RPC – COMMUNITY SERVICES
Fund 075

MISSION STATEMENT

The Community Services Division is the designated community action agency in Champaign County supporting the well-being and quality of life for at-risk, low-income and underserved residents in our defined service area. We provide effective and meaningful services to increase self-sufficiency of these populations and are committed to efficient services through regional leadership and interagency cooperation.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

The Community Services Division will have increases in revenue during FY19 with the addition of the Bridge to Subsidized Housing Utility Assistance Program, increased staffing for Centralized Intake for Homeless, addition of two housing programs to address homelessness and expansion of program services offered through the Individual Services Coordination team. Although some reductions may be experienced due to shifts in federal and state budgets for entitlement programs for persons in poverty, the Regional Planning Commission is well-positioned to provide additional services that have been prioritized for persons who are homeless, out of work or developmentally disabled.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

The Community Services Division activities for FY19 will focus on retaining existing funding resources for current social services programming, leveraging additional funding resources as new federal and state initiatives are announced, and seeking ways to incorporate a variety of funding resources to achieve program goals.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Community Services Division performs services, activities and initiatives supporting improved quality of life for at-risk, low-income and underserved residents in our defined service areas. The Community Services Division is comprised of the following teams: Case Management Services, Independent Service Coordination, Homeless Services, LIHEAP/Weatherization Services, and Workforce Development Services. Community Services staff provides assessment, information, referral, and supportive services to over 10,000 individuals annually, who need assistance in coping with life challenges. Comprehensive services are provided to achieve successful grant and contract outcomes.

OBJECTIVES

Case Management Programs
Case management staff provide information, support and advocacy focused on moving households out of poverty toward self-sufficiency.

- Family Housing Preservation Program – assists DCFS-referred households in locating permanent housing throughout Champaign, Ford, and Vermilion Counties. Staff assist families by removing barriers to stable housing by locating housing, negotiating with landlords, and offering case management to foster stabilization. Additional services are provided to DCFS wards that are transitioning into adult independence.

- No Limits - provides case management services to low-income families at risk of long-term public assistance dependency. The goal of No Limits is to cultivate family self-sufficiency as well as to establish community partnerships for additional family services and support. Case management services focus on comprehensive assessment, self-sufficiency planning, goal development and a plan to work toward achievement, employment preparation, job training and numerous other activities designed to move a family to self-reliance.

- Rapid Rehousing – attempts to permanently house homeless families by providing case management and/or financial assistance. Case management may include attempting to remove barriers to stable housing by locating housing, negotiating with landlords, and offering case management to help these households become stabilized.

- Senior Services Information, Referral and Advocacy - is provided by telephone consultations, face-to-face interviews, public speaking events, and our website. Specific outreach activities are targeted for minorities and rural areas of the county. A mix of funding from local governments and special interest groups allows services to be provided regardless of income.

- Youth Assessment Center – The Youth Assessment Center (YAC) serves as the primary center for intake, screening and service connection for Champaign County youth and families. The goal of the YAC is to connect youth with resources that help them to be resilient, resourceful, responsible, and restored to positive community involvement through prompt assessment, treatment/service recommendations and follow-up, in collaboration with programs such as Parenting with Love and Limits, and other positive youth development and restorative best practices in the community.

- Court Diversion Services provides youth who have committed a legal offense an opportunity to divert court involvement. Using a balanced and restorative justice perspective, staff hold youth on station adjustment accountable and provide opportunities for competency development through interventions such as mediation, peer court, and services referrals with a goal of diversion from court involvement. Victims and the community are provided the opportunity to participate in decisions involving restitution agreements. Both sides actively participate in face-to-face meetings as a way of making things right. Victim offender mediation services address single-victim, single-offender situations. Peer Court is an option for cases with no victim participation.

Homeless Assistance, Rental Assistance, and Rent Voucher Programs

- Centralized Intake for Homeless - is an access point for households experiencing homelessness. Individuals will complete screening and assessment process to gather and verify information about the person, individual's housing and service needs and program

eligibility. This information is used to refer homeless households to appropriate programs and agencies based on identified needs and objective prioritization.

- Emergency Shelter for Families – provides emergency shelter for families for a short-term period, filling a critical gap in Champaign County's homeless services. Along with providing shelter for families with children; ESF provides case management for families while they are guests at the shelter. ESF services offer families an opportunity to progress in a safe space and transition into stable sources of employment, food, shelter/housing and other necessities.

- Homeless Prevention Rental Assistance Program - helps homeless households obtain housing and near-homeless households retain housing by paying the first month's rent or up to one month's past due rent. Services provided in this program include information and referral, assistance with landlord negotiations, and housing counseling.

- Shelter Plus Care Program – offers rent subsidies for homeless persons with disabilities being served by partnering agencies that benefit from supportive housing services.

Independent Service Coordination (ISC) Programs

Independent Service Coordination provides an array of activities on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families/guardians to help them access individualized services and supports. The program's purpose is to ensure such services and supports are responsive to the unique needs and desires of each individual and to effectively promote independence, community inclusion, and self-determination. ISC staff serve as an advocate, resource, and partner for the individual, his/her family, and other service providers. Champaign, Ford, and Iroquois counties are served under this program.

Staff support individuals and families to complete a discovery tool, develop a person-centered plan, and support the individual and family in identifying and securing services to support the goals of the person-centered plan. Staff also provides follow up services to monitor the implementation and success of the plan, making adjustments as needed, always taking into the general health, safety and well-being of the participant.

LIHEAP/Weatherization Programs

Staff assists low-income households with financial assistance for utilities and home repair and weatherization measures to improve home safety and energy efficiency.

- Bridge to Subsidized Housing Utility Assistance Program (BSHUAP) - provides utility payment assistance to households in Champaign County who have been awarded a subsidized housing award, but have utility arrearage that is a barrier to moving into subsidized housing.

- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) - provides utility payment assistance to low-income households in Champaign County.

- Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program – provides general contractor services in assessing homes and coordinating private construction contractors to provide weatherization measures to achieve energy savings for low-income households in Champaign County.

- Senior Home Repair – offers minor home repairs to City of Champaign seniors and persons with   disabilities in order to provide a safe, healthy living environment.

Special Initiatives

- Community Services Block Grant Scholarship Program **-** provides scholarship assistance to low-income Champaign County residents to help pay for tuition, books, or other costs associated with their education at a post-secondary institution in Illinois. Scholarships range from $500 to $2,500. Almost 100 students have benefited from CSBG Scholarships since the program was initiated in 1986.

- Summer Youth Employment Program – supports the continued development of a Summer Youth Employment Programs for Champaign County students.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Indicator	2017Actual	2018 Projected	2019 Budgeted
# of clients accessing community services	8187	8000	8000
# of clients progressing on measures of self-sufficiency & skill development	870	800	800
# of clients receiving financial assistance for basic needs	6116	6000	6000
# of youth diverted from court	462	450	700
# clients obtaining skills/competencies required for employment	488	500	500