

**Warren-Hamilton Counties ACEO, Inc.
(Community Action Agency)**

Strategic Plan- 2024-2028

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission and purpose of the Warren Hamilton Counties Community Action Agency to coordinate resources and programs to nurture equal economic opportunity for low-income, elderly and disabled residents. Such resources and programs are tailored to provide or facilitate services which promote self-sufficiency, community responsiveness and the continuing focus of private and public resources for anti-poverty purposes. The Agency's Mission Statement which has changed very little since its creation in 1966 includes the following: "To open the opportunities for economic security and to provide the opportunity to live in decency and dignity." Today, Community Action continues to strive to fulfill this mission for all residents accessing our services.

This plan is based on the methodology of surveying agency clients and partners along with the general local community to ascertain the prevailing needs in the area for the purpose of completing the Community needs Assessment Reort. This activity is completed prior to the formation of the Agency's strategic plan and is presented to the Board of Directors and the community at large in the form of a Community Needs Assessment report. This Community Assessment is then utilized to drive Agency service priorities and resource allocations according to feedback obtained.

SERVICES

The services provided by the Warren-Hamilton Counties Community Action Agency are two-fold in their purpose. Crisis intervention and improving the quality of life for low-income residents of Warren and Hamilton Counties are equally prioritized in the services provided. We strive to offer or increase the opportunities for our customers to contribute to their own wellbeing and that of the community.

CUSTOMER GOALS

1. Increasing customer's economic security, self-sufficiency and establish a healthy interdependence with their community.

Objectives/Strategies

- a. Maintain and/or increase donations and consumption of nutritious food for children, adults and the elderly.
- b. Increase the availability of special diet appropriate food products with consideration of ethnic groups.

- c. Increase available clothing by encouraging donations and ensuring adequate volunteer labor to handle donations received.
- d. Assist customers with obtaining formal supports through a referral to Project Option and other qualified providers.
- e. Encourage healthy eating and healthy lifestyles by providing information and referral to nutrition and wellness providers such as Cornell Cooperative Extension and Regional Food Bank of NENY and by partnering with health care providers such as Public Health and the Adirondack Health Institute.
- f. Promote self-sufficiency and fiscal responsibility with referrals to employment programs and entities providing financial literacy and/or budgeting. Encourage the furthering of formal education with referrals to Literacy Volunteers, TASC (GED), library forums and SUNY Adirondack.

2. The Weatherization Assistance program will increase energy savings for consumers through additional resources and staff development. Our program will help homeowners feel more comfortable in their homes and give a sense of security and relief.

Objectives/Strategies

- a. Maintain coordination of Weatherization services with other entities such as Warren, Washington, & Hamilton Counties Social Services, NYSERDA, USDA Rural Development, Rebuilding Together Saratoga, and Glens Falls Economic Development.
- b. Recruit and maintain qualified staff by providing competitive compensation, health insurance, paid time off, and provide all necessary training.
- c. Maintain/expand fee for service activities through NYSERDA's Empower Program and the HEAP Cooling Emergency Program to improve customers' economic security, health and safety, and comfort.

3. Families will achieve their goals and gain stability using the critical attributes of the Family Development Model.

Objectives/Strategies

- a. Provide the opportunity for Project Option staff to pursue their Family Development Credentialing.
- b. Maintain/Increase coordination with other service providers to establish comprehensive service delivery.
- c. Ensure that authorization to release/obtain information forms are completed in a timely manner to expedite services.
- d. Encourage all Agency staff to take the initiative to seek out professional advancement opportunities such as training and education by utilizing Zoom, webinars, etc.
- e. Agency staff and customers will work as partners to achieve their goals.

4. Customers have increased access and availability of services in the rural sections of our catchment area.

Objectives/Strategies

- a. Provide outreach in rural towns by distributing Agency flyers in medical offices, libraries and grocery stores.
- b. Maintain/increase coordination with other rural service providers by the sharing of resources, food, staff expertise and client referrals.
- c. Continue networking in Hamilton County to increase awareness and support of Community Action services and to recruit volunteers including low-income Board members.
- d. Increase rural transportation services to ensure full county coverage and recruit reliable volunteers to ensure continuity of service.

AGENCY GOALS

The legitimacy, accountability, sincerity and image of the Agency is paramount for community support and customer satisfaction. In our work we will treat our customers with respect and dignity and promote the Community Action mission to the general public.

1. Ensure the Warren-Hamilton Counties Community Action Agency is a sustainable and financially viable/secure agency.

Objectives/Strategies

- a. Maintain current facility to ensure the safety of customers and staff and to provide a welcoming environment.
- b. Recruit and maintain diversified Board members committed to Agency goals and customers served by promoting active Board participation.
- c. Maintain and update Agency technology to increase programs' efficiency.
- d. Continue to actively pursue new sources of funding to increase the scope of services provided or to add additional services.
- e. Ensure the smooth succession of Agency Senior staff members by recruiting qualified candidates and allowing for ample training.

2. Further a core principle of Community Action by increasing the visibility and recognition of the agency.

Objectives/Strategies

- a. Educate community members, employees and Board members to further the message of the agency.
- b. Promote, enhance and maintain the Agency's website, social media and publications to ensure information is current and relevant.
- c. Increase non-consumer community awareness and support through the use of media presentations, appearance at community events and Board and Staff networking.

COMMUNITY GOALS

1. Increase the number of vendors who accept SNAP, tokens and WIC at farmers markets in Hamilton County.

Objectives/Strategies

- a. Community Action staff will attend farmer's markets and advocate for the acceptance of SNAP, tokens, WIC and "Hamilton Helps" vouchers with vendors.
- b. Increase knowledge and participation in the community gardens located throughout Hamilton County by collaborating with entities such as Cornell Cooperative Extension for free seeds, use of plots and equipment as well as access to master Gardeners.

2. Enhance rural transportation services to be more responsive to the needs of the elderly and/or shut-ins (Hamilton County).

Objectives/Strategies

- a. Work with County Officials to recruit ample and reliable volunteer drivers.
- b. Explore possible means of utilizing county employees as drivers or providing stipends to volunteers.
- c. Explore potential funding sources for the purpose of hiring part-time drivers either through Community Action or the county
- d. Promote and encourage individuals to utilize medicabs or alternative transportation covered by insurance.

3. Provide volunteer labor to assist with community projects such as Habitat for Humanity or the homeless shelter.

Objectives/Strategies

- a. Screen Alternative Sentencing participants for appropriate skills and interests such as construction experience.
- b. Place appropriate participants where their skill will provide the largest impact.

Adopted: 10/25/2023