, 0.054)	(-0.058, 0.023)	(0.010, 0.094)
P-value	0.5803	0.3998	0.0147
Need: Health (Medical, Dental)			
	<u>Outside Tacoma</u>	<u>Non-White</u>	<u>Below 150% of the Poverty Line</u>
Coefficient	0.032	-0.0225	0.0064
95% Confidence Interval	(-0.011, 0.075)	(-0.063, 0.018)	(-0.035, 0.048)
P-value	0.1432	0.2815	0.7645

Marginal effects are from logistic regressions of the listed current need against location, race, and income 0/1 indicators. Regressions also control for respondent's gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, educational attainment, family status (presence of children in the household), veteran status, and employment status.

Appendix F: Pierce County Community Needs Assessment Survey Questions

Every three years, Community Action Programs through Pierce County Human Services and the Metropolitan Development Council (MDC) conduct a comprehensive assessment to identify strengths, barriers, and resources in the community to better serve children, youth and families.

This Community Needs Assessment (CNA) is designed to highlight the successes and gaps in services and programs throughout Pierce County so we can learn how to better serve those in need in our communities. It's important for us to hear from you because your voice will impact the services and programs offered in Tacoma and Pierce County.

This survey is anonymous and should take about 15-30 minutes. Once you've completed the survey you have the option of entering to win a \$25 Visa gift card.

We will use the results to help us better understand the issues facing our community and what we can do to create effective solutions. The completed CNA will be available in early 2024.

Demographics

We ask multiple demographic questions to make sure we hear from diverse stakeholders and better understand the unique differences in experience. All questions in this survey are voluntary and anonymous.

1. What age group are you in?

- 17 or younger
- 18-20
- 21-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60 or older
- Prefer not to answer

2. Which of the following best describes your gender?

- Female
- Genderqueer/Non-binary
- Male
- Transgender
- Prefer not to answer
- Additional gender category/identity not listed (please specify):

3. Which of the following best describes you?

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Gay or Lesbian
- Heterosexual or Straight
- Pansexual
- Queer
- Additional sexual orientation not listed (please specify): _____
- Prefer not to answer

4. Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity? (Check all that apply)

- 2 or more races/ethnicities
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Middle Eastern or North African
- White
- Prefer not to answer
- Additional race/ethnicity category/identity not listed (please specify):

5. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- No, I am not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Cuban
- Prefer not to answer
- Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin (Salvadoran, Dominican, Columbian, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.) (please specify): _____

6. What language(s) do you speak at home? (Check all that apply)

- American Sign Language (ASL)
- Cambodian
- English
- Khmer
- Korean
- Russian
- Samoan
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Ukrainian

- Vietnamese
- Additional language(s) not listed (please specify): _____

7. Do you identify as a person with a disability or other chronic condition? (Some examples include diabetes, arthritis, mobility-related disability, etc.)

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

8. How would you describe your disability or chronic condition? (Check all that apply) **Skip this question if you answered “no” or “prefer not to answer” to the previous question.**

- Arthritis
- Autism
- Behavioral/mental health condition
- Blind or visually impaired
- Cancer
- Deaf or hard of hearing
- Diabetes
- Health-related disability
- Heart disease
- Learning disability
- Mobility-related disability
- Speech-related disability
- Prefer not to answer
- Additional disability not listed (please specify): _____

9. Are you a United States Veteran?

- Not a Military Veteran
- Active Duty
- Disabled Veteran
- Reserves
- Military Veteran
- Prefer not to answer

10. What is your highest level of education completed?

- Grade 0-8
- Grade 9-12
- Non-Graduate
- High School Graduate/ GED
- 12th Grade + Some Post-Secondary School
- 2-year College or trade school Graduate
- 4-year College Graduate
- Graduate or Other Post-Secondary School Other (please specify):

11. Have you received services from the following organizations the past 12 months? (Check all that apply)

- Metropolitan Development Council (MDC)
- Pierce County Human Services
- No, I have not received services from any of these organizations in the past 12 months
- I don't know

12. Have you received any of the following services in the past 12 months? (Check all that apply)

- Aging & Disability Resources
- Behavioral Health and Recovery program
- Care Management and Supportive Housing program
- Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- ChildReach Tribal Screening
- Developmental Disabilities
- Drive to Achieve Mobile Success Hub
- Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) Preschool
- Educational Opportunity Center (EOC)
- Energy Assistance (Tacoma resident)
- Energy Assistance (Pierce County resident)
- Home Repair
- The Upward Bound program
- Transportation
- Veterans Assistance Program Weatherization (Tacoma resident)
- Weatherization (Pierce County resident)
- Community Services (Housing, Homelessness, Eviction Prevention)
- None of the above

13. How satisfied were you with the service(s)? Skip if you didn't check any service(s).

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

14. Do you have any specific feedback regarding the service(s) you received? Skip if you didn't check any service(s).

- No
- Yes (please specify):

15. Have you faced any barriers when trying to access any of these services? Skip if you didn't check any service(s).

- Yes
- No

16. Please specify what those barriers are in the comments below. Skip if you didn't check any service(s).

17. In the past 12 months have you received any of the following benefits? (Check all that apply)

- Affordable Care Act Subsidy
- Childcare Voucher
- Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Housing Choice Voucher
- HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD- VASH)
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) (Energy Assistance)
- Permanent Supportive Housing Public Housing
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- WIC (Woman, Infants, and Children nutrition assistance)
- None of the above

18. What are your current needs? (Check all that apply)

- After school activities for children (school sports, clubs)
- Behavioral health resources (emotional well- being/counseling)
- Childcare Clothing
- Community activities for families (parks, recreation sports)
- Disabilities/special needs resources Eldercare
- Education
- Employment
- Financial assistance (energy, rent assistance, other)
- Food/Groceries
- Health (medical, dental)
- Home repair/maintenance
- Housing
- Legal resources
- Marriage/relationship counseling
- Nutrition (e.g. Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC))
- Parent education classes
- Physical abuse/domestic violence counseling or advocacy
- Prenatal care/pregnancy education
- Recovery or treatment services (for example, 12- step groups)
- Transportation

19. Based on your previous answers, rank your current needs in order of importance to you. (1 being the most important). If you only picked 1 response continue the survey.

- After school activities for children (school sports, clubs)
- Behavioral health resources (emotional well-being/counseling)
- Childcare
- Clothing
- Community activities for families (parks, recreation sports)
- Disabilities/special needs resources
- Eldercare
- Education
- Employment
- Financial assistance (energy, rent assistance, other)
- Food/Groceries
- Health (medical, dental)
- Housing
- Home repair/maintenance
- Legal resources
- Marriage/relationship counseling
- Nutrition (e.g. Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC))
- Parent education classes
- Physical abuse/domestic violence counseling or advocacy
- Prenatal care/pregnancy education
- Recovery or treatment services (for example, 12-step groups)
- Transportation

20. Are there services/programs you think are missing in our community?

- Yes
- No

21. Please list the services/programs you think are missing in the community below:

22. Please select the types of income you receive. (Check all that apply)

- Alimony or other Spousal Support
- Child Support
- Earned Income (Income earned through active employment, such as wages, salaries, tips, and bonuses)
- Pension
- Private Disability Compensation Retirement Income from Social Security Social Security Disability Income (SSDI)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Unemployment Insurance
- VA Non-Service-Connected Disability Compensation
- VA Service-Connected Disability Compensation Worker's Compensation
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify): _____

23. What is your employment status?

- Employed Full-time
- Employed Part-time
- Full-time stay-at-home parent or caregiver
- Full-time student
- Migrant Seasonal Worker
- Retired
- Unable to work temporarily (skip to question 26)
- Unable to work permanently (skip to question 26)
- Unemployed Short Term - Less than 6 months (skip to question 26)
- Unemployed Long Term - Over 6 months (skip to question 26)

24. What is the area you work in?

- I work outside of Pierce County
- Anderson Island
- Ashford
- Bonney Lake
- Buckley
- Carbonado
- Dupont
- Eatonville
- Edgewood
- Elbe
- Fife
- Fircrest
- Fox Island
- Gig Harbor
- Graham

- JBLM
- Kapowsin
- Lake Tapps
- Lakebay/Home
- Lakewood
- Longbranch
- Milton
- Orting
- Parkland
- Puyallup (inside city limits)
- Puyallup (outside city limits)
- Puyallup Tribe
- Roy
- Ruston
- South Prairie
- Spanaway
- Steilacoom
- Sumner
- Tacoma (inside city limits)
- Tacoma (outside city limits)
- University Place
- Vaughn
- Wauna
- Wilkeson
- Other (please specify): _____

25. Do you work from home?

- Yes, more than 50% of the time
- Yes, less than 50% of the time
- No, I do not work from home
- Other (please specify)

26. If you selected “unemployed or unable to work” please select the reason(s) why you are unemployed or unable to work. (Check all that apply)

- Criminal background
- Domestic violence/sexual assault victim
- Drug/alcohol substance use
- Due to a COVID-19 related illness
- Lack childcare
- Lack permanent address
- Lack proper clothing
- Lack skills/education
- Lack transportation

- Lack US documents
- Language barrier
- Layoff or downsizing
- Learning/developmental disability
- Behavioral health reasons
- Other health issues
- Permanent physical disability
- Sexual orientation or gender identity discrimination
- Temporary physical disability
- Unaccompanied youth
- Other (please specify): _____

27. Are you currently looking for work?

- Yes
- No

28. If you are looking for work, which job-related support(s) do you need help with while looking for work? (Check all that apply)

- Career guidance
- Career/job training
- Interviewing skills
- Job search strategies
- Resume writing
- Transportation Tools/equipment
- Childcare
- Work clothes/equipment
- None of the above
- Other (please specify): _____

29. Based on your previous answers, rank your job-related support needs. (1 being the greatest need). If you only picked 1 response continue the survey.

_ Career guidance

_ Career/job training

_ Interviewing skills

_ Job search strategies

_ Resume writing

_ Transportation Tools/equipment

_ Childcare

_ Work clothes/equipment

_ None of the above

_ Other (please specify): _____

30. Do you have reliable access to a telephone?

- Yes, cell phone only
- Yes, landline only
- Yes, both cell phone and landline
- No

31. Do you have reliable access to the internet?

- Yes
- No

32. How do you primarily access the internet?

- Desktop computer
- Laptop
- Smartphone
- Tablet
- Other (please specify): _____

33. Where do you primarily use the internet?

- At home
- At work
- At the library
- At a friend's home
- At a family member's home
- Other (please specify): _____

34. Do you have reliable access to transportation?

- Yes
- No

35. What is your primary mode of transportation?

- Personal vehicle
- Public transportation
- Carpool
- Bicycle
- Taxi
- Rideshare (Lyft, Uber)
- Family or Friends drive me
- Other (please specify): _____

36. What is your primary barrier to transportation?

- Gas prices are too high

- No public transportation near me
- Not enough money to maintain a personal vehicle
- Not enough money to pay for bus fare
- I have no barriers to transportation
- Other (please specify): _____

37. In what area of Pierce County do you live in or usually stay?

- Anderson Island
- Ashford
- Bonney Lake
- Buckley
- Carbonado
- Dupont
- Eatonville
- Edgewood
- Elbe
- Fife
- Fircrest
- Fox Island
- Gig Harbor
- Graham
- JBLM
- Kapowsin
- Lake Tapps
- Lakebay/Home
- Lakewood
- Longbranch
- Milton
- Orting
- Parkland
- Puyallup (inside city limits)
- Puyallup (outside city limits)
- Puyallup Tribe
- Roy
- Ruston
- South Prairie
- Spanaway
- Steilacoom
- Sumner
- Tacoma (inside city limits)
- Tacoma (outside city limits)
- University Place

- Vaughn
- Wauna
- Wilkeson
- Other (please specify): _____

38. What is your housing status?

- Own/Buying
- Rent/Unsubsidized
- Rent/Subsidized (Sec 8)
- Other Permanent housing (Nursing/long term care, Group Home, etc.)
- I am unhoused and/or experiencing housing instability
- Other (please specify): _____

39. If you checked “unhoused and/or experiencing housing instability” please specify below.

- Staying with friends or family Outdoors
- Car
- Shelter
- Transitional housing (HUD Temporary)
- Hotel/Motel
- Other (please specify): _____

40. If you checked “other permanent housing” please specify below:

- Nursing/long term care
- Assisted living
- Group Home
- Halfway house
- Other (please specify): _____

41. Which of the following best describes your household?

- Foster Parents, Kinship Care
- Multigenerational Household (such as grandparents, parents, and children living in the same home)
- Raising children of other family members (I am a grandparent, aunt, etc.)
- Raising own children AND children of others
- Shared custody
- Single Parent with children under 18
- Single Person
- Two Adults - no children
- Two parent household with children under 18
- Other (please specify): _____

42. In the past 12 months, have you ever received an eviction notice?

- Yes
 - No
43. Have you ever been evicted?
- Yes
 - No
44. In the past 12 months have you applied for eviction prevention?
- Yes
 - No
45. In the past 12 months has your home needed repairs?
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know
46. Were you or your landlord/property manager able to complete those repairs?
- Yes
 - No
47. What was the primary barrier that stopped you from getting the repairs?
- Couldn't afford repairs
 - Couldn't find reliable contractors/repair persons
 - Didn't know how to find reliable contractors/repair persons
 - No response from landlord or property manager
 - Other (please specify): _____
48. Do you have children under 18? If not, skip to question 56.
- Yes
 - No
49. Please select the school district(s) your child(ren) attend. (Check all that apply)
- Bethel School District
 - Carbonado School District
 - Clover Park School District
 - Dieringer School District
 - Eatonville School District
 - Fife School District
 - Franklin Pierce School District
 - Orting School District
 - Peninsula School District
 - Puyallup School District
 - Steilacoom Historical School District
 - Sumner School District
 - Tacoma School District

- University Place School District
- White River School District
- Other (please specify): _____
- None of the above

50. Who provides your childcare? (Check all that apply)

- Self
- Childcare Center or Childcare Licensed Home
- Family
- Friends
- Church
- Have to leave children alone
- Before and/or after school care on campus
- Before and/or after school care off campus (such as Boys & Girls Club)
- Other (please specify): _____

51. Based on your previous answers, rank childcare providers. (1 being the most used childcare provider). If you only picked 1 response continue the survey.

_ Self

_ Childcare Center or Childcare Licensed Home

_ Family

_ Friends

_ Church

_ Have to leave children alone

_ Before and/or after school care on campus

_ Before and/or after school care off campus (such as Boys & Girls Club)

_ Other (please specify): _____

52. Do you feel your childcare provider is dependable?

- Yes
- No

53. Have you ever lost a job because you didn't have dependable childcare?

- Yes
- No

54. What kind(s) of childcare support would improve your life? (Check all that apply)

- Costs for childcare

- Locating a childcare center
- Before/after school care
- Care for a child with special needs
- Evening hours due to work shift schedule
- Weekends due to work shift schedule
- Other (please specify): _____
- None of the above

55. Based on your previous answers, rank what kind(s) of childcare support that would have the most significant impact on improving your life. (1 being the greatest impact). If you only picked 1 response continue the survey.

- _ Costs for childcare
- _ Locating a childcare center
- _ Before/after school care
- _ Care for a child with special needs
- _ Evening hours due to work shift schedule
- _ Weekends due to work shift schedule
- _ Other (please specify): _____
- _ None of the above

56. How many people live in your household or where you stay?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14

2023 Poverty Guidelines - Monthly Income

Find the number of people living in your household or where you stay in the left column, then find your household's monthly income in the row corresponding with that number. Your best estimate is fine. Include all household members' income before taxes were taken out.

# of people living in household	50%	75%	100%	125%	150%	175%	200%	Over 200%
1	\$ 608	\$ 911	\$1,215	\$1,519	\$1,823	\$2,126	\$2,430	More than \$2,430
2	\$ 823	\$1,234	\$1,646	\$2,057	\$2,469	\$2,880	\$3,292	More than \$3,292
3	\$1,036	\$1,554	\$2,072	\$2,590	\$3,108	\$3,625	\$4,143	More than \$4,143
4	\$1,250	\$1,875	\$2,500	\$3,125	\$3,750	\$4,375	\$5,000	More than \$5,000
5	\$1,464	\$2,196	\$2,928	\$3,660	\$4,393	\$5,125	\$5,857	More than \$5,857
6	\$1,678	\$2,518	\$3,357	\$4,196	\$5,035	\$5,874	\$6,713	More than \$6,713
7	\$1,893	\$2,839	\$3,785	\$4,731	\$5,678	\$6,624	\$7,570	More than \$7,570
8	\$2,107	\$3,160	\$4,213	\$5,267	\$6,320	\$7,373	\$8,427	More than \$8,427
9	\$2,321	\$3,481	\$4,642	\$5,802	\$6,963	\$8,123	\$9,283	More than \$9,283
10	\$2,535	\$3,803	\$5,070	\$6,338	\$7,605	\$8,873	\$10,140	More than \$10,140
11	\$2,749	\$4,124	\$5,498	\$6,873	\$8,248	\$9,622	\$10,997	More than \$10,997
12	\$2,963	\$4,445	\$5,927	\$7,408	\$8,890	\$10,372	\$11,853	More than \$11,853
13	\$3,178	\$4,766	\$6,355	\$7,944	\$9,533	\$11,121	\$12,710	More than \$12,710
14	\$3,392	\$5,088	\$6,783	\$8,479	\$10,175	\$11,871	\$13,567	More than \$13,567

57. According to the table above: What percentage (%) category does your monthly household income correspond with?

- 50%
- 75%
- 100%
- 125%
- 150%
- 175%
- 200%
- Over 200% I don't know

58. During the past year, what was your total gross income as an individual? Your best estimate is fine.

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$14,999
- \$15,000 to \$24,999

- \$25,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$199,999
- \$200,000 or more
- Prefer not to answer

59. Which of these monthly bills do you pay? (Check all that apply)

- Cable/Satellite TV
- Bus Pass
- Car Payment
- Childcare
- Credit Cards
- Food
- Gasoline
- Insurance - Auto
- Insurance - Health/Medical
- Insurance - Homeowners
- Insurance - Renters/Rental
- Loans - Payday
- Loans - School
- Loans - Other
- Medical
- Mortgage
- Phone - Cell
- Phone - House/Landline
- Rent
- Streaming services (Hulu, Netflix, Peacock, Spotify, Pandora)
- Utilities - Electric
- Utilities - Internet
- Utilities - Natural Gas/Propane
- Utilities - Water
- Utilities - Garbage
- Utilities - Sewer
- I have no monthly bills

60. Are you behind or overdue on your monthly bills?

- Yes, I am behind on one or more of my monthly bills
- No, I am not behind on any monthly bills
- Not applicable, I have no monthly bills
- Prefer not to answer

61. Which bills are you currently behind or overdue on? (Check all that apply)

- Cable/Satellite TV
- Bus Pass
- Car Payment
- Childcare
- Credit Cards
- Food
- Gasoline
- Insurance - Auto
- Insurance - Health/Medical
- Insurance - Homeowners
- Insurance - Renters/Rental
- Loans - Payday
- Loans - School
- Loans - Other
- Medical
- Mortgage
- Phone - Cell
- Phone - House/Landline
- Rent
- Streaming services (Hulu, Netflix, Peacock, Spotify, Pandora)
- Utilities - Electric
- Utilities - Internet
- Utilities - Natural Gas/Propane
- Utilities - Water
- Utilities - Garbage
- Utilities - Sewer
- I have no monthly bills

62. How many months behind are you on your bills?

- 1 month
- 2 months
- 3 months
- More than 3 months

63. Was there a time in the past 12 months when you needed to see a doctor but did not?

- Yes
- No

64. Why weren't you able to get medical care? (Check all that apply)

- I didn't have insurance
- I couldn't afford to pay my co-pay or deductible
- I didn't have any way to get to a doctor

- The doctor refused to take my insurance or Medicaid
- My doctor moved, retired
- I didn't know how to find a doctor
- Too long to wait for an appointment
- I can't find a doctor who offers interpretation
- I can't find a doctor who offers culturally- competent services
- Fear Embarrassment
- Other (please specify): _____

65. In the last year, was there a time you needed behavioral health (mental health, substance abuse) counseling but could not get it?

- Not applicable
- Yes
- No

66. Why weren't you able to get behavioral health counseling? (Check all that apply)

- I didn't have insurance
- I couldn't afford to pay my co-pay or deductible
- I didn't have any way to get to a counselor
- The counselor refused to take my insurance or Medicaid
- My counselor moved, retired
- I didn't know how to find services
- Too long to wait for an appointment
- I can't find a provider who offers interpretation
- I can't find a provider who offers culturally- competent services
- There are no openings/I can't find a provider accepting new clients
- Fear Embarrassment
- Other (please specify): _____

67. Based on your previous answers, rank the reasons why you weren't able to get behavioral health counseling. (1 being the top reason). If you only picked 1 answer continue the survey.

- _ I didn't have insurance
- _ I couldn't afford to pay my co-pay or deductible
- _ I didn't have any way to get to a counselor
- _ The counselor refused to take my insurance or Medicaid
- _ My counselor moved, retired
- _ I didn't know how to find services
- _ Too long to wait for an appointment
- _ I can't find a provider who offers interpretation

- I can't find a provider who offers culturally- competent services
- There are no openings/I can't find a provider accepting new clients
- Fear Embarrassment
- Other (please specify): _____

68. Is there anything else you would like us to know about your experience accessing or receiving services in Tacoma-Pierce County?

69. Would you like to be entered to win a \$25 Visa gift card for completing the Tacoma-Pierce County CNA Survey?

- No
- Yes (please write your first name and email address or phone number):

70. Would you like to be contacted with updates regarding the Tacoma-Pierce County CNA and resources available to the community?

No

- Yes (please write your email address or phone number):

Appendix G: Pierce County Community Needs Assessment Focus Group Questions

Community Needs Assessment Focus Group Questions

1. Community Strengths: What do you see as the primary strengths of our community?
2. Barriers to Access: Are there barriers that prevent community members from accessing necessary services or resources? If so, what are they?
3. Community Services Awareness: How aware are community members of the services and resources available in Pierce County? What could be done to improve awareness?
4. Equity and Inclusion: Are there specific groups within the community that face additional challenges in accessing services or resources? What steps can be taken to ensure equity and inclusion for all community members?
5. Short-Term and Long-Term Goals: What are some short-term and long-term goals for improving the community's health and safety? How do you envision the community in the future?
6. Key Stakeholders: Who should be involved in addressing these challenges? What organizations or individuals are crucial to making positive changes?
7. Existing Community Initiatives: Are there any existing initiatives, programs, or projects in Pierce County that you think are doing an excellent job addressing community needs? What can we learn from them?
8. Feedback on Local Service Providers: Can you provide feedback on your experiences with local service providers, such as access, quality, and areas of improvement?
9. Community Priorities: If you had the authority to allocate resources to address the community's needs, where would you prioritize funding or attention?
10. Sustainability: How can efforts to improve community health and safety be sustained over time? What steps can ensure that these efforts are ongoing and effective?

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Appendix H: PCHS Community Action Program Descriptions

[Energy Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)

The Low Income Household Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) was first established through congress appropriations to the Department of Health and Human Services in 1981 to assist low-income households by paying a portion of their energy bills and providing conservation education.

Puget Sound Energy also provides funds to assist their low-income customers by paying a portion of their energy bills

[Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program \(ECEAP\)](#)

ECEAP is a state funded preschool program that provides free comprehensive early learning programming to income-eligible children three to five years of age. PCHS CAP is funded by Puget Sound Educational Service District who is a contractor of the state Department of Children Youth and Family Services. There is a focus on family supports as well, including services including referrals to food banks, furniture banks, mental health consultations, and many others.

[Minor Home Repair](#) (for residents living outside the city limits of Tacoma and Lakewood)

The Pierce County Human Services Home Repair Program is funded through a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The program provides home repairs to income eligible populations in the form of a grant.

Program Qualifications

- Households must have an income below 80% Area Median Income (AMI)
- Participants in the program must reside in Pierce County (outside the city limits of Tacoma and Lakewood)
- Participants must own their home.
- Units must be owner occupied.

[Home Weatherization Assistance Program \(WAP\)](#)

WAP was created by the Department of Energy in 1976 to assist low-income families in making their homes healthier, reducing their carbon footprint, reducing heat loss, and saving money on heating bills, through adding insulation, sealing cracks, and making other changes.

Other services and programs available from Pierce County include:

[Aging and Disability Resources \(ADR\)](#)

ADR is designated by the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services / Aging and Long Term Support Administration as the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for Pierce County. As an AAA, ADR is responsible for local planning, coordination and administration of Federal and State funds targeted to provide a comprehensive system of long term services and supports (LTSS) designed to address the needs and support community living for frail older adults, adults with disabilities and their caregivers residing in Pierce County.

The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) is a program of ADR and serves as the front-door to the local LTSS delivery system, providing unbiased information, community outreach / education, help accessing services and person-centered care planning / care coordination to meet the individual needs of older adults, persons with disabilities and their caregivers.

[Developmental Disabilities Program](#)

The Developmental Disabilities Program works with community partners to provide services for residents of Pierce County and their families. The program is responsible for:

- County-wide information and education,
- Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program for children birth to three years,
- Employment and community inclusion programs for adults 21 and older, and
- Assist eligible transition students to obtain paid employment prior to exiting school at age 21.

[Eviction Prevention](#)

The Pierce County Eviction Prevention program supports eligible low-income households with their past due rent.

[Housing Assistance](#)

Human Services offers a variety of services, programs, and resources to assist residents with their housing needs. They include a variety of grant and loan programs to assist renters, homebuyers, homeowners and affordable housing developers.

[Transportation Services](#)

Pierce County Human Services provides transportation for the special needs populations in south and east Pierce County and coordinates a local Transportation Coalition to address transportation gaps County wide.

This includes [Beyond the Borders](#) and the [Pierce County Coordinated Transportation Coalition](#).

Beyond the Borders transportation service helps eligible riders in east and south Pierce County, who are outside of the Pierce Transit service area, access public transit, medical services, employment and shopping. The service is free for eligible riders including people with disabilities, seniors 65+, veterans, youth aged 12-17, and those who identify as low income.

The Pierce County Coordinated Transportation Coalition (PCCTC) is a catalyst for change. Members work to coordinate transportation between public transit, human services agencies and private transportation providers. [The Coordinated Transit-Human-Services Transportation Plan](#) is the roadmap for building a coordinated transportation system and was completed in June 2015.

[Veterans Assistance Program](#)

With guidance from the Veterans Advisory Board, Pierce County Veterans Program administers the Veterans Assistance Fund and Veteran Resource Center to provide services to help veterans and their families improve their wellbeing.

Appendix I: MDC Community Action Program Descriptions

[Housing](#)

The MDC Care Management and Supportive Housing program offers a variety of services to low-income residents, families in crisis, and those experiencing homelessness or disability. With a variety of housing options and lease terms, members of the community are supported with assistance obtaining documentation, housing budgets, fair housing resources, affordable monthly rent, and more. MDC housing programs include:

- Short-term Supportive Housing
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Housing First: Rapid Rehousing
- Affordable Housing

[Behavioral Health](#)

MDC provides a variety of services to empower our community to overcome mental health challenges and substance abuse disorders. Whether a client has been ordered by the court to receive treatment or chosen recovery for themselves, MDC counselors work with all those on the road to recovery.

Services include:

- Intensive Outpatient Psychotherapy (IOP)
- Eight week Washington State Health Care Authority certified program
- Outpatient Psychotherapy (OP):
 - Mindful Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP)
 - Seeking Safety Group
 - Individual and group counseling
 - Detoxification/withdrawal management
 - Medication management
 - Illness education
 - Skill-building
 - Relapse prevention
 - Case management to assist with housing, education, employment and financial benefits

Education

MDC provides education support for both [youth](#) and [adults](#). The Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) provides free educational support to individuals in the following areas: attaining a GED, educational planning, career advising and exploration, assistance with financial aid forms and college applications, and student loan default advocacy.

The Upward Bound program counsels high school students through college applications, financial aid, and career opportunities.

[Energy Assistance](#)

The Energy Assistance Program helps income qualified residents living inside the City Limits of Tacoma with their heating and energy costs. The program will also provide education on energy conservation and refer you to our Weatherization Assistance Program so they can help you make your home safe, healthier, comfortable and more energy efficient.

The [Weatherization Assistance Program](#) is a state and federally funded resource that levels the scales of poverty in our community with services to improve energy conservation, air quality and heat loss. Available to serve the rental dwellings of qualifying residents, the program provides professional energy management through the following services:

- Home assessment
- Insulation (floor, attic, duct and walls)
- Air sealing
- Gas appliance testing
- Furnace repairs
- Carbon Monoxide detectors
- Education on energy conservation and the dangers of lead

PIERCE COUNTY

COMMUNITY NEEDS

ASSESSMENT REPORT **2023**



Pierce County
Human Services

