



COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation,

This Community Needs Assessment contains data, conclusions and an Executive Summary of the results of Client Surveys, Community Partner (Stakeholder) Surveys, Customer Satisfaction Surveys, and comparative data/results in many areas for the seven counties served by NEICAC – Allamakee, Bremer, Chickasaw, Clayton, Fayette, Howard and Winneshiek.

PO Box 487 – 305 Montgomery, Decorah, IA 52101

Northeast Iowa Community Action Corporation Community Assessment Report

Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

NEICAC's Director of Community Outreach & Development prepared a synopsis and an analysis of each of the following assessments:

NEICAC Client Needs Assessment from February 2016

NEICAC Client Needs Assessments for periods - 4/29/15 – 7/10/15
11/1/16 – 1/31/17
2/1/17 – 4/11/17
2/2/17 – 2/2/18*

* *The most current 12-month reporting period*

NEICAC Community Stakeholders Needs Assessment from November 2017

Community Action Partnership's Comprehensive Needs Assessment from April 2018

NEICAC Client Satisfaction Reports from February 2016 and February 2018

NEICAC Community Partners (Stakeholders) Satisfaction Reports from November 2017

KEY FINDINGS

CLIENT NEEDS as IDENTIFIED BY OUR CLIENTS

1) The significant needs presented by our clients were:

- 61.42% state they could use help with budgeting/managing money
- 51.01% state they could use help with getting financial help with my utility bills (heating, electric, and/or water)
- 49.75% state they could use help getting food from food pantries
- 47.39% state they could use help finding a permanent full-time job that will support me and my family

2) The possible causes (reasons) for why the stated client needs exist:

- The majority of the jobs that our clients have are low-wage, part-time and provide insufficient income to meet basic needs
- Same – insufficient income to meet basic needs
- The food pantries not operated by NEICAC have very limited hours of operation
- Both job locations and skill levels are a deterrent to our clients acquiring the sought after employment

COMMUNITY NEEDS as IDENTIFIED BY OUR PARTNERS (STAKEHOLDERS)

1) The significant community needs identified (conditions of poverty) were:

- 67.73% responded that there at not sufficient full-time jobs that paid \$15 or more
- 57.45% responded that "under-employment" was an issue
- 66.29% responded that there were insufficient childcare facilities **for low-income people** that provide services during evenings, nighttime, and/or weekends for children ages 0-11
- 64.02% responded that there were insufficient transportation services (e.g. cabs, taxis, buses, trolleys) **for low-income people** during the evenings, nighttime, and or weekends
- 55.13% responded that there are insufficient number of safe and affordable housing units

- 57.58% responded that there are insufficient safe and affordable housing units **built or set aside for low-income people**
- 73.66% responded that there are insufficient shelters or shelter beds
- 54.62% responded that there were **(for low-income people)** insufficient numbers of accessible and affordable behavioral and mental health care resources/services
- 51.94% responded that NON-violent crime is an issue (e.g. theft, larceny, drugs)

2) Possible causes (reasons) for why the identified community needs exists:

- The apparent lack of full-time jobs that pay a living wage – as expressed by our clients appears validated also by our partners/stakeholders. Job locations and job skills required are both major obstacles for our clients. Under employment is most evident in the Bremer and Winneshiek County areas. Many college graduates are working in the food and service industries.
- Evening, nighttime and weekend childcare and transportation options are not unique to our service area. The availability of both is limited. Current providers have not had sufficient interest or use to make these extra hours a viable option. With employers, looking for second shift and/or weekend employees the lack of transportation/childcare can make employment untenable.
- The lack of safe and affordable housing is more of an expressed need by our partners than by our clients. The definition of safe and affordable varies greatly between the two survey groups.
- Shelters and shelter beds along with accessible and affordable behavioral and mental health resources/services again is much more of an expressed need by our partners than by our clients
- Lack of sufficient income to meet basic needs is always a contributing factor of NON-violent crime.

DATA SPECIFIC TO POVERTY

1. First, the total population of our seven county service area has declined since the year 2000. Over all we have had a 3.13 percent decrease in total population. The only county with an increase in population has been Bremer County with a 5.74% increase in population. Chickasaw and Fayette counties both had population decreases in excess of 7% and Clayton and Howard counties both had decreases in excess of 5%.

Poverty data by gender – In all seven of our counties the percent of females in poverty is significantly higher than males in poverty. For the entire seven counties 11.17% of females are in poverty as opposed to 8.43% of the males. The highest percentage of both females and males is in Fayette County – 14.08% and 12.22% respectively. The lowest is Bremer with females at 8.69% and males at 5.87%.

Poverty data by age – The poverty rate for children ages 0 – 17 for our seven county service area is 12%. The highest four counties are Allamakee at 14.1%, Fayette at 17.2%, Clayton at 14% and Howard at 13.9%. The poverty rate for seniors (65 and over) for our seven county service area is 8%. The counties with the three highest seniors in poverty percentages: Clayton at 10.1%, Howard at 11.3% and Winneshiek at 10.1%.

Poverty data by race – These **are the percentages within the race group are in poverty**

Report Area	White	Black or African American	Native American/ Alaska Native	Asian/Pacific Islander	Some other race	Multiple races
Seven counties	9.4%	48.19%	2.63%	13.15%/95.12%	15.04%	23.11%

Poverty data by ethnicity – For our seven county area the Hispanic/Latino population in poverty is 853 individuals or 32.69% of our Hispanic/Latino population. The total non-Hispanic/Latino population in poverty is 10,242 individuals or 9.25% of non-Hispanic/Latino.

Food needs data – “Children Eligible for Free Lunch” data reflects that 35.83% of the school age children in or seven counties are participating in the program. Allamakee at the highest rate of 57.93% and Bremer at the lowest at 22.62%. Our Client Needs Assessment Survey data reflects that 49.75% need help getting food from food pantries; 43.91% need help with having enough food at home; and 39.59% want to learn how to stretch their food dollar.

2. The significant poverty data provided through both local surveys and the local, state and national data providers points to a population that we serve that is struggling with:
 - 1) finding full-time employment that will support their households
 - 2) managing their money
 - 3) having sufficient food

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

1. In all areas, our clients rated their experience/satisfaction with NEICAC at a 98% or higher. The sole category that did not score a 98% or higher was: *I was informed about other agency or community services* which received responses of: **YES – 94.56% (591)** **NO – 1.26% (8)**/A – 4.16% (26)
2. Very good customer satisfaction scores by anyone’s standards. From these results it appears that NEICAC staff are doing and excellent job in customer service.

Trisha S. Wilkins, CCAP
NEICAC Executive Director

April 17, 2018