



PEOPLE ACTING IN COMMUNITY ENDEAVORS  
For Brighter Futures

# COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

2021-2023



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## Executive Summary

PACE is the designated Community Action Agency serving New Bedford that provides programs and services to the city's low-income community members. The organization was founded in 1982, born from the need to provide the community with resources to prevent and eliminate poverty. In order to identify and address the current and developing needs of the community, PACE participates in a thorough investigation into the needs of the community every three years, while also examining the internal needs of the agency in order to stay efficient and effective in the fight against poverty.

As an agency that primarily serves the city of New Bedford, PACE and its client are often met with the challenges of a limited job market and increasing costs of living. A city famed for its acceptance of newcomers, the population of New Bedford continues to shift. In 2019, the U.S. Census estimated New Bedford's population to be 95,363, with 21.1% of the population living in poverty. Between 2018 and 2020, PACE served 18% of New Bedford's population. The organization prioritizes collaboration with other community agencies to minimize duplication of efforts and to maximize the quality and amount of assistance. By assessing the needs of the community every three years, PACE is able to organize a strategic plan with short- and long-term goals that involves growth within and beyond the agency and amongst partnerships in order for all members of the community to have access to brighter futures.

In 2019, the agency formed a Strategic Planning Committee to launch this process. Together, this committee conducted a survey consisting of multiple choice and open-ended questions and polled community members across all sectors both electronically and on paper. Respondents were asked to identify the top needs impacting the community at-large and themselves, and they were also asked what they believed PACE could do in order to intervene and mitigate the impacts of poverty. PACE launched the campaign via traditional and social media.

The Committee also held interviews with more than 20 key community stakeholders from different sectors including: healthcare, economic development, business, faith-based, local government, non-profit and community organizations, including law enforcement and education. The interviews offered confirmation, context, and potential solutions to the needs identified in the survey, while also demonstrating the ways in which the top needs are interconnected with one another. Additional data was gathered from the US Census, local media sources, public records, and in information provided by consultants and agency partners.

PACE also conducted an internal needs assessment among its staff designed to assess agency culture, environment, communications, staff development, administration, technology, facilities, and equipment. The Strategic Planning Committee reviewed and reflected on those results, as well as additional information about the performance of agency programs.

At the same time that PACE began its process to investigate the needs of the community, COVID-19 began shifting the agency's focus. In accordance with agency leadership, a second round of assessment was completed in Fall 2020 in order to evaluate the changing needs of the

community related to COVID-19, and to include goals in our Strategic Plan that would address those emerging and increasing needs.

Over 75% of respondents identified affordable housing as a top need, and just under 60% identified mental health services and training or education to get a job as a top need.

Subsequently, ability to pay heating or utility bills, access to food, access to child care, and job opportunities, were among the top seven needs identified in this survey. When respondents were asked what keeps their family from financial stability, 43% responded their living expenses being too high (i.e. rent/mortgage, heat, food), 28% reported that they were on a fixed income, and 23% responded that they work full-time but do not make enough money to cover their expenses.

Additionally, results from the internal assessment indicated that the following are areas where the agency has opportunity to grow: improvement of facilities and equipment, heightened awareness to the community of all the programs and services offered by the agency, increased IT capacity, increased internal communication and integration of programs, employee recognition and evaluation, and etc. Improvements in these areas will lead to an even healthier agency on the inside, so that we can improve our commitment to the community on the outside.

When comparing the responses of this survey before and after COVID-19, PACE found that the needs identified prior were only intensified following the spread of COVID-19. For example, mental health as a top need was selected 22% more frequently following the breakout of COVID-19, and access to food and access to technology/internet were selected 15.5% and 13.7% more times. The need for after-school/summer programs and child care, dropped 14.5% and 8.1%, possibly as a result of increased remote work and school.

In response to the top needs identified by the community (housing affordability, food insecurity, and mental health), the agency has established goals over the next three years to increase housing stability and affordability, reduce food insecurity, advocate and organize for more access to mental healthcare services (especially for children), as well as to seek out more opportunity for individuals and families to engage in training to improve job skills and ability to manage available resources.

Although the needs presented in this report only begin to scratch the surface of the challenges faced in the community of New Bedford, we are confident that the execution of the strategic goals listed above will point the agency and community in the right direction as we continue to provide programs and services that eliminate and reduce poverty in our service area.

## Agency Description

People Acting in Community Endeavors (PACE), is the designated Community Action Agency for the Greater New Bedford area and leads in providing high quality programs and services that are responsive to community needs. The agency advocates for the interests of those living in poverty and aggressively seeks out ways to ameliorate issues experienced by members of its community by developing or expanding programs and through collaboration with partners in the public, private, and non-profit sectors.

PACE offers the following programs:

Health Access – outreach and application assistance to individuals and families exploring their health coverage options. The program assists with applications for MassHealth, Health Connector, and Medicare programs and can provide insurance counseling for the uninsured.

Fuel Assistance – assists eligible households with the high costs of home heating during the winter months through financial assistance, discount programs, and financial counseling.

Food Bank – provides the community with grocery and food items, including fresh food from local farms, supermarkets, and stores.

Head Start – is a family-centered program that provides early childhood education and offers health and nutrition services to over 300 children between the ages of 3 and 5 (at no cost to families that are income eligible).

Child Care Works – promotes quality childcare and early childhood education to families across Southeastern Massachusetts, by training and providing technical assistance to licensed child care providers and by providing information and referral services for families seeking childcare.

The Family Center – provides support and resources to families with children from birth to age 8, including research-based home visiting components, parent/child playgroups, parenting education, and family literacy events.

YouthBuild – empowers young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who have left school without a diploma by providing academic and vocational education, case management, and development in life skills and financial literacy.

Housing Opportunity Center – provides rental assistance for individuals and families that are at risk of or experiencing homelessness through housing search assistance, case management, and referrals to other vital resources.

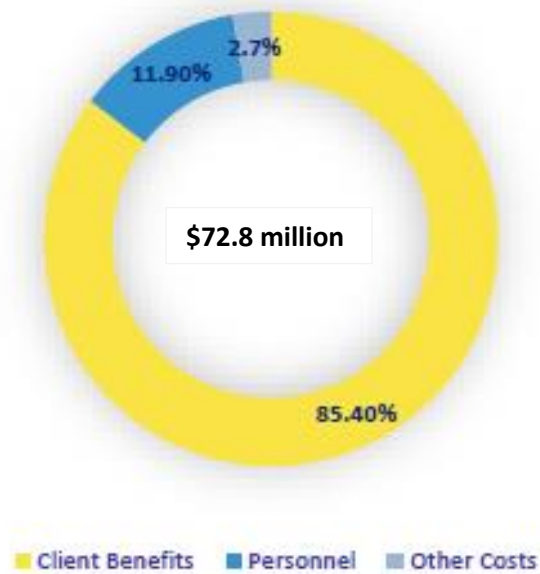
Lead Program – provides community education and targeted supports for families of children that have or are at the risk of having lead poisoning.

VITA Tax Preparation – provides free electronic tax preparation for eligible individuals and families.



Clemente Course – offers six college courses in the field of Humanities to those who are 17+ and economically disadvantaged (in partnership with MassHumanities).

PACE has grown into a vital economic engine for our community, with a staff size of 160 and an annual operating budget that is over \$70 million, with over \$62 million going directly to the benefits and services that are provided to our clients.



# PACE'S Mission

## MISSION STATEMENT

PACE delivers innovative and effective services to members of the Greater New Bedford Community in their pursuit of brighter futures.

Last reviewed February 11, 2020

## VISION STATEMENT

It is the vision of PACE to ensure all members of our community have the ability to achieve their goals and create their own personal “brighter futures.”

This is made possible by the agency continuing to set high expectations for its programs and services, and by properly delivering on the goals and objectives set forth in this plan.

In the next three years, PACE will focus on the top needs identified in this report: housing affordability, food insecurity, mental health, and job training/resource development. PACE has operated at an expanded capacity in many programs because of the increased needs caused by the pandemic, and PACE aspires to maintain this increased level of service to continue to meet those needs and further strengthen our programs. The agency will continue to develop its Housing Opportunity Center and Food Bank programs to offer an enhanced level of service in these much-needed areas, bringing innovative solutions to complex, long-standing community issues.

PACE will continue its legacy of advocacy and collaboration with community partners by organizing for better access to culturally and linguistically competent mental health services in our community, especially for children.

The agency will also better integrate job skills development and resource management into its existing programs and services. Helping people cope with the rising costs of food and shelter is one part of our work – increasing our client’s capacity to earn higher incomes and make sound financial decisions is another. Combating poverty in our community requires building upon the strengths of those we serve.

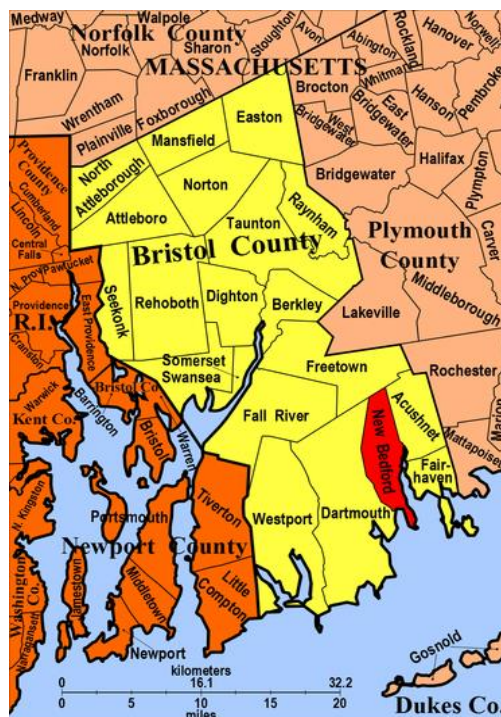
Our vision is that the agency will continue to connect our community with opportunities, across all of our programs, services, and initiatives. We see our work on a continuum, from helping clients find stability, to taking advantage of opportunities for growth, and achieving their own dreams. In some cases, our clients become our volunteers, employees, and active engaged citizens who themselves give back to the community and dismantle generational poverty.



## Community Profile

Community Action Agencies are located within designated communities in order to reduce or eliminate poverty in given and surrounding areas; while different organizations take on the role of providing different services to those in need, it is a community effort to reduce poverty. Elected officials, representatives of all sectors, and low-income residents (clients) are included in this report in order to identify and address the causes and effects of poverty as experienced in this area of Massachusetts. PACE is the Community Action Agency responsible for the Greater New Bedford area (including Dartmouth, Acushnet, and Fairhaven) with a primary focus on the city of New Bedford. In addition to these municipalities, the Fuel Assistance Program serves homeowners and renters located in Marion, Mattapoisett, and Rochester. As the designated childcare voucher management program for the region, Child Care Works serves 40 cities and towns throughout Southeastern Massachusetts. Similarly, PACE's Housing Opportunity Center serves all of Bristol County. The overwhelming majority of PACE's services are provided in Bristol County, but some programs extend into Plymouth and Norfolk County.

### New Bedford



(Figure 6.1)

Located in Bristol County, Massachusetts, with a population of 95,363, New Bedford is the sixth largest city in the state (according to the US. Census 2019 estimates). New Bedford is one of eleven “Gateway Cities” in Massachusetts, defined as “midsize urban centers that anchor regional economies” that face “stubborn social and economic challenges”; Gateway Cities have

been disproportionately impacted by the erosion of manufacturing and other similar industries that became obsolete or outsourced. New Bedford was once known as the world's largest whaling port during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Although the New Bedford Whaling National Historic Park is all that is physically left of the whaling industry, it is acknowledged that the diversity of the city is in part related to this era and the mass immigration and settlements that took place during this time.

Industry and city demographics have changed over time. From the bygone whaling era to the once-robust textile manufacturing industry, New Bedford residents now primarily work in the hospitality sector, the still-strong fishing industry, healthcare, in office and administrative work, and in education. Going back centuries, the city has been home to large contingents of Portuguese and Cape Verdean populations. Population trends have changed over time, with a once-large French population giving way to an increase in immigration from Central America.

The lasting effects of the whaling industry are seen in both the diversity of the people and the culture of New Bedford, and it can also be used to inform our understanding of the following demographics and statistics of New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Key Statistics	
Total Population of New Bedford (current): 95,363	
Total population living in poverty	21.1%
Total individuals served	17,288
Median household income (New Bedford)	\$43,989
Federal Poverty Level (family of 2)	\$16,460
Poverty rate among women	22.7%
Poverty rate among men	19.4%
Poverty rate under age 18	32.1%
Poverty rate 18-64	18.1%
Poverty rate 65+	17.4%
Poverty rate by race—White alone	16.5%
Poverty rate by race—Black or African American	27.6%
Poverty rate by some other race alone	32%
By Ethnicity—Hispanic	35.5%
Unemployment Rate	4.7%

Food Stamps/SNAP participants	25.6%
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**(Figure 6.2); Source: Statistics gathered by SMC (2018)**

According to the U.S. Census QuickFacts, the population of New Bedford is composed of the following: White alone (63.5%), Black or African American (7.0%), Two or more races (5.2%), Hispanic or Latino (20.8%), White alone not Hispanic or Latino (60.5%), and 2% or less for the following: American Indian and Alaska Native alone, Asian alone, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone.

In 2018, the median household income in Massachusetts was \$77,382 and in New Bedford, the median household income was \$43,989, showing a marked income gap in the city. The city's median income is closer to the federal poverty level of \$16,460 (for a household of 2) than it is to the state median income. Amongst those living in impoverished conditions, the highest rates of poverty are seen among: women (22.7%), those under the age of 18 (32.1%), and the following ethnic/racial groups: Hispanic (35.5%), those who identified as one other race alone (32%), and Black or African American (27.6%), as it is demonstrated in the graph above.

According to Legal Momentum: The Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund, there are several factors influencing the disparity between women and men when it comes to poverty levels. These factors include: segregation into low-paying work, the gender wage gap, the lack of anti-poverty programs and safety-nets for women and families, lack of affordable childcare, caretaking responsibilities, costs/burdens of pregnancies, and violence and abuse.

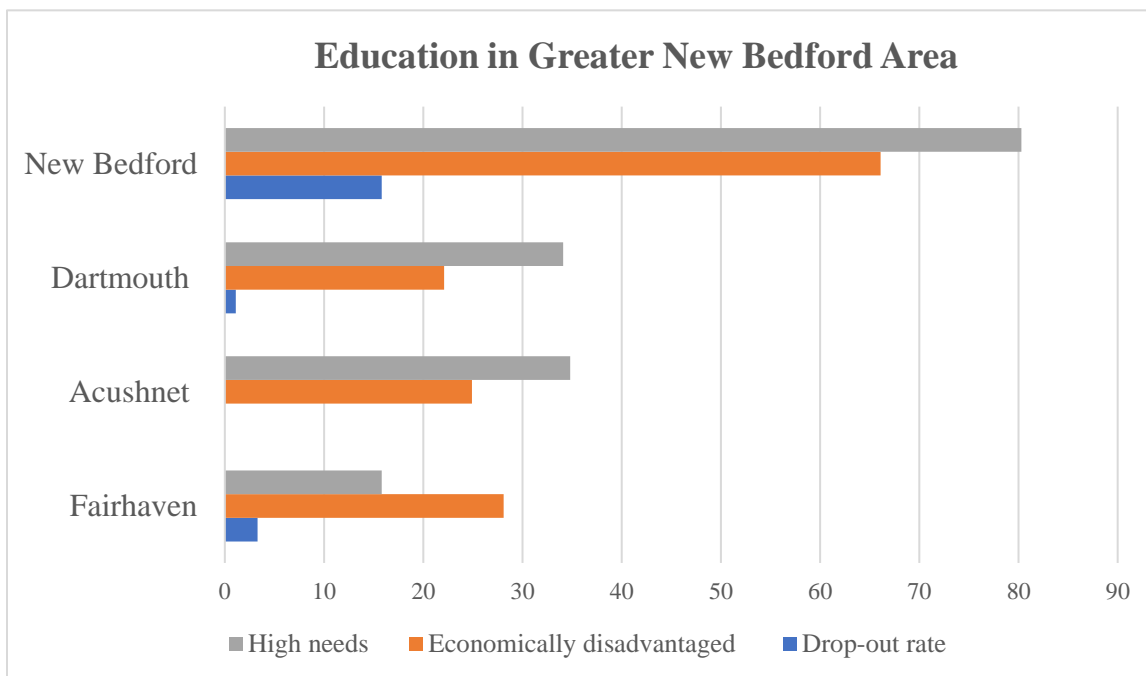
In 2015, it was reported in SouthCoastToday that, "One out of every four women in New Bedford and Fall River [was] living at or below the federal poverty level, and the median income for women earners [was] about \$10,000 less than that of men across all sectors and educational levels". It was also reported that more than 40 percent of households at the time were headed by single mothers. Responses to PACE's Community Assessment Survey (in 2020) echoes the concerns reported in 2015; one respondent shared, "Truthfully child care is expensive, if it was easier to get some help. I would be able to provide for my child. I'd like to go to school to start a career. Yet I have no one to watch my child yet I pay for everything in my home. I can't afford daycare..it's stressful" (ID: 164). As it is seen in this person's response, the lack of childcare and the demands of being head of household becomes a barrier in being able to attain higher education and therefore a better paying job.

According to the 2019 American Community Survey, there was 25,589 people in New Bedford identified as "working class." Of those, 13,958 identified as women (47%) and 15,631 identified as men (52%). According to this same survey, 46% of women reported working outside of New Bedford, while 54% of men reported the same. On average, the male worker in New Bedford made \$47,072, while the female worker made \$39,824—a \$7,248 difference in wages (16.6%) and a potential indicator of the different work opportunities that exist for each gender.

When measuring poverty in children, it is important to acknowledge the ratio of children to adults in one household, which explains a higher percentage of children in poverty than adults. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), there is a positive relationship

between poverty in children and living in a household with a parent who did not finish high school and/or living in a household led by a single-parent (especially a single-mother). Other indicators of child poverty are illiteracy levels, lack of access to food/water, lack of access to health care, and lack of employment opportunities, all of which appear in a review of New Bedford data.

The following data was gathered by SMC from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in 2018 and is specific to New Bedford and its neighboring towns Dartmouth, Acushnet, and Fairhaven.



**(Figure 6.3); Source: Statistics gathered by SMC (2018)**

The graph above compares the percentages of high needs, economically disadvantaged students, and the drop-out rates in New Bedford, Dartmouth, Acushnet, and Fairhaven. High needs and economic disadvantages are indicators of poverty; students who identified as “economically disadvantaged” represent public school students who are also enrolled in one of the state’s safety net programs, such as MassHealth or SNAP. The “High Needs” measure includes economically disadvantaged students along with students receiving special education or English language services. Amongst these four, New Bedford has by far the highest percentage of students with high needs, economic disadvantages, and also the highest drop-out rate. It is more than double of the surrounding towns for all indicators. These numbers are significant because research finds that among those living in impoverished conditions between the ages of 18 and 24, 30.8% dropped out of high school, while 13.5% attained at least a bachelor’s degree (Department of Education). New Bedford’s large percentage of students with high needs (80.3%) and economic disadvantages (66.1%) reflects high poverty rates in New Bedford and indicates barriers to educational attainment. This graph emphasizes that more has to be done in order to intervene and

reduce/eliminate the drop-out rates that are significantly associated with poverty levels in adulthood. Additional supports may be necessary to help students overcome socioeconomic barriers.

According to The State of Working America, factors contributing to disparity among racial/ethnic groups include income inequality, family structure, and educational attainment. As mentioned above, poverty rates in New Bedford are the highest among Hispanics (35.5%) and Black or African Americans (27.6%).

The South Health (2016) Community Needs Assessment report highlights that the teen birth rate in Greater New Bedford is also the highest among Hispanic and Black or African American females. In 2009, the teen birth rate among Hispanic females was 16.9% and among Black or African American females it was 13.7% (compare to the teen birth rate of 8.5% for White females). In 2013, the teen birth rate among Hispanic females was 14.9% and among Black or African American females it was 12.1% (compare to the teen birth rate of 5.0% for White females).

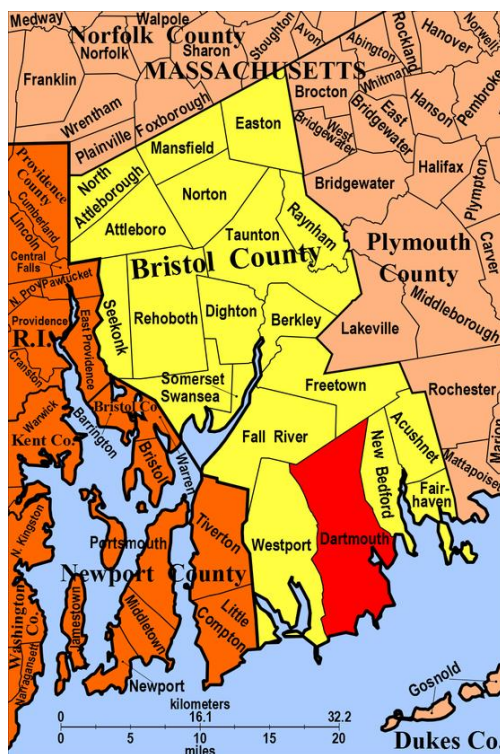
In 2017, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a report that stated the following: “Pregnancy and birth are significant contributors to high school dropout rates among girls. Only about 50% of teen mothers receive a high school diploma by 22 years of age, whereas approximately 90% of women who do not give birth during adolescence graduate from high school”.

As mentioned earlier, research finds that among those living in impoverished conditions between the ages of 18 and 24, 30.8% dropped out of high school; therefore, if a higher rate of teen birth is linked to a higher rate of high school drop-outs, and higher rates of high school drop-outs are linked to higher rates of poverty—teen birth may also be an indicator of poverty levels among Hispanic and Black or African Americans in the Greater New Bedford area.

Another indicator of poverty is access to health care, which has become an increasing concern among residents in the Greater New Bedford area. A recent news article claims that the income in New Bedford rose in 2019 and that the number of those living in poverty fell—however the number of people without health insurance increased. This aligns with data collected from The PACE Community Needs Assessment Survey (2020), as well as the South Health (2016) Community Needs Assessment which also reported that, “[the] Southcoast’s Hispanic population is particularly underserved in terms of clinical care. More residents cannot see a doctor due to cost and fewer have participated in cancer screenings when comparing to nonminorities and even the statewide Hispanic population”. If health conditions are left undiagnosed and therefore untreated, this can lead to increased poverty conditions.

While much has been done, it is a continued effort to reduce and eliminate poverty for all.

## Dartmouth



(Figure 6.4)

Located to the southwest of New Bedford with a population of 34,286 is the town of Dartmouth. Dartmouth is also located in Bristol County and its name is from a town in Devon, England, as it was the first area of Southeastern Massachusetts to be settled by Euro-Americans in the early 1650s. While at first Dartmouth was known for its rich agricultural industry, the coastal town has now become more of a resort destination, with parks, beaches, a garden museum, rivers, nature walks, and beaches that can be visited for recreational activities. Dartmouth spans 97.5 square miles and is largely seen as split into two parts: North and South; North Dartmouth is more commercialized and is the home to the Dartmouth town center, the Dartmouth Mall, and the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, while South Dartmouth is located on Buzzard's Bay and is more known for boating, fishing, and its coastal real estate. As a whole, the town is relatively affluent and this is reflected in the available data.

### Key Statistics

Total Population of Dartmouth (current): 34,286

Total population living in poverty	7.6%
Total individuals served	1,137
Median household income (Dartmouth)	\$81,641
Poverty guideline (family of 2)	\$16,460



Poverty rate among women	9.2%
Poverty rate among men	5.6%
Poverty rate under age 18	7.6%
Poverty rate 18-64	6.5%
Poverty rate 65+	10.2%
Poverty rate by race—White alone	7.5%
Poverty rate by race—Black or African American	0.0%
Poverty rate by some other race alone	15.8%
Ethnicity—Hispanic	28.4%
Unemployment Rate	3.1%
Food Stamps/SNAP participants	9.9%

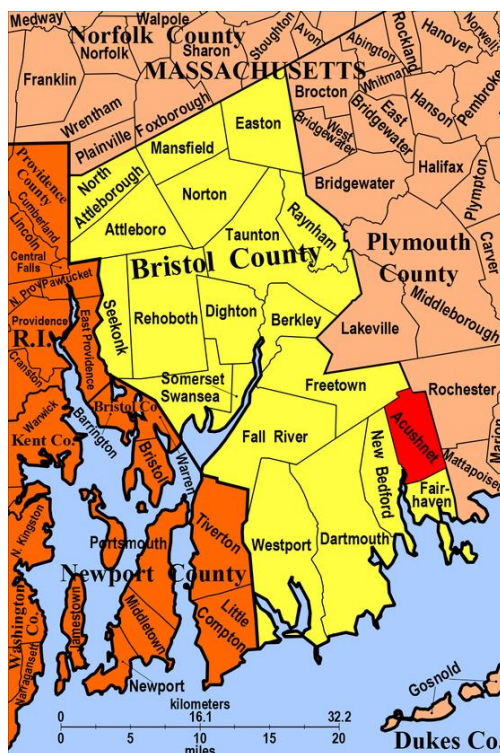
**(Figure 6.5); Source: Statistics gathered by SMC (2018)**

According to the U.S. Census, 90.4% of the population in Dartmouth is White alone; 2.8% Black or African American, 2.6% Asian, 2.6% two or more races, and 2.3% Hispanic or Latino. In 2018, the median household income in Dartmouth was \$81,641 with 7.6% of the population living in poverty. On average, women in Dartmouth make \$17,267 less than men living in Dartmouth. The leading occupations in Dartmouth (by percentage of population working these jobs) are: health care and social assistance (17.3%), educational services (14.1%), retail trade (13.2%), and manufacturing (10.2%).

Additionally, in 2018, 8.8% of Dartmouth's population received SNAP benefits (compare this to New Bedford's 25.6%). Although the percentage of people receiving public assistance is relatively lower in Dartmouth than it is in New Bedford, the gap between the stable/wealthy vs. those living in impoverished conditions is significantly higher, leaving those living in poverty in Dartmouth far more vulnerable. In addition, when comparing the different age groups, the highest rates of poverty in Dartmouth are seen in the age category of 65+ (10.2%); this leads to another major concern in Dartmouth—the increase in the cost of living and how this affects populations on fixed incomes (such as the 65+ population). In the last year alone, the cost of living in Dartmouth has increased by 1.6% and it is 9.9% higher than the national average. This means that those who rely on public assistance or are disadvantaged in any way, are struggling to keep up with the rest of the population living in Dartmouth.

*\*For data on education in Dartmouth, refer to figure 6.3 on page 9.*

## Acushnet



(Figure 6.6)

To the northeast of New Bedford is the small town of Acushnet with a population of 10,625. Acushnet is also located in Bristol County and it is 19 square miles. In the past, Acushnet has been considered to be a part of three separate towns: Dartmouth, then New Bedford, and lastly, Fairhaven. In 1812, Acushnet became its own distinct town and incorporated in 1860. Since, the rural town has kept its agricultural roots, and every year hosts the Apple Peach Festival in which Acushnet farmers, artisans, and its Historical Society gather and welcome visitors to join them in celebrating their town's annual tradition. The small size and population of the town plays a major role in the following statistics and demographics of Acushnet.

Key Statistics	
Total Population of Acushnet (current): 10,625	
Total population living in poverty	4.9%
Total individuals served	788
Median household income (Acushnet)	\$72,125
Poverty guideline (family of 2)	\$16,460
Poverty rate among women	6.6%
Poverty rate among men	3.2%

Poverty rate under age 18	4.5%
Poverty rate 18-64	3.8%
Poverty rate 65+	8.7%
Poverty rate by race—White alone	4.9%
Poverty rate by race—Black or African American	0%
Poverty rate by some other race alone	5.6%
Ethnicity—Hispanic	0%
Unemployment Rate (March 2020)	3.1%
Food Stamps/SNAP participants	8.5%

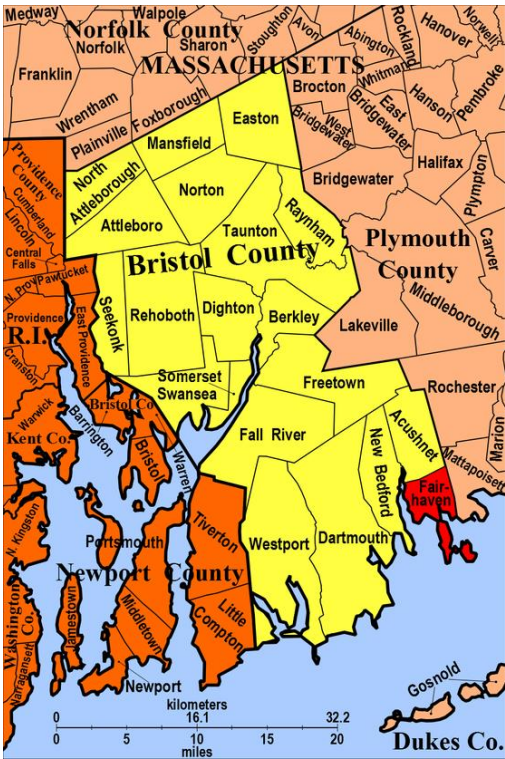
**(Figure 6.7) Source: Statistics gathered by SMC (2018)**

According to the U.S. Census 2019 estimates, the population of Acushnet is composed of the following percentages by race and ethnicity: White alone (91.8%), Black or African American alone (0.1%), Asian alone (2.0%), two or more races (2.7%), and Hispanic or Latino (3.4%).

In 2018, the median household income was \$72,125, while the poverty threshold was \$16,460; 4.9% of the population in Acushnet was at (or below) the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). From the total percentage of people living in poverty, 3.2% identified as male, while 6.6% identified as female. According to the statistics gathered by SMC, 0.0% of households with income below the FPL were those led by a male figure with no wife present, while 56.9% of households with income below the FPL were those led by a female figure with no husband present (the remaining percentages were households with both parents present). 1.8% of households were reported to claim cash assistance and 4.6% of households were identified as Food Stamps/SNAP participants. According to the 2019 annual report, the principal industries in Acushnet are: road surface materials, farming, apple, peach orchards, landscape, and nurseries. One of the most notable community concerns in Acushnet as of late has been the environmental effects of having a paving and asphalt company so close to residential areas. This conflict between prominent business and area residents is emblematic of issues faced by many rural communities that are becoming more settled; residential and commercial areas encroach on each other. Due to its small population size and tax base, another concern for Acushnet is that it lacks the resiliency that its neighboring towns have, especially when confronting unanticipated expenses and with the rising costs of town government.

*\*For data on education in Acushnet, refer to figure 6.3 on page 9; Acushnet does not have a high school and therefore there is no graduation rate or drop-out rate data.*

Fairhaven



(Figure 6.8)

Located on Buzzard’s Bay and to the east of New Bedford is Fairhaven, a town with a population of 16,094. Fairhaven is also located in Bristol County and it is 14.1 square miles. While at first Fairhaven was an agricultural town, it has shifted more towards maritime activities (shipbuilding, whaling, fishing, foreign trade) since the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a former Fairhaven resident who had become a billionaire in the oil industry returned and made generous donations to rebuild his hometown (donations went towards the Town Hall, a library, a Unitarian church, schools, streets, and water systems). Fairhaven is also known for its biking/walking trail, state parks, and beaches, making it a summer tourist destination. The present-day economy of Fairhaven is composed of: marine repair and construction, the fishing industry, fishing machinery, hospitality industry, retail, and agriculture.

Key Statistics	
Total Population of Fairhaven (current): 16,094	
Total population living in poverty	7.6%
Total individuals served	779
Median household income Fairhaven	\$65,763
Poverty guideline (family of 2)	\$16,460

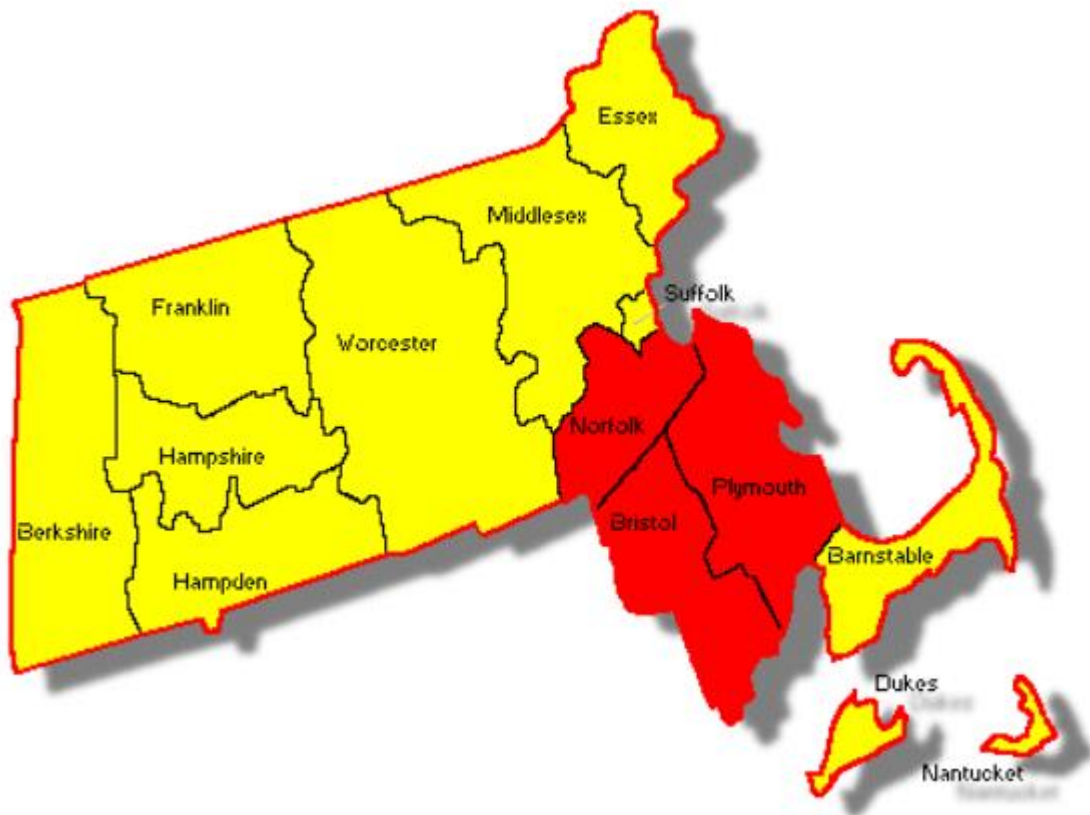
Poverty rate among women	9.1%
Poverty rate among men	5.9%
Poverty rate under age 18	9.4%
Poverty rate 18-64	7.2%
Poverty rate 65+	6.9%
Poverty rate by race—White alone	6.3%
Poverty rate by race—Black or African American	24.7%
Poverty rate by some other race alone	9%
Ethnicity—Hispanic	9.6%
Unemployment Rate (March 2020)	3.4%
SNAP participants	10.6%

**(Figure 6.9) Source: Statistics gathered by SMC (2018)**

According to the U.S. Census, the population of Fairhaven is made up of the following: 91.1% White alone, 0.7% Black or African American, 3.6% Asian alone, 0.1% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, 1.0% two or more races, and 2.0% Hispanic or Latino. The median household income reported for 2018 was \$65,763 (compare to poverty threshold of \$16,460); according to the statistics gathered by SMC, 7.6% of the population of Fairhaven was living at or below the FPL in 2018. Among those living in poverty, the highest percentage rates are seen among women (9.1%), those under the age of 18 (9.4%), and Black or African Americans (24.7%). In the last decade, the population of Fairhaven is estimated to have seen an increase of 1.3% and about 75.6% of the population is living in owner-occupied housing (U.S. Census)—indicating that the demographics of the town does not change as often as bigger cities like New Bedford. The concerns in Fairhaven are similar to those in New Bedford, Dartmouth, and Acushnet. Fairhaven has much in common with Dartmouth specifically, such as the significant presence of commercial businesses, and particularly retailers along Route 6; like Acushnet, Fairhaven must grapple with the coexistence of businesses and residential properties in close proximity.

*\*For data on education in Fairhaven, refer to figure 6.3 on page 9.*

## Additional Service Areas



(Figure 6.10)

<https://www.sec.state.ma.us/census2020/index.html>

### **Bristol County**

Key Statistics	
Total Population of Bristol County (current): 565,217	
Total population living in poverty	11.3%
Total individuals served	22,073
Median household income (Bristol County)	\$69,095
Poverty guideline (family of 2)	\$16,460
Poverty rate under age 18	16.6%
Poverty rate 18-64	10.2%
Poverty rate 65+	9.8%
Unemployment Rate (March 2020)	4%



## **Plymouth County**

Key Statistics	
Total Population of Plymouth County (current): 521,202	
Total population living in poverty	7.4%
Total individuals served	2194
Median household income (Plymouth County)	\$89,489
Poverty guideline (family of 2)	\$16,460
Poverty rate under age 18	10%
Poverty rate 18-64	7.0%
Poverty rate 65+	6.9%
Unemployment Rate (March 2020)	3.3%

(Figure 6.11)

## **Norfolk County**

Key Statistics	
Total Population of Norfolk County (current): 706,775	
Total population living in poverty	5.8%
Total individuals served	392
Median household income (Norfolk County)	\$103,291
Poverty guideline (family of 2)	\$16,460
Poverty rate under age 18	6.5%
Poverty rate 18-64	6.4%
Poverty rate 65+	7.1%
Unemployment Rate (March 2020)	3.3%

(Figure 6.12)

## **Clients Served by City/Town**

TOWN/CDP	Median Household Income	Population	Clients Served
New Bedford	\$40,626	95125	17288
Brockton	\$52,393	95161	1510

Dartmouth	\$74,742	34341	1137
Fall River	\$39,328	89258	980
Acushnet	\$72,125	10443	788
Fairhaven	\$62,090	16027	779
Taunton	\$56,797	56826	458
Attleboro	\$70,136	44326	183
Marion	\$76,576	5065	160
Stoughton	\$78,343	28338	135
Mattapoisett	\$85,870	6245	110
Middleboro	\$79,800	24213	110
Rochester	\$103,472	5462	101
Holbrook	\$68,023	11029	69
Walpole	\$107,956	24960	64
Bridgewater	\$88,640	27434	58
North Attleboro	\$87,093	29033	55
Easton	\$105,380	24001	53
Westport	\$80,176	15810	50
Foxboro	\$98,199	17448	49
Raynham	\$91,944	13845	46
Mansfield	\$111,141	23678	42
Lakeville	\$98,015	11245	39
Norton	\$102,869	19515	38
Somerset	\$72,920	18257	37
Swansea	\$81,125	16341	35
Abington	\$91,643	16275	33
Freetown	\$85,040	9175	32
Plainville	\$93,889	9000	32
East Bridgewater	\$86,568	14301	32
Dighton	\$93,017	7438	25
Whitman	\$79,705	14864	25
Seekonk	\$86,014	14957	24
Wrentham	\$107,444	11597	17
Avon	\$69,709	4468	14
Berkley	\$89,597	6630	13
Wareham	\$65,718	22535	13
Sharon	\$132,734	18245	11
Rehoboth	\$96,098	11990	10
Plymouth	\$83,746	58695	3
Norwood	\$87,516	29121	1
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>24,659</b>

**(Figure 6.13)**

Additional service areas include cities and towns as far as Norwood, with populations as small as 4,468 (Avon) and as big as 95,161 (Brockton) with median household incomes ranging anywhere from \$39,328 (Fall River) to \$132,734 (Sharon).

Over 70% of PACE's clients are New Bedford residents, with an additional 11% coming from the abutting communities Dartmouth, Fairhaven, and Acushnet that make up Greater New

Bedford. Aside from neighboring towns, the largest percentage of clients come from municipalities not typically associated with PACE's Greater New Bedford service area, such as Brockton, Fall River, and Taunton (12%). The other 34 communities listed make up less than 7% of PACE's total client population. The vast majority of the clients served outside of Greater New Bedford are served through the agency's Child Care Works program, which by state contract serves 40 cities and towns throughout Bristol, Norfolk, and Plymouth counties. PACE's Housing Opportunity Center serves all of Bristol County. Most of the other programs only service New Bedford or Greater New Bedford. Some clients listed are New Bedford residents when served, but have identification listing previous addresses or mailing addresses in other communities that are entered into the agency's database software.

In addition to PACE, the community action agencies (CAAs) serving these areas include Citizens for Citizens, Self-Help, Inc., and South Shore Community Action Council. PACE works closely with these agencies to ensure vital community needs are met and services offered in other CAA territories are relevant, needed, and coordinated.

## Community & Internal Assessment Process

To start the 2021-2023 Community Assessment Report and Strategic Plan process, PACE formed a Steering Committee in October 2019, which attended the Department of Housing & Community Development and MASSCAP's kickoff event on October 16, 2019. The Steering Committee presented on the topic at a meeting of agency managers on October 23, 2019. Each program designated staff members to participate on the larger Strategic Planning Committee, which met for the first time on January 3, 2020 and began meeting biweekly. Both the Steering Committee and Strategic Planning Committee included Executive Director Pam Kuechler and the agency's ROMA Implementers, Milly Duarte and Joshua Amaral.

Simultaneously, the Planning & Development Committee of PACE's Board of Directors embarked on a review of the agency's mission statement, culminating in a revision proposed and approved at the February 11, 2020 board meeting.

Led by the Strategic Planning Committee, PACE conducted its Internal Needs Assessment Survey between January 22, 2020 and February 7, 2020. Members of the Strategic Planning Committee reviewed and discussed the survey data on February 14, 2020. The Committee, made up of representatives from each program and administrative department, discussed the survey results and added needed context that helped the group draw conclusions about the most pressing internal needs.

Utilizing the set of common community survey questions provided by SMC Partners, in collaboration with DHCD and MASSCAP, PACE launched its Community Needs Assessment Survey on March 6, 2020 with a scheduled end date of April 10<sup>th</sup>. To ensure maximum participation, PACE made the survey available both online and on paper, and launched a campaign via traditional media and social media, and distributed posters, business cards, and

rack cards with the survey link and QR code throughout our buildings and at high-traffic locations throughout the community. The survey was translated into Spanish and Portuguese and shared specifically with community partners who could more easily share it with traditionally hard-to-reach populations.

Just a week after the survey's launch, PACE and many other community institutions made the decision to limit in-person interactions during the beginning stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Without foot traffic in PACE offices and other community sites, and the distribution of hard copies and promotional materials now prohibited, the agency received just 146 survey responses, (most of which were submitted online).

On April 9, 2020, DHCD informed all Community Action Agencies that the Community Action Report & Strategic Plan deadline was extended, with the Community Assessment elements now due on December 31, 2020 and the Strategic Plan elements due July 2, 2021. Agency leadership anticipated community needs might change drastically over the course of the pandemic and determined another round of assessment would be necessary in Fall 2020 to accurately measure the needs of the community and in order to plan for the years post-pandemic. With this extended deadline and the additional data that was necessary, the Strategic Planning process was placed on hold as the agency shifted its focus to meet the rapidly evolving needs of the community which were developing as a direct result to the pandemic.

In November 2020, PACE re-launched its Community Assessment Survey, with the addition of five questions relating specifically to the impacts of COVID-19. Simultaneously, members of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee conducted several interviews with members of the community. Individuals were selected based on suggestions of the Strategic Planning Committee. The Strategic Planning Committee formally reconvened on December 3, 2020 to revisit the process and plan for the completion of the assessment and next steps. The group met again on December 18, 2020 to review data from the surveys and interviews and prioritized community needs to close out the Community Assessment Report process. Genesis Galan, who joined the Committee in the Fall, was an integral part of the Community Assessment Report process, performing much of the research and data analysis prepared in the report. The data gathered by SMC Partners as part of the DHCD/MASSCAP data project was synthesized with other available sources, including more recent Census data from the American Community Survey, local media sources, historic information on the towns in PACE's service area, and other trusted publications reporting on the prevalence of poverty in the United States.

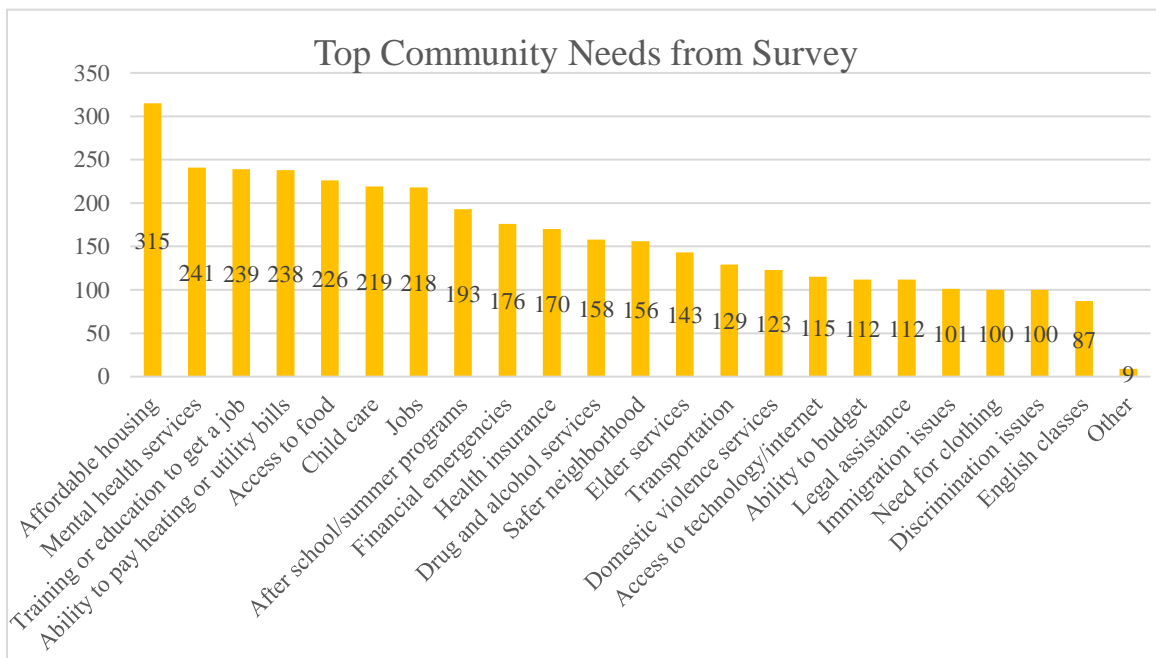
The agency engaged its board of directors on the topic of strategic planning and assessing the community at each regular board meeting. Board members assisted in the creation of the survey tools, helped promote and share the survey, and helped process and interpret the data. The Planning & Development Committee of the board participated directly in all phases of the process and provided invaluable guidance. Updates were shared with the board throughout the process, and the board was presented with the findings of the Community Assessment on December 18, 2020, with feedback received and incorporated prior to the submission of a draft document to DHCD on December 31, 2020. The full board reviewed and approved the finalized Community Assessment Report on January 12, 2021 and began the planning phase.

## Key Findings: Community Assessment

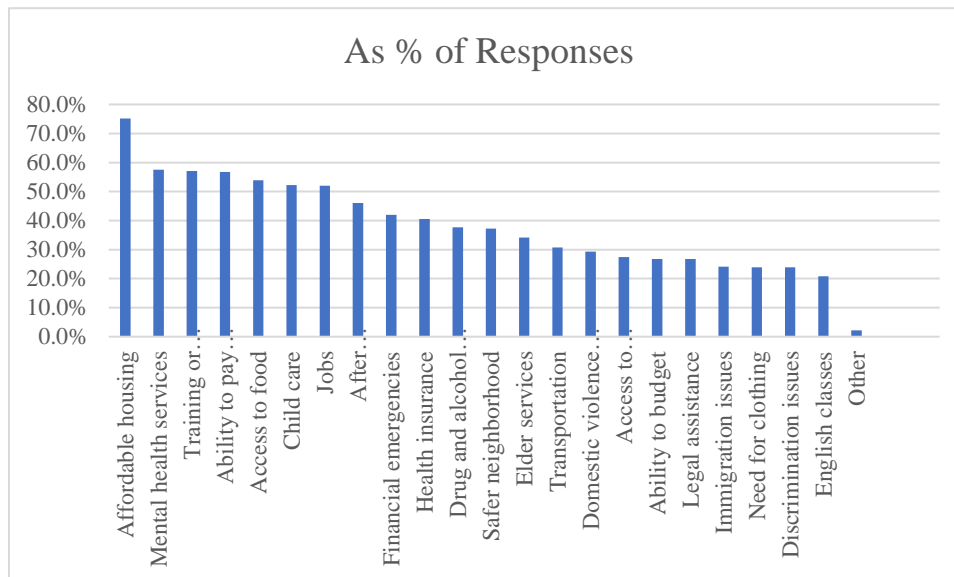
### Community Needs Assessment Survey Results

PACE received a total of 419 responses to the Community Assessment survey. Respondents were asked to select all affiliations that applied to them from the following choices: PACE client, community member, community agency/partner, or PACE employee. We received 242 identifying as community members, 176 as PACE clients, 30 as community partners, 48 as PACE employees, and 17 as “Other”.

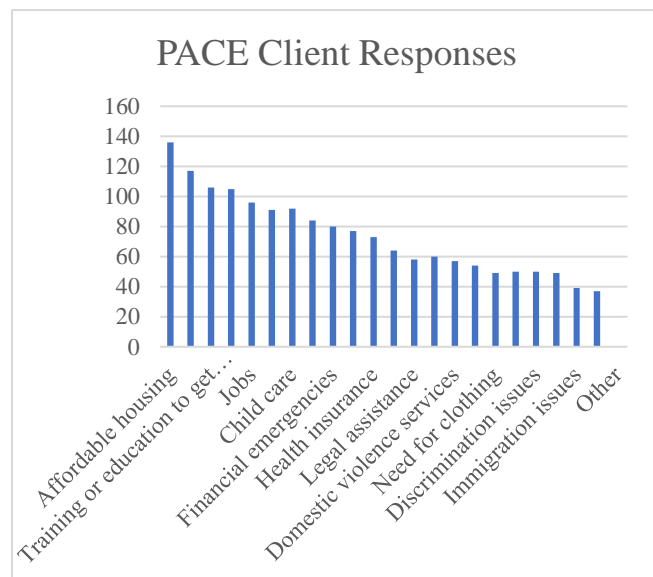
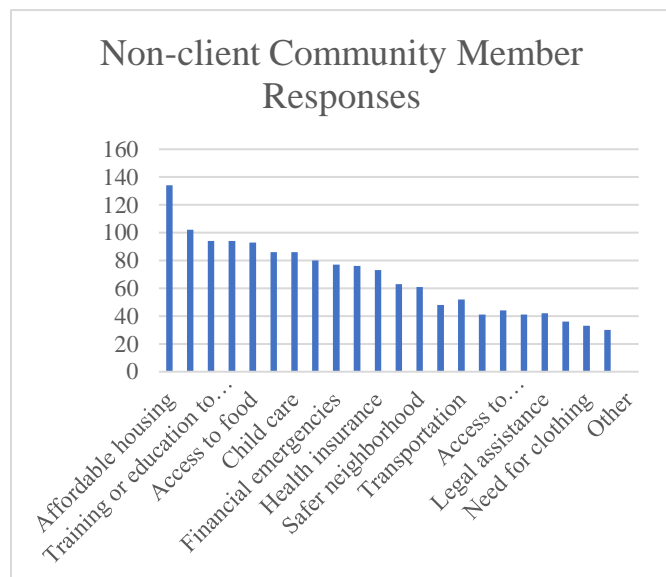
Respondents were asked a series of survey questions, consistent with the surveys offered by other CAAs. The most vital question asked respondents to check off what they believed to be the top needs impacting people in their community. The results showed a clear top need in affordable housing and a consensus top seven responses: housing, mental health services, job training or education, heating/utility assistance, access to food, access to child care, and job opportunities.



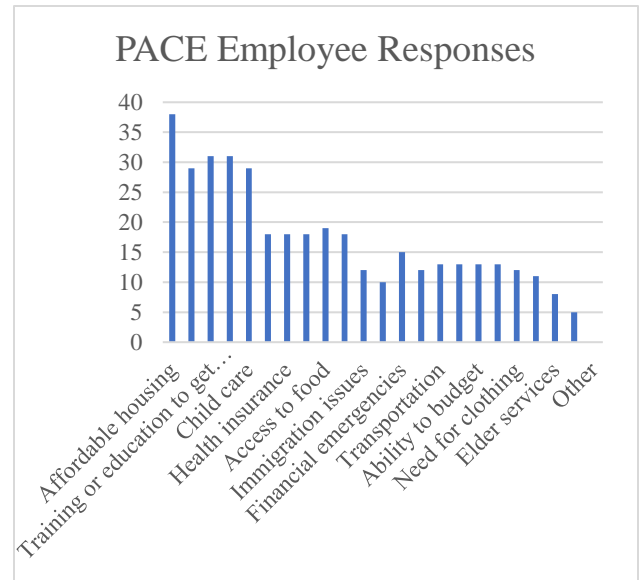
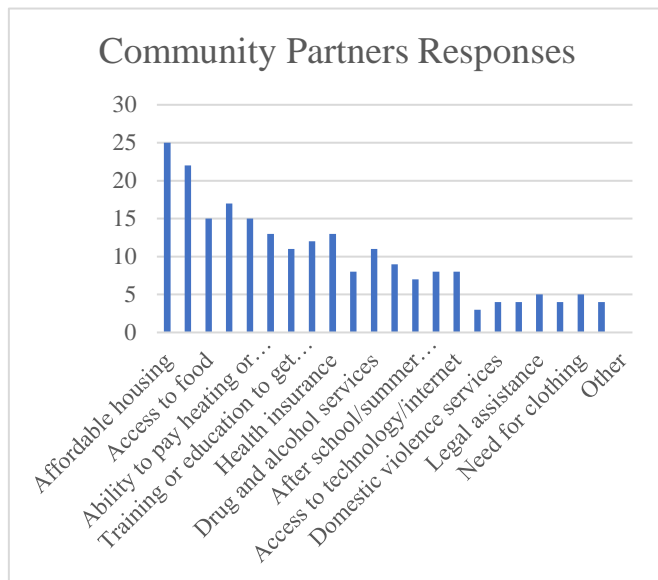
The top three needs identified by respondents of the survey were: affordable housing, mental health services, and training/education to get a job. As a percentage of responses, nearly 75% of respondents selected affordable housing as a top need. Just under 60% identified mental health services, training or education to get a job, and ability to pay heating and utility costs.



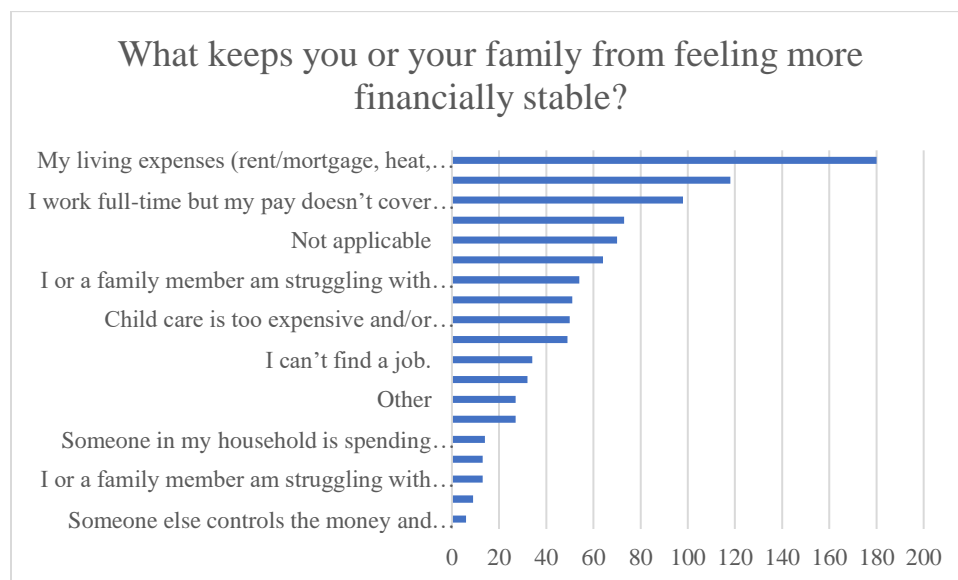
The consensus on these top community needs appeared consistently in the data disaggregated by how respondents identified themselves. Non-client community members, clients, partners, and employees all surfaced affordable housing as the top need.







Additionally, we assessed the financial stability of the respondents and asked what keeps them and their families from feeling more financially stable:



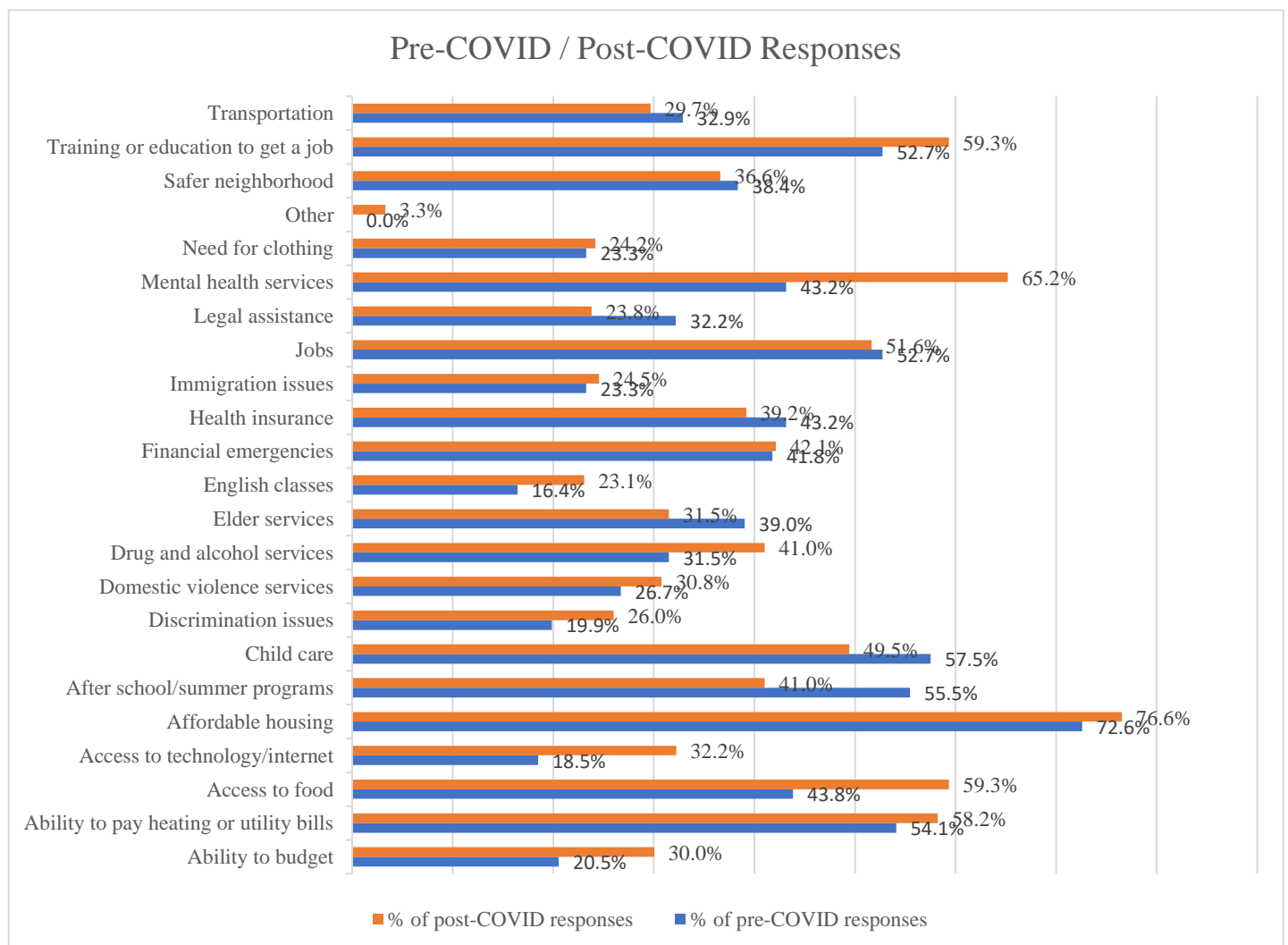
The two most common responses indicated a related phenomenon. Either the respondent shared their living expenses were too high or despite their full-time job, their income was too low. Regardless, basic living expenses like housing costs and food were deemed unaffordable.

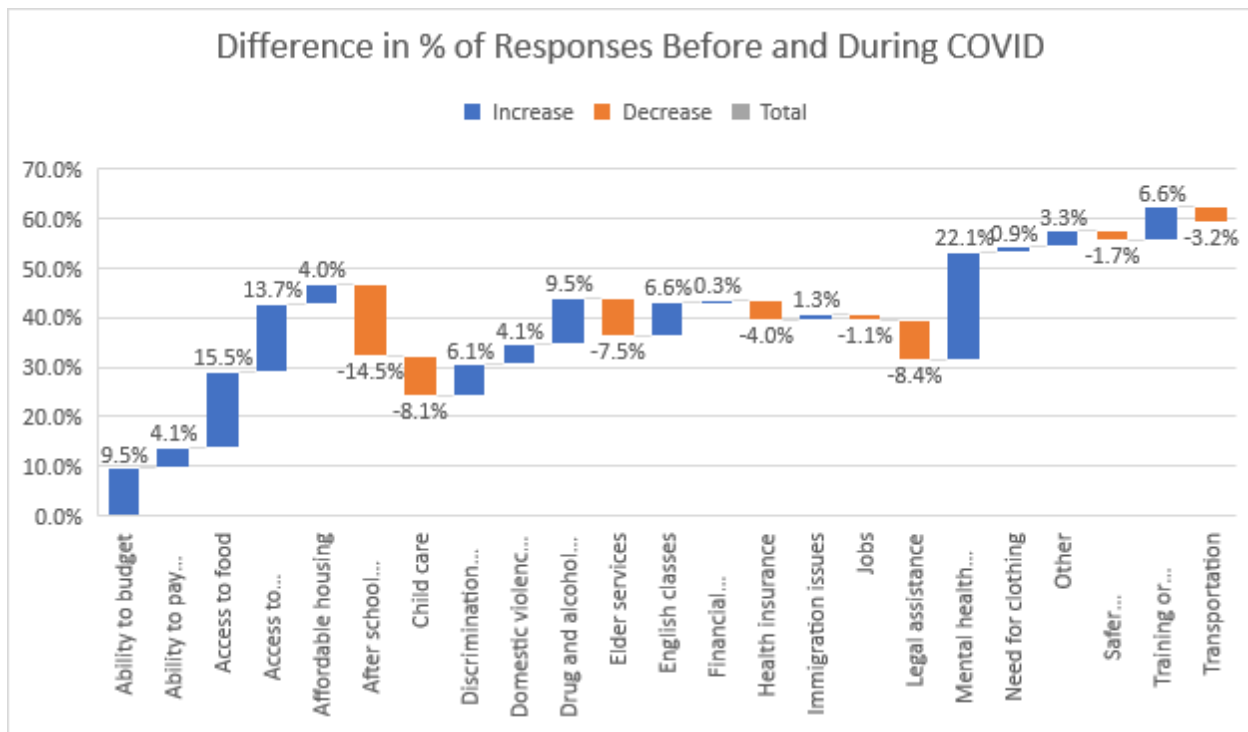
## Impacts of COVID-19

PACE launched its Community Survey in March 2020, just prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. PACE received a total of 146 recorded responses in March and April 2020.

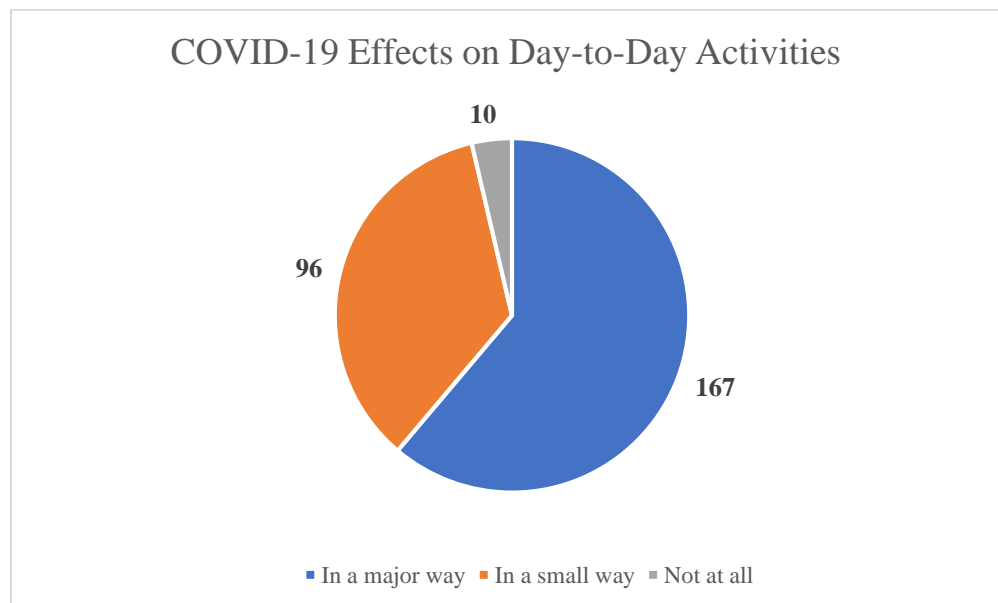
Considering the massive impacts of the COVID pandemic, PACE sought more current data in Fall 2020 and re-launched the assessment survey with the addition of five COVID-specific questions and received an additional 273 responses.

The differences in top needs selected by respondents before and after the start of COVID tells the story of how the pandemic has exacerbated needs in the community. Mental health was selected as a top need 22% more frequently in the post-COVID responses. Similarly, access to food and access to technology/internet were selected 15.5% and 13.7% more often than they were before COVID. The response rate identifying after school and daycare as top needs dropped 14.5% and 8.1% respectively, perhaps in response to more respondents working from home or becoming unemployed.

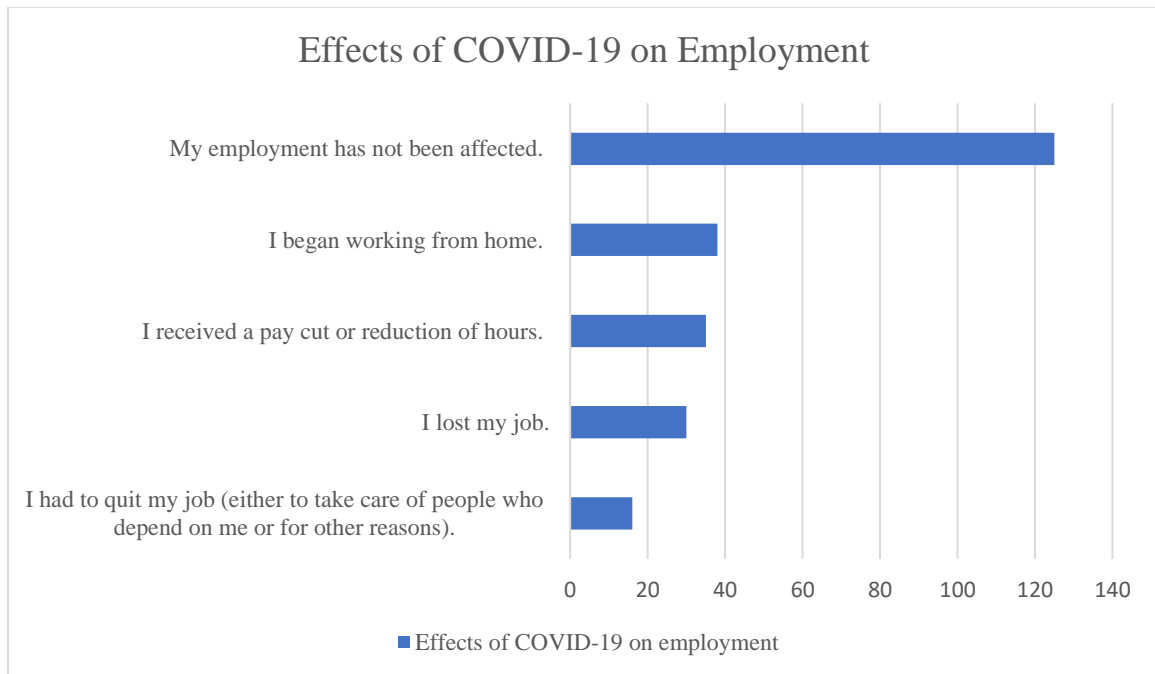




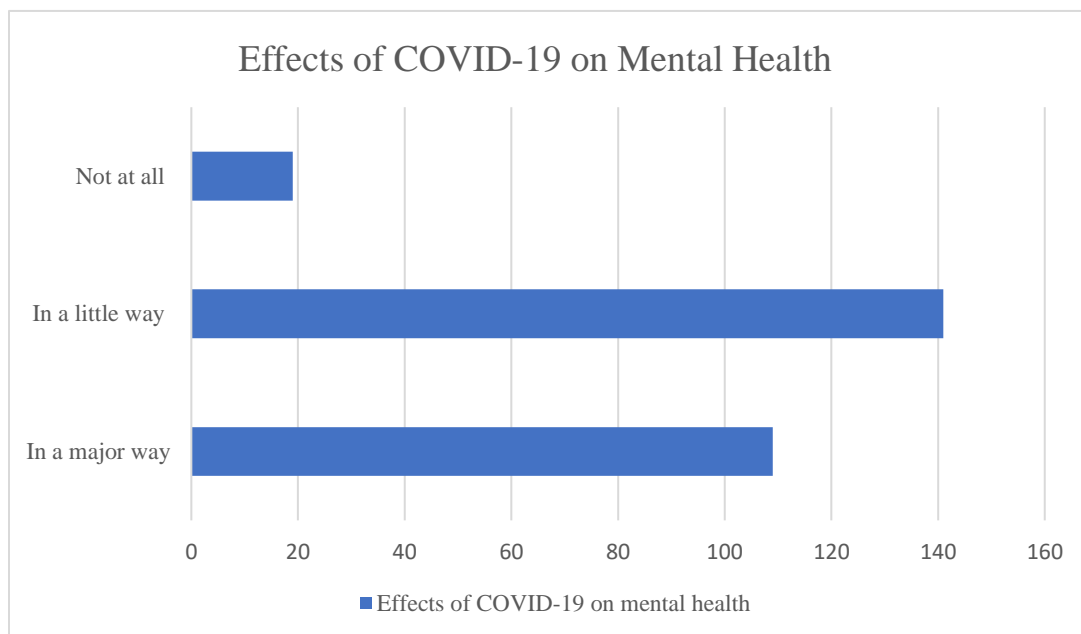
The COVID-specific questions added when the survey was relaunched are also telling. 61% of respondents shared that COVID-19 had a major effect on their day-to-day activities.



While most post-COVID respondents did not experience a significant impact to their employment status, 15% began working from home, 14% received a pay cut or loss of hours, and nearly 19% lost their job either as a result of reductions by their employer or via resignation for a COVID related reason.



In a question assessing COVID’s impacts on mental health, 41% of respondents shared that the pandemic has had a major impact on their mental health. 52% shared a less severe impact, and 7% said their mental health had not been affected at all.



Respondents were also asked an open-ended question, “How else has COVID-19 affected you?” Clear themes emerged in the 125 responses, including needs in health, employment/finances, family care/education, and food insecurity.

### Health

Responses ranged from physical, to mental, to socioemotional health. Respondents cited reduced routine medical care, and one person responded that their health was worsening due to harsher work conditions. Responses in relation to physical health included gaining weight, having a hard time breathing due to wearing face masks, and a lack of energy to do anything. Several respondents answered that they were limited due to being high risk for COVID-19, while others claimed to have had COVID-19 or knew someone who had it. Some shared that they experienced a loss related to COVID-19. Some shared what they felt were newly developed mental health concerns and exacerbated existing concerns. Many respondents shared that they were anxious, worried, fearful, experiencing changes in their sleep, having panic attacks, experiencing depression and struggling with isolation. Other respondents shared that their children, significant other, or loved one was experiencing mental health concerns. Many respondents shared that they did not feel safe being around others for fear of contracting COVID-19, and many responses included mental health concerns linked to not being able to spend time with family and friends; for example, one respondent said, “No socializing has made me depressed more”. Another respondent who identified as 65 or older stated, “I have too much time alone, and I sometimes feel forgotten.”

### Employment/Finances

The second most open-ended responses regarding COVID were connected to employment and finance. Many respondents shared that they were laid off, working less hours, or receiving less income. Other respondents shared that they were unable to pay bills on time. One respondent shared their concern that unemployment benefits were going to run out soon. Some respondents shared that the way in which they worked change (i.e. work from home). Others expressed having a hard time finding work, for example one person in particular shared that they were limited by which opportunities they could take upon graduating from college. Other respondents shared their frustration with the inflated cost of basic needs like food.

### Family Care & Education

Respondents shared that they were afraid to send their children to day care and in some cases, unable to afford child care. Other respondents expressed an increased responsibility in child and/or family care. For example, one respondent noted, “Elderly parents need more from me now.” Another shared that their stress level had increased as a result of COVID-19 and being responsible for their disabled brother. Two respondents shared the challenges of being grandparents responsible for the childcare of their grandchildren.

Ten responses were related to distance learning. One of them shared the following, “Affected my kid who is an ESL student” and another stated, “We have a special needs child. So, finding childcare is close to impossible in a pandemic. And, he requires constant care. So when not in school, we have to care for him or find someone willing to be his PCA during this crisis.” Another respondent shared his/her struggle with distance learning, writing, “...My 17 year old hates remote learning. He goes in Monday and Tuesday but we struggle with wed, thurs, and Friday while I am at work and cannot be here to supervise remote learning. He is somewhat depressed. Thank God for sports (which he was able to play this summer)...”

### Food Security

Some respondents expressed their frustration with the cost of food increasing at a time when so many are struggling. One wrote, “Cost of food going up all the time,, food stamps run out before end of [month]..”

### Others

We received a number of more generic responses that highlight important costs of the pandemic. For example, one writes, “Just can’t do the things I love anymore” while others shared their concerns and hypotheses about government/political involvement in COVID-19.

Others lamented the technological challenges borne of the pandemic, with one commenting, “COVID-19 made it so clear of the people who have access to internet and computer devices and the ones who do not .”

Among the responses following COVID-19, there were also positive messages for PACE and its programs including, “I’m glad to be working and part of an organization that is truly helping many families in the community at this time!!!” and “I just want to thank PACE in helping me through the toughest period in my life...”

### Small Business Perspective

Many clients noted changes to their finances, employment, or overall wellbeing related to their employment – many being employed by local small businesses affected by the pandemic, especially those in the hospitality and tourism sectors. These impacts were a common theme in the interviews we conducted, particularly with area Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Council, and with small business owners themselves. Owners of two local restaurants explained the challenges they have faced with the pandemic, including frustration with the time it takes to get tests back, cost pressures in covering staff shifts due to COVID related absences, false alarm shutdowns, and overall decreased business attributable to the pandemic.

It was noted that New Bedford’s hospitality sector is likely more resilient than that of bigger cities because overhead costs in our region are relatively low. Some restaurateurs, for example, own their own building and can cover their overhead and labor expenses by reducing their menus and offering efficient takeout options, whereas Boston restaurants with exorbitant rents are being shuttered at higher rates. Executive Director of the New Bedford Economic Development Council, Derek Santos, pointed out that while none of the hospitality businesses in New Bedford have gone under, it is to be said with caution due to the fact that the winter months are the toughest in this sector normally, so their economics may get worse before they get better.



## **Key Stakeholder Interviews**

As part of the assessment process, PACE interviewed over 20 key community stakeholders from a variety of sectors. Those interviewed include administrators from Southcoast Health, United Interfaith Action, local small businesses, local government officials, foundation and funder leaders, community organizations and partner agencies, economic and workforce development experts, the head of the Chamber of Commerce, the leadership of the city's Office of Housing and Community Development, as well as leaders of local educational institutions.

They were asked questions about community needs, how to fill service gaps, and for their first-hand and organizational experiences with the pandemic. The responses received were valuable in providing additional context to the data we collected. For example, talking to local businesses and economic development officials gave us an updated and unique view into the state of the city economy, and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in managing and recovering from the pandemic.

Overall, the interviews confirmed the top needs identified in the survey and added important context beyond the simplistic quantitative and qualitative data gathered from respondents. In many cases, the interviews reinforced just how interconnected the needs were. For example, the affordability of housing repeatedly surfaced in interviews as a top need, but was often directly related to other needs. Several interview subjects pointed out that housing affordability goes beyond the housing market and also includes the income levels of renters and homebuyers, which depends on their educational attainment and/or employment status. Likewise, affordability is a function of one's budget. One client may be housing cost burdened and need supplemental food from the food pantry in order to make the rent, while another might forego paying for health insurance to accomplish the same.

The interviews were also a valuable tool in learning more about the work of these vital community institutions, and sharing more about PACE's work. We believe they will lead not just to our increased understanding of community needs, but also to collaborative opportunities and increased information sharing.

## **Top Needs Identified**

Based on the quantitative and qualitative data gathered by the community survey, the feedback received in key stakeholder interviews, PACE service trends, and the expertise of PACE's board and staff, the following have been determined to be the top needs areas identified by this assessment:

- **Housing**
- **Food security**
- **Mental health**
- **Training to Improve Employment Opportunities and Financial Skills**

## Housing

Domain	Level	Need Statement
Housing	Indiv/Fam.	Individuals and families in our community have difficulty affording their housing costs.

The topic of housing and various needs related to its affordability emerged as the obvious top need. Not only did over 75% of survey respondents select it as a top need, but virtually every person interviewed spoke at length about urgent housing challenges, their centrality to poverty, and how they are intertwined with other basic needs shortages. Our Strategic Planning Committee was unanimous in selecting it as the top need.

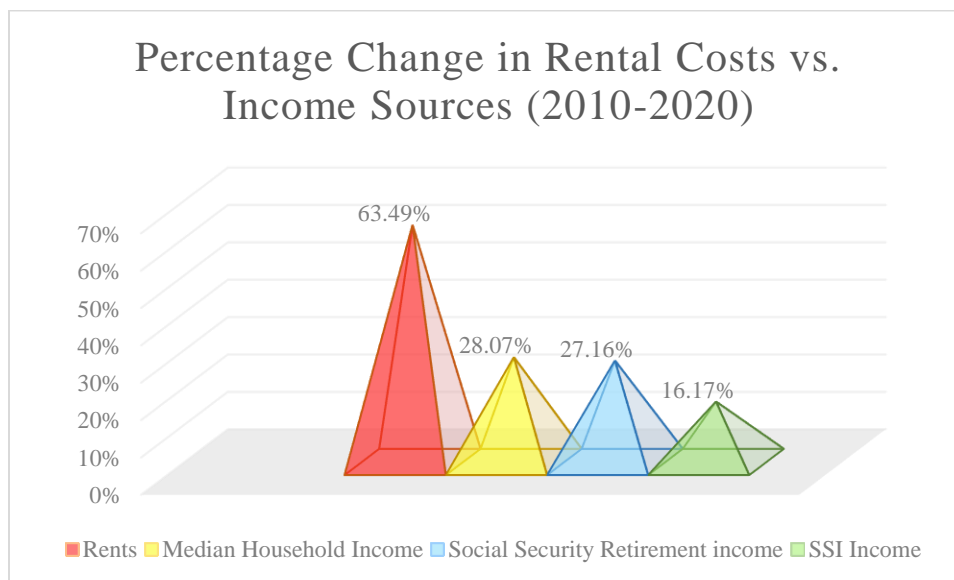
### Cost of Housing

Housing is a broad category, with needs experienced by community members in various ways. The most prevalent issue is that housing in New Bedford is becoming unaffordable for many. The common theme that appeared throughout our assessment is that New Bedford housing costs have increased at a rate much faster than that of household income.

New Bedford has long been recognized as one of the most affordable places to live in Massachusetts. Separate from a Greater Boston housing market that has boomed in recent years, one could have found a good quality three-bedroom apartment in New Bedford for under \$1000 a month—a rate within reach for seniors and others living on fixed incomes and low-wage workers. Over the last few years, however, rents have increased fairly dramatically. The same apartments that were once attainable at \$1000 per month are now regularly rented closer to \$1500. The one-bedroom, third-floor apartments traditionally rented by students and single adults for around \$700 are now listed around \$1000. At the same time, senior citizens, those who are paid low-wages, and those with fixed incomes have seen minimal change to their income. Many of these populations were “housing cost burdened” even with lower rents, meaning they paid more than 30% of their income in rent. Now, many households are struggling to pay well upwards of 50% of their income on housing costs alone. These added expenses have eaten into other areas of their household budgets. With money increasingly siphoned away to pay the rent, tenants have fallen behind on utility bills, foregone car payments and insurance, and skimp on basic necessities like food.

One survey respondent summarized their experience: “There really should be something done about rent control and doing what they can to protect the tenants. People are struggling and even 1 bedroom apartments are over \$1,000 a month. This is New Bedford. People struggle to pay their rent. Why can’t we live? We have good jobs with decent pay but these rents are outrageous! I am in a 2 bedroom right now and my rent is \$1550 a month. It’s not updated at all and definitely not worth the money and it’s not fair. A lot of management companies and landlords are trying to become rich off of poor people.”

Other area residents shared those sentiments, writing, “Cost has gone up on everything but my pay has stayed the same” and “Rents don’t match wages,” respectively. This phenomenon is reflected in the data.



Rents for a three bedroom apartment in New Bedford have increased over 60% in the last decade, while the median household income has grown just 28%. Social Security and Supplemental Security Income, fixed income sources relied on by many residents, increased just 27% and 16%, respectively. Minimum wage has increased over 60% in the last decade, too, but a full-time minimum wage worker would still be housing cost burdened, paying over 50% of their monthly earnings of \$2,080 in rent alone.

For these reasons, Managing Attorney from South Coastal Counties Legal Services Mary Ellen Natale shared that even before the pandemic, 40% of those seeking legal services from their agency were for housing related concerns, including eviction defense, with particular increases in the number of elderly and non-English speaking people seeking assistance.

Others interviewed believed the drastic hikes in local rents to be related to the rapid growth and increasing costs of the Boston housing market. New Bedford has historically been disconnected from that market, but with the South Coast Rail project on the horizon, many shared their belief that real estate investors and speculators are buying multi-family properties in New Bedford as investments. In some cases, they have renovated these houses in order to charge higher rents. These increased amounts are perceived as premium rates in New Bedford, but as a steep discount compared to the rents in Greater Boston. While the train is still a few years away, some landlords have been able to find tenants to rent their units at these increased rates.

Other landlords, many of whom occupy a unit within the multi-family homes they own, responded to our survey and claimed that they have had no choice but to raise the rent to keep up with rising property taxes. Over the last several years, property taxes have increased in New Bedford for a variety of reasons. In some cases, the actual tax rate has gone up, stretching household budgets. More often, because of the increased valuations of homes in the city, tax bills

have increased despite the tax rate staying flat or even decreasing. This may be yet another indicator of the increased investment and competition for multi-family properties by out-of-town investors.

Regardless of the cause, rising rents present a real challenge to long-time New Bedford residents pushed to the brink. This issue is not new in other parts of the state where rents have been on the rise for decades. New Bedford was perhaps the last community in the state where market-rate units were affordable to those with fixed incomes and low wages. But as those units become more and more scarce, residents here are simply not able to afford to live where they have always lived, presenting a serious challenge. This problem is particularly vexing in New Bedford, in that it still remains arguably the most affordable place to live in Massachusetts. Short of moving out of state, residents have few options.

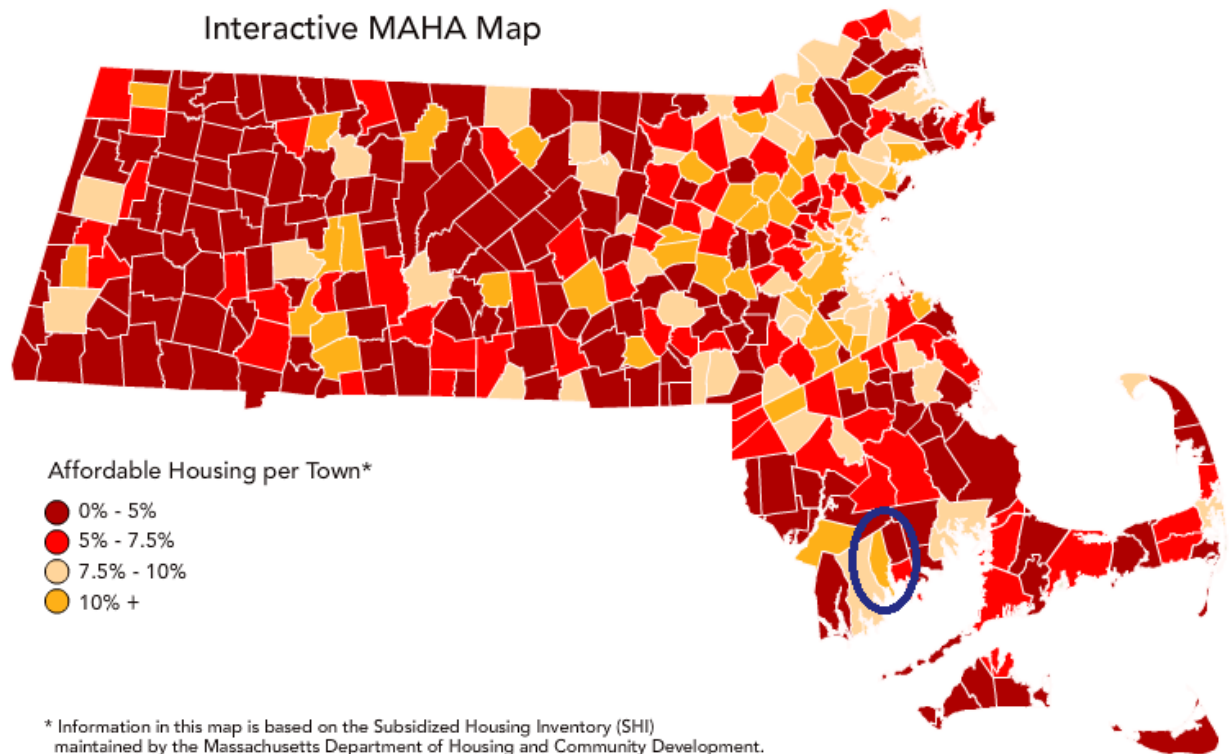
Competition for reasonably priced units among prospective tenants is fierce. Some landlords are willing to sacrifice on the rents they charge in order to have a greater selection of prospective tenants from which to choose. As one survey respondent offered, landlords are performing thorough background checks on applicants, checking their credit and eviction history, and asking for proof that tenants have monthly incomes three to five times greater than the rent. As a result, even tenants who can afford some units are eliminated from consideration because of imperfect credit, a prior run-in with the law, a past eviction, or a lower income level. Landlords' ability to be more selective gives them even more power and raises obvious concerns about equity.

In certain corners of such a seller's market, landlords have little incentive to maintain, let alone improve, their units. Some choose to simply rent substandard units at below market rates. Survey respondents shared the lackluster conditions in some of these units, with one commenting, "The rents are crazy. I've been looking for 7 months. I am currently living in an apartment with lead paint with my new born." Patrick Sullivan, Director of the city's Office of Housing and Community Development and Andrea Sheppard Lomba of United Interfaith Action both noted high childhood asthma rates in the city and high rates of the presence of lead in units. The scarcity of budget-friendly units give tenants little leverage to demand action from their landlords. Tenants experiencing legitimate issues with mold, pests, lead paint, inoperable equipment, and other issues often neglect to approach their landlords out of fear they will be evicted or their rents raised in retaliation. Though these sorts of responses often violate the law, tenants lack the ability to follow through and fear disrupting their housing situation.

#### Subsidized Housing & Housing Development

It is clear that much of New Bedford's rental housing has become significantly less affordable. Some communities throughout Massachusetts and the country have responded to similar challenges by developing more subsidized housing in which residents pay no more than 30% of their income in rent. These resources are invaluable to low-wage workers and those on fixed incomes, as in nearly all cases, 30% of their income is well below the average rent in the area for a similar unit. This response is a clear boon to those who otherwise feel priced out of the community.

Very minimal subsidized housing has been developed in New Bedford over the course of the last decade, with virtually no additional subsidized units coming after 2012. Several interview subjects pointed to what they perceived to be political and community opposition to such developments. As the argument goes, New Bedford has more subsidized units (11.9%) than what is required by law (10%) and there are hundreds of other communities in Massachusetts offering even less, particularly in the suburban communities surrounding New Bedford. Interviewees expressed a commonly held view that because of its traditionally low housing costs, New Bedford has seen an influx of low-income residents who have been priced out of other communities.

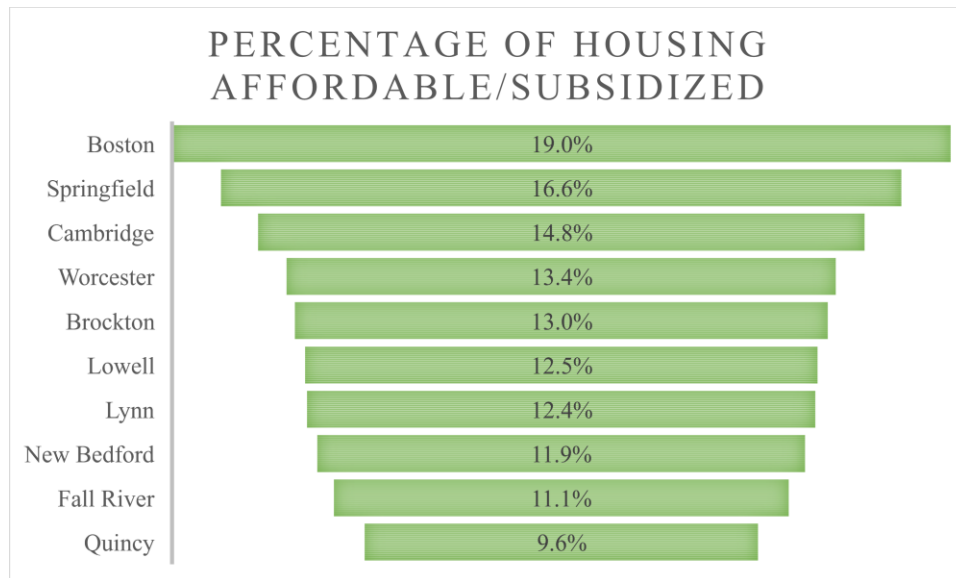


One leader of a non-profit housing organization interviewed shared his perspective that many, including some political leaders, see affordable housing developments “as a drag on the community.” They perceive these types of housing to attract undesirable populations from other parts of the state, who consume a greater share of municipal services and contribute to higher crime rates and lower education metrics. While these stereotypes are largely untrue, the perceptions are hard to unravel. Some argue that increased rents are a sign of positive developments in the community, that it is becoming a more desirable place to live and the laws of supply and demand are taking effect. This housing expert explained one response is to advocate for the development of additional subsidized housing, and also for the issuance of more subsidized housing vouchers, which would allow eligible tenants to choose a unit on the private market and receive a portion of their rent paid by the government.

**Top 10 Communities with Most Housing Units** (per 2017 DHCD inventory)

<b>Community</b>	<b>2010 Census Year Round Housing Units</b>	<b>Subsidized Units</b>	<b>%</b>
Boston	269,482	51,283	19.0%
Worcester	74,383	9,977	13.4%
Springfield	61,556	10,192	16.6%
Cambridge	46,690	6,911	14.8%
New Bedford	42,816	5,110	11.9%
Fall River	42,650	4,751	11.1%
Quincy	42,547	4,096	9.6%
Lowell	41,308	5,180	12.5%
Lynn	35,701	4,435	12.4%
Brockton	35,514	4,619	13.0%

Similarly untrue is the argument that New Bedford has more subsidized and affordable units than is required and thus additional development should not be prioritized. When compared to other similar cities across the Commonwealth, New Bedford has comparatively less affordable units. In a comparison of the top ten communities with the most housing units, New Bedford has the fifth most total units but ranks eighth (third from last) percentage of affordable units.



Other interview subjects shared some frustration with the effectiveness of subsidized housing vouchers in an environment in which rents have gone up so rapidly and demand for available units is high. When demand was lower, landlords aspired to find tenants with so-called Section 8 vouchers because the rental income was consistent and the families often very stable. However,

many of the same landlords can now find even better candidates for their units, and can avoid the annual housing inspections and bureaucratic red tape that come with being a subsidized landlord. In other cases, rents have increased at rates higher than the government can keep up with. The rents offered by subsidized programs are, in many cases, less than what the landlord can garner on the private market. Again, this is a key difference from a few years ago, when landlords would earn more with a subsidized tenant than otherwise.

Even beyond subsidized units, market rate housing development in the city has been slow moving. The city is relatively small and narrow and does not have ample space that can be easily developed, with the majority of its housing stock being constructed prior to 1940. Over the last decade, developers have been logically drawn to the bustling Boston housing market. As one interviewee told us, it costs about the same to build something in New Bedford as it does in Boston, Cambridge, or Somerville, but one can charge three times the rent there and recoup their investment faster. This has contributed to a growing supply and demand problem that has only exacerbated conditions here in New Bedford.

**Total Number of Housing Units 2010 vs. 2019** (according to Census estimates)

	New Bedford	Lynn	Fall River	Boston	Springfield	Cambridge	Worcester	Brockton	Lowell	Quincy
<b>2019</b>	42200	33371	40999	303791	60454	51621	337885	33880	44026	44034
<b>2010</b>	44489	34912	44270	277949	59989	50099	326963	35895	42470	43385
<b>Change</b>	-2289	-1541	-3271	25842	465	1522	10922	-2015	1556	649
<b>%</b>										
<b>Change</b>	-5.1%	-4.4%	-7.4%	9.3%	0.8%	3.0%	3.3%	-5.6%	3.7%	1.5%

According to US Census estimates, the total number of housing units in New Bedford has actually declined 5% in the last decade, meaning more units have been subtracted from the housing market than added. Slowed housing development is not unique to New Bedford. Fall River, Lynn, and Brockton have experienced similar declines in housing supply. Boston, Lowell, Worcester, Cambridge, and Quincy have had increases. These increases square with the anecdotal explanation that housing development has been spurred in Greater Boston by increased demand and a resultant lucrative rental market, often coming at the expense of other corners of the state.

The director of the city's Office of Housing and Community Development shared there are some significant plans in the pipeline to develop multifamily housing in New Bedford over the next couple years, likely attributable to the Boston to New Bedford rail connection.

While encouraging advocacy around subsidized housing, Ed Allard of Community Action for Better Housing pointed to what he called "workforce housing" at the solution. Workforce housing is in part a rebranding, or a new perspective, on "affordable" subsidized housing. The concept drives home the point that the region needs housing that the average worker can afford, casting aside false stereotypes about those living in subsidized housing. The city needs an infusion of housing supply that is merely attainable and literally affordable to the average person, whether subsidized or determined by the private market. If not, the outcome is inevitable: more



of our neighbors in the city will wind up homeless, couch-surfing or rooming, living in cars, or living on the street.

### Impact of COVID-19 on Housing

Housing was arguably the top need in New Bedford prior to the pandemic, and yet it is also likely an area made disproportionately worse by COVID-19. Several of those interviewed shared that the pandemic did not necessarily create new issues, but exacerbated existing. This is especially apparent in the area of housing, and the impacts of the pandemic will take years to fully reverse in this area.

In an effort to reduce public health risks and avoid contributing to further instability, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts enacted a moratorium on evictions in the Spring of 2020 at the outset of the pandemic. With severe job loss and income reduction and a lagging state and federal unemployment response, a moratorium was necessary. However, as the months have gone on and the pandemic period nears the start of its second year, significant rental arrearages are mounting. Various moratoria, both state and federal, have been extended and as of the time of this writing, are currently slated to end on the last day of January 2021, with some experts anticipating an additional extension.

In August 2020, a Metropolitan Area Planning Council study used July unemployment figures to estimate New Bedford's rental assistance needs to be in excess of \$1.6 million for just the first three months of the pandemic. Extrapolating the data through the end of 2020 would result in a \$4.2 million rental gap for New Bedford. PACE conducted its own survey of 474 renters and 73 landlords in August 2020 and determined the rental assistance need at the time to be closer to \$2.4 million then, and over \$6 million by the end of 2020.

Because of these mounting arrearages, the end of the moratorium on evictions will bring with it what experts are calling an "eviction tsunami." Thousands of evictions will be filed locally. The primary response has been through a state rental assistance program, Rental Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT), with additional assistance provided through the federal Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program which was boosted during federal stimulus efforts. However, the combination of existing RAFT and ESG resources will only meet a portion of the need. Funds are expected to be exhausted quickly, and the sheer volume of need and the extent of related means-testing and eligibility determination is expected to test the capacity of housing organizations, including PACE. In many cases, by the time benefit payments are processed, clients have fallen behind with an additional month or two. With limited economic improvement on the horizon and a continuing moratorium, one-time assistance may not be a durable solution to the problem.

Worse, the "eviction tsunami" is likely to leave the harmful scarlet letter of eviction on thousands of renters' housing histories, which is made public in Massachusetts. This will make it harder for these displaced renters to successfully other units. The impact on landlords cannot be ignored, either. While professional landlords and property investors rightfully assume a level of risk in running their businesses, many local landlords rent out units in the homes they themselves occupy and have come to rely on their rental income to meet their own expenses. For example, a

significant number of those eligible for PACE's Fuel Assistance program and other agency services are low-income landlords.

The eviction crisis to come is likely to be damaging to both tenants and landlords and will be largely unproductive for all involved. Landlords are likely to evict tenants that have fallen behind and do not access sufficient assistance in time. These tenants will find themselves back in a housing market they cannot afford to participate in. When they do find a unit, it will likely be a unit in which the previous tenant was also evicted for the same reason they found themselves evicted. Landlords will largely never be made whole for their arrearages, and may find themselves even worse off after paying court and legal fees. In some cases, tenants will be followed for years by collection efforts on the significant rental arrears they incurred.

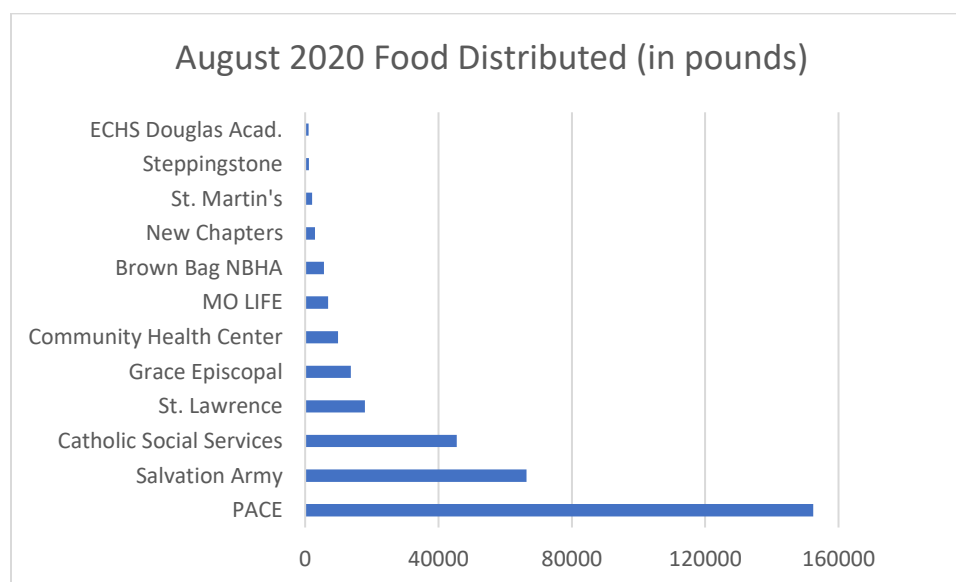
These phenomena occur in the context of a housing market that had already grown increasingly hostile to the average worker in New Bedford due to the forces of gentrification, a reduction in supply, and the loss of purchasing power. Many of those interviewed shared their view that the pandemic would likely grow the gap between the "haves" and the "have nots," and this is no more apparent than in the area of housing.

## Food Security

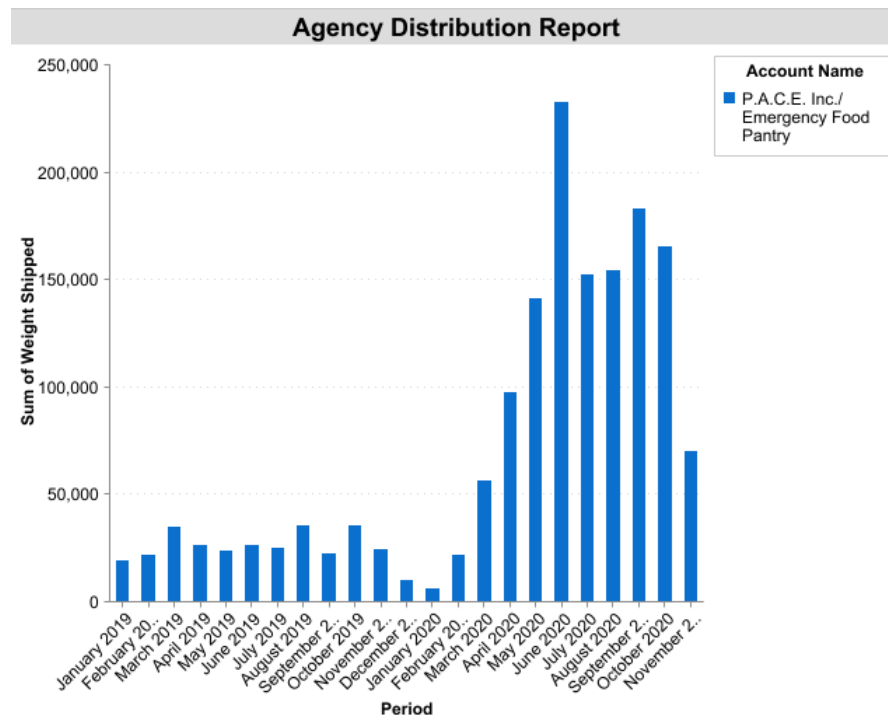
Domain	Level	Need Statement
Health & Social/ Behavioral Development	Indiv/Fam.	Individuals and families in our community have difficulty affording and accessing food.

Food security surfaced as a top need in the survey results, many of the stakeholder interviews, and in PACE's first-hand experience since the start of the pandemic.

In March 2020, several New Bedford area food pantries limited their hours or closed entirely. Simultaneously, area residents faced unprecedented economic hardship as by May, the unemployment rate in New Bedford soared past 25%. While most PACE programs shifted to working remotely, the Food Bank program continued to see clients in person but shifted operations outdoors. Immediately, program staff saw an uptick in the number of clients coming and in the number of new clients who had never accessed these sorts of resources before.



PACE joined several community coalitions strategizing on the response to emerging needs related to the pandemic and took the lead on addressing emergency food security. With a series of mobile pop-up pantries, an offsite warehouse, and increased intake and distribution of food, PACE's food pantry saw client demand increase six-fold, from about 800 families served per month to over 1200 families per week. Due to the uptick in demand, PACE distributed more pounds of food from March through May of 2020 than it had in the previous 12 months combined.



In addition to the demonstrated uptick in demand, nearly 55% of survey respondents cited access to food as a top need. The response rate identifying food as a top need increased by over 15% when compared to pre-pandemic responses. This area of need was further confirmed in many of the stakeholder interviews conducted. Other community organizations, such as NorthStar Learning Centers and the United Way of Greater New Bedford, lauded PACE’s food security work as needed, helpful, and supportive of their efforts to meet client needs. They, along with leaders in the New Bedford Office of Housing and Community Development, believed that food security will be a long-term challenge that PACE could help solve. In an interview with managers from the Greater Boston Food Bank, they shared that their plan anticipates an increased need for food for the next three years as the economy recovers from the impacts of COVID.

The barriers to accessing food are varied. For some clients, they simply do not have sufficient income to afford food after meeting their other obligations, for example, housing costs. Some clients receive SNAP benefits but they are insufficient, so they supplement their food by utilizing food pantries. As one client wrote in response to the survey, “Just can’t feed myself... never mind my family.” For others, they cannot access food pantries because they do not have adequate transportation or find them difficult to access while simultaneously caring for children. In other cases, there is a stigma attached to utilizing a food pantry, and clients worry about how they will be treated.

In our interview with the Greater Boston Food Bank, experts on the subject, they made two important points. First, they shared that the communities most underserved are often the towns surrounding cities like New Bedford. While cities like New Bedford often have the highest level of need, they also have more pantries and available resources, whereas surrounding towns have

significant populations living in poverty but with less access to pantries. Secondly, they consider food pantries to be an emergency resource, and would prefer other available options be utilized first. For example, all eligible participants should enroll and utilize SNAP benefits. Similarly, they note that school lunch programs have gone largely unutilized since the start of the pandemic, even by those experiencing food insecurity.

## Mental Health

Domain	Level	Need Statement
Health & Social/ Behavioral Development	Community	There is a need for more mental and behavioral health resources in our community, especially for younger children.

Mental health services were identified by nearly 60% of survey respondents as a top need. The post-COVID survey responses identified mental health as a top need 22% more often than prior to the start of the pandemic. Open-ended survey responses related to mental health also increased after the pandemic, including comments such as “more readily available assistance for newly disabled with both mental and physical issues”. Respondents expressed a need for family counseling, more services, and mental health awareness and a sense of normalcy.

A wide cross-section of those interviewed also saw mental health as a top need. New Bedford Chief of Police Joe Cordeiro shared his view that mental health is a primary issue in the community that has been compounded by COVID. He shared concerns that resources to address these challenges are limited, with too few clinicians, and even fewer culturally competent and linguistically capable of serving those in need.

In a separate interview, Superintendent of Schools Thomas Anderson concurred, sharing concerns that COVID has greatly impacted the schools’ ability to meet the mental health needs of their most vulnerable students. He added that this is exacerbated by the lack of qualified counselors to meet the demand, particularly those who are multilingual and multicultural. Like Chief Cordeiro, Anderson suggested looking at the overall delivery system, better coordinating resources, and forming or building upon partnerships between community agencies.

PACE’s Head Start program has done pioneering work in connecting preschoolers with mental health services, but Head Start Director Jill Fox also commented on the lack of available clinicians in the community, noting it can take nearly a year for someone in need to be seen. YouthBuild Case Manager Kathy Kruger added that it is very difficult to get an appointment unless someone is in crisis.

A significant factor contributing to the problem is a perceived shortage in clinicians in general, especially those who are willing to accept MassHealth. Some also noted that access to health insurance is a barrier to seeking mental health supports. Some individuals are uninsured, or do not believe that mental healthcare is covered under their plan.

## Training to Improve Employment Opportunities and Financial Skills

Domain	Level	Need Statements
Education	Indiv/Fam.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individuals and families in our community need supports to increase their job skills to improve their employment opportunities.</li><li>• Individuals and families need improved skills to manage their finances and available resources to maximize stability.</li></ul>

At the core of issues like housing, food security, and the provision of other basic needs is the income level of those in need of support. While the cost of these vital necessities is an important factor, their affordability is a function of the income levels of their end users. Individuals and families in our community would benefit from additional supports that would increase job skills and improve employment opportunities. Increasing skills and helping area residents attain higher paying jobs is an important part of the mix. Income even impacts matters of mental health, as many of those who shared their mental health struggles cite the stress associated with a lack of financial stability as a primary factor.

As with other Gateway Cities, New Bedford's history of low educational attainment levels and blue-collar industrial work has created a mismatch in a post-industrial era in which higher paying jobs are increasingly associated with performing knowledge work – positions that are scarce outside of the orbit of the metro Boston area and require a four-year degree, which only 11.2% of New Bedford residents have.

With a commuter rail extension connecting New Bedford to Greater Boston anticipated to be completed by the end of 2023, New Bedford residents will gain access to a larger job market and more opportunities. As mentioned in several stakeholder interviews, the reverse is also true; New Bedford residents will also have to compete with talent from the Boston job market for the scarce job opportunities existing on the Southcoast. Likewise, the pivot to remote working attributable to the pandemic has anecdotally created some of the same effects as the South Coast Rail project. Remote work has also allowed New Bedford residents opportunities to work in the Boston job market without the unwieldy commute. In order to be competitive, on the Southcoast and in Greater Boston, our region's residents must have opportunities to increase their skills and prepare for the work of the future. Several respondents and interviewees shared that non-English speakers would benefit from increased availability of effective ESOL classes, commenting that many are not well-served by the uncoordinated patchwork of courses in the community now.

After the pandemic, the job market is likely to become even more competitive. Anticipated economic contraction over the course of the next few years will lead to job loss. While small businesses and the hospitality sector in New Bedford have been more resilient over the course of 2020 than their bigger-city counterparts, significant challenges lie ahead for a local economy that was just starting to gain traction.



As noted by Derek Santos, Executive Director of New Bedford's Economic Development Council, the residents of New Bedford have been known for their strong work ethic dating back to the industrial era. Many of the most successful members of the community have earned their living in the trades, where a strong work ethic and ingenuity is more valuable than the formal credentials of college education.

Several interviewees and program staff within PACE's YouthBuild and Health Access programs discussed barriers to vocational education, specifically the selectivity of admissions at Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School, an issue not unique to New Bedford. Vocational schools throughout the Commonwealth have become very popular, and as interest in attending has grown among students and their families, these schools have had more applications than seats available, creating a competitive and selective process. They have selected students for admission based on students' middle school grades, attendance, discipline record, and in some cases, guidance counselor recommendation. A group of community organizations, civil rights groups, and labor unions called the Vocational Education Justice Coalition have charged that the selectivity in admissions has led to the exclusion of the very students more likely to benefit from vocational education. Increasingly, vocational school seats are occupied by students who intend to attend to a four-year college after graduation, while students not on the college track toil in traditional, comprehensive high school classes geared toward preparing college graduates rather than receiving the vocational education they would prefer.

PACE's YouthBuild program, itself a vocational education training program, has noted an uptick in students who have not been successful in traditional comprehensive high schools, exited, and wound up at YouthBuild where they can finally get the hands-on vocational experience they craved. Expanding access to such programs is of critical importance, whether by changing admissions processes, expanding available vocational high school seats, or creating additional opportunities outside of traditional K-12 education.

Of similar importance to maximizing opportunities for residents to earn a living wage is to help provide much-needed skills in managing available financial resources. Our surveys and interview show a clear trend that even when some families are able to increase their income and get ahead, they do not have fluency with sound financial management, budgeting, debt management, and savings strategies. For example, with rental costs soaring in New Bedford at rates faster than the valuations of available houses, many households would be better off purchasing a home, paying a mortgage, and building equity rather than paying an even greater amount in rent. However, families are not well-versed in the homebuying process and lack the upfront funds for a down payment. Respondents requested assistance in how to tackle their debt. Some even suggested hosting couponing courses to help families make their dollar stretch further. Budgeting and managing financial resources are supports that would be helpful to the community at large.

## **Discussion of Other Needs**

### Transportation

Several of those surveyed and interviewed pointed to transportation challenges as a hinderance to progress in the city. While efforts have taken root over the last several years to make the city more accessible on foot and by bicycle, it is still largely a place that requires car ownership to get around. Local public transportation options are limited in their hours of operation. The lack of Sunday, evening, and more frequent service throughout the work week, for example, reduce its usefulness as a way of getting to work. At the same time, ridership levels are relatively low, likely due to New Bedford's relatively low population density. This creates something of a double-edged sword: residents cannot rely on public transportation because of its limited availability, but the regional transportation authority cannot justify increasing availability because of low ridership. Transportation issues crop up in a variety of ways. Some clients told us they have a difficult time accessing food pantries because they just can't get there. Others have been unable to hold a job for the same reason. In a competitive housing market, some residents greatly limit the apartments and houses available to them because they lack transportation and need to stay in close proximity to work, family, church, or other resources.

### Racial Equity/Political Climate

Many survey respondents and interview subjects commented on the push for racial equity and the demonstrations held in New Bedford and across the country after the tragic murder of George Floyd. PACE and community partners have redoubled equity efforts and many residents have become more attuned to the scourge of racism and the role it plays in our communities and throughout society. Across the country and certainly in our own community, poverty and race are inextricably linked. Virtually all of the top needs identified in this assessment are affected by race; from the role of housing discrimination and the impact of redlining on home ownership opportunities for populations of color, to the cultural and linguistic competence of mental health clinicians and their acceptance or rejection of public health insurance plans, to the disparities in access to educational opportunities. It is clear that all community organizations, and citizens in general, have a responsibility to do better. Programs must be considered, designed, and carried out with equity in mind.

In a similar vein, some respondents remarked on the toxic and unproductive political climate in the United States, seeing it as a source of division, confusion, and factor in creating apathy and blunting civic engagement.

### Communication Channels, Media Sources, and Civic Engagement

Several survey respondents and virtually every interview subject touched on the topic of local media and effective communication throughout the region. What one interviewee dubbed "the slow death of local news" and the growth of social media has fractured once-strong communication channels. City Councillor Derek Baptiste expressed his frustration with the growing ubiquity of online sources, saying his "biggest gripe is seeing who is being left behind in having information by doing everything online. What about people who are off the grid? No phone, no internet, no computer." Several survey responses alluded to the same, noting the

“digital divide” between those who have access and fluency with technology and those who do not.

Traditional local news sources have not been immune to national and international trends in the media industry, with disinvestment observed through job losses and reduction in coverage following decreasing circulation numbers and the deleterious impact of venture capital on a once-strong industry. As a result, access to information about local government, available resources, and more has become increasingly hard to come by. Those with access to technology have consumed more their news online and via cable TV, where they are more likely to find sensationalized, inaccurate, and often damaging versions of ostensibly objective information. This has contributed to an outsized focus on national politics and culture news at the expense of valuable tidbits of local information more likely to directly impact the life of a local resident.

The fractured landscape of media sources makes it harder for any one message, even an important and relevant local one, to break through. As a result, some interviewed shared frustrations with a lack of engagement from community members in public meetings and listening sessions. One respondent noted “you can find instructions about paying a bill, but nothing about food insecurity, COVID testing, etc.” It has become more difficult to seek out and find appropriate resources.

As part of this, community organizations, local government, and other entities have been stymied in their efforts to generate participation and feedback from those most impacted by the policies and requirements of the services they participate in. One interviewee felt that there needed to be more grassroots training and organizing to help empower community members to advocate for their needs in this changing landscape, arguing that PACE is seen as an entity that could “be a voice for the voiceless.” It was suggested this could be done by encouraging participation in boards and committees, providing organizing training, and acting as an incubator for grassroots efforts.

### Elder Services

Our assessment surfaced a number of comments on services needed by seniors, from assistance with finances and bills, home repairs, shoveling and other housework, to assistance simply navigating all of the resources that currently exist. One respondent wrote, “There are members in the community that are elderly and can’t read or write.” Another respondent wrote the following suggestion, “Drop off food pantry items to the disabled or seniors, that have no way get there or are physically afflicted.” Others flagged a need for increased PCA services to assist with basic needs like laundry and snow shoveling.

### Child Care

Respondents shared a need for more after-school activities for children of all ages, more financial assistance to defray the high costs of childcare, more readily available tutoring services, and even more healthy meals for children. Affordability of child care repeatedly surfaced, as did the lack of child care centers with available slots. The pandemic has limited the capacity of child care centers, making it even more difficult for parents to find good options. When they are able to find one, transportation to and from the center is another repeatedly shared need. Waitlists for

child care vouchers remain long, with significant movement only coming recently with new state investment.

## **Review of Internal Needs**

The 2020-2021 agency year was especially productive and impactful. The COVID pandemic created challenges that required a coordinated and thorough response, and PACE rose to the occasion in many ways. Whether it was mastering the transition from paper-based, in-person processes to remote work, creating new partnerships and collaborations, or dramatically scaling up to serve four or five times as many people, the agency did it, and continues to do it.

While the pandemic has brought a myriad of challenges, it has also brought opportunities in funding and increased capacity to continue to improve. We identified and targeted some areas for improvement after conducting an internal needs assessment in 2020. While the external portion of this Strategic Plan was being finalized, PACE began to address many of the needs that emerged in the process. Below is a list of areas for adjustment and improvement:

- Review and revise mission statement (completed 2/2020)
- Improve facilities and equipment (in progress)
- Heighten awareness/profile in community (in progress)
- Administrative practices are dated and in need of modernization
  - i.e. technology for procedures in HR and finance (in progress)
- Increased IT capacity
- Increased investment in technology (largely completed)
- Increased internal communication (in progress)
- Quicker hiring process (completed)
- Increased wages/payscale (in progress)
- Offering retirement plan/benefits
- Employee recognition (in progress)
- Improved employee evaluation practices
- Better integrating agency programs, simplifying internal referrals
- More access to information and training
- Expanded tuition reimbursement
- Strengthened orientation/onboarding process (completed)

## Strategic Three Year Goals

In addition to the program goals that have already been developed across the agency to respond to various funder and community expectations, and those objectives managed through our annual Community Action Plan, PACE will focus on achieving the following goals over next three years:

- Increase housing stability and affordability for individuals and families.
- Reduce food insecurity experienced by individuals and families.
- Advocate and organize for more access to comprehensive mental and behavioral health services in the community, especially for children.
- Provide increased pathways and supports for individuals and families to increase their job skills.
- Enhance individuals' and families' ability to manage available resources, including through financial management and budgeting skills development.

The following section details the specific objectives the agency will take up to reach these goals, as well as associated funding strategies, methods of service delivery, linkages, and service gaps.

### Specific Objectives

<b><u>Goal #1 – Housing Affordability</u></b>	
<b>Need:</b>	Housing
<b>Goal:</b>	Increase housing stability and affordability for individuals and families.
<b>Specific Objectives:</b>	
2021-2023	Maintain increased staffing and capacity of the Housing Opportunity Center.
2022-2023	Develop relationships with area landlords through a partnership program, continue to offer and enhance tenant/landlord educational materials and resources.
2022-2023	Advocate for strategies to increase housing stability and affordability, by efforts that include increasing awareness, housing development, subsidies, etc.
2021-2022	Broaden scope of services to provide more proactive education and case management supports, including tenant education certification.
2022-2023	Create and fund housing search activities
2021-2023	Seek out new forms of stable housing programming, including developing additional units of housing, permanent supportive housing, mediation, collaboration with regional providers, etc.
<b>Funding Strategies:</b>	
All non-client benefit expenses of the PACE Housing program were borne by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) until 2020, when additional revenues related to providing HomeBASE services allowed for expansion and sustainability. Additional grant funds must be sought to pilot new ideas, with an option of board investment of additional agency CSBG resources. Continued growth and success of the Housing Opportunity Center will increase	

opportunities to successfully compete for resources. Core potential program additions, including providing RAFT services and considering Permanent Supportive Housing programs will create other stable funding sources.

#### **Service Delivery:**

The Housing Opportunity Center will continue to establish itself at the Cottage Street location. As the program moves past the pandemic, the doors will once again open to seeing clients in person. The program will be able to provide educational resources and workshops in person, and can also utilize the growing ubiquity of online video technology to deliver similar resources from a distance. Program staff are cross-trained to provide ESG, HomeBASE, and RAFT services. Additional resources are needed to provide more specific housing search assistance, which would include working closely with clients to locate and procure desired housing. The program will develop a certification course for tenants to receive basic education in financial management and successful tenancy, and will work closely with landlords to provide incentives for renting units to program clients. The program will work closely with the PACE Development and Marketing department to help promote programming in ways that improve access and awareness of program offerings. The Center will continue a commitment of equity through the availability of staff and materials that reflect the cultural and linguistic needs of the community.

#### **Linkages:**

PACE continues to build upon successful partnerships with the City of New Bedford and its Office of Housing & Community Development, NeighborWorks Housing Solutions, New Bedford Housing Authority, South Coastal Counties Legal Services, Catholic Social Services, the United Way, and other providers through the New Bedford Homeless Service Providers Network. These linkages are especially important in meeting the stated goal of developing coalitions and advocacy for affordable housing. PACE continues to play a leadership role in the Homeless Service Provider Network, and continues to work hard to strengthen the connections within that network to help support the community needs.

#### **Service Gaps:**

We have identified service gaps in housing search assistance and in on-going case management supports. While financial assistance for move-in costs or rent arrears has been plentiful in response to the pandemic, forming deeper, lasting relationships with clients in order to ensure success and sustainability requires more capacity than most programs are able to provide. Our agency will continue to address this service gap by reviewing available apartment listings and aggregating them for our clients. We will also seek training opportunities to expand our capacity to meet case management needs in an efficient and effective way. Rental units that are sustainably affordable for our clients are scarce, particularly for those living on fixed incomes and with suboptimal credit or rental histories. To respond, we will help with eviction. We will also continue to offer financial workshops through collaboration with local organizations to help clients fix their credit. We will research possibilities for those who have fixed incomes and seek ways to advocate for them, as well as help them budget the money they do have through workshops and by distribution of educational resources and materials, including those on investing, financial planning, and retirement, to avoid poverty in later stages of life.

**Goal #2 – Reduce Food Insecurity****Need:** Food Security**Goal:** Reduce food insecurity experienced by individuals and families.**Specific Objectives:**

2021 Complete renovation and open Park Street facility

2022-2023 Offer increased nutrition and educational resources through programming and materials

2021-2023 Maintain pandemic level of service as long as needs require

2022-2023 Strengthen linkages between Food Bank and other PACE programs

2022 Complete a Food Bank-specific Strategic Plan to coordinate enhanced activities

**Funding Strategies:**

The acquisition and renovation of the Park Street facility relies on Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. Any shortfalls in funding will be made up by agency reserves, financing, and additional grants sought for that purpose. Nutrition and educational resources will be provided with CSBG funds and modest grants from interested funders. Food expenses are minimal, as the food provided is largely free or heavily subsidized by partners. The most significant operational expense is for the staff required to operate at a level of increased capacity long-term, past the expiration of pandemic-related one-time funds. To that end, creating efficient and sustainable systems at the new facility is a must.

**Service Delivery:**

The goal of the new Park Street facility is to offer clients increased choice when they visit the pantry, perhaps by pivoting to a market format as opposed to the current method of delivery that includes pre-made bags. The program intends to include a greater degree of educational materials, especially related to nutrition, including nutrition and cooking classes and informative videos. With the potential to include a community garden on-site, farmers' markets, and other creative and innovative programs, a food-specific plan should be devised to go into greater detail on when and how these services could be provided. A key to improving service delivery will be to utilize technology so distribute food pantry resources online. Additionally, the agency would like to expand coordination internally between the Food Bank and its other programs. All programming and materials will continue to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of the community through staffing.

**Linkages:**

The PACE Food Bank works closely with the Greater Boston Food Bank, the United Way and its Hunger Commission, the Marion Institute's Food Policy Council, Proactive Philanthropy, the City of New Bedford and its Office of Housing & Community Development, New Bedford Housing Authority, Elliott Farm, and will continue to broaden relationships with area educational institutions.

**Service Gaps:**

PACE has seen a 400-500% increase in demand for food assistance since the start of the pandemic in March 2020, and has scaled up its capacity to meet this extreme increase, through providing pop-up mobile pantries, deliveries, and expanded hours. Continuing to meet the breadth of community needs is important. Additionally, connecting clients to other food resources, such as SNAP benefits, is helpful in transitioning away from the emergency food response to more sustainable long-term methods.

**Goal #3 – Mental Health Access**

**Need:** Mental & Behavioral Health Supports

**Goal:** Advocate and organize for more access to comprehensive mental and behavioral health services in the community, especially for children.

**Specific Objectives:**

2021-2022 Research & formalize relationships with mental and behavioral health providers and coalitions related to the provision of services and the cultural competence and language capacity of providers.

2022-2023 Create a local advocacy campaign around access to mental health services

2021-2023 Enhance mental and behavioral health supports within existing PACE programs building capacity with staff

**Funding Strategies:**

Embedding mental health work within existing programs, such as Head Start, Health Access, or the Food Bank, can all be done within existing grants and budgets. Some additional funding must be sought to expand those efforts and to dedicate staff time to research and advocacy efforts. A public relations campaign, for example, would require funding from new sources. When applicable, CSBG funds can be used to launch these efforts, but attracting philanthropy interested in this topic appears to be the best path.

**Service Delivery:**

Existing PACE programs will develop their own strategies to embed mental health and mental health awareness into their current program offerings, such as being trauma-informed in their work. Specific research must be done on existing coalitions and campaigns related to advocacy, as well as to study relevant current public policy trends and interests. At Head Start, existing relationships will be maintained and potentially expanded. PACE's Health Access program will seek out opportunities to focus further on mental health as opposed to basic health insurance access. Increasing awareness through advocacy and public relations campaigns could include social media campaigning, issuing press releases and white papers, and hosting informational events. The ultimate goal and focus is to target the pernicious effects of poverty and this stress and trauma's correlation to multigenerational poverty. Low educational attainment and poverty are correlated with mental health concerns. Early intervention through youth development is key to lasting change, but we must also consider shorter-term urgent solutions for those currently in need as well. It is also important to foster relationships that meet the needs culturally and linguistically for those in need in the community.

**Linkages:**

PACE Head Start has a standing relationship with the Bradley Hospital, as well as a mental health consultant that visits the program and engages with parents and families. PACE has also partnered with Child and Family Services and New Bedford Public Schools. The goal is to expand the agency's knowledge of mental health services in the community and establish relationships to learn more about the ways that PACE can get involved and help close the service gap in our area. To that end, PACE has engaged with Health Care For All MA to learn more about existing coalitions and advocacy efforts. The Strategic Planning Committee also recommended developing relationships with relevant area providers by having PACE representatives sit on their boards of directors.

**Service Gaps:**



Based on preliminary research and interviews held with experts in the mental health arena, service gaps in this area include an overall lack of mental health services, public transportation to get to and from these services, and an insufficient amount of awareness/understanding of mental health in the community. The lack of mental health services is further complicated by an inadequate amount of culturally/linguistically competent clinicians in our region. In addition, mental health experts in the community agree that while there is an overall shortage, there seems to be an even greater lack of services for children and teenagers of all races and ethnicities, and especially for the Hispanic community. An individual or family in need may have to wait up to a year to be seen for these sorts of services. COVID-19 has led to the expansion of telehealth services (including telehealth counseling and therapy); this in turn has increased the number of options that are available to people that are seeking mental health and behavioral services. As an agency, our goal is to close the existing service gap in mental health access by investigating which options are available to those who are unable to commute to and from services, and for those who need culturally and linguistically competent clinicians, and then connect those clients with the existing agencies. Our goal would be to remain as local as possible, and build stronger relationships with neighboring agencies that provide these services; (advocating and fundraising to support expansion of their services). Additionally, our agency would provide educational materials, resources, and social media posts (in various translations) to increase mental health awareness in the community.

**Goal #4 – Employment Skills & Resource Management****Need:** Employment Skills & Resource Management

- Goal:**
- Provide increased pathways and supports for individuals and families to increase their job skills.
  - Enhance individuals' and families' ability to manage available resources, including through financial management and budgeting skills development.

**Specific Objectives:**

2022-2023 Create and enhance financial skill development offerings across programs

2022-2023 Seek out opportunities to create more lasting impacts via case management

2021-2022 Offer public workshops on resource management, financial skills, and consumer advocacy and education, including first-time homebuyer classes

**Funding Strategies:**

Most of the listed objectives can be incorporated into existing programs without significant cost, including YouthBuild and the Housing Opportunity Center. The agency has already received United Way funding to provide financial literacy courses and is prioritizing financial skills development and consumer education through its housing programs. Some additional small grants can help support this work, and may connect the agency's Clemente Course and VITA programs, among others. CSBG funding can be used to support these efforts.

**Service Delivery:**

These services can be provided in multiple ways across the agency. This will mostly be a two-pronged effort: better reaching existing clients to expand our impact, and appealing to new clients who are looking for these services specifically. Internally, for example, YouthBuild participants will benefit from a financial literacy curriculum or internships and apprenticeships as pathways to employment. Housing clients may see a path to homeownership that makes more financial sense for them than continued renting. The Clemente Course for Humanities provides free college credit coursework to support a pathway to higher education opportunities. Externally, interested parties may sign up for homebuyer training or other resource management strategies tailored toward those with moderate incomes. By attracting clients in this group, we will also be able to connect them to resources they might not realize they are eligible for, such as Fuel Assistance or Health Access.

**Linkages:**

We will engage many of our existing partners for this project, including NeighborWorks Housing Solutions, the City of New Bedford, the United Way, the Community Economic Development Center, MassHumanities, YouthBuild USA, MassDevelopment. PACE will build on its existing partnership with MassHire and the Workforce Board, as well as Bristol Community College, UMass Dartmouth, and Mass Humanities.

**Service Gaps:**

Similar services are provided throughout the community but do not appear to be as centralized or easily accessible to larger populations, as is the case in other communities. We believe our existing population of clients and credibility in the community will allow us to expand access to these resources to better meet community needs.

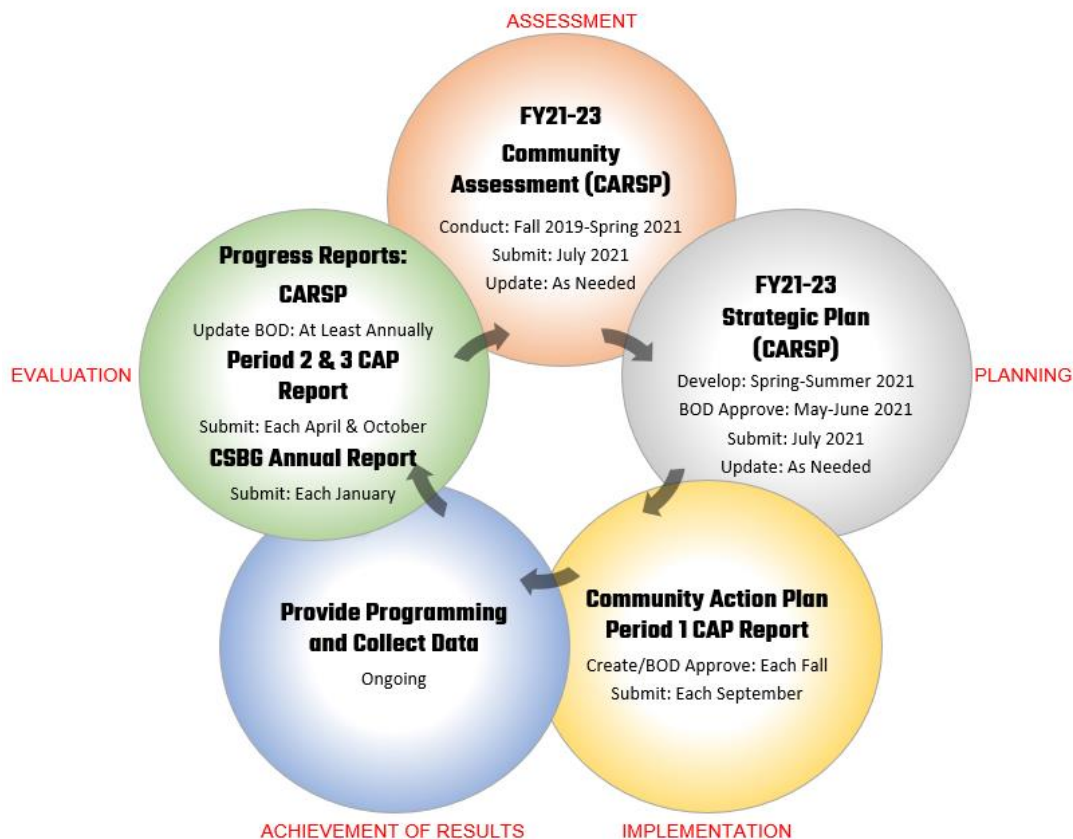
These goals align with the agency's mission to respond to community needs. The agency has the ability to execute on these goals and specific objectives, either by providing services directly or by researching further or partnering with other groups. The agency either has or can develop the financial capacity to reach these goals over the next few years, and will continuously review and revise the plan as needs evolve.

## Plan Monitoring & Reporting

Implementation and performance outcomes related to the specific objectives outlined in PACE's Community Assessment Report and Strategic Plan will be monitored internally by the administrative team, which includes a Nationally Certified ROMA Implementer, and meets regularly to discuss strategic objectives.

Progress toward each objective will be carefully monitored against the CSBG National Performance Indicators, and will become part of the agency's required reporting through the Community Action Plan, which is implemented and monitored by the Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director. The Strategic Planning Committee responsible for this project will meet twice per year to review progress toward the plan and identify any necessary adjustments.

Communicating the progress toward the goals of this plan with PACE's Board of Directors is a priority, and will be done quarterly at Planning & Development Committee meetings and at least twice per year in regular board meetings. Further, the agency will communicate its results internally using existing communication channels and to the community at large. The agency feels a duty to report to the community on its progress in responding to identified needs. This plan will be shared with our community by distributing it to key partners, local media sources, and posting it on our website for public review.



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## Appendix

### Data Tables

#### County Level Data

##### Child Care

Center-Based Care						
	Infant Care			4-Year-Old Care		
County	Cost	% Median Income	Difference to State Average	Cost	% Median Income	Difference to State Average
Bristol	\$14,326	13.9%	3.3%	\$10,479	10.2%	2.0%
Norfolk	\$20,908	14.9%	2.3%	\$16,108	11.5%	0.7%
Plymouth	\$16,817	14.4%	2.8%	\$12,675	10.9%	1.3%

Family Child Care						
	Infant Care			4-Year-Old Care		
County	Cost	% Median Income	Difference to State Average	Cost	% Median Income	Difference to State Average
Bristol	\$10,459	10.2%	0.6%	\$9,916	9.7%	0.4%
Norfolk	\$14,227	10.1%	0.7%	\$13,738	9.8%	0.3%
Plymouth	\$12,122	10.4%	0.4%	\$11,370	9.7%	0.4%

### Elder Economic Security Index

County	Household Type	Housing Status	Housing	Food	Transportation	Healthcare	Misc	Monthly	Yearly Index
Bristol	Single Elder	Owner w/o Mortgage	\$604	\$256	\$247	\$483	\$318	\$1,908	\$22,896
Bristol	Single Elder	Renter, one bedroom	\$811	\$256	\$247	\$483	\$318	\$2,115	\$25,380
Bristol	Single Elder	Owner w/ Mortgage	\$1,564	\$256	\$247	\$483	\$318	\$2,868	\$34,416
Bristol	Elder Couple	Owner w/o Mortgage	\$604	\$470	\$382	\$966	\$484	\$2,906	\$34,872
Bristol	Elder Couple	Renter, one bedroom	\$811	\$470	\$382	\$966	\$484	\$3,113	\$37,356
Bristol	Elder Couple	Owner w/ Mortgage	\$1,564	\$470	\$382	\$966	\$484	\$3,866	\$46,392
Norfolk	Single Elder	Owner w/o Mortgage	\$844	\$256	\$225	\$483	\$362	\$2,170	\$26,040
Norfolk	Single Elder	Renter, one bedroom	\$1,224	\$256	\$225	\$483	\$362	\$2,550	\$30,600
Norfolk	Single Elder	Owner w/ Mortgage	\$2,101	\$256	\$225	\$483	\$362	\$3,427	\$41,124
Norfolk	Elder Couple	Owner w/o Mortgage	\$844	\$470	\$348	\$966	\$526	\$3,154	\$37,848
Norfolk	Elder Couple	Renter, one bedroom	\$1,224	\$470	\$348	\$966	\$526	\$3,534	\$42,408
Norfolk	Elder Couple	Owner w/ Mortgage	\$2,101	\$470	\$348	\$966	\$526	\$4,411	\$52,932
Plymouth	Single Elder	Owner w/o Mortgage	\$738	\$256	\$225	\$483	\$340	\$2,042	\$24,504
Plymouth	Single Elder	Renter, one bedroom	\$1,071	\$256	\$225	\$483	\$340	\$2,375	\$28,500
Plymouth	Single Elder	Owner w/ Mortgage	\$1,830	\$256	\$225	\$483	\$340	\$3,134	\$37,608
Plymouth	Elder Couple	Owner w/o Mortgage	\$738	\$470	\$348	\$966	\$504	\$3,026	\$36,312
Plymouth	Elder Couple	Renter, one bedroom	\$1,071	\$470	\$348	\$966	\$504	\$3,359	\$40,308
Plymouth	Elder Couple	Owner w/ Mortgage	\$1,830	\$470	\$348	\$966	\$504	\$4,118	\$49,416



### Living Wage Data

County	Hourly Wages	1 Adult	1 Adult, 1 Child	1 Adult, 2 Children	2 Adults 1 Child	2 Adults 2 Children
Bristol	Living Wage	\$12.22	\$26.99	\$30.99	\$14.62	\$16.80
Bristol	Poverty Wage	\$5.84	\$7.91	\$9.99	\$5.00	\$6.03
Bristol	Minimum Wage	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00
Norfolk	Living Wage	\$15.19	\$31.30	\$35.30	\$16.78	\$18.95
Norfolk	Poverty Wage	\$5.84	\$7.91	\$9.99	\$5.00	\$6.03
Norfolk	Minimum Wage	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00
Plymouth	Living Wage	\$14.33	\$30.11	\$34.11	\$16.18	\$18.36
Plymouth	Poverty Wage	\$5.84	\$7.91	\$9.99	\$5.00	\$6.03
Plymouth	Minimum Wage	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$11.00

### Food Insecurity

County	Food Insecurity Rate	# Food Insecure Persons in 2017	2017 Child Food Insecurity Rate	# Food Insecure Children in 2017
Bristol	10.1%	56,280	13.7%	16,000
Norfolk	7.2%	50,190	9.0%	13,410
Plymouth	8.1%	41,170	11.0%	12,400
MA State Totals	9.0%	616,090	11.7%	159,950

### Health Data

County	Poor/Fair Health	Poor Physical Health Days	Poor Mental Health Days	Adult Smokers	Adult Obesity	Excessive Drinking	Primary Care Physician Rate	Mental Health Provider Rate	Life Expectancy
Bristol	15	3.6	4.7	18	29	20	52	453	78.7
Norfolk	10	2.9	3.7	12	22	21	126	554	81.5
Plymouth	12	3.6	4.2	16	29	22	64	490	79.5

	Emergency Shelter	Sheltered Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	Total
<b>Summary by household type reported:</b>				
Households without children	85	87	48	220
Households with at least one adult and one child	52	5	0	57
Households with only children	1	0	1	2
Total Homeless Households	138	92	49	279
<b>Summary of persons in each household type:</b>				
Persons in households without children	85	87	48	220
Persons Age 18 to 24	5	8	0	13
Persons Over Age 24	80	79	48	207
Persons in households with at least one adult and one child	176	11	0	187
Children Under Age 18	108	6	0	114
Persons Age 18 to 24	20	3	0	23
Persons Over Age 24	48	2	0	50
Persons in households with only children	1	0	1	2
Total Homeless Persons	262	98	49	409
<b>Demographic summary by ethnicity:</b>				
Hispanic/Latino	88	18	4	110
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	174	80	45	299
Total	262	98	49	409
<b>Demographic summary by gender:</b>				
Female	147	37	20	204
Male	115	61	29	205
Transgender	0	0	0	0
Gender Non-Conforming	0	0	0	0
Total	262	98	49	409
<b>Demographic summary by race:</b>				
Black or African-American	90	14	8	112
White	132	72	37	241
Asian	0	0	0	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	1	1	5
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	3	0	0	3
Multiple Races	34	11	3	48
Total	262	98	49	409

<b>Summary of chronically homeless households:</b>				
Chronically Homeless households w/ 1 adult, 1 child	2	0	0	2
<b>Summary of chronically homeless persons by HH type:</b>				
Chronically Homeless persons without children	6	0	17	23
Chronically Homeless persons w/at least 1 adult, 1 child	6	0	0	6
Chronically Homeless persons w/ only children	0	0	0	0
Total Chronically Homeless Persons	12	0	17	29
<b>Summary of all other populations reported:</b>				
Severely Mentally Ill	36	68	21	125
Chronic Substance Abuse	24	69	20	113
Veterans	5	45	2	52
HIV/AIDS	1	0	9	10
Victims of Domestic Violence	7	4	4	15
Unaccompanied Youth	6	8	1	15
Unaccompanied Youth Under 18	1	0	1	2
Unaccompanied Youth 18-24	5	8	0	13
Parenting Youth	11	3	0	14
Parenting Youth Under 18	0	0	0	0
Parenting Youth 18-24	11	3	0	14
Children of Parenting Youth	17	2	0	19

### **Data By Municipality**

#### New Bedford Continuum of Care Homelessness Data

#### Population Data

Town/City	Population #	% Male	% Female	Total Households
Acushnet	10443	49.3	50.7	4033
Dartmouth	34341	49.1	50.9	11543
Fairhaven	16027	48	52	6506
New Bedford	95125	47.3	52.7	39491

Town/City	Median Age	# Population 65 Years+	Under 18	# Lang. Spoken Other Than English	Fertility Rates (per 1000)	% Veteran
Acushnet	45.6	2020	1842	1867	57	8.1

Dartmouth	40.9	6933	5439	6099	20	6.9
Fairhaven	46.7	3552	3033	1955	76	9.5
New Bedford	37.5	14366	21082	33405	48	5.2

### Income & Poverty

	Per Capita Income	Median Household Income	Median Earnings for Workers
Acushnet	32422	69402	35772
Dartmouth	34415	74742	30065
Fairhaven	33268	62090	39835
New Bedford	23866	40626	29468

	% in Poverty (<100% FPL)	% in Poverty or Near Poverty (200%)	% Children in Poverty (<100%)	% Children in Poverty or Near Poverty
Acushnet	4.1%	21.9%	1.8%	26.3%
Dartmouth	8.2%	18.4%	9.0%	17.9%
Fairhaven	9.1%	21.6%	10.0%	20.9%
New Bedford	23.1%	44.7%	34.8%	60.1%

	% Households w/ Social Security	% HHs w/ Retirement Income	% Households w/SSI	% HH w/ Cash Public Assistance	% Households w/ SNAP Benefits	% Tax Filers Claiming EITC
Acushnet	40.1%	21.8%	7.5%	1.8%	10.7%	9.8%
Dartmouth	42.2%	23.6%	5.0%	2.8%	8.8%	9.0%
Fairhaven	38.5%	21.3%	6.3%	0.5%	9.1%	10.9%
New Bedford	29.9%	13.7%	11.8%	6.3%	25.6%	26.1%

### Education Data

District	Total Students	First Language Not English #	First Language Not English %
Acushnet	1,004	10	1
Alma del Mar Charter School (District)	441	189	42.9

City on a Hill Charter Public School New Bedford (District)	217	111	51.2
Dartmouth	3,618	128	3.5
Fairhaven	2,025	75	3.7
Global Learning Charter Public (District)	505	169	33.5
Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical	2,139	460	21.5
Marion	447	5	1.1
Mattapoisett	441	5	1.1
New Bedford	12,845	5,188	40.4
Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical	550	1	0.2
Old Rochester	1,212	16	1.3
Rochester	511	3	0.6
Service Area Totals	25,955	6,360	24.50%

District	English Language Learner #	English Language Learner %	Students With Disabilities #	Students With Disabilities %
Acushnet	8	0.8	145	14.2
Alma del Mar Charter School (District)	107	24.3	83	18.8
City on a Hill Charter Public School New Bedford (District)	46	21.2	69	31.8
Dartmouth	85	2.3	560	15.3
Fairhaven	32	1.6	334	16.3
Global Learning Charter Public (District)	50	9.9	72	14.3
Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical	71	3.3	232	10.8
Marion	3	0.7	94	20.8
Mattapoisett	3	0.7	75	16.7
New Bedford	3,685	28.7	2,708	20.9
Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical	1	0.2	137	24.9
Old Rochester	1	0.1	143	11.8
Rochester	3	0.6	96	18.7

District	High Needs #	High Needs %	Economically Disadvantaged #	Economically Disadvantaged %
Acushnet	356	34.8	250	24.9
Alma del Mar Charter School (District)	348	78.9	273	61.9
City on a Hill Charter Public School New Bedford (District)	178	82	146	67.3
Dartmouth	1,249	34.1	801	22.1
Fairhaven	796	38.9	570	28.1

Global Learning Charter Public (District)	345	68.3	270	53.5
Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical	1,003	46.9	811	37.9
Marion	153	33.8	84	18.8
Mattapoisett	126	28.1	71	16.1
New Bedford	10,408	80.3	8,485	66.1
Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical	202	36.7	91	16.5
Old Rochester	245	20.2	145	12
Rochester	149	29	72	14.1

District	4-yr Grad Rate (%)	Dropout Rate (%)	Graduation Rate ELL	Dropout Rate ELL
Acushnet	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Alma del Mar Charter School (District)	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
City on a Hill Charter Public School New Bedford (District)	53.9	12.5	#N/A	#N/A
Dartmouth	93.2	1.1	#N/A	#N/A
Fairhaven	94	3.3	#N/A	#N/A
Global Learning Charter Public (District)	92.7	4.9	#N/A	#N/A
Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical	90.9	6.5	90.5	9.5
Marion	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Mattapoisett	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
New Bedford	58.6	15.8	43.3	15.7
Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical	99.1	0.9	#N/A	#N/A
Old Rochester	94.6	1.5	#N/A	#N/A
Rochester	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A

District	Graduation Rate Students w/Disabilities	Dropout Rate Students w/Disabilities	Graduation Rate Low Income
Acushnet	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Alma del Mar Charter School (District)	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
City on a Hill Charter Public School New Bedford (District)	24.9	13.2	54.1
Dartmouth	73.8	0	81.2
Fairhaven	65.2	17.4	85.7
Global Learning Charter Public (District)	66.7	16.7	93.3
Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical	82.5	15.8	87.4
Marion	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Mattapoisett	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
New Bedford	37.5	20.2	56.8

Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical	100	0	100
Old Rochester	88.1	2.4	89.7
Rochester	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A

District	Dropout Rate Low Income	Graduation Rate High Needs	Dropout Rate High Needs
Acushnet	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Alma del Mar Charter School (District)	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
City on a Hill Charter Public School New Bedford (District)	10.7	53.4	11.1
Dartmouth	2.9	83	2.1
Fairhaven	7.1	84.9	7.5
Global Learning Charter Public (District)	3.3	90.3	6.5
Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical	8.9	87.2	9.5
Marion	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Mattapoisett	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
New Bedford	16.8	55	16.9
Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical	0	100	0
Old Rochester	6.9	88.9	4.8
Rochester	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A

Town/City	Educational Attainment by Age 25						
	Less than 9th gr.	9-12, no grad	HS grad	Some college	Associates	Bachelor's	Grad/Professional
Acushnet	9.4%	8.9%	36.8%	15.8%	10.3%	13.6%	5.1%
Dartmouth	8.6%	6.9%	29.3%	15.5%	8.7%	16.9%	14.0%
Fairhaven	5.3%	5.5%	30.9%	21.2%	7.1%	19.3%	10.7%
New Bedford	15.9%	10.2%	32.3%	17.1%	7.5%	11.2%	5.8%

Town/City	# Children Ages 3-4 Enrolled in Preschool	% Children Ages 3-4 Enrolled in Preschool	# Teen Births
Acushnet	134	64.4%	-
Dartmouth	385	77.6%	-
Fairhaven	155	45.5%	-
New Bedford	1190	49.8%	96

### Housing

Town/City	# Total Housing Units	# Housing Stock Built by Year - 2014 and Later	# Occupied Housing Units	% Occupied Housing Units
Acushnet	4180	0	4033	96.5%
Dartmouth	12617	98	11543	91.5%
Fairhaven	7188	10	6506	90.5%
New Bedford	43393	21	39491	91.0%

Town/City	# Owner-Occupied Housing Units	% Owner-Occupied Housing Units	# Renter-Occupied Housing Units	% Renter-Occupied Housing Units
Acushnet	3406	84.5%	627	15.5%
Dartmouth	8979	77.8%	2564	22.2%
Fairhaven	4887	75.1%	1619	24.9%
New Bedford	16190	41.0%	23301	59.0%

Town/City	Median Monthly Owner Costs - with Mortgage (\$)	Median Monthly Owner Costs - without Mortgage (\$)	Median Monthly Housing Costs (\$)	Median Gross Rent (\$)
Acushnet	1637	638	1144	793
Dartmouth	1912	609	1336	939
Fairhaven	1698	575	1177	886
New Bedford	1576	587	853	802
MA STATE TOTALS	1706	602	1128	855



Town/City	Homeowner Vacancy Rate	Rental Vacancy Rate	% Renters Paying ≥ 35% Income to Housing Costs	# Occupied Housing Units with One or More Substandard Conditions
Acushnet	2.9%	0.0%	22.3%	87
Dartmouth	0.8%	6.1%	40.7%	408
Fairhaven	3.2%	0.0%	35.0%	153
New Bedford	1.1%	6.0%	41.4%	1278

### Employment

Town/City	Size of Labor Force	# Employed	Employment Rate	# Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
Acushnet	6395	6199	96.9%	196	3.1%
Dartmouth	19296	18703	96.9%	593	3.1%
Fairhaven	9836	9505	96.6%	331	3.4%
New Bedford	48399	46128	95.3%	2,271	4.7%

### Voting

Town/City	Registered Voters - 2018	Voter Turnout (2018 State)	Voter Turnout - %
Acushnet	7510	4297	57.2%
Dartmouth	22344	12966	58.0%
Fairhaven	11497	7117	61.9%
New Bedford	58198	23741	40.8%

### Transportation

Town/City	% Commuted By Car, Truck, or Van, Drove Alone	Carpooled	Public Transportation	Walked
Acushnet	88.5%	5.6%	0.0%	2.0%
Dartmouth	76.2%	10.1%	1.1%	5.4%
Fairhaven	86.8%	5.3%	0.8%	1.2%
New Bedford	73.5%	16.1%	2.5%	4.2%

Town/City	Worked at Home	Mean Travel Time to Work (in Minutes)	No Vehicle	1 Vehicle	2 Vehicles
Acushnet	3.5%	25.1	4.8%	27.9%	37.8%
Dartmouth	6.5%	26.3	7.9%	29.6%	39.3%
Fairhaven	4.7%	25.6	8.9%	34.7%	38.5%
New Bedford	2.3%	24.8	21.5%	42.7%	26.5%

## Survey Tools & Miscellaneous





**What do you think our  
community needs?**

*TELL US!*

Scan this code  
with your phone:

OR

Go to this  
website:



[paceinfo.org/survey](https://paceinfo.org/survey)

**YOU COULD WIN OUR RAFFLE!**



PACE, Inc.

Published by Josh Amaral · November 20 at 9:54 AM · 🌐

...

[paceinfo.org/survey](https://paceinfo.org/survey)

PACE is conducting a survey to find out what our community needs are. Please help us out by taking this brief survey to share your thoughts. It takes about five minutes to complete, and those who respond will be entered into a raffle for Stop and Shop gift cards.

Thank you for your support!

[paceinfo.org/survey](https://paceinfo.org/survey)



15,283

People Reached

1,381

Engagements

Boost Again

Boosted on November 20 at 9:55 AM

Completed

By Josh Amaral

People Reached 12.3K

Post Engagements 882

View Results



You and 173 others

30 Comments 73 Shares

## Audience

This ad reached 12,308 people in your audience.



## Audience Details

Location - Living In

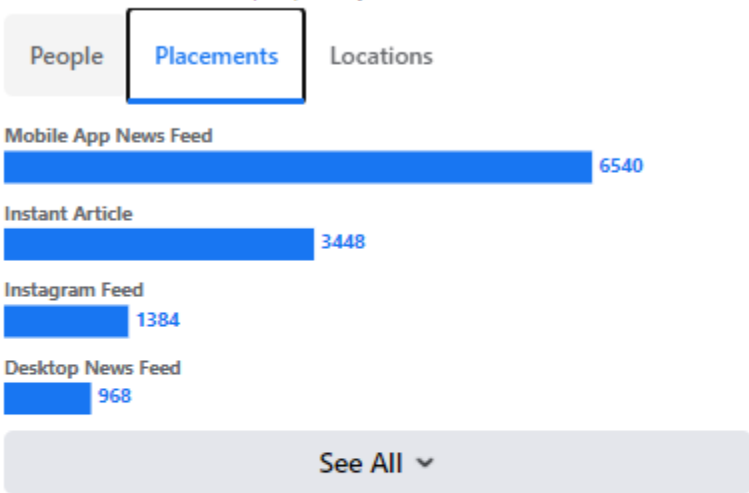
United States: 166 William St, New Bedford (+10 mi) Massachusetts

Age

18 - 65+

## Audience

This ad reached 12,308 people in your audience.



## Audience Details

Location - Living In

United States: 166 William St, New Bedford (+10 mi) Massachusetts

Age

18 - 65+

## Audience

This ad reached 12,308 people in your audience.

People

Placements

Locations

Massachusetts



Rhode Island

200

## Audience Details



Location - Living In

United States: 166 William St, New Bedford (+10 mi) Massachusetts

Age

18 - 65+