



SOUTHWEST HUMAN RESOURCE AGENCY

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Completion Date: July, 2019
Board Approval Date: August 15, 2019

History

The Southwest Human Resource Agency was previously Chickasaw Area Development Commission which was formed in 1972 through the Economic Opportunities Act of 1964. The agency was reorganized in 1974 as Southwest Human Resource Agency through the Human Resource Act of 1973.

Southwest HRA primarily serves the counties of Chester, Decatur, Hardeman, Hardin, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and McNairy in the Southwest Tennessee Region. The Weatherization Assistance Program also serves the counties of Benton, Carroll, Gibson, Henry, and Weakley. The Senior Services Department has nutrition services in Lauderdale, Fayette and Tipton Counties. The Central Office of Southwest Human Resource Agency is located in Chester County, a centrally located county. A Community Service Center office is located in each of the primary eight counties in order to have a local presence to assist families in need. There are 11 Head Start Centers operating in 7 counties. The Workforce Investment Program also has offices in each of the eight counties served by Southwest HRA, with 5 of the 8 WIOA offices being co-located with the Community Service Centers.

The mission of Southwest Human Resource Agency is to meet the needs of families and individuals in our service area by delivering social services and resources. Through effective collaboration with federal, state and community partners, we are dedicated to enhancing quality of life, promoting self-sufficiency, and alleviating the effects of poverty.

Overview of Primary Service Area

Chester County, which is the location of our central office, borders Hardeman, Henderson, Madison and McNairy Counties and is centrally located in our service area. It is the home of Freed Hardeman University and Chickasaw State Park. The county has a total area of 286 square miles.

According to U.S. Census statistical estimates, the population is 17,276. The median household income is \$43,740 compared to the State of Tennessee's median household income of \$48,708. . 16.9% of people are living in poverty compared to the Tennessee poverty rate of 15%.

Decatur County anchors the middle of the extreme eastern edge of West Tennessee. It is bounded on the north by Benton County and the west by Henderson County. The Tennessee River divides it from Perry County on the east and from Hardin County on the south. Phosphate and limestone are two of the county's mineral assets. The limestone is well suited for building materials and also supplies high-grade gravel for road construction. The county has a total area of 334 square miles.

According to U.S. Census statistical estimates, the population is 11,706. The median household income is \$36,427 compared to the State of Tennessee's median household income of \$48,708. 19.4% of people are living in poverty as compared to the Tennessee poverty rate of 15%.

Hardeman County is rich in history as well as natural resources. Along with the scenic Hatchie River, which runs across the county, there are more than 20 watershed lakes stocked with game fish. Over 100 buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places. Forestry plays an integral role in Hardeman County's economic makeup. Hardeman County is the largest hardwood producer in Tennessee. The county is also the home of two state prisons.

The county has a total area of 670 square miles. It is the fifth largest county in Tennessee by area. Located on the southern edge of Tennessee, it borders Fayette County to the West, and Mississippi to the south.

According to U.S. Census statistical estimates, the population is 25,220. The median household income is \$36,686 compared to the State of Tennessee's median household income of \$48,708. 23% of people are living in poverty as compared to the Tennessee poverty rate of 15%.

Hardin County is located in western southern Tennessee (although part of the county is east of the Tennessee River, the county is considered part of the "Grand Division" of West Tennessee). The county is abundant in history and recreation. Pickwick Lake and Pickwick Landing State Park is a haven for boaters, fishermen, and campers. The Walking Tour of Savannah's Historic Homes and the Trail of Tears Walking Trail begin at the Tennessee River Museum, continue to the Cherry Mansion, headquarters of General Grant during the Battle of Shiloh, and wind around the shady, tree lined streets of old down town to the Wayne Jerrold's Riverside Park. The county has a total land area of 577 square miles.

According to U.S. Census statistical estimates, the population is 25,776. The median household income is \$39,092 compared to the State of Tennessee's median household income of \$48,708. 18.7% of people are living in poverty as compared to the Tennessee poverty rate of 15%.

Haywood County, home of the Peach Festival, has a vibrant business community along with agriculture and farming that are important ingredients in the community's overall economic mix. The mix of businesses and industries in Brownsville and Haywood County is ample evidence that there is great appeal in the resources and amenities of this serene community. Brownsville located in the rich, rolling farmlands of West Tennessee, is a quiet city which has maintained the charms of the past without ignoring the demands of the future. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 534 square miles. The largest industry in Haywood County is agriculture.

According to U.S. Census statistical estimates, the population is 17,335. The median household income is \$36,118 compared to the State of Tennessee's median household income of \$48,708. 20.6% of people are living in poverty as compared to the Tennessee poverty rate of 15%.

Henderson County, located almost equal distance between Nashville and Memphis, is strategically situated to serve the populous and rapidly developing areas of Tennessee and the Southeast Region of the United States.

A number of manufacturing plants in Lexington have found the city's location to be ideal for them to distribute products to a national market. Lexington's manufacturing, processing

industries and distribution centers distribute goods all over the Southeast, as well as the principal markets in the United States. and the connection to Interstate 40 makes the county accessible and visible.

Natchez Trace State Park, the state's largest and most visited, with over 46,000 square acres, is six miles northeast of Lexington. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 520 square miles.

According to U.S. Census statistical estimates, the population is 27,847. The median household income is \$42,711 compared to the State of Tennessee's median household income of \$48,708. 15.2% of people are living in poverty as compared to the Tennessee poverty rate of 15%.

McNairy County is located in beautiful Southwest Tennessee, 30 miles from Jackson, Tennessee, 90 miles from Memphis; and situated on the Mississippi/Tennessee state line. McNairy County has eight (8) public schools. Five (5) public colleges and universities are located within a 30 mile radius of McNairy County. Vocational and technical courses are offered at Crump, Tennessee on the Eastern edge of McNairy County. Recreation parks and facilities are located throughout the county. Low occupation cost and location to the Nation's markets are real advantages to McNairy County industry. The county has a total area of 563 square miles.

According to U.S. Census statistical estimates, the population is 25,832. The median household income is \$34,353 compared to the State of Tennessee's median household income of \$48,708. 17.1% of people are living in poverty as compared to the Tennessee poverty rate of 15%.

Madison County is the only metropolitan county in our service area. It is centrally located in West Tennessee and offers a wide variety of economic, cultural, and educational benefits. It is the home of the University of Memphis Lambuth Campus (formerly Lambuth University), Union University, Lane College, and Jackson State Community College. Once largely agricultural, the county's economy now rests on a diversified industrial and commercial base. Transportation continues to be important to county development, and Madison County is served by Interstate 40, three railroads, and McKellar-Sipes Regional Airport. Madison County's central location and excellent highway system offers business and industry access to a strong labor force from a thirteen county area. The county has a total area of 557 square miles.

According to U.S. Census statistical estimates, the population is 97,605. The median household income is \$44,496 compared to the State of Tennessee's median household income of \$48,708. 17.5% of people are living in poverty as compared to the Tennessee poverty rate of 15%.

Purpose of Community Needs Assessment

The purpose of the Community Needs Assessment (CNA) is to provide the agency with necessary information to identify and prioritize community needs within the service area. SWHRA will review identified needs and determine if the needs are being addressed through partner agencies or if SWHRA should develop services/strategies to address the identified needs.

SWHRA will analyze information obtained through the CNA to prepare a strategic plan which will include identified strategies/goals based on results to improve the lives of individuals, families and/or the community as a whole.

Needs Assessment Data

The Community Needs Assessment (CNA) is a compilation of customer surveys, board surveys, partner surveys, staff interviews, census information and other pertinent data used to determine the needs of the communities served. Surveys were mailed out to agency customers and provided to partner agencies to provide to their customers. CNA surveys were also available in Community Service Center offices throughout the year. Surveys were mailed to board members and community partners including Community Based Organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, public sector and educational institutions. Results of surveys and interviews were calculated to identify the top 5 needs for both the family level and community level as listed below. Online sources used were the Community Action Partnership website which allowed us to use the Community Needs Assessment Online Tool, U.S. Census Bureau Quickfacts, Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), CARES Engagement Network and Kids Count Data Center. Data was analyzed by Community Services Block Grant Staff and Community Needs Assessment/ Strategic Planning Committee Members.

The following information was obtained during the Community Needs Assessment:

Demographics:

The following are demographics for the primary eight county service area:

Total Population: 250,040

Males Age:	0-4	5-17	18-64	over 64
#	7,558	20,849	74,169	17,581

Females Age:	0-4	5-17	18-64	over 64
#	6,967	20,176	76,809	24,429

Race:	White	Black	Amer. Indian	Asian	Native Haw.	Mixed Race
#	179,732	62,765	219	1,716	41	3,915

Hispanic or Latino Origin: 7,936 or 3.2% of the population

Income Levels: The median household incomes ranged from a low of \$34,556 in Haywood County, to a high of \$46,424 in Madison County. The median household income for the state of Tennessee was \$51,319, and \$61,372 for the United States.

Unemployment: The 8 county area has a current unemployment rate of 4.02% as compared to 3.25% in Tennessee, and 3.7 in the United States.

The current unemployment rate for our service area is 0.92% less than one year ago and 5.24% less than four years ago.

Poverty: The service area has a poverty rate of 18.10%, compared to 15% in Tennessee, and 12.3% in US.

The poverty rate is 11.7% for the senior population (65+).

The poverty rate is 2.6% less than 3 years ago.

Education:

	No Diploma	HS Only	Some College	Associates	Bachelors	Graduate or Professional
(Service Area)	16%	40%	20%	6%	12%	6%
(TN)	13%	32%	21%	7%	17%	10%

16.35% of persons over age 16 in the service area lack literacy skills

Healthcare: There are 93 active Medicare and Medicaid institutional service providers in the report area, with Madison County having the most.

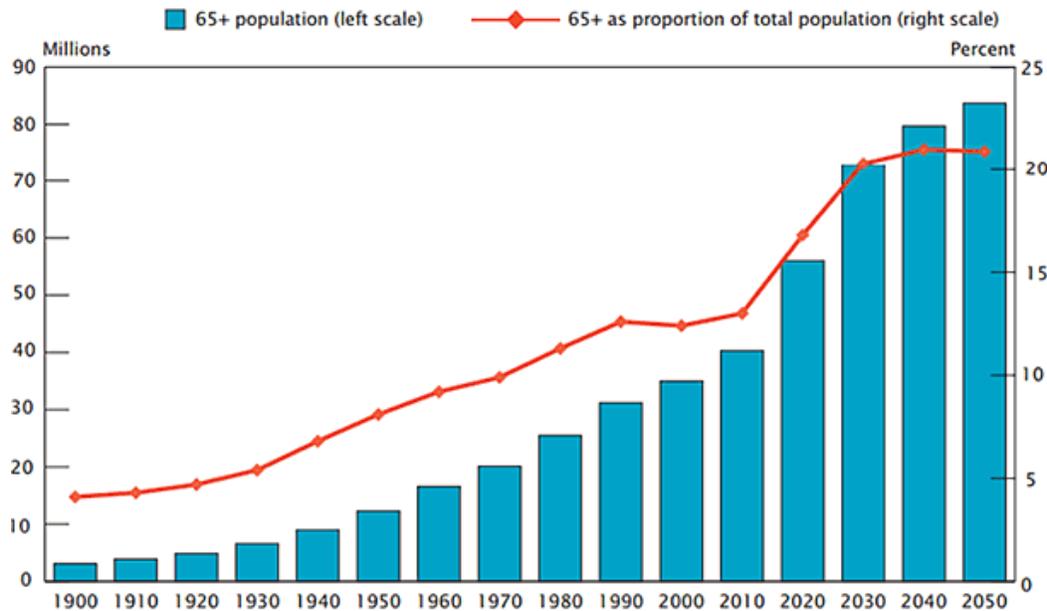
The total persons receiving Medicare in the service area is 57,754, compared to 2,648,672 in Tennessee, and 55,584,149 in the USA.

8.36% of the people in our service area are uninsured, as compared to 9.42% in Tennessee, and 9.21% in the United States.

Nutrition: Percent of students participating in free and reduced lunch program in report area is 67.69%, with 55.95% in Tennessee, and 52.12% in the USA.

20.7% of households receive SNAP in the service area, while 15.68% receive SNAP in Tennessee, and 13.17% in the USA

Population Aged 65 and Over: 1900 to 2050



Source: National Center on Elder Abuse Statistics and Data - ncea.acl.gov

Top 5 Family and Community Level Needs Identified:

Family Level:

- Food Assistance
- Assistance with Energy Costs
- Emergency Assistance
- Assistance for the Elderly
- Dental/Vision Assistance

Community Level:

- Access to Affordable Healthcare
- Child Abuse Prevention
- Food Pantries
- Affordable Housing
- Elder Abuse Prevention

Gaps in Services Identified

The following gaps in available services were identified from the needs assessment:

- Food Assistance
- Energy Assistance
- Home Repair

Rental Assistance
Dental/Vision Assistance
Affordable Housing
Homeless Assistance

KEY FINDINGS

The poverty rate is 18.1% in the SWHRA service area. Many families simply do not have adequate resources to purchase food and also pay for rent, utilities and other basics. Too many working-age adults are unemployed or working part-time jobs, but want full-time employment. Many others are working for wages that are not enough to afford the basics for themselves and their families.

20.7% of households in our service area receive SNAP Assistance. While SNAP is critical in providing nutrition assistance to both working and non-working households, many families are still in need of food. Households with children are particularly vulnerable to hunger. The inability of people to consistently afford enough food for their household ultimately harms children, working age adults, people with disabilities and seniors. It harms health, learning and productivity; and it drives up health care and other costs for families, employers and government.

16.7% of the population are age 65 or over. 11.7% of the Senior Population are living in poverty. These older adults struggle with rising housing and health care bills, inadequate nutrition, lack of access to transportation, diminished savings, and job loss. For older adults who are above the poverty level, one major adverse life event can change today's realities into tomorrow's troubles. Senior households in poverty do not have enough money to cover essential expenses.

Fifteen counties in the State were identified as the most economically distressed counties. Two of the identified counties, McNairy and Hardeman, are in the SWHRA service area.

In an effort to address identified needs, SWHRA will operate the following services/programs:

CSBG Funded Programs:

Outcomes Across Multiple Domains

Program: Information & Referral (I&R) - Linkages

SWHRA will operate an information and referral program to provide information regarding available services, and make referrals to community programs. Community Service Center staff will track and report on all information and referral services provided on a monthly basis.

Applications for several agency programs are accepted at these 8 community service centers. A portion of the rent, utilities, supplies and other operating cost is charged to the grant as a mechanism for providing a way to enable customers to apply for services. We also charge a portion of the salaries and benefits to CSBG based on their time spent in the program. Other programs are charged for their share based on the time employees spend in that program.

Program: Case Management

The Case Management Program is designed to assist low-income households in identifying and overcoming barriers preventing economic self-sufficiency.

Eligible families will be enrolled in this program for up to 6 months. During this period, a case manager will work closely with the family to help set goals and overcome their barriers to achieving self-sufficiency. They may be provided financial assistance throughout this period of up to \$1,000 if needed, as long as they are actively working toward their goals and remain in compliance with program rules. A new requirement has been implemented that requires the applicant to work toward employment and/or education goals in order to participate in the program.

Health & Social/Behavioral Development

Program: Assistance to Commodities

Through the TEFAP Program, low-income families are provided with non-perishable food items. SWHRA distributes these items three times per year in each county served to eligible households. CSBG funds are used to supplement U.S.D.A. funding to store and distribute surplus USDA agricultural commodities to low-income persons. The CSBG funding allows us enough funds to successfully operate the program and reach all of the families who need this service.

Other Agency Programs/Services

Employment:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides dislocated workers with the opportunity and resources to obtain and/or maintain employment. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act employs a 'work first' philosophy with employers and training partners to create new jobs and train or retrain workers to fill them. The WIOA program prepares youth, adults, and dislocated workers for entry into the labor force. Workforce makes job training and employment opportunities available to economically disadvantaged individuals as well as others, providing initial screening for training eligibility. WIOA assists the Tennessee Department of Labor with RESEA (Re-Employment Services Eligibility Assessment), and with SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). WIOA is also continuing to expand the Inside-Out Dad Program and Responsible Mother Re-Entry Program in the county jails.

Education:

Through the WIOA Program, we will assist youth and adults in obtaining high school diplomas or General Equivalency Diplomas. Assistance will also be provided with furthering education and training through WIA Education/Employment Programs.

Housing:

Energy Assistance: Energy Assistance will be provided through the LIHEAP Program to low-income households to assist with the high cost of utilities.

Emergency Services: LIHEAP Crisis Assistance will be provided to eligible families in danger of utility disconnection.

Weatherization Assistance will be provided under the Department of Energy grant. The Emergency Repair Program through a grant with THDA will provide urgent repairs to homes of the disabled/elderly homeowners. Referrals will be made to Section 8 Housing for families who need monthly assistance with rental costs.

Southwest TN Community Development Corporation (SWTCDC) is a community housing organization created to meet the housing needs of low to moderate income citizens throughout the primary eight counties served by SWHRA. The CDC owns and rents 37 housing units, which are energy efficient and meet the building standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Target groups are low to moderate income and special needs populations. SWTCDC will administer the 2019 HOME grant to provide rehabilitation on targeted housing units in Henderson County. The continuing 2017 HOME Grant will allow SWTCDC to build three homes in the city of Jackson which will be sold to eligible low to moderate income families.

Southwest Human Resource Agency is a Certified Homebuyer Education Counseling Agency. Through this program we will provide education and materials to qualified homebuyers as they navigate their way through the home buying process.

Community Revitalization: SWTCDC, through an ongoing partnership with Jackson Housing Authority and the Jackson Community Redevelopment Agency, has built and sold two houses to eligible low to moderate income persons and currently has five lots available for new construction and when construction is complete will be sold to eligible families. (Domain: Housing)

Health & Social/Behavioral Development:

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) was established to ensure that children continue to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session. Free meals, that meet Federal Nutrition guidelines, are provided to all children at approved SFSP sites. The SFSP operates during school vacations, primarily in the summer months from May to August. This is a federally funded U.S.

Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service and State sponsored through the Tennessee Department of Human Services.

The At-Risk Afterschool Program provides snacks and an evening meal to children participating in afterschool activities while school is in session.

The Senior Services Department provides hot nutritious meals through the Choices Program (funded by TNCare) and Good Neighbor Meals Program, which is self-pay. Shelf stable food is available through the Tennessee Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and is distributed to low-income families to ensure proper nutrition.

Head Start provides meals to enrolled children which aids in meeting their nutritional needs.

SWHRA operates the Homemaker Program and Social Services Block Grant Program which are designed to meet the needs of aging and disabled individuals having difficulties with the activities of daily living. Services may include light house cleaning, running errands, respite services, essential shopping and case management.

The Senior Services Department will provide services for long term care for the elderly/disabled through the Homemaker Program, Respite Program and Personal Care.

SWHRA sponsored a Remote Area Medical (RAM) Clinic in June, 2019 in McNairy County which provided \$229,000 of medical, vision and dental services to 447 people utilizing over 500 volunteers. Another RAM clinic is scheduled in Henderson County in 2020.

Misdemeanor probation: SWHRA is partnering with McNairy County Government, General Sessions Court and Circuit court to handle probationary services for misdemeanor offenders. Services will include but are not limited to drug and alcohol assessments, DUI school and anger management classes.

Outcomes Across Multiple Domains:

The Head Start Program provides programming that will enhance children's growth and development in preparation for later academic and social pursuits. Comprehensive services are provided in the areas of education, medical, dental and nutritional health as well as social services.

Linkages: Information and referral services will be provided through an internal network of programs. This service will include utilization of all available service catalogs of outside organizations and resources available to meet the needs of low-income families/individuals that are not available through our Agency. Partnering with other service providers offers the low-income families/individuals the best chance to attain economic self-sufficiency. Each Department collaborates with outside agencies to link available services in order to improve service delivery. Several of our staff members serve on task forces, or committees in the

communities to make decisions that impact service delivery. SWHRA works with over 400 partners in order to meet the needs of our service area.

Telephone Assistance Program: Reduced rate or free phone services are offered to low-income families in our area through partnerships with telephone companies by the Community Outreach Department.

Transportation: Rural public transportation is available to the general public. Southwest HRA contracts with several outside agencies to transport customers to appointments and facilities. Transportation services are available to everyone.

Veterans: Services are provided to eligible veterans through the Homemaker Program to assist with house cleaning, shopping and running errands. Representative Payee Services are also available to veterans. The RSVP Program also includes services specific to Veterans.

Volunteer Opportunities: SWHRA promotes volunteerism and utilizes volunteers in many programs with the agency. The Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) will provide opportunities for people age 55 and over to make a difference in their community through volunteer service. The program also includes services specific to Veterans. The Foster Grandparent Program will provide tutoring and mentoring to children with special needs by utilizing volunteers age 60+ with limited incomes who receive a stipend for their service. Volunteer opportunities will also be available during the upcoming Remote Area Medical Clinic.

Representative Payee Services: Southwest HRA is a qualified organization through the Social Security Administration to provide Representative Payee assistance for those individuals who are unable to manage their finances. A new partnership was formed in 2019 with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to also provide Rep Payee services to veterans. Agency staff also works to connect the clients to other services and resources in order to assist the individual in having a better quality of life.