



WESTERN DAIRYLAND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL

2022 Needs Assessment

For Western Dairyland
Economic Opportunity
Council, Inc.

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Western Dairyland 2022 Community Needs Assessment

INTRODUCTION

Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. (WDEOC) is a private, non-profit community action agency established on June 6, 1966. Formed as part of the war on poverty with a mission to alleviate poverty-related conditions and provide opportunities that enable people to advance economically and socially, WDEOC periodically undertakes efforts to assess the poverty-related conditions in its western Wisconsin service area of Buffalo, Eau Claire, Jackson, and Trempealeau counties.

In order to accomplish this in a manner necessary to hold the Agency true to its missions, systematic and organized processes are necessary. Bearing this in mind, WDEOC conducts a triennial needs assessment to gather and analyze quantitative data to assess broad macroeconomic trends in the region. This, however, only tells part of the story. To better understand the human stories, struggles, and experiences with poverty, this Community Needs Assessment also uses qualitative data shared by those living in our community. Combining these methods, it is incumbent upon the Agency to tease out community conditions that may exacerbate poverty, then subsequently assess what community programming currently seeks to address poverty-related conditions or to provide those living in poverty the opportunity to escape its clutches. Finally, we must identify obsolete or redundant services; and resource gaps that leave vulnerable families and individuals without access to services.

WDEOC's last triennial Community Needs Assessment was conducted in 2019. Since then, our communities have seen massive disruptions from a global pandemic that left human, social, and economic devastation. While social bonds were tested, the community is still struggling with the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Much as across the country, inflation has taken its toll on local economies—wiping out savings and pushing essentials like housing, food, and services to worrying levels.

The following assessment reflects the culmination of many months of extensive inquiry. This included administering a comprehensive community survey and focus groups with community partners and critical stakeholders. Additionally, the assessment will bring in secondary data from sources including the U.S. Census, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Zillow, and others, as noted. These data have been incorporated to provide context and better understand trends from a quantitative perspective.

This report will begin by offering an in-depth profile of Western Dairyland's four-county service area. It will then briefly address current economic trends, highlight key community issues, and subsequently provide a profile of the Agency's services. Next, it will discuss the methodology employed in creating this

report. Subsequently, the data collection results will be synthesized to provide a summary of key findings that the Agency may use to develop a strategic framework for working toward its mission.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Population

The WDEOC service area comprises a contiguous region of Western Wisconsin which includes Buffalo, Eau Claire, Jackson, and Trempealeau counties. The area is largely rural, with some suburban population centers, including the cities of Eau Claire, Altoona, and Black River Falls. While the communities lie in close geographic proximity, they have unique populations with conditions fostering disparate needs.

The population density of the service area has seen a significant though not large increase between the 2010 Census and the 2021 American Community Survey, with the latter estimating a service area-wide population of 171,599 people, up approximately 6.2% since 2010. As Table 1.1 shows, three of the four counties saw population expansion during this period, with Buffalo County as the outlier, seeing an approximate -2% population growth. This level of growth supports long-term trends, particularly in rural areas with few economic opportunities and little access to services and basic needs.

Table 1.1 – Population Change 2010 - 2021

	Buffalo	Eau Claire	Jackson	Trempealeau	Service Area
2010	13,587	98,736	20,449	28,818	161,588
2021	13,302	106,452	21,121	30,724	171,599
% change	-2%	7.8%	3.3%	6.6%	6.2%

American Community Survey (2021) and U.S. Census (2010) population estimates, <http://www.census.gov>

The entirety of Buffalo, Jackson, and Trempealeau counties qualify as *rural areas*. In contrast, Eau Claire is considered an *urbanized area* under the Wisconsin Department of Rural Development provisions as defined below. For clarity's sake when speaking of rural and urban environments, we must note key U.S. Census terms: urbanized area, urban cluster, and rural areas:

Urbanized area: A densely settled area with a Census population of at least 50,000. A typical urbanized area has more than 500 people per square mile and consists of all or part of one or more incorporated places, such as towns.

Urban cluster: A densely settled area with a census population of 2,500 to 49,999.

Rural areas: Territory, population, and housing units located outside of urbanized areas or urban clusters. Rural areas have fewer than 2,500 people or areas where people live in open country.

Given these classifications, the picture of the service area becomes moderately more complex, as significant differences exist in the economic challenges and provision of services between rural and urban areas. Logistics and transportation issues alone pose stark challenges in rural environments, whereas issues with housing, gentrification, and racial disparities may be more salient in urban areas. With this last challenge in mind, this assessment now focuses on diversity in the service area.

Diversity

As was noted in the previous (2019) *Community Needs Assessment*, the service area in question has seen significant shifts in demography in the 21st century. This has been and continues to be particularly true concerning the substantial growth of the Hispanic/Latino population. While this growth has helped buoy declining rural populations in Trempealeau County and brought a greater diversity of culture to these communities, it has also led to friction.

While still relatively small, the Hispanic population in Trempealeau County has seen substantial growth in the past 20 years. According to the U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), the Trempealeau County Hispanic population was 240, while 2021 estimates place that number at 2,581. This increase represents a 975% increase in a very rural community. According to the ACS, the entire service area has seen growth in its Hispanic population—from 1,561 Hispanic residents in 2000 to 6,288 in 2021. (Signifying a nearly 303% increase.) Table 1.2 shows the Hispanic breakdown by county, with Trempealeau exceeding statewide averages in population percentage.

Table 1.2 Hispanic Population

Report Area	Total Population	Non-Hispanic Population	Percent Population Non-Hispanic	Hispanic or Latino Population	Percent Population Hispanic or Latino
Report Location	167,300	161,012	96.24%	6,288	3.76%
Buffalo County, WI	13,087	12,787	97.71%	300	2.29%
Eau Claire County, WI	104,132	101,470	97.44%	2,662	2.56%
Jackson County, WI	20,556	19,811	96.38%	745	3.62%
Trempealeau County, WI	29,525	26,944	91.26%	2,581	8.74%
Wisconsin	5,806,975	5,398,708	92.97%	408,267	7.03%

Community Action Partnership - Source: U.S. Census American Community Survey 2000-2021

In terms of racial demographics, the service area remains overwhelmingly White (racial category excluding Hispanic ethnicity), as can be seen in Table 1.3. Based on U.S. Census estimates, racial breakdowns show that

92.2% of the service area population is White (non-Hispanic), with 2.9% Asian, 1.6% American Indian, and 1.3% Black.

The aggregated numbers for the service area hide an important characteristic—that of racial/ethnic enclaves. For example, while nearly 3% of the service area population identifies as Asian, these numbers are almost entirely from Eau Claire County, which, given its 4.4% Asian population and overall larger population, skews numbers for the service area. Indeed, Eau Claire hosts a relatively large Asian population, mostly second and third-generation Hmong immigrants from South-East Asia. The exact numbers of Hmong residents are challenging to disaggregate, given that no “Hmong” category exists in Census data. While 2021 ACS estimates place the Asian population at 4,684, at least 3,811 identify as the “Other Asian” ethnic subcategory. While not a perfect proxy, it is reasonable to assume that most of those in Eau Claire County identifying under this label are Hmong.

Finally, Jackson County is home to the Ho-Chunk nation, whose seat of governance is in Black River Falls. While the reservation has its own services for tribal members, a substantial population of American Indians dwell within the county. According to ACS estimates, 6.9% of all Jackson County residents identify as American Indian, making this the largest proportional non-White ethnic/racial grouping in any of the Service Area's four counties. Furthermore, this makes Jackson County the most diverse in the four-county service area.

Table 1.3 – Racial and Ethnic Composition

Race and Hispanic Origin ▲	Buffalo County, Wisconsin ✕	Eau Claire County, Wisconsin ✕	Jackson County, Wisconsin ✕	Trempealeau County, Wisconsin ✕
Population Estimates, July 1 2021, (V2021)	△ 13,302	△ 106,452	△ 21,121	△ 30,724
PEOPLE				
Race and Hispanic Origin				
White alone, percent	△ 97.1%	△ 91.3%	△ 88.1%	△ 95.8%
Black or African American alone, percent (a)	△ 0.7%	△ 1.3%	△ 2.5%	△ 0.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent (a)	△ 0.5%	△ 0.7%	△ 6.9%	△ 1.5%
Asian alone, percent (a)	△ 0.5%	△ 4.4%	△ 0.5%	△ 0.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent (a)	△ Z	△ 0.2%	△ 0.1%	△ 0.1%
Two or More Races, percent	△ 1.3%	△ 2.1%	△ 1.9%	△ 1.3%

U.S. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey, 2021*. Source geography: County

Disability

There is limited availability of disability data for the service area. The U.S. Census tracks these data, but it can be imprecise. The best aggregation of these data comes from the Community Action Partnership, which compiles numbers based only on those whose disability classification is known. Table 1.4 shows these

numbers for each county and the service area.

Table 1.4 – Disability Status

Report Area	Total Population (For Whom Disability Status Is Determined)	Population with a Disability	Population with a Disability, Percent
Report Location	165,066	21,195	12.84%
Buffalo County, WI	13,016	1,764	13.55%
Eau Claire County, WI	103,472	13,803	13.34%
Jackson County, WI	19,399	2,639	13.60%
Trempealeau County, WI	29,179	2,989	10.24%
Wisconsin	5,735,703	676,631	11.80%
United States	321,525,041	40,786,461	12.69%

Community Action Partnership - Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016-20. Source geography: Tract

The Americans with Disabilities Act defines a person with a disability as someone who: a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as walking, seeing, hearing, or speaking; b) has a record of having such an impairment, whether or not the impairment still exists; or c) is regarded as having such an impairment, whether or not the perception is accurate. The definition also includes persons 60 years of age and older who are frail (unable to perform at least three activities of daily living without assistance, such as bathing, dressing, or using the toilet). Census data, as shown above, merely reports on those who self-identify as having disabilities.

Poverty

Record low unemployment, rising wages, and increased savings have often been offset by rapidly rising price levels, decreased access to childcare, and increased income disparities. Those living in poverty have seen their financial footing deteriorate even further as they watch inflation eat away at their already limited income.

Table 1.5 shows the poverty change in the service area based on U.S. Census estimates. These estimates show poverty decreasing across the service area by 6.36% since 2010 and the total number of those in poverty shrinking by 25% since the Agency's last Community Needs Assessment. While this is excellent news, some caution should be displayed upon reflection. While the persons living in poverty clearly diminished since WDEOC's 2019 Needs Assessment (from 20,616 to 15,467 respectively), this cannot account for a change from 2010 of +4.15% as reported in 2019's Community Needs Assessment to

negative 6.36%, shown in Table 1.5. Indeed, a U.S. Census revision (a continuous process) nearly doubled the population estimated to be living in poverty in 2010, just altering baseline calculations. Additionally, this number is based on the 2021 Federal Poverty Level (FPL) set by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This number was set before the past 12 months of inflationary pressure, which has seen CPI range from 5.4 to 9.1%--likely rendering the 2021 FPL obsolete.

Still, proceeding cautiously, we may observe trends in county-by-county breakdowns. These indicate that the poverty reduction has been led largely by Eau Claire and Trempealeau Counties, which have reported a ten-year poverty reduction of over 6%.

Table 1.5 – Current Poverty Rate and Change in Poverty Rates

Report Area	Persons in Poverty 2010	Poverty Rate 2010	Persons in Poverty 2020	Poverty Rate 2020	Change in Poverty Rate 2010-2020
Report Location	24,601	15.91%	15,467	9.55%	-6.36%
Buffalo County, WI	1,616	12.0%	1,037	8.0%	-4.0%
Eau Claire County, WI	15,663	16.7%	9,830	9.8%	-6.9%
Jackson County, WI	3,471	18.2%	2,460	12.7%	-5.5%
Trempealeau County, WI	3,851	13.6%	2,140	7.3%	-6.3%
Wisconsin	731,564	13.2%	571,049	10.0%	-3.2%
United States	46,215,956	15.3%	38,371,394	11.9%	-3.4%

Community Action Partnership - Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates. 2020

Poverty by Sex

While knowing current and longitudinal data can provide insight into macro-trends in poverty rates, it does little to shed light on other mitigating factors that may exacerbate poverty's effects on individuals and families. For example, women, racial and ethnic minorities, seniors, and children are all more likely to be vulnerable to poverty-related conditions, making data on the persistence of poverty in these groups fundamental to understanding the community.

Table 1.6 shows the poverty rate for WDEOC's four-county service area broken down by sex. Regional poverty levels for both sexes lie squarely between statewide and national averages. While the service area's poverty levels for both males and females are more significant than statewide averages, the differences are minimal. What is important, however, is the poverty gap between the two sexes. The gap shows that in the service area, women hold a 2.89% higher poverty rate than men. This is significant, though not particularly large, compared to statewide (2.13%) and national (2.35%) disparities between the sexes.

Table 1.6 – Poverty Rate by Sex

Report Area	Male	Female	Male, Percent	Female, Percent
Report Location	8,169	10,376	10.07%	12.96%
Buffalo County, WI	428	671	6.53%	10.48%
Eau Claire County, WI	5,895	7,178	11.81%	14.34%
Jackson County, WI	962	1,320	9.73%	14.11%
Trempealeau County, WI	884	1,207	5.98%	8.48%
Wisconsin	277,914	343,033	9.90%	12.03%
United States	18,171,512	22,738,814	11.64%	13.99%

Community Action Partnership – Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016-20

Poverty by Race/Ethnicity

As is the case in much of the United States, racial and ethnic minorities living in the service area continue to disproportionately struggle with poverty. Unlike many other locations, however, communities of color in the service area remain quite small compared to White populations. This can make these individuals and families particularly vulnerable to poverty-related conditions, as studies from Harvard and The University of Florida have shown they may face more significant barriers to accessing community resources and support. Table 1.7a offers poverty rates broken out by Census racial categories. The data clearly show robust disparities by racial grouping. Black and Indigenous people of color fare the worst, with Black individuals in the service area over three times as likely as Whites to be in poverty (36.35% to 10.68%, respectively). Indigenous (American Indian) individuals fared moderately better at 29.59%. For the entire service area, only 10.68% of Whites live below the federal poverty level. This is nearly identical to the national average of 10.60%, though notably higher than the statewide rate of 8.7%. In every other category, poverty levels are higher. White individuals retain the lowest overall poverty levels (excluding the difficult to disentangle 'some other race' category). Asian individuals, meanwhile, have made strides recently, lowering poverty levels to near that of Whites (10.73% to 10.68%, respectively). This rate is also significantly below the statewide average (15.46%) and very close to the national average (10.61%).

Every racial category, with the exception of “Some Other Race,” retains higher poverty levels than the national average, and only Asian individuals fare better than statewide averages.

Table 1.7a -Percentage of Individuals in Poverty by Racial Category

Report Area	White	Black or African American	Native American or Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	Multiple Race
Report Location	10.68%	36.35%	29.59%	10.73%	29.72%	7.55%	28.04%
Buffalo County, WI	8.03%	68.33%	0.00%	0.00%	No data	6.50%	23.24%
Eau Claire County, WI	12.36%	34.75%	44.75%	10.84%	10.97%	0.76%	29.04%
Jackson County, WI	9.91%	33.33%	27.71%	15.46%	75.00%	6.39%	38.70%
Trempealeau County, WI	6.73%	37.72%	13.16%	4.03%	100.00%	9.67%	3.77%
Wisconsin	8.70%	30.42%	24.55%	15.05%	28.53%	21.48%	18.38%
United States	10.60%	22.07%	24.13%	10.61%	16.81%	19.66%	15.08%

Community Action Partnership – Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2016-20

It is unsurprising that the service area's largest ethnic minority, its Hispanic/Latino residents, is disproportionately more likely to live in poverty than its non-Hispanic neighbors. Table 1.7b shows poverty rates by ethnicity. As can be seen, the regional percentage of 21.51% Hispanic poverty rate nearly doubles that of non-Hispanic residents (11.12%) but is higher than statewide (19.57%) and national (18.29%) rates. Further demonstrating how racial and ethnic minority communities are more susceptible to poverty and poverty-related conditions.

Table 1.7b – Poverty by Ethnicity (Hispanic vs. Non-Hispanic)

Report Area	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Hispanic or Latino, Percent	Not Hispanic or Latino, Percent
Report Location	1,288	17,257	21.51%	11.12%
Buffalo County, WI	25	1,074	9.33%	8.46%
Eau Claire County, WI	866	12,207	34.61%	12.52%
Jackson County, WI	141	2,141	21.83%	11.51%
Trempealeau County, WI	256	1,835	9.96%	6.94%
Wisconsin	77,861	543,086	19.57%	10.32%
United States	10,642,653	30,267,673	18.29%	11.62%

Community Action Partnership – Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2016-20

Poverty by Age

Childhood poverty is a challenging problem. A recent National Institutes of Health (NIH) meta-analysis by Aber, Morris, and Raver (2020) confirms the long-held understanding that the cycle of poverty begins in childhood, as children who grow up in poverty are substantially more likely to live in poverty as adults. Childhood poverty is not only crucial for understanding how poverty affects the most vulnerable group in the service area but gives us a snapshot of likely future poverty rates if the cycle is not broken. Table 1.8 shows childhood poverty in the service area. From it, we can see that the service area does relatively well regarding

childhood poverty, falling significantly below both state and national averages.

Table 1.8 –Childhood Poverty

Report Area	Total Population	Population Under Age 18	Population Under Age 18 in Poverty	Percent Population Under Age 18 in Poverty
Report Location	161,207	34,645	3,766	10.87%
Buffalo County, WI	12,962	2,611	304	11.64%
Eau Claire County, WI	99,991	20,489	2,203	10.75%
Jackson County, WI	19,241	4,325	641	14.82%
Trempealeau County, WI	29,013	7,220	618	8.56%
Wisconsin	5,659,485	1,250,830	177,140	14.16%
United States	318,564,128	72,065,774	12,598,699	17.48%

Community Action Partnership – Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2016-20

Aside from children, the next most vulnerable group concerning poverty is seniors. The WDEOC service area has seen senior poverty rates improve substantially recently, as the current rate has declined from 9.1% to 6.9% in three years. As can be seen in Table 1.9, this rate has moved below both statewide and national averages.

Table 1.9 – Seniors in Poverty

Report Area	Ages 65 and Up Total Population	Ages 65 and Up In Poverty	Ages 65 and Up Poverty Rate
Report Location	27,534	1,900	6.9%
Buffalo County, WI	2,861	218	7.6%
Eau Claire County, WI	15,849	1,043	6.6%
Jackson County, WI	3,748	288	7.7%
Trempealeau County, WI	5,076	351	6.9%
Wisconsin	956,642	74,180	7.8%
United States	51,072,143	4,756,707	9.3%

Community Action Partnership – Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2016-20

Poverty by Household Type

This final demographic look at demography tracks the prevalence of poverty by familial structure.

Virtually all research suggests that families headed by a single adult are more likely to live below the

poverty line than married (and, to a lesser extent, even cohabitating) couples. These single-parent adult families are more likely to be headed by women. As Kathryn Edin, professor of public policy and management at Harvard Kennedy School, points out, 94% of births to college-educated women today occur within marriage, and 57% of women with high-school degrees or less education are unmarried when they bear their first child. She argues that the decoupling of marriage from childbearing among lower-income Americans is the most profound social trend in American life today. As Edin sees it, reestablishing the link between childbearing and marriage in low-income communities requires giving residents reasons to wait to have children—to better align their childbearing and marriage timetables.

Table 1.10 shows that the trend of female-led households comprising a larger share of families in poverty is born out of service area data. More than three times as many single-adult families are led by women compared to men (970 to 290, respectively).

Table 1.10 – Households in Poverty by Type

Report Area	Total Families	Families in Poverty Total	Families in Poverty Married Couples	Families in Poverty Male Householder	Families in Poverty Female Householder
Report Location	40,414	2,074	814	290	970
Buffalo County, WI	3,809	207	90	14	103
Eau Claire County, WI	23,872	1,198	451	177	570
Jackson County, WI	5,031	382	152	58	172
Trempealeau County, WI	7,702	287	121	41	125
Wisconsin	1,479,364	100,642	34,685	11,893	54,064
United States	79,849,830	7,245,704	2,684,272	768,434	3,792,998

Community Action Partnership – Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2016-20

The trauma of childhood poverty, particularly in single-caretaker homes, may be harmful to children and can affect development well into adulthood. One primary resource for improving such conditions is Western Dairyland's Head Start and Early Head Start services, which operate in Buffalo, Eau Claire, Jackson, and Trempealeau Counties. Early Head Start serves pregnant women and children from birth to three, with Head Start serving children and families from 3-5 and beyond. Presently the programs serve: 15 children under one year old; 17 one-year-olds; 18 two-year-olds; 106 three-year-olds; 106 four-year-olds; 6 five-year-olds; and 2 pregnant women.

Head Start is crucial as eligible children in the area live in poverty and often have other factors of childhood trauma—for example, children placed in foster care. Table 1.11 shows the number of children in poverty currently placed in out-of-home care (generally foster care or related family). Children placed in out-of-home care tend to be amongst the most vulnerable, with the highest ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences) scores.

While placement out of home is generally traumatic for children, placement outside the family can be even more so, depending on circumstances. As can be seen, Eau Claire's non-relative placement rates substantially top those of statewide averages at 57.4%. However, overall, not the most prevalent indicator of childhood trauma, these numbers give some insights into the most vulnerable individuals in the service area.

Table 1.11 – Children in Out-of-Home Placement

County	Non-Relative F.C.		Congregate Care		Relative F.C./Kinship		Other		Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
State Total	3,368	47.4%	598	8.4%	2,787	39.2%	351	4.9%	7,104
Buffalo	5	23.8%	1	10%	4	40%	0	0%	10
Eau Claire	89	57.4%	6	3.9%	59	38.1%	1	0.6%	155
Jackson	14	34.1%	4	9.8%	21	51.2%	2	4.9%	41
Trempealeau	9	47.4%	1	5.3%	7	36.8%	2	10.5%	19

Source: Wisconsin Department of Children and Families 2017 Out of Home Report

**For a more detailed look at Head Start and Early Head Start eligibility and service numbers, see Appendix A.*

COMMUNITY ISSUES IN FOCUS

In addition to demographic and poverty-related data, a comprehensive snapshot of the community necessitates highlighting several high-impact issues. These issues may be related to previous Agency priorities, national trends, and/or greater levels of community attention.

Childcare

One of the most significant issues to arise during the COVID-19 pandemic was the shutdown of childcare centers across the country. Since then, childcare has remained a foremost issue in communities across the United States. This issue is critical not only for the safety and well-being of children but also for its impact on working parents whose inability to secure affordable childcare may limit their ability to work. As seen in Table 2.1, since March of 2020, only Eau Claire County has seen a growth in its labor force participation rate. Buffalo, Jackson, and Trempealeau counties have all seen prolonged dips (and record lows) in labor force participation, with Buffalo and Trempealeau both seeing a continued decline through July of 2022. Many economists have speculated on the reason for the tentative return to pre-COVID labor force participation rates, with lack of access to childcare nearly always listed as one of the top contenders.

Table 2.1 – Labor Force by County

Year	Buffalo	Eau Claire	Jackson	Trempealeau
Mar-2020	6,363	58,770	9,865	15,931
July-2022	6,134	59,656	9,415	14,821

The WDEOC service area has long struggled with inadequate registered childcare, but the COVID-19 pandemic stretches an already thin supply to its breaking point. Table 2.2 shows internal survey data from WDEOC's Childcare Partnership program in the Spring of 2022.

Table 2.2 – Childcare Capacity Survey

County	# Of Regulated Programs	Response Rate	Total Capacity	Current Capacity	% Reported staffing shortage/turnover due to COVID	# Of open staff positions	Staff hired in the past year	Infant openings (0-12 months)	Toddler Openings (1 – 2 years)	2-year-old Openings	3-year-old Openings	Total openings	% Programs with Waiting List	# Children under 3 on waiting list	# Children 3 and over on waiting list	% Of programs likely to be in business in 1 year given current staffing issues
Buffalo	10	67%	122	49	100%	1	13	0	0	0	0	0	100%	2	6	50%
Eau Claire	85	79%	4,247	2,332	89%	100	267	2	4	9	60	75	85%	1,065	485	63%
Jackson	18	100%	340	147	67%	12	27	9	6	5	18	38	100%	50	20	0%
Trempealeau	21	71%	584	259	80%	11	41	-	2	4	19	25	100%	64	7	80%

Source: Western Dairyland Childcare Partnership Childcare Capacity Survey

This data is very troubling. Not only does it paint a picture of childcare centers stretched to the breaking point with staffing issues, but it also shows how an already inadequate capacity is brought even lower. Over 50% of centers in each county have reported experiencing major staffing issues related to the pandemic, and most troubling, these issues persist for many facilities. Not only does this result in significant waiting lists, but also a substantial risk of closure.

Jackson County's position is particularly precarious. Jackson County Public Health officials continue to sound the alarm as the county's providers have struggled to meet childcare demand. New partnerships have opened

unique opportunities, but the above survey responses are troubling. Of respondents, no childcare facility in Jackson County was confident it could last another 12 months with its current staffing issues. In Buffalo County, approximately half of centers believe they may close in the next year given current staffing shortages/turnover, with Eau Claire (37%) and Trempealeau (20%) Counties slightly more stable but still struggling.

Eau Claire County is seeing a very high number of children on waiting lists, though given the larger overall capacity in Eau Claire County, these lists may have less wait time associated. Regardless, over 1,181 children on waiting lists in the service area likely indicate over a thousand families struggling to find adequate childcare in a safe and stable environment. While some may turn to family or unregulated care, realistically, many cannot work regular schedules without access to this care.

Table 2.2b – Cost of Infant Care in Service Area

County	Annual Price of Infant Care	% Of CMI	% Of Income Below FPL
Buffalo	---	---	---
Eau Claire	\$11,341	12.6%	49.2%
Jackson	\$9,438	12.3%	41%
Trempealeau	\$8,368	10.6%	36.3%

Source: Child Aware of America – Price of Childcare by County: Wisconsin

While the data shown above in Table 2.2b don't include Buffalo County, given its small number of regulated childcare centers, the results for the other three counties are alarming. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends childcare not exceed 10% of a household's budget. This metric demonstrates that infant care in the three counties is unaffordable for households earning the median incomes (CMI).

COVID-19

The COVID pandemic was global in scope, but its effects were all very local. While it's impossible to disentangle the pandemic's vast and fraught economic consequences, the human toll is far easier to identify. Table 1.5 shows the black-and-white toll of COVID-19 on the communities served by WDEOC. While these numbers, by proportion, are lower than both statewide and national averages, this may be expected given the recognition that population density is a significant factor in community transmission and the service area is overwhelmingly rural. Given the limited local medical capacities of the rural counties in the service area, it is perhaps not entirely surprising that two rural counties (Trempealeau and Jackson) saw greater COVID mortality rates than the more urban Eau Claire County.

Table 2.3 – COVID 19 Mortality

Report Area	Total Population	Total Deaths	Deaths, Rate per 100,000 Population	Last Update
Report Location	167,579	320	190.95	09/19/2022
Buffalo County, WI	13,125	12	91.43	09/19/2022
Eau Claire County, WI	104,534	197	188.46	09/19/2022
Jackson County, WI	20,478	44	214.86	09/19/2022
Trempealeau County, WI	29,442	67	227.57	09/19/2022
Wisconsin	5,813,568	15,190	261.29	09/19/2022
United States	326,262,499	1,032,471	316.45	09/19/2022

Community Action Partnership - Source: Johns Hopkins University. Accessed via ESRI. Additional data analysis by CARES. 2022

Food Security

As inflation continues pushing prices up for low-income families, the cost of groceries deepens existing food insecurity. In addition, shortages currently affecting the market have been detrimental to food pantries struggling with increased demand and shrinking supply. The case in the service area is even direr than national issues, as Table 2.4 shows.

Table 2.4 – Food Security

Report Area	Total Population	Low Income Population	Low Income Population with Low Food Access	Percent Low Income Population with Low Food Access
Report Location	161,588	48,184	11,663	24.21%
Buffalo County, WI	13,587	3,621	734	20.27%
Eau Claire County, WI	98,736	29,663	7,489	25.25%
Jackson County, WI	20,449	7,076	2,355	33.28%
Trempealeau County, WI	28,816	7,824	1,085	13.87%
Wisconsin	5,686,986	1,586,098	284,384	17.93%
United States	308,745,538	97,055,825	18,834,033	19.41%

Community Action Partnership - Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service

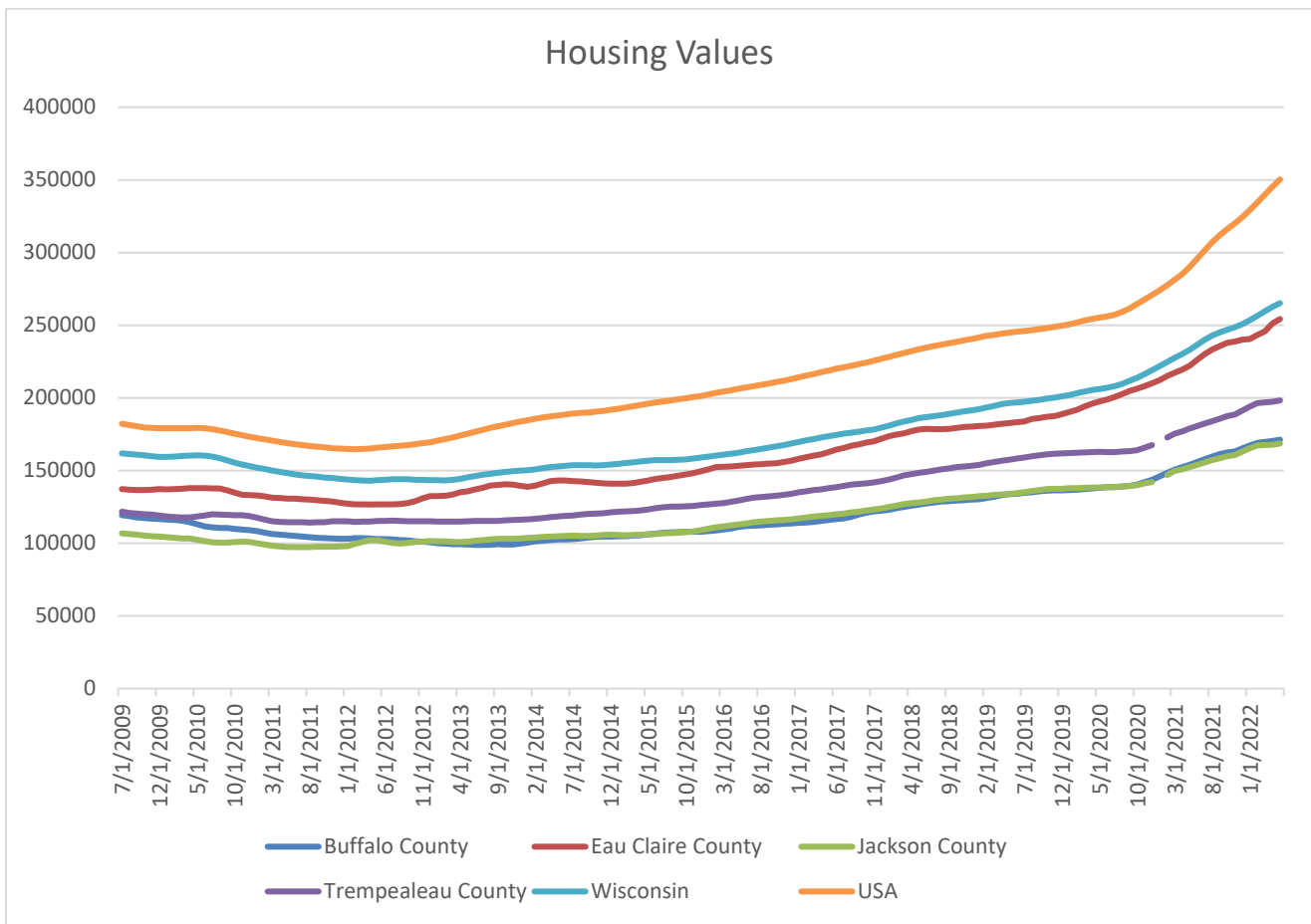
These data, from 2020, show the percentage of the population who is low-income (falling below FPL) and lives at least half a mile (urban) or greater than 10 miles (rural) from a food source with produce. (A more updated map of Eau Claire County can be found in Appendix B.) Plainly shown is that food security is a significant issue for the region, with all but Trempealeau County having greater levels of food insecurity than the state and

national averages.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing has long been a primary focus of WDEOC and many of the local governments and communities within its service area. It is not surprising, then, that the recent national spike in home prices has further exacerbated the housing crisis in the service area. This spike can be seen in Graph 2.1 below, which aggregates over 12 years of Zillow data on median home pricing. These data show the rising costs of median homes in the market and the strong upward trend in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Graph 2.1 – Median Housing Prices



Source: Zillow Home Value Index

The "affordable" part of affordable housing is relative to both housing prices and incomes. Unfortunately, little data exists showing the lower threshold of housing and rental pricing. Still, to give some sense of housing affordability in general terms, we can compare median housing costs (costs with a mortgage by homeowners and rental prices) with median income. Bearing that budgeting recommendations from HUD and HHS recommend against housing that costs more than 30% of income, Table 2.5 provides greater insight into housing affordability in the service area.

Table 2.5 – Housing Costs and Income

	Buffalo	Eau Claire	Jackson	Trempealeau
<i>Median selected monthly owner costs with a mortgage</i>	\$1,308	\$1,346	\$1,159	\$1,339
<i>Median gross rent</i>	\$771	\$818	\$704	\$749
<i>30% of median income (monthly)</i>	\$1,459	\$1,563	\$1,381	\$1,490

Source: 2020 ACS estimates

These data would seem to indicate that for median-income households, home ownership remains within reach. The problem is the lag in data, which, in its more recent format, is based on 2020 prices. Indeed, according to the Case-Shiller Housing Index of all home sales (re-sales), since the beginning of 2021, housing prices have climbed by nearly 28.2%. Given the turbulent nature of housing prices and rising interest rates, accurately depicting the housing market in the service area is difficult. For this, client surveys and quantitative feedback may be more illustrative.

ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Attempting to gather, contextualize and analyze macroeconomic data in the rapidly changing post-COVID economy can be challenging. Market conditions generally move far faster than data can capture, particularly local-level data. We may still observe some broad trends in economic forces, which can shed some light on the economy following a pandemic.

Employment and Incomes

The ability to procure a livable wage remains the most relevant indicator of the poverty level in the United States. One heartening indicator has been the rise in incomes due to very tight labor markets. Before turning to wage data (which remains significantly lagged at the county level), it would be helpful to examine that tight labor market to see how it has functioned within the service area.

Table 3.1 –Unemployment Rate Change (1 year)

Report Area	Unemployment July 2021	Unemployment July 2022	Unemployment Rate July 2021	Unemployment Rate July 2022	Rate Change
Report Location	3,230	2,764	3.5%	3.1%	-0.4%
Buffalo County, WI	252	243	4.0%	4.0%	0.0%
Eau Claire County, WI	1,989	1,701	3.3%	2.9%	-0.4%
Jackson County, WI	445	365	4.7%	3.9%	-0.8%
Trempealeau County, WI	544	455	3.5%	3.1%	-0.4%
Wisconsin	123,757	105,072	3.9%	3.3%	-0.5%
United States	9,367,597	6,320,721	5.7%	3.8%	-1.9%

Community Action Partnership - Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2022 - July

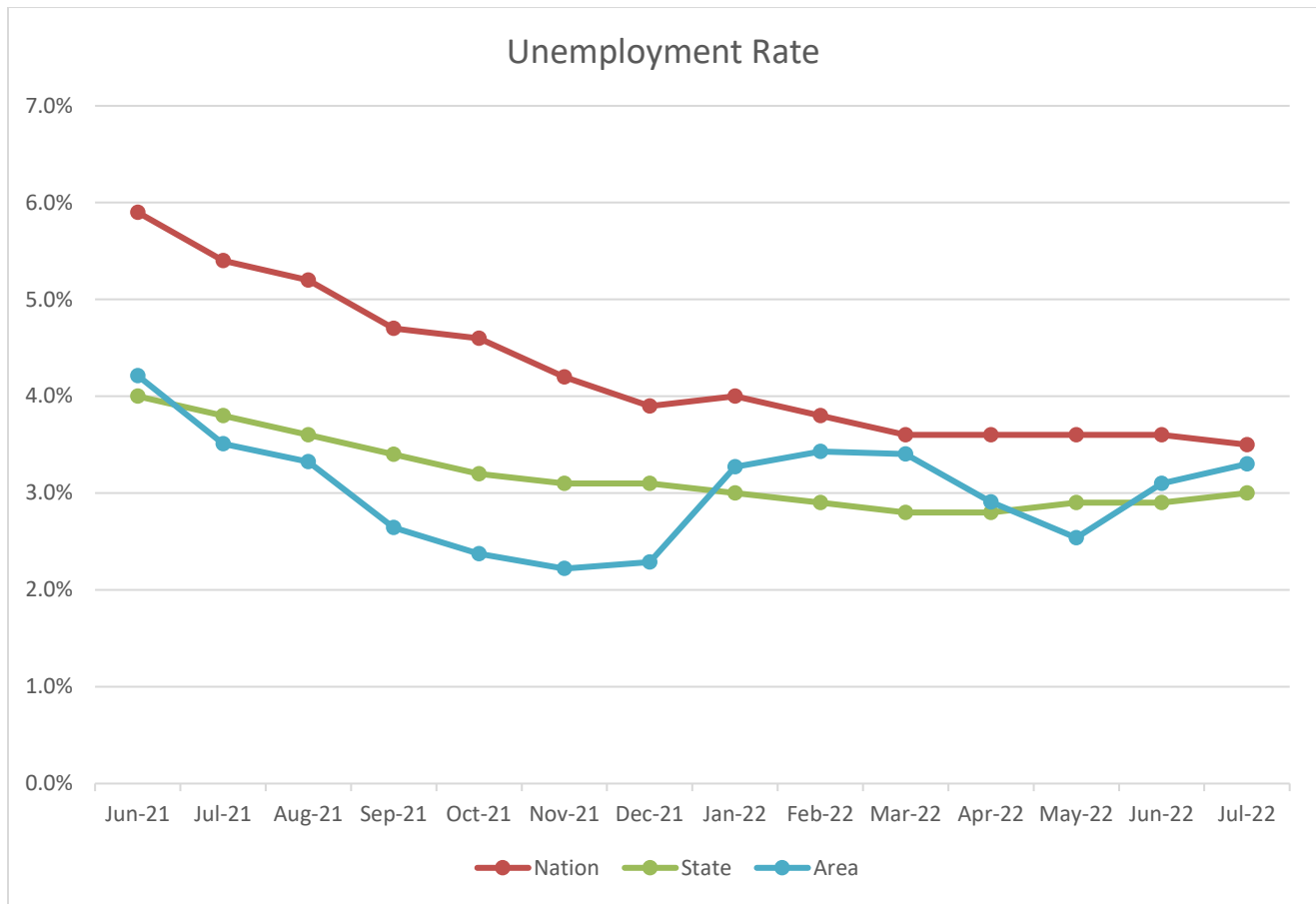
The above table shows a year-to-year comparison from July 2021 to July 2022 for each county in the service area. Interestingly, despite signals that the labor market may have reached full employment in 2021, unemployment declined over the interceding year in three of the four counties. Table 3.2 shows roughly the same data (with counties aggregated into the service area) monthly, with Graph 3.1 reflecting these data points.

Table 3.2 – Monthly Unemployment in Service Area

	Nation	State	Service Area
Apr-21	6.0%	4.3%	3.9%
May-21	5.8%	4.1%	3.7%
Jun-21	5.9%	4.0%	4.2%
Jul-21	5.4%	3.8%	3.5%
Aug-21	5.2%	3.6%	3.3%
Sep-21	4.7%	3.4%	2.6%
Oct-21	4.6%	3.2%	2.4%
Nov-21	4.2%	3.1%	2.2%
Dec-21	3.9%	3.1%	2.3%
Jan-22	4.0%	3.0%	3.3%
Feb-22	3.8%	2.9%	3.4%
Mar-22	3.6%	2.8%	3.4%
Apr-22	3.6%	2.8%	2.9%
May-22	3.6%	2.9%	2.5%
Jun-22	3.6%	2.9%	3.1%
Jul-22	3.5%	3.0%	3.3%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics LAU County Level Data

Graph 3.1 – Local, State, and National Unemployment Data (Monthly)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics LAU County Level Data

As is expected, given the smaller sample size, the local unemployment numbers are more erratic than national and statewide trends. Still, they have remained consistently below the national average and frequently below statewide averages.

Again, though results can be misleading given lead time, the median incomes listed below in Table 3.3 reflect data from 2020 amid a very volatile economic environment. Still, it is worth noting these data, as they provide some touchstone and insight into incomes in the service area.

Table 3.3 – Service Area Median Income

Report Area	Total Households	Average Household Income	Median Household Income
Report Location	67,742	\$76,552	No data
Buffalo County, WI	5,751	\$70,666	\$58,364
Eau Claire County, WI	41,602	\$80,188	\$62,508
Jackson County, WI	8,246	\$67,261	\$55,228
Trempealeau County, WI	12,143	\$73,193	\$59,606
Wisconsin	2,377,935	\$82,757	\$63,293
United States	122,354,219	\$91,547	\$64,994

Community Action Partnership - Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. 2016-20. Source geography: Tract

Production and Growth

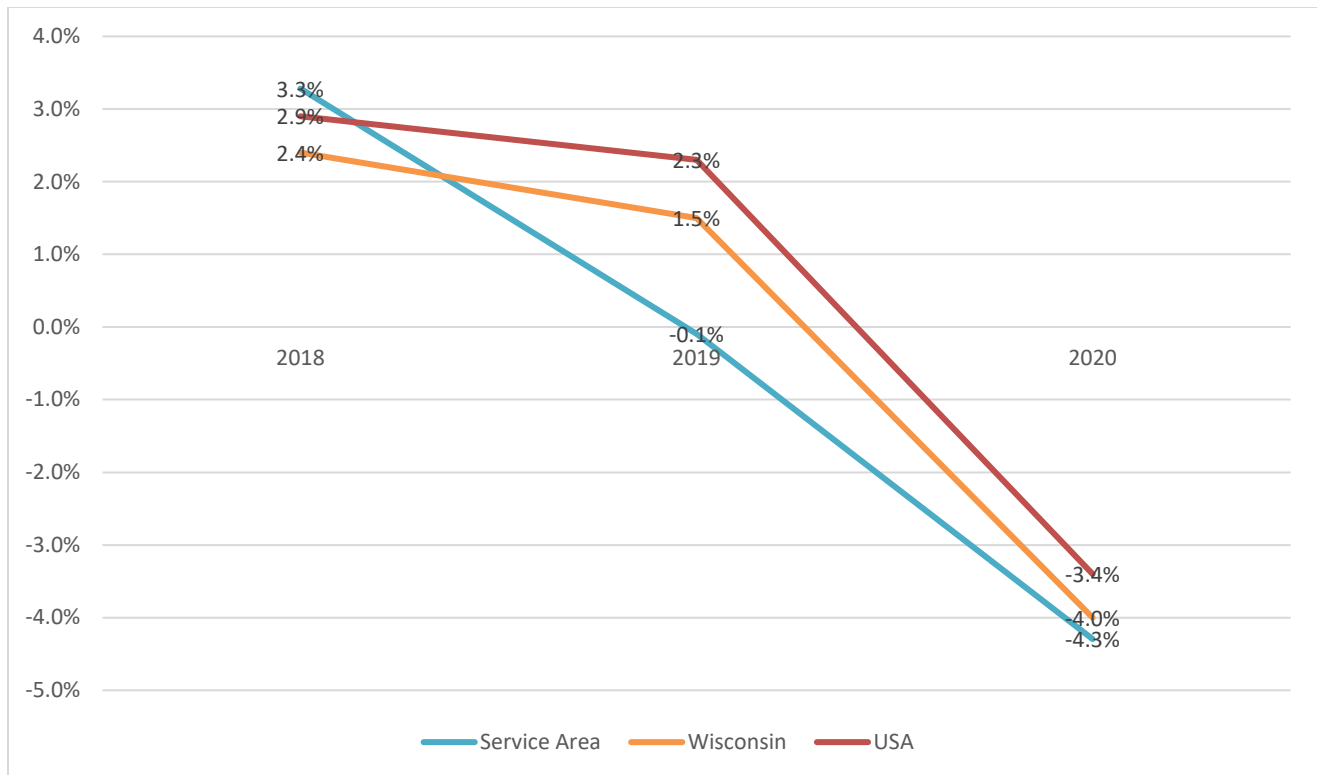
The Bureau of Economic Analysis provides the nation with its quarterly GDP numbers. Additionally, they offer these same data on a county level, offering insights into production and economic growth. Though the much smaller economies of counties make far more noise in the data, they offer good snapshots of GDP growth in each service area county. Table 3.6 shows this growth in both dollars and percentage format, and Graph 3.2 provides a visual.

Table 3.6 – County GDP

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Buffalo	442,365	504,924	448,784	482,086
% Growth	--	14.1%	-11.1%	7.4%
Eau Claire	5,657,612	5,808,447	5,920,439	5,675,015
% Growth	--	2.7%	1.9%	-4.1%
Jackson	815,773	871,881	810,108	754,391
% Growth	--	6.9%	-7.1%	-6.9%
Trempealeau	1,281,068	1,280,513	1,278,332	1,182,907
% Growth	--	0%	-0.2%	-7.5%
Service Area	8,196,818	8,465,765	8,457,663	8,094,399
% Growth	--	3.3%	-0.1%	-4.3%

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis Gross Domestic Product by County, 2020

Graph 3.2 – Service Area, State, and National GDP Growth



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis Gross Domestic Product by County, 2020

Of note in the above data is that every county except for Buffalo saw significant output loss in 2020. (Buffalo likely only saw its increase due to a substantial slow-down the previous year.) One employer slowing its production or moving out of the area can cause these significant swings in the data—remaining a suitable method for seeing what is happening in a local business.

AGENCY PROFILE

Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. (WDEOC) is the community action agency providing extensive programs for low-income individuals and families in Buffalo, Eau Claire, Jackson, and Trempealeau Counties in western Wisconsin. (The structure of the Agency and the programs offered can be found in the organization chart of Appendix C.) All programs fit into six program categories; Housing and Family Services (primarily focused on self-sufficiency); Head Start (education); Weatherization (housing); Childcare Partnership (childcare); Jobs and Business Development (self-sufficiency); and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (self-sufficiency). These programs serve clients struggling with poverty-related issues, including homelessness, food insecurity, childcare needs, inability to pay energy bills, unsafe/uninhabitable housing, childhood development, trouble starting a business, and a lack of social and civic engagement.

WDEOC offers a variety of services, including Head Start, a Women's Business Center, Child and Adult Food

Care Program (CACFP), Wisconsin Emergency Rental Assistance, Childcare Resource and Referral, Homeless shelters, Permanent Supportive Housing, Fresh Start, Work and Wheels, Paratransit certification, Rapid Rehousing, RSVP Volunteer programming (Weekend Food 4 Kids, Birthday Boxes, and Volunteer Caregivers), Weatherization, Housing Rehabilitation, Energy Assistance, and more. A few critical services stand out given WDEOC's role as the sole provider in the communities served. These include homeless services and sheltering in Buffalo, Jackson, and Trempealeau Counties, Head Start schooling and care for low-income children in all four counties, Weatherization assistance in all four counties, and energy assistance in Eau Claire, Trempealeau, and Clark Counties.

National attention has finally begun to focus on disparities in poverty and poverty-related conditions as they apply to communities of color. Table 4.1 shows the rate of services provided to the service area's largest racial and ethnic minority groups. The Service Index compares raw numbers of unduplicated clients served (who have provided their race/ethnicity) of both Hispanic and non-Hispanic origin and racial categories of American Indian, Black, Asian, and White. The index takes these raw numbers and converts them to the percentage of clients served by the Agency. For example, a value of 3% in the 'X of Clients Served' column would indicate that 3% of all clients served in the past year fell into this classification (note: racial categories don't add up to 100% as smaller groups were omitted). To determine disparities in service, this number was compared to the percentage of the total population in the service area living below the federal poverty line from each racial/ethnic grouping. In other words, a 5% in the “% of total pop. below FPL” column would indicate that of all individuals living in poverty, 5% fell into the given racial/ethnic category. These numbers were then compared, and the disparity between the two shows (in percentage terms) the relative under or over service of a given group.

As can be seen, White, non-Hispanic individuals continue to be overserved by the Agency relative to their proportion of the population living in poverty. Hispanic/Latino clients are the most underserved, at 2.5%, a persistent problem likely stemming from the difficulties in establishing trust and building inroads into a very cautious and tight-knit Hispanic community in the rural counties. Also significantly under-served are American Indian individuals, though this too likely has a relatively simple explanation: the majority of American Indian community members in the service area live in Jackson County—the location of the Ho-Chunk Nation. Ho-Chunk members living in poverty have access to various tribal resources, which may be utilized instead of WDEOC resources. Regardless of the explanation, the Agency will continue to work to make inroads with these two communities to close these gaps.

Table 4.1 – Western Dairyland's Service Index

Ethnic Group	Number Served	% of total pop. below FPL	% of Clients Served	(+/-) Disparity
Hispanic	252	6.9%	4.4%	-2.5%
Non-Hispanic	5,525	93.1%	95.6%	+2.5%
Racial Group	Number Served	% of total pop. below FPL	% of Clients Served	(+/-) Disparity
Asian	260	2.4%	4.6%	+2.2%
Black/African American	154	2.8%	2.5%	-0.3%
American Indian	60	2.3%	1.1%	-1.2%
White (non-Hispanic)	4961	85.1%	87.3%	+2.2%

Source: internal data and ACS population and poverty estimates

-RED = % by which the Agency underserved this population

+GREEN = % by which the Agency overserved this population

METHODOLOGY

Quantitative data is essential to understanding the challenges of low-income individuals within the community. In keeping with this, the report (to this point) has utilized secondary data to analyze trends and indicators from data sources such as the U.S. Census, the American Community Survey, John's Hopkins, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Zillow, and elsewhere. These data have been compared empirically and synthesized to find indicator overlap and multiple indicators identifying the same problem or need. The Agency's planning department analyzed these data with the assistance of a University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire economist. The chosen analytic styles were geographic and intuitive trend analysis, identifying long-term and evolving patterns in the community to identify present conditions and proactively prepare for future needs.

While these national sources with local data are compelling, it is necessary to provide a local perspective. As such, WDEOC has endeavored to again administer a Low-Income Survey of members in need and organizations from key community sectors (community, faith-based, public, private, and educational institutions in particular). In previous years the collection of responses was more robust, but in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, WDEOC has implemented policies to limit foot traffic in the Eau Claire office to protect clients and staff. As such, surveys have been more limited and conducted exclusively online, with links mailed to WDEOC clients and partnering organizations from these key sectors. With 311 raw responses (231 after eliminating invalid or double entries), the n of 231, while not as robust as previous surveys, has more precise and useful data.

In addition to this survey of low-income individuals, the Agency carried out four (4) focus groups in the summer of 2022. These groups included the Head Start Policy Council, Western Dairyland's Board of Directors, The Women's Business Center Steering Committee, and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program Advisory Board. They help to contextualize quantitative data with qualitative feedback. The survey instrument

and focus group questions may be found in Appendices D and F, respectively.

Table 5.1 – Primary Data Collection Instruments

Instrument	Type	Sample	Participants
LI Survey <i>June – Aug. 2022</i>	Quantitative	n=231	Low-income clients and community members Key organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start (C.B., E.D.) • Catholic Charities (F.B.) • UW-Eau Claire (E.D.)
Focus Groups <i>May-July 2022</i>	Qualitative	4 groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Western Dairyland Board of Directors (C.B., P.B.) 2. Head Start Policy Council (C.B., E.D.) 3. Women's Business Center Steering Cmt. (P.V., C.B.) 4. RSVP Board (C.B.)
C.B. = Community-Based members F.B. = Faith-Based members PV = Private Sector members PB = Public Sector members E.D. = Educational Institution members			

LI Survey

The Low-Income Survey was a self-administered instrument in the field from June 3, 2022, until August 9, 2022. There were 311 responses, with 231 meeting the established criteria. To reach as many low-income clients as possible, particularly given post-COVID protocols which limit foot traffic in offices, the Agency tapped its vast communications network of over 5,000 individuals with its own client lists as well as partnering agencies and stakeholders from key sectors, including community-based, faith-based, private sector, public sector, and educational organizations. In addition, the Agency advertised the survey through its Facebook page and provided incentives for completion of the survey in the form of Kwik Trip cards of \$5 for the first 100 respondents. Given the focus on clients and input from key stakeholders/organizations, this survey is not randomized and has limited scientific validity. While this is a shortcoming of the instrument, it allows this assessment to focus on the input of low-income clients and those in key community sectors. This survey also included direct administration by Planning Department staff and staff at Sojourner House, run by Catholic Charities, a faith-based community organization.

Survey responses are not weighted by geography. Though Eau Claire has a much higher response rate (121) compared to Buffalo (27), Jackson (50), and Trempealeau (29) Counties, this is roughly proportional to overall county populations, with Jackson slightly over-represented and Trempealeau marginally under-represented.

Focus Groups

The best method to contextualize quantitative feedback is through qualitative discussion. With this in mind, WDEOC conducted four focus groups in the Summer of 2022. These focus groups were smaller in nature and included members from community-based organizations (Retired Senior Volunteer Program Advisory Board, Western Dairyland Board of Directors), the public sector (Western Dairyland Board of Directors), the private sector (Women's Business Center Steering Committee, Western Dairyland Board of Directors), and educational institutions (Head Start Policy Council).

These focus groups were attended: Head Start Policy Council – 5 participants; RSVP Advisory Board – 7 participants and 3 staff; Job and Women's Business Center Steering Committee – 5 participants and 3 staff; and Western Dairyland Board of Directors – 13 participants. Participants were asked open-ended questions (see Attachment E) to spur discussion, which did not exceed one hour. The planning department led the focus groups, which guided discussion and recorded feedback.

KEY FINDINGS

After collecting and analyzing all primary and secondary data, several urgent needs were identified. The two most prominent (lack of access to affordable childcare and affordable housing) are ranked below as key foci for the Agency to address moving forward. The third area of focus was a bit more challenging to ascertain. Access to mental health resources, food insecurity, transportation, and vocational skills have all been identified by various data as problems in the community. Given the current economic and social uncertainty as communities seek an equilibrium following the pandemic, it is difficult to prioritize these needs and even more challenging to anticipate new ones arising. For this reason, the third priority for Western Dairyland should be building capacity. The entries below will identify each need at various levels of analysis and offer a brief justification for its salience in the community.

1. Childcare	
Community Level	There is a lack of affordable, registered childcare in each of the four counties
Family Level	Working families with children often must make difficult choices regarding finding childcare or missing work time.
Agency Level	The Agency is focused on the creation of regulated, high-quality childcare

Access to affordable childcare is an issue that sprawls through patterns of poverty within the community. One significant impact is a caregiver's ability to obtain employment without childcare. The secondary data show substantially lower labor force participation rates in three of the four counties, all counties in which internal

survey data show shortages of care, waiting lists, and staffing issues, which leave centers in precarious positions. The current price rates identified make the available care cost prohibitive for many low-income caregivers.

It is not surprising that three out of four focus groups listed childcare as one of the top-five most pressing needs of their community, with some placing it as their top priority. All agree that there is a greater need to push for childcare. This topic was viewed as especially important by both the Head Start and Women's Business Center focus groups. In addition to the focus groups, 30% of low-income individuals with children surveyed reported difficulty gaining/maintaining employment due to COVID-19 issues or childcare needs. Further, 37% reported being concerned with the cost of childcare, while 17.7% disclosed using unregulated childcare. Indeed, while the importance of affordable childcare seems primarily of concern to parents, out of all respondents surveyed (including those without children), 34% identified affordable childcare as a top concern affecting their community.

The problems with childcare access and affordability in the region have already been presented to some degree in the preceding sections. When these numbers are analyzed, the issue of access for low-income families becomes particularly clear. Given that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that a family's childcare budget not exceed 10% of their income, prices for infant care alone in each of the four counties would be cost-prohibitive even for median income earners in Table 2.2b.

While there are several community resources regarding childcare (including county departments of health and human services, state/federal aid for low-income families, and organizations such as the Family Resource Center), few of these focus on increasing the supply of childcare to give parents more options and help control costs. Only Western Dairyland has this critical focus, though one that has been dramatically limited due to the loss of the YoungStar technical support sub-contract. Gaining more funding and helping to launch (and maintain) childcare centers should be a top priority for the Agency.

2. Affordable Housing/Homelessness	
Community Level	There is a lack of affordable, habitable housing in all four counties
Family Level	Families have difficulty finding and maintaining access to safe, affordable housing units.
Agency Level	The Agency continues trying innovative approaches but has had difficulty placing clients in housing. WERA rental assistance is helping clients to remain housed, but these funds are finite, and the program has a limited shelf-life.

Housing costs are rising. This has become a self-evident statement across the United States. The secondary data analyzed via the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, the rising Case-Shiller Housing Index,

and Zillow Analytics confirm what we know to be true. In the communities served by Western Dairyland, there has been a long-standing difficulty with affordable housing. It has been mentioned in county-level strategic planning documents; it's been identified by local media and politicians and can be teased out of the data.

Regarding Low-income client and partner survey responses, over 48% selected either "Housing," "Homeless Services," or both as top concerns affecting their community. This makes the housing crisis the most significant response in the survey. Of interest is that over 43% of respondents were homeowners, making prioritizing housing issues particularly noteworthy. Again, housing issues were raised in every focus group conducted. The Women's Business Center focus group discussed the demolition of low-income apartments and duplexes and how it has been replaced with new housing that is unaffordable to low-income clients. This is a pattern throughout the service area, where developers have been reluctant to build new housing for low-income residents.

There are, of course, consequences for this lack of access to housing stability. The most recent Point in Time count, meant to identify unhoused individuals and families, shows 75 families and 120 individuals currently unhoused. This is up substantially from the pre-pandemic number of 41 families and 72 individuals unhoused as of January 2020.

Based upon these factors, combined with historically high housing prices, rental prices, and low vacancy rates, it is likely that low-income individuals in the community will see increased rates of housing insecurity. The Western Dairyland Board of Directors focus group emphasized collaborative efforts between non-profits, businesses, and the public sector to solve community issues. No issue seems quite as ripe for this approach as housing. Western Dairyland is positioned as a non-profit to deal with unhoused individuals and families. However, the broader issues that push families into housing instability will require this sort of collaboration to solve. It would behoove the Agency to lead in building a greater coalition of stakeholders to address these issues.

3. Capacity Building	
Community Level	The service area is subject to a great deal of economic and social re-orientation following the pandemic
Family Level	Low-Income families are struggling with the ever-rising costs, new employment realities, and changing institutions
Agency Level	The Agency, like all service providers, is struggling to find its footing and anticipate and adapt to, at times, rapidly changing realities in the community

It is difficult to tell if we're part of a sustained economic boom or amid a recession. It would do the Agency well to remain agile and adaptive to changing circumstances and needs in the coming months and years. The

microdata from the Bureau of Economic Analysis and the Bureau of Labor Statistics show a region whose growth is sporadic and largely dependent upon large employers and industries. Aside from commonalities around housing and childcare, focus groups diverged on other issues they found to be the most salient in their community. As previously mentioned, the Western Dairyland Board of Directors and other groups highlighted the ability to be flexible and work with partners within the community to address issues.

Given the lack of consensus on issues beyond housing and childcare and the unpredictable economic and social trends in coming years, any agency seeking to deal with emerging needs must have the available capacity to identify these problems and build programs and coalitions of community stakeholders to alleviate them. It is therefore recommended that WDEOC engages in general capacity building to meet these rising challenges.

CONCLUSION

This report was prepared to offer insights into the trends and trajectories within Western Dairyland's four-county service area. However, this is a difficult task as various data points and indicators may tell seemingly contradictory tales. While the community continues its tumultuous economic ride—alternating between positive and negative indicators, what is clear is that those who have not been lifted out of poverty by increasing wages and employment are struggling now worse than ever.

The sincere hope of the contributors and preparers of this assessment is that Western Dairyland will build the capacity, leadership, and foresight necessary to address critical issues as they arise. If the past is any indication, it undoubtedly will.

There is no easy answer to alleviating poverty-related conditions in our community, nor giving individuals the opportunities they need to advance economically and socially, especially in the wake of COVID-19. Even so, as long as Western Dairyland's Board of Directors, leadership, staff, and volunteers remain committed to the mission laid out over 50 years ago, the Agency will continue to be at the forefront of this effort.

APPENDIX A

Western Dairyland EOC, Inc.

9900 - PIR Report (current values)

Head Start 21-22 Western Dairyland EOC, Inc.

A. Enrollment & Program Options

Funded Enrollment by Funding Source

1. Funded Enrollment	
a. Head Start/Early Head Start Funded Enrollment, as identified on NOA that captures the greatest part of the program year	322
b. Funded Enrollment from non-federal sources, i.e. state, local, private	0
c. Funded Enrollment from the MIECHV Grant Program using the Early Head Start home visiting model	0

Funded Enrollment by Program Option

2. Center-based option	
a. Number of slots equal to or greater than 1,020 annual hours for Head Start preschool children or 1,380 annual hours for Early Head Start infants and toddlers	276
1. Of these, the number available for the full-working-day and full-calendar-year	0
b. Number of slots with fewer than 1,020 annual hours for Head Start preschool children or 1,380 annual hours for Early Head Start infants and toddlers	46
1. Of these, the number that are available for 3.5 hours per day for 128 days	46
2. Of these, the number that are available for full working day	0
3. Home-based option	0
4. Family child care option	0
5. Locally designed option	0
6. Pregnant women slots	0

Funded Slots at Child Care Partner

7. Total number of slots in the center-based or locally designed option (A.2.a + A.2.b + A.5)	322
a. Of these, the total number of slots at a child care partner	0
8. Total funded enrollment at child care partners (includes center-based, locally designed, and family child care program options) (A.4 + A.7.a)	0

Classes in Center-based

9. Total number of center-based classes operated	24
a. Of these, the number of double session classes	4

Children by Age

10. Children by Age:			
a. Under 1 year	0	d. 3 years old	104
b. 1 year old	0	e. 4 years old	84
c. 2 years old	5	f. 5 years and older	3
g. Total cumulative enrollment of children (A.10.a + A.10.b + A.10.c + A.10.d + A.10.e + A.10.f)			196

Cumulative enrollment of pregnant women

11. Cumulative enrollment of pregnant women	0
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Total cumulative enrollment

12. Total cumulative enrollment (A.10.g + A.11)	196
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A. Enrollment & Program Options

Primary type of Eligibility

13. Report each enrollee only once by primary type of eligibility:	
a. Income at or below 100% of federal poverty line	107
b. Receipt of public assistance such as TANF and SSI	18
c. Foster care	11
d. Homeless	25
e. Eligibility based on other type of need, but not counted in A.13.a through d	14
f. Incomes between 100% and 130% of the federal poverty line, but not counted in A.13.a through e	21
14. If the program serves enrollees under A.13.f, specify how the program has demonstrated that all income-eligible children in their area are being served.	

Prior enrollment

15. Enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start for:	
a. The second year	50
b. Three or more years	15

Transition and Turnover (HS Programs)

16. Total number of preschool children who left the program any time after classes or home visits began and did not re-enroll	27
a. Of the preschool children who left the program during the program year, the number of preschool children who were enrolled less than 45 days	5
17. Of the number of preschool children enrolled in Head Start at the end of the current enrollment year, the number projected to be entering kindergarten in the following school year	75

Transition and Turnover (EHS Programs)

18. Total number of infants and toddlers who left the program any time after classes or home visits began and did not re-enroll	0
a. Of the infants and toddlers who left the program above, the number of children who were enrolled less than 45 days	0
b. Of the infants and toddlers who left the program during the program year, the number who aged out of Early Head Start	0
1. Of the infants and toddlers who aged out of Early Head Start, the number who entered a Head Start program	0
2. Of the infants and toddlers who aged out of Early Head Start, the number who entered another early childhood program	0
3. Of the infants and toddlers who aged out of Early Head Start, the number who did NOT enter another early childhood program	0
19. Total number of pregnant women who left the program after receiving Early Head Start services but before the birth of their infant, and did not re-enroll	0
20. Number of pregnant women receiving Early Head Start services at the time their infant was born	0
a. Of the pregnant women enrolled when their infant was born, the number whose infant was subsequently enrolled in the program	0
b. Of the pregnant women enrolled when their infant was born, the number whose infant was NOT subsequently enrolled in the program (A.20 - A.20.a)	0

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A. Enrollment & Program Options

Transition and Turnover (Migrant Programs)

21. Total number of children who left the program any time after classes or home visits began and did not re-enroll	0
a. Of the children who left the program during the program year, the number of children who were enrolled less than 45 days	0
b. Of the children who left the program during the program year, the number of preschool children who aged out, i.e., left the program in order to attend kindergarten	0

Attendance

22. The total number of children cumulatively enrolled in the center-based or family child care program option	196
a. Of these children, the number of children that were chronically absent	122
1. Of the children chronically absent, the number that stayed enrolled until the end of enrollment	97
23. Comments on children that were chronically absent:	

Child Care Subsidy

24. The number of enrolled children for whom the program and/or its partners received a child care subsidy during the program year	0
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Race and Ethnicity

25. Race and Ethnicity	(1) Hispanic/Latino	(2) Non-Hispanic
a. American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	3
b. Asian	0	12
c. Black or African American	0	7
d. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0
e. White	34	112
f. Biracial/Multi-racial	4	23
g. Other	0	1
h. Unspecified	0	0
25.g.1 Comments:	Middle Eastern - Arabic	
25.h.1 Comments:		

Primary Language of the Family at Home

26. Primary language of family at home:			
a. English			162
1. Of these, the number of children acquiring/learning another language in addition to english			1
b. Spanish	28	h. Pacific Island Languages	0
c. Native Central American	0	i. European/Slavic Languages	0
d. Caribbean Languages	0	j. African Languages	0
e. Middle Eastern & South Asian	0	k. American Sign Language	1
f. East Asian Languages	3	l. Other	2
g. Native North American/Alaskan	0	m. Unspecified	0
26.l.1 Comments:	Gujarati		

Dual Language Learners

27. Total number of Dual Language Learners (A.26.a.1 + A.26.b through A.26.m)	35
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Transportation

28. Number of children for whom transportation is provided to and from classes	136
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A. Enrollment & Program Options

Management Information Systems

29. List the management information system(s) your program uses to support tracking, maintaining, and using data on enrollees, program services, and program staff.

Name/title

a. ChildPlus

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B. Program Staff & Qualifications

Staff by type	(1) Head Start Early Head Start Staff	(2) Contracted Staff
1. Total number of staff members, regardless of the funding source for their salary or number of hours worked	95	0
a. Of these, the number who are current or former Head Start or Early Head Start parents	23	0

Volunteers by type

2. Number of persons providing any volunteer services to the program during the program year	0
a. Of these, the number who are current or former Head Start or Early Head Start parents	0

Preschool Classroom and Assistant Teachers (HS and Migrant Programs)	(1) Classroom Teacher	(2) Assistant Teachers
3. Total number of preschool education and child development staff by position	23	25
a. An advanced degree in:	1	0
early childhood education or any field and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education, with experience teaching preschool-age children.		
b. A baccalaureate degree in one of the following:	17	0
early childhood education any field and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education with experience teaching preschool-age children or any field and is part of the Teach for America program and passed a rigorous early childhood content exam		
c. An associate degree in:	2	9
early childhood education a field related to early childhood education and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education with experience teaching preschool-age children		
d. A Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or state-awarded certification, credential, or licensure that meets or exceeds CDA requirements	0	9
1. Of these, a CDA credential or state-awarded certification, credential, or licensure that meets or exceeds CDA requirements and that is appropriate to the option in which they are working	0	9
e. None of the qualifications listed in B.3.a through B.3.d	3	7

Preschool Classroom Teachers Program Enrollment

4. Total number of preschool classroom teachers that do not meet qualifications listed in B.3.a or B.3.b	5
a. Of these preschool classroom teachers, the number enrolled in a degree program that would meet the qualifications described in B.3.a or B.3.b	1

Preschool Classroom Assistant Teachers Program Enrollment

5. Total number of preschool assistant teachers that do not meet qualifications listed in B.3.a through B.3.d	7
a. Of these preschool assistant teachers, the number enrolled in a degree, certification, credential, or licensure program that would meet the qualifications listed in B.3.a through B.3.d	5

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B. Program Staff & Qualifications

Infant and Toddler Classroom Teachers (EHS and Migrant Programs)

6. Total number of infant and toddler classroom teachers	0
a. An advanced degree in:	0
early childhood education with a focus on infant and toddler development or	
any field and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education, with experience teaching infants and/or toddlers	
b. A baccalaureate degree in:	0
early childhood education with a focus on infant and toddler development or	
a field related to early childhood education and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education with experience teaching infants and/or toddlers	
c. An associate degree in:	0
early childhood education with a focus on infant and toddler development or	
a field related to early childhood education and coursework equivalent to a major relating to early childhood education with experience teaching infants and/or toddlers	
d. A Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or state-awarded certification, credential, or licensure that meets or exceeds CDA requirements	0
1. Of these, a CDA credential or state-awarded certification, credential, or licensure that meets or exceeds CDA requirements and that is appropriate to the option in which they are working	0
e. None of the qualifications listed in B.6.a through B.6.d	0
7. Total number of infant and toddler classroom teachers that do not have any qualifications listed in B.6.a through B.6.d (B.6.e)	0
a. Of these infant and toddler classroom teachers, the number enrolled in a degree, certification, credential, or licensure program that would meet one of the qualifications listed in B.6.a through B.6.d.	0

Home Visitors and Family Child Care Provider Staff Qualifications

8. Total number of home visitors	0
a. Of these, the number of home visitors that have a home-based CDA credential or comparable credential, or equivalent coursework as part of an associate's, baccalaureate, or advanced degree	0
b. Of these, the number of home visitors that do not meet one of the qualifications described in B.8.a.	0
1. Of the home visitors in B.8.b, the number enrolled in a degree or credential program that would meet a qualification described in B.8.a	0
9. Total number of family child care providers	0
a. Of these, the number of family child care providers that have a Family Child Care CDA credential or state equivalent, or an associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree in child development or early childhood education	0
b. Of these, the number of family child care providers that do not meet one of the qualifications described in B.9.a	0
1. Of the family child care providers in B.9.b, the number enrolled in a degree or credential program that would meet a qualification described in B.9.a.	0
10. Total number of child development specialists that support family child care providers	0
a. Of these, the number of child development specialists that have a baccalaureate degree in child development, early childhood education, or a related field	0
b. Of these, the number of child development specialists that do not meet one of the qualifications described in B.10.a.	0
1. Of the child development specialists in B.10.b, the number enrolled in a degree or credential program that would meet a qualification described in B.10.a	0

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B. Program Staff & Qualifications

Classroom teacher salary by level of education

11. Classroom teacher salary by level of education:	
a. Advanced degree in early childhood education or related degree	Not Entered
b. Baccalaureate degree in early childhood education or related degree	Not Entered
c. Associate degree in early childhood education or related degree	Not Entered
d. A Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or state-awarded preschool, infant/toddler, family child care or home-based certification, credential, or licensure that meets or exceeds CDA requirements	Not Entered
e. Classroom teachers that do not have the qualifications listed in B.12.a - B.12.d	Not Entered

Child development staff - average salary

12. Average salary:	Avg. Annual Salary	Avg. Hourly Rate
a. Classroom teachers	Not Entered	Not Entered
b. Assistant teachers	Not Entered	Not Entered
c. Home-based visitors	Not Entered	Not Entered
d. Family child care providers	Not Entered	Not Entered

Child development staff - race

13. Race and Ethnicity:	(1)Hispanic/Latino	(2)Non-Hispanic
a. American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0
b. Asian	0	2
c. Black or African American	0	0
d. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0	0
e. White	2	44
f. Biracial/Multi-racial	0	0
g. Other	0	0
h. Unspecified	0	0
13.g.1 Comments:		
13.h.1 Comments:		

Child development staff - language

14. The number who are proficient in a language(s) other than English	4
a. Of these, the number who are proficient in more than one language other than English	0
15. Language groups in which staff are proficient:	
a. Spanish	2
b. Native Central American, South American, and Mexican Languages (e.g., Mixteco, Quichean)	0
c. Caribbean Languages (e.g., Haitian-Creole, Patois)	0
d. Middle Eastern & South Asian Languages (e.g., Arabic, Hebrew, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali)	0
e. East Asian Languages (e.g., Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog)	2
f. Native North American/Alaska Native Languages	0
g. Pacific Island Languages (e.g., Palauan, Fijian)	0
h. European & Slavic Languages (e.g., German, French, Italian, Croatian, Yiddish, Portuguese, Russian)	0
i. African Languages (e.g., Swahili, Wolof)	0
j. American Sign Language	0
k. Other	0
15.k.1 Comments:	
l. Unspecified (language is not known or staff declined identifying the language)	0

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B. Program Staff & Qualifications

All Staff Turnover

	Staff	Contract Staff
16. Total number of staff who left during the program year (including turnover that occurred while the program was not in session, e.g. summer months)	16	0
a. Of these, the number who were replaced	7	0

Education and Child Development Staff Turnover

17. The number of teachers, preschool assistant teachers, family child care providers, and home visitors who left during the program year (including turnover that occurred while classes and home visits were not in session, e.g., during summer months)		9
a. Of these, the number who were replaced		4
b. Of these, the number who left while classes and home visits were in session		8
c. Of these, the number that were teachers who left the program		4
18. Of the number of education and child development staff that left, the number that left for the following primary reason:		
a. Higher compensation		0
1. Of these, the number that moved to state pre-k or other early childhood program		0
b. Retirement or relocation		0
c. Involuntary separation		2
d. Other (e.g., change in job field, reason not provided)		7
19. Number of vacancies during the program year that remained unfilled for a period of 3 months or longer		0

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C. Child & Family Services

	(1) At enrollment	(2) At end of enrollment year
Health Insurance - children		
1. Number of all children with health insurance	192	193
Of these, the number of children whose primary insurance fits into the following categories:		
a. Of these, the number enrolled in Medicaid and/or CHIP	175	176
b. Of these, the number enrolled in state-only funded insurance (e.g., medically indigent insurance), private insurance, or other health insurance (C.1-C.1.a)	17	17
2. Number of all children with no health insurance (A.10.g - C.1)	4	3

	(1) At enrollment	(2) At end of enrollment year
Health insurance - pregnant women (EHS programs)		
3. Number of pregnant women with at least one type of health insurance.	0	0
a. Of these, the number enrolled in Medicaid	0	0
b. Of these, the number enrolled in state-only funded insurance (e.g. medically indigent insurance), private insurance, or other health insurance (C.3 - C.3.a)	0	0
4. Number of pregnant women with no health insurance (A.11 - C.3)	0	0

	(1) At enrollment	(2) At end of enrollment year
Accessible Health Care - Children		
5. Number of children with and ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care provided by a health care professional that maintains the child's ongoing health record and is not primarily a source of emergency or urgent care	192	129
a. Of these, the number of children that have accessible health care through a federally qualified Health Center, Indian Health Service, Tribal and/or Urban Indian Health Program facility	20	21

	(1) At enrollment	(2) At end of enrollment year
Accessible Health Care - Pregnant Women (EHS Programs)		
6. Number of pregnant women with an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care provided by a health care professional that maintains their ongoing health record and is not primarily a source of emergency or urgent care	0	0

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C. Child & Family Services

	(1) At enrollment	(2) At end of enrollment year
Medical services - children		
7. Number of all children who are up-to-date on a schedule of age-appropriate preventive and primary health care, according to the relevant state's EPSDT schedule for well child care	134	159
a. Of these, the number of children diagnosed with any chronic condition by a health care professional, regardless of when the condition was first diagnosed		25
1. Of these, the number who received medical treatment for their diagnosed chronic health condition		7
b. Specify the primary reason that children with any chronic condition diagnosed by a health care professional did not receive medical treatment		Number of Children
1. No medical treatment needed		1
2. No health insurance		0
3. Parents did not keep/make appointment		0
4. Children left the program before their appointment date		0
5. Appointment is scheduled for future date		0
6. Other		0
8. Number of children diagnosed by a health care professional with the following chronic condition, regardless of when the condition was first diagnosed:		
a. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)	5	f. Hearing Problems
b. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)	3	g. Vision Problems
c. Asthma	8	h. Blood lead level test with elevated lead levels > u5 g/dL
d. Seizures	0	i. Diabetes
e. Life threatening allergies (e.g. food allergies, bee stings, and medication allergies that may result in systemic anaphylaxis).		2

Body Mass Index (BMI) - children (HS and Migrant programs)

	Children at enrollment
9. Number of children who are in the following weight categories according to the 2000 CDC BMI-for-age growth charts	
a. Underweight (BMI less than 5th percentile for child's age and sex)	10
b. Healthy weight (at or above 5th percentile and below 85th percentile for child's age and sex)	105
c. Overweight (BMI at or above 85th percentile and below 95th percentile for child's age and sex)	35
d. Obese (BMI at or above 95th percentile for child's age and sex)	42

	(1) At enrollment	(2) At end of enrollment year
Immunization services - children		
10. Number of children who have been determined by a health professional to be up-to-date on all immunizations appropriate for their age	186	187
11. Number of children who have been determined by a health care professional to have received all immunizations possible at this time, but who have not received all immunizations appropriate for their age	0	0
C.12 Number of children who meet their state's guidelines for an exemption from immunizations	6	5

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C. Child & Family Services

Medical services - pregnant women (EHS programs)

13. Indicate the number of pregnant women who received the following services while enrolled in EHS:	
a. Prenatal health care	0
b. Postpartum health care	0
c. A professional oral health assessment, examination, and/or treatment	0
d. Mental health interventions and follow-up	0
e. Education on fetal development	0
f. Education on the benefits of breastfeeding	0
g. Education on the importance of nutrition	0
h. Education on infant care and safe sleep practices	0
i. Education on the risks of alcohol, drugs, and/or smoking	0
j. Facilitating access to substance abuse treatment	0

Prenatal health - pregnant women (EHS programs)

14. Trimester of pregnancy in which the pregnant women served were enrolled:	
a. 1st trimester (0-3 months)	0
b. 2nd trimester (3-6 months)	0
c. 3rd trimester (6-9 months)	0
15. Of the total served, the number whose pregnancies were identified as medically high risk by a physician or health care provider	0

	(1) At enrollment	(2) At end of enrollment year
Accessible dental care - children		
C.16 Number of children with continuous, accessible dental care provided by an oral health care professional which includes access to preventive care and dental treatment	133	113

Preschool dental services (HS and Migrant programs)

17. Number of children who received preventive care during the program year	154
18. Number of all children, including those enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP, who have completed a professional dental examination during the program year	154
a. Of these, the number of children diagnosed as needing dental treatment during the program year	57
1. Of these, the number of children who have received or are receiving dental treatment	14
b. Specify the primary reason that children who needed dental treatment did not receive it:	Number of Children
1. Health insurance doesn't cover dental treatment	0
2. No dental care available in local area	0
3. Medicaid not accepted by dentist	0
4. Dentists in the area do not treat 3 - 5 year old children	0
5. Parents did not keep/make appointment	0
6. Children left the program before their appointment date	0
7. Appointment is scheduled for future date	0
8. No transportation	0
9. Other	0

Infant and toddler preventive dental services (EHS and migrant programs)

19. Number of all children who are up-to-date according to the dental periodicity schedule in the relevant state's EPSDT schedule	0
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C. Child & Family Services

Mental health consultation

20. Total number of classroom teachers, home visitors, and family child care providers (B.3(1) + B.6 + B.8 + B.9)	23
a. Indicate the number of classroom teachers, home visitors, and family child care providers who received assistance from a mental health consultant through observation and consultation	24

IDEA eligibility determination

21. The total number of children referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) during the program year	3
a. Of these, the number who received an evaluation to determine IDEA eligibility	3
1. Of the children that received an evaluation, the number that were diagnosed with a disability	3
2. Of the children that received an evaluation, the number that were not diagnosed with a disability under IDEA	0
1. Of these children, the number for which the program is still providing or facilitating individualized services and supports such as an individual learning plan or supports described under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	0
b. Of these, the number who did not receive an evaluation to determine IDEA eligibility (C.21 - C.21.a)	0
22. Specify the primary reason that children referred for an evaluation to determine IDEA eligibility did not receive it:	
a. The responsible agency assigned child to Response to Intervention (RTI)	0
b. Parent(s) refused evaluation	0
c. Evaluation is pending and not yet completed by responsible agency	0
d. Other	0

Preschool disability services (HS and Migrant programs)

23. Number of children enrolled in the program who had an individualized Education Program (IEP), at any time during the program year, indicating they were determined eligible by the LEA to receive special education and related services under the IDEA	45
a. Of these, the number who were determined eligible to receive special education and related services:	
1. Prior to this program year	24
2. During this program year	21
b. Of these, the number who have not received special education and related services	0

Infant and toddler Part C early intervention services (EHS and Migrant programs)

24. Number of children enrolled in the program who have an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), at any time during the program year, indicating they were determined eligible by the Part C agency to receive early intervention services under the IDEA	0
a. Of these, the number who were determined eligible to receive early intervention services:	
1. Prior to this program year	0
2. During this program year	0
b. Of these, the number who have not received early intervention services under IDEA	0

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C. Child & Family Services

Preschool primary disabilities (HS and Migrant programs)	(1) Determined to have Disability	(2) Receiving Special Services
25. Diagnosed primary disability:		
a. Health impairment	2	2
b. Emotional disturbance	1	1
c. Speech or language impairment	25	25
d. Intellectual disabilities	0	0
e. Hearing impairment, including deafness	0	0
f. Orthopedic impairment	0	0
g. Visual impairment, including blindness	0	0
h. Specific learning disability	0	0
i. Autism	3	3
j. Traumatic brain injury	0	0
k. Non-categorical/developmental delay	14	14
l. Multiple disabilities, excluding deaf-blind	0	0
m. Deaf-blind	0	0

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C. Child & Family Services

Education and Development Tools/Approaches

Screening

26. Number of all newly enrolled children since last year's PIR was reported	133
27. Number of all newly enrolled children who completed required screenings within 45 days for developmental, sensory, and behavioral concerns since last year's PIR was reported	125
a. Of these, the number identified as needing follow-up assessment or formal evaluation to determine if the child has a disability	70
28. The instrument(s) used by the program for developmental screening:	
a. ASQ- 3 (Ages & Stages Questionnaire)	
b.	
c.	

Assessment

29. Approach or tool(s) used by the program for ongoing child assessment:	Locally designed
a. Teaching Strategies GOLD Online	No
b.	No
c.	No

Curriculum

30. Curriculum used by the program:	
a. For center-based services:	Locally designed
1. Creative Curriculum (Early Childhood)	No
2.	No
3.	No
b. For family child care services:	Locally designed
1.	No
2.	No
3.	No
c. For home-based services:	Locally designed
1.	No
2.	No
3.	No
d. For pregnant women services:	Locally designed
1.	No
2.	No
3.	No
e. For building on the parents' knowledge and skill (i.e. parenting curriculum)	Locally designed
1.	No
2.	No
3.	No

Staff-child interaction observation tools

	Yes (Y)/ No (N)
31. Does the program routinely use classroom or home visit observation tools to assess quality?	Yes
32. If yes, classroom and home visit observation tool(s) used by the program:	Locally designed
a. Center-based settings	Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS: Infant, Toddler, or No
b. Home-based settings	No
c. Family child care settings	No

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Head Start 21-22 Western Dairyland EOC, Inc.

C. Child & Family Services

Family and Community Partnerships

Number of families

33. Total number of families:	180
a. Of these, the number of two-parent families	84
b. Of these, the number of single-parent families	96
34. Of the total number of families, the number in which the parent/guardian figures are best described as:	
a. Parent(s) (e.g. biological, adoptive, stepparents)	168
1. Of these, the number of families with a mother only (biological, adoptive, stepmother)	85
2. Of these, the number of families with a father only (biological, adoptive, stepfather)	8
b. Grandparents	4
c. Relative(s) other than grandparents	2
d. Foster parent(s) not including relatives	6
e. Other	0

Parent guardian education

35. Of the total number of families, the highest level of education obtained by the child's parent(s) / guardian(s)	
a. An advanced degree or baccalaureate degree	12
b. An associate degree, vocational school, or some college	68
c. High school graduate or GED	86
d. Less than high school graduate	14

Employment, Job Training, and School

36. Total number of families in which at enrollment	
a. At least one parent/guardian is employed, in job training, or in school at enrollment	129
1. Of these families, the number in which one or more parent/guardian is employed	127
2. Of these families, the number in which one or more parent/guardian is in job training (e.g. job training program, professional certificate, apprenticeship, or occupational license)	8
3. Of these families, the number in which one or more parent/guardian is in school (e.g. GED, associate degree, baccalaureate, or advanced degree)	4
b. Neither/No parent/guardian is employed, in job training, or in school at enrollment (e.g. unemployed, retired, or disabled)	51
37. Total number of families in which at end of enrollment:	
a. At least one parent/guardian is employed, in job training, or in school at end of enrollment	133
1. Of these families, the number of families that were also counted in C.36.a (as having been employed, in job training, or in school at enrollment)	107
2. Of these families, the number of families that were also counted in C.36.b (as having not been employed, in job training, or in school at enrollment)	26
b. Neither/No parent/guardian is employed, in job training, or in school at end of enrollment (e.g. unemployed, retired, or disabled)	20
1. Of these families, the number of families that were also counted in C.36.a	7
2. Of these families, the number of families that were also counted in C.36.b	13

Western Dairyland EOC, Inc.

9900 - PIR Report (current values)

Head Start 21-22 Western Dairyland EOC, Inc.

C. Child & Family Services

Military Families

38.a At least one parent/guardian is a member of the United States military on active duty	0
38.b At least one parent/guardian is a veteran of the United States military	8

	(1) At enrollment	(2) At end of enrollment year
Federal or other assistance		
39. The number of families receiving any cash benefits or other services under the Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program	1	1
40. Total number families receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	20	22
41. Total number of families receiving services under the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)	83	74
42. Total number of families receiving benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly referred to as Food Stamps	86	82

	Services Received
Family Services	
43. The number of families that received the following program service to promote family outcomes:	
a. Emergency/crisis intervention such as addressing immediate need for food, clothing, or shelter	78
b. Housing assistance such as subsidies, utilities, repairs, etc.	15
c. Asset building services (e.g. financial education, debt counseling)	2
d. Mental health services	15
e. Substance misuse prevention	24
f. Substance misuse treatment	4
g. English as a second language (ESL) training	7
h. Assistance in enrolling into an education or job training program	5
i. Research-based parenting curriculum	91
j. Involvement in discussing their child's screening and assessment results and their child's progress	169
k. Supporting transitions between programs (i.e. EHS to HS, HS to kindergarten)	132
l. Education on preventative medical and oral health	169
m. Education on health and developmental consequences of tobacco product use	157
n. Education on nutrition	166
o. Education on postpartum care (e.g. breastfeeding support)	8
p. Education on relationship/marriage	2
q. Assistance to families of incarcerated individuals	3
44. Of these, the number that received at least one of the services listed above	178

Father engagement

45. Number of fathers/father figures who were engaged in the following activities during this program year:	
a. Family Assessment	75
b. Family goal setting	83
c. Involvement in child's Head Start child development experiences (e.g. home visits, parent-teacher conferences, volunteering)	99
d. Head Start program governance, such as participation in the Policy Council or policy committees	6
e. Parenting education workshops	36

Western Dairyland EOC, Inc.

9900 - PIR Report (current values)

Head Start 21-22 Western Dairyland EOC, Inc.

C. Child & Family Services

Homelessness Services

46. Total number of families experiencing homelessness that were served during the enrollment year	23
47. Total number of children experiencing homelessness that were served during the enrollment year	26
48. Total number of families experiencing homelessness that acquired housing during the enrollment year	9

Foster care and child welfare

49. Total number of enrolled children who were in foster care at any point during the program year	16
50. Total number of enrolled children who were referred to Head Start/Early Head Start services by a child welfare agency	9

Western Dairyland EOC, Inc.

9900 - PIR Report (current values)

Head Start 21-22 Western Dairyland EOC, Inc.

D. Grant Level Questions

Intensive Coaching

1. The number of education and child development staff (i.e. teachers, preschool assistant teachers, home visitors, FFC providers) that received intensive coaching	17
2. The number of individuals that provided intensive coaching, whether by staff, consultants, or through partnership	2

Management Staff Salaries

	(1) Annual Salary	(2) Percent Funded by Head Start or Early Head Start	(3) Number of Management Staff in this Position
3. Management staff:			
a. Executive Director	0	0	0
b. Head Start and/or Early Head Start Director	0	0	1
c. Education Manager/Coordinator	0	0	2
d. Health Services Manager/Coordinator	0	0	1
e. Family & Community Partnerships Manager/Coordinator	0	0	1
f. Disability Services Manager/Coordinator	0	0	0
g. Fiscal Officer	0	0	0

of education managers /coordinators

Education Management Staff Qualifications

4. Total number of education managers/coordinators (D.3.c.(3))	2
a. Of these, the number of education manager/coordinators with a baccalaureate or advanced degree in early childhood education or a baccalaureate or advance degree and equivalent coursework in early childhood education with early education teaching experience	2
b. Of these, the number of education manager/coordinators that do not meet one of the qualifications in D.4.a	0
1. Of the education manager/coordinators in D.4.b, the number enrolled in a program that would meet a qualification described in D.4.a	0

of family services staff

Family Services Staff Qualifications

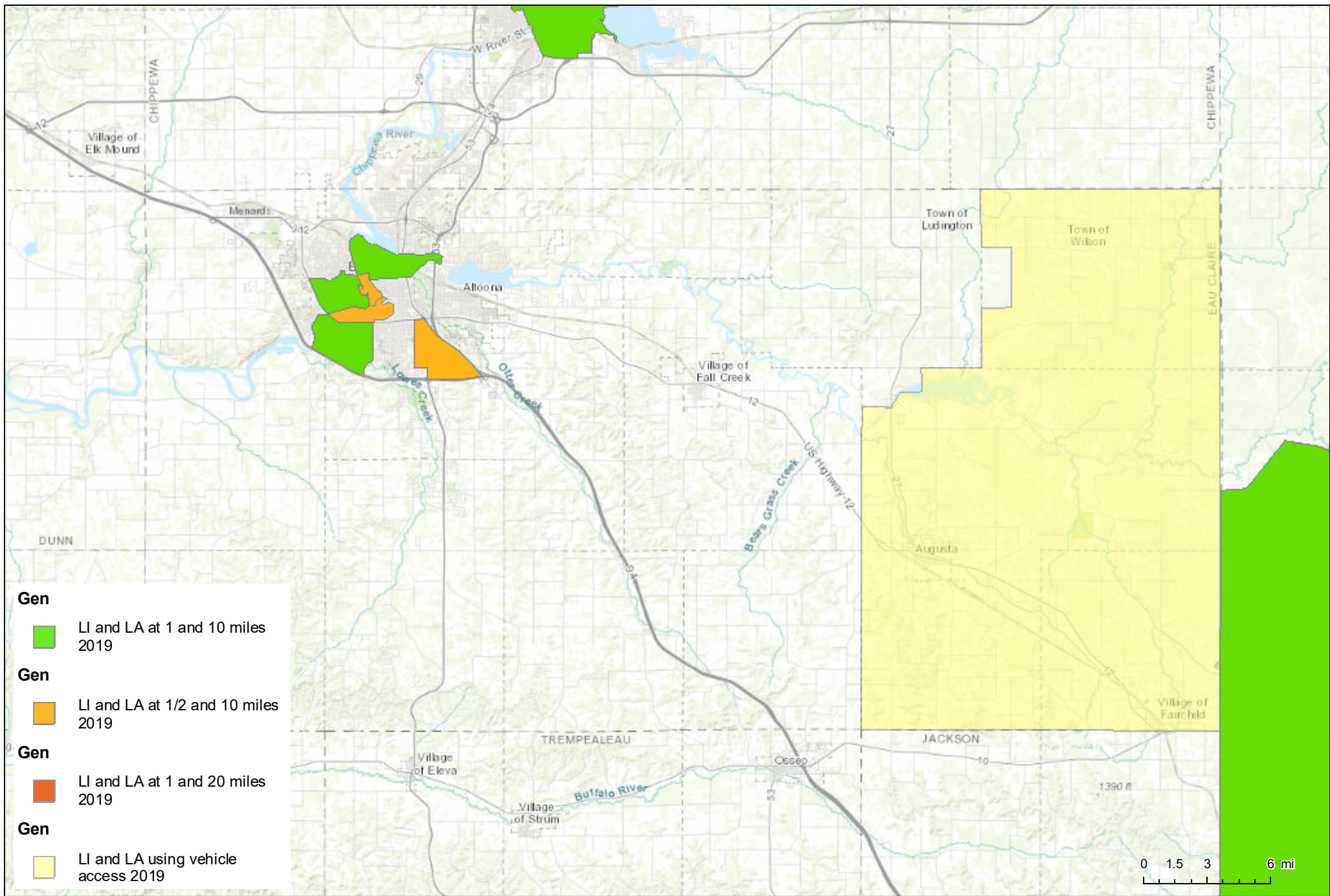
5. Total number of family services staff	7
a. Of these, the number that have a credential, certification, associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree in social work, human services, family services, counseling, or a related field	7
b. Of these, the number that do not meet one of the qualifications described in D.5.a	0
1. Of the family services staff in D.5.b, the number enrolled in a degree or credential program that would meet a qualification described in D.5.a.	0
2. Of the family services staff in D.5.b, the number hired before November 7, 2016	0

of formal agreements

Formal Agreements for Collaboration

6. Total number of formal agreements with child care partners	0
7. Total number of LEAs in the service area	4
a. Of these, the total number of formal agreements with those LEAs to coordinate services for children with disabilities	4
b. Of these, the total number of formal agreements with those LEAs to coordinate transition services	4

APPENDIX B



LILAMAP

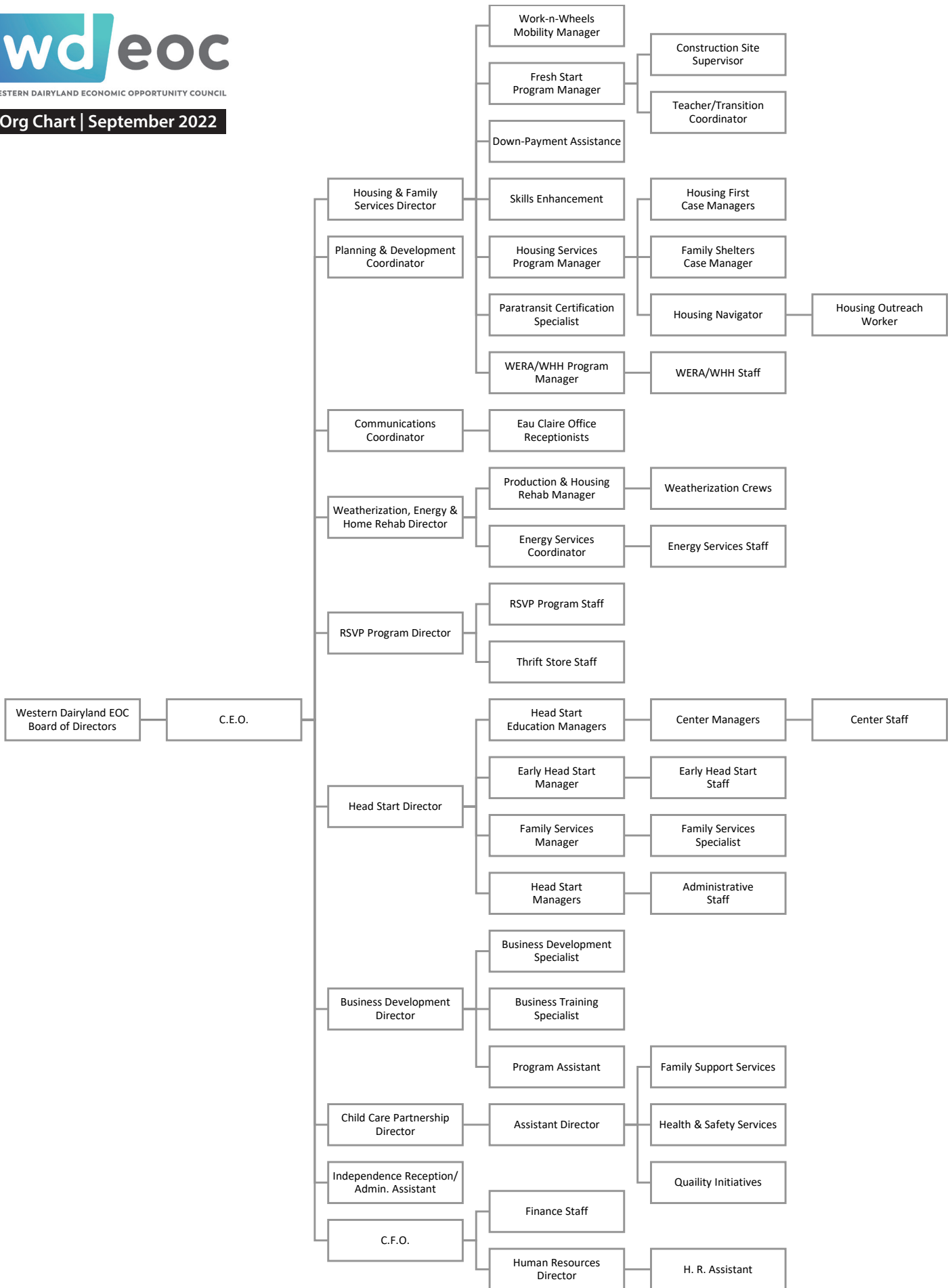
Date: 9/19/2022 Source: USDA Economic Research Service, ESRI. For more information:
<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/documentation>

APPENDIX C



WESTERN DAIRYLAND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL

Org Chart | September 2022



APPENDIX D



2022 Community Needs Assessment Survey

Every three years, Western Dairyland EOC conducts a Community Needs Assessment. The results are used to determine the extent of the needs that exist in our community, and then to design new programs and evaluate existing programs. You, as community members, are an important voice that Western Dairyland wants to hear.

If you have any questions or would like additional information about this Community Needs Assessment, please contact Western Dairyland EOC:

Main Office
23122 Whitehall Rd.
Independence, WI, 54747

Eau Claire Office
418 Wisconsin St.
Eau Claire, WI 54703

Phone: 715-985-2391

Phone: 715-836-7511

What county do you live in? *

- Buffalo
- Eau Claire
- Jackson
- Trempealeau
-

What is your zip code? *

Do you receive any public assistance? Check all that apply. *

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food Share | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> W-2 / TANF | <input type="checkbox"/> SSI |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Badger Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not receive public assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> <input style="width: 80px;" type="text" value="Other"/> |

Do you receive income from any of the following sources? Check all that apply. *

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security | <input type="checkbox"/> Pension/Annuities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> SSDI |
| <input type="checkbox"/> VA Benefits | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not receive income from any of these sources | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

Employment Status (check all that apply) *

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time | <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Migrant seasonal farm worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retired | <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self Employed | <input type="checkbox"/> Working more than one job |

What type of job(s) do you have? *

Manufacturing, Retail, Etc.

How would you describe your current housing situation? *

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Homeowner | <input type="radio"/> Renter |
| <input type="radio"/> Staying with family or friends | <input type="radio"/> Living in a motel |
| <input type="radio"/> Temporary shelter | <input type="radio"/> Outside / on the street |
| <input type="radio"/> Mobile home | <input type="radio"/> Car / camper |
| <input type="radio"/> Other | |

What is your estimated annual income?

ex: 23

How many people currently live in your household? *

numbers only

How many children (under age 18) currently live in your household? *

Are you a parent who has needed assistance purchasing diapers or baby formula?

- Yes
- No

Are any children in the household foster children? *

- Yes
- No

How many foster children are in the household?

Are you providing assistance to recent immigrants?

- Yes
- No

Are you a caregiver to an adult family member in your home?

- Yes
- No

How many children with disabilities are in your household?

numbers only

Please list types of disabilities

What is the accessibility of disability services for members of your household?

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent
- Does not apply

Was there a time in the past 12 months when children in your home needed medical care but did not get the care they needed?

- Yes
- No

What are some of the reasons that kept them from getting the medical care they needed? (check all that apply)

- Not sure how to find a doctor
- Unable to afford to pay for care
- Cannot take time off work
- Unable to find a doctor who takes my insurance
- Cannot take child out of class
- Do not have insurance to cover medical care
- Doctor's office does not have convenient hours
- Transportation challenges
- Unable to schedule an appointment when needed
- Unable to find a doctor who knows or understands my culture identity, or beliefs
- Other

Was there a time in the past 12 months when children in your home needed mental and/or behavioral health care but did not get the care they needed?

- Yes
- No

What are some reasons that kept them from getting the mental and/or behavioral health care they needed? (choose all that apply)

- Am not sure how to find a doctor/counselor
- Unable to afford to pay for care
- Unable to find a doctor/counselor who takes my insurance
- Cannot take time off work
- Do not have insurance to cover mental health care
- Cannot take child out of class
- Doctor/counselor's office does not have convenient hours
- Afraid of what people might think
- Unable to schedule an appointment when needed
- Transportation challenges
- Unable to find a doctor/counselor who knows or understands my culture, identity, or beliefs
- Other

How do you pay for most of your health care?

- I pay cash / I don't have insurance
- Medicare or Medicare HMO
- Medicaid or Medicaid HMO
- Veteran's Administration
- County health plan
- TRICARE
- Indian Health Services
- Commercial health insurance (from Employer)
- Marketplace insurance plan
- Other

What are the biggest health concerns in your family? *

Are there adequate food pantries in your area?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Are you unable to continue employment due to COVID or child care needs?

- Yes
- No

What transportation do you use most often to go places? *

- I drive a car
- I take the bus
- I ride a bicycle
- I ride a motorcycle or scooter
- Other
- Someone drives me
- I walk
- I take a taxi/cab
- I taken an Uber/Lyft

Do you have a reliable vehicle?

- Yes
- No

if you do not own or lease a vehicle, do you have access to reliable transportation (carpool, bus, etc)?

- Yes
- No
- Does not apply

Do you need a vehicle for work purposes? *

- Yes
- No

How would you describe the accessibility of public transportation in your area? *

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent
- Does not apply

How would you describe the convenience of public transportation in your area? *

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent
- Does not apply

What is your ability to pay for your own vehicle (gas, insurance, maintenance)? *

- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Excellent
- Does not apply

Are you driving less or have you cancelled trips due to being unable to afford fuel?

- Yes
- No

Do you have any other transportation needs?

Do you currently have children in child care? This includes centers, in-home care, family members, etc. *

- Yes
- No

If "No," Why do you NOT have children in child care? *

- I do not have children in need of child care
- I am a stay-at-home parent
- I have a spouse who works an opposite shift
- I cannot afford child care
- Child care is unavailable/no openings in my area

If "yes," please answer the following questions about childcare, if "no" please skip to the Business section

Is your child care provider licensed and/or regulated?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Are you concerned about the cost of child care?

- Yes
- No

If you are using a child care provider, what is your weekly cost?

- less than \$100
- \$200 - \$300
- \$300 - \$400
- \$400 - \$500
- \$100 - \$200
- more than \$500

Do you currently own or have you ever owned a business? *

- Yes
- No
- No, but I have considered it

If "Yes," Has COVID-19 negatively affected your business?

- Yes
- No

How has COVID-19 negatively affected your business?

If you have considered starting a business, what has prevented you from doing so? Select all that apply.

- Funding
- Poor credit/no credit
- Unsure how to start the process
- Need additional education, skills or experience
- Medical debt
- Student loan debt
- Other

Are you interested in additional education?

- Yes
- No

Please select your top concerns out of these issues affecting your community (maximum of five choices). *

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol and drug use | <input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting & financial literacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying | <input type="checkbox"/> Child & family development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare (affordable) | <input type="checkbox"/> Crime |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic abuse, child abuse, elder abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> Disability services and assistance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity | <input type="checkbox"/> Economic development and sustainability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Elderly services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment | <input type="checkbox"/> Food & nutrition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Hoarding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless services | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Income/wages | <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job availability | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social isolation and loneliness | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth services | <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text" value="Other"/> |

Please read the list below. Which do you believe are the three most important factors to improve the quality of life in a community? Please choose only three. *

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good place to raise children | <input type="checkbox"/> Low crime/safe neighborhoods |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good schools | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to health care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parks and recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean environment/air and water quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-cost housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Arts and cultural events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-cost health insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Tolerance / embracing diversity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good jobs and healthy economy | <input type="checkbox"/> Strong family life |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to low-cost, health foods | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy behaviors and lifestyles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sidewalks / walking safety | <input type="checkbox"/> Public transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious or spiritual values | <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster preparedness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency medical services | <input type="checkbox"/> Access to good health information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strong community / community knows and supports each other | |

Please read the list of risky behaviors below. Which three do you believe are the most harmful to the overall health of your community? Please choose only three. *

- Alcohol abuse / drinking too much (beer, wine, spirits, mixed drinks)
- Dropping out of school
- Illegal drug use / abuse or misuse of prescription medications
- Lack of exercise
- Poor eating habits
- Not getting shots or immunizations to prevent disease
- Not using seat belts / not using child safety seats
- Vaping, cigarette, e-cigarette or other tobacco use
- Unsafe sex, including not using birth control
- Distracted driving (texting, eating, talking on the phone)
- Not locking up guns / not following firearm safety rules
- Not seeing a doctor while pregnant

Is anyone in your household unable to meet basic needs (food, water, shelter, clothing, transportation, healthcare)? *

- Yes
- No

What are some of the reasons you or any of your household members are unable to meet basic needs (food, water, shelter, clothing, transportation, healthcare)?

- Not sure how to find services
- Cannot take time off to access services
- Cannot find reliable child care
- Over income for assistance
- Transportation issues
- Lack of translation or literacy skills

Do you identify as LGBTQ+?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

What is your current gender identity?

- Man
- Woman
- Trans Man / Trans Masculine Spectrum
- Trans Woman / Trans Feminine Spectrum
- Non-Binary
- Prefer not to answer
-

APPENDIX E

Focus Group Questions

The purpose of our conversation is to obtain feedback from a small group of individuals to have an in-depth discussion of the contributing factors to the top five needs identified in our community.

Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council, Inc., is conducting a Community Needs Assessment as part of the requirements to receive Community Service Block Grant funds from Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. As part of the assessment, we would like to have an open conversation with community members.

- 1. What do you know about our Community Action Agency and the services we provide that help address needs of low-income persons? What is the biggest limitation or weakness of WDEOC – or our major programs if you are more familiar with them?**

- 2. What do you think are the top five key needs of low-income persons in your community?**
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

- 3. What suggestions can you provide on how the needs could be addressed?**

- 4. What organizations and services do you perceive to be utilized the most in the community?**

- 5. How can WDEOC be a better partner to you or better serve the community?**

- 6. Do you have any other feedback?**