

Community Action Plan





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1. Executive Summary

About ACTION

ACTION INC. is a non-profit human services organization and the designated Community Action Agency serving the Greater Cape Ann area, including the City of Gloucester and the towns of Essex, Ipswich, Manchester-by-the-Sea, and Rockport, Massachusetts. ACTION INC. was established in 1965 as a result of the Economic Opportunity Act, which began the War on Poverty and resulted in the formation of Community Action Agencies across the U.S. ACTION was among the first and aimed to address the underlying causes of poverty and provide programs that would help people move up the ladder of economic opportunity.

ACTION INC.'s primary programs include Client and Housing Services, COMPASS Youth Program, Energy Services, HomeCare, and Job Training and Education. Through these programs, we provide a broad range of services including: public benefits enrollment, case management, housing assistance, eviction prevention, homelessness prevention, day and night school programs for at-risk teens, HiSET preparation, academic and career counseling, weatherization, heating system repair and replacement, energy conservation, assistance with fuel and utility bills, in-home personal care services for elders and disabled adults, resume assistance, interview skills, job searches, healthcare training programs, Adult Basic Education, emergency shelter, affordable housing units, and substance abuse and mental health services.

As a Community Action Agency, ACTION INC. has a tripartite Board of Directors made up of one-third private sector representatives, one-third public sector representatives, and one-third community sector representatives.

In addition to Greater Cape Ann, ACTION's Energy Services division also oversees energy conservation projects throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. *For the purposes of the 2015-2017 Community Action Plan we will focus on our primary service area.*

About the 2015-2017 Community Action Plan

ACTION INC.'s 2015-2017 Community Action Plan is a roadmap for our organization and the communities we serve, providing a picture of our service area, information on current needs, and goals to help ACTION and our partners meet those needs over the course of the next three years. The Plan includes the results of our 2014 Community Needs and Internal Assessments, which you'll learn about in the pages that follow. These assessments and the resulting Community Action Plan were a collaborative effort led by ACTION's Strategic Planning Committee, which included representatives from each of our programs as well as our Board of Directors. We also gathered input from a broad range of stakeholders, including past and current ACTION clients and students, staff members of other local service providers, city/town officials, school district representatives, and ACTION staff and Board members.

The Community Needs and Internal Assessments conducted by ACTION every three years help us to assess our internal operations, customer and employee satisfaction, programs and services, and funding strategies, and enable us to identify new ways to meet community needs and future opportunities for collaboration. The specific methods used to assess community and internal needs can be found in Section 4, *Community Needs Assessment*, and Section 5, *Internal* *Needs Assessment.* The information and ideas gathered through this process, as well as secondary data that has been collected on our service area, will inform how we deliver our programs and services and determine who we want to be for the next three years.

While serving as a guide to keep our programs and goals on track, this Community Action Plan will also be a living document which will be reevaluated over the course of each year, as specific annual goals are developed and outcomes analyzed, and as changes occur such as new or lost funding, unexpected community emergencies or events, or the discovery of newly emerging needs. ACTION executive and program staff will work together to review the Plan and revise it as necessary while developing Annual Workplans each summer, and when reporting on outcomes each April and October.

2015-2017 Community Action Plan Components

- *Mission and Vision Statements:* ACTION's overarching philosophy and goals for the next three years.
- Community Profile: Data on each of the communities we serve.
- Community Needs and Internal Assessments: Overviews of the methods used and results of the 2014 Community Needs and Internal Assessments, highlighting the most pressing needs in ACTION's service area and ideas for how to meet needs and improve internal operations.
- Service Delivery System and Goals: Descriptions of ACTION's programs and services and specific goals based on National Indicators that will help us meet the needs identified through the 2014 assessments.
- Linkages: A description of how ACTION will work with a large network of partners to ensure needs are met within our service area, even if ACTION cannot meet them directly.
- *Funding Strategy:* ACTION's plan for supporting our programs and services over the next three years.

2. Mission and Vision Statements

Our Mission

The mission of ACTION INC. is to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged residents of Cape Ann and beyond by minimizing the effects of poverty, promoting economic security, and advocating for social change.

Our Vision

2015-2017 Vision Statement

ACTION INC. aims to be an instrument of change, helping all individuals and families within our service area achieve the greatest possible level of self-sufficiency.

Connection: We will connect people with the tools – programs, services, resources, and education -- to create opportunities and address poverty at the local level and make our community an even better place to live *for everyone*.

Communication: We will inform our stakeholders and community at large about local needs and available services, while playing a key role in conversations around poverty.

Partnership: We will seek out input from other stakeholders in our community, engaging in a collaborative approach to meeting community needs efficiently, effectively, and innovatively.

Coordination: We will work to coordinate services both internally among ACTION's own programs and externally among other service providers, to ensure individual needs are met.

Respect: We will treat everyone who crosses our path with dignity and respect, and aim to offer hope and positive support.

3. Community Profiles

Overview

The primary service area of ACTION INC. includes the City of Gloucester and the towns of Essex, Ipswich, Manchester-by-the-Sea, and Rockport, all within Essex County, Massachusetts. ACTION INC.'s Energy Services division also oversees energy conservation projects throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. For the purposes of the 2015-2017 Community Action Plan, we will focus on ACTION's primary service area, which is referred to as the Greater Cape Ann area located within Essex County. For more detailed profiles of communities throughout Essex County and Massachusetts, visit the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development online at http://www.mass.gov/hed/economic/eohed/dhcd/community-profiles-dhcd/.

Population Change and Poverty Rates

City/Town	Total 2000 Population	Total 2010 Population	Total 2012 Population	% of people below poverty in last 12 months
Gloucester	30,273	28,789	28,937	8.3%
Essex	3,267	3,504	3,520	3.6%
lpswich	12,987	13,175	13,271	7.1%
Manchester	5,228	5,136	5,158	5.1%
Rockport	7,767	6,952	7,018	4.8%
Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey Five Year Estimates				

Employment Data

City/Town	Labor Force	# Employed	# Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	
Gloucester	15,478	14,648	830	5.4 %	
Essex	1,950	1,866	84	4.3 %	
lpswich	7,403	7,135	268	3.6 %	
Manchester	2,720	2,596	124	4.6 %	
Rockport	3,719	3,572	147	4.0 %	
Massachusetts unemployment rate: 5.2%					
Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, May 2014 Labor					

Data, http://lmi2.detma.org/lmi/town_comparison.asp

ACTION Clients by Community

Residence	Served 2011	% of Total	Served 2012	% of Total	Served 2013	% of Total
Gloucester	5585	73.9%	5140	73.4%	5131	71.3%
Essex	139	1.8%	127	1.8%	141	2.0%
Ipswich	597	7.9%	594	8.5%	647	9.0%
Manchester	115	1.5%	111	1.6%	108	1.5%
Rockport	640	8.5%	703	10.0%	665	9.2%
Other	477	6.3%	332	4.7%	498	6.9%

ACTION 2014 Community Needs Survey Responses by Community*

Residence	# of Respondents	% of Total
Gloucester	427	69.3%
Essex	26	4.2%
lpswich	56	9.1%
Manchester	14	2.3%
Rockport	93	15.1%
Other	38	6.2%

*See Section4, Community Needs Assessment for more information.

Individual Community Profiles

Primary source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey unless noted with asterisk (*).

Gloucester

Gloucester is America's original seaport and the oldest working art colony in North America. The city is an important center of the fishing industry and a popular summer destination. Gloucester is located in northeastern Massachusetts, 31 miles northeast of Boston, in the North Shore region, on Cape Ann in Essex County, and is bordered by Manchester and Essex on the west, the Atlantic Ocean on the north and south, and Rockport on the east. The total area of Gloucester is 41.50 square miles with a total land area of 25.97 square miles.

Population and Gender	Age	Income
Individuals: 28,937	Under 18: 5,370 (18.6%)	Median household: \$62,059
Households: 12,149	18 and over: 23,567 (81.4%)	Median per capita: \$36,919
Average household size: 2.36	20 – 24: 1,044 (3.6%)	Persons below poverty: 8.3%
Male: 13,451	25 – 34: 2,697 (9.3%)	Statewide comparison:
Female: 15,486	35 – 44: 3,564 (12.3%)	MA median per capita: \$35,485
	45 – 54: 4,915 (17.0%)	MA median household: \$66,658
	55 – 64: 5,178 (17.9%)	
	65 and over: 5,522 (19.1%)	
Housing*	Race/Ethnicity	Education*
Housing units: 13,813	White: 28,126	High school drop-out rate: 2.2%
Housing units in multi-unit	African American: 516	High school graduation rate:
structures: 43,1%	Asian: 310	82.5%
Owner-occupied: 7,496	American Indian or Alaska	High school graduate or higher
Renter-occupied: 4,603	Native: 219	(% of persons age 25+): 89.0%
Vacancy rates: 1,714 vacant	Native Hawaiian or Pacific	Bachelor's degree or higher (%
Homeownership rate: 65.3%	Islander: 0	of persons age 25+): 34.0%
Median value of owner-	Two or more races: 473	Veterans: 2,156
occupied housing: \$374,900	Hispanic or Latino: 826	* Dept. of Education 2012-2013
* 2010-2012 Census estimates	Not Hispanic or Latino: 28,111	

Established in 1819, Essex is a small, rural town with a maritime history and is filled with the natural beauty of woodlands, open spaces, and the Essex River flowing through a marsh system. Clamming continues to be one of the town's primary industries. Essex is known for its antique shops and restaurants. Essex is located in northeastern Massachusetts, about 25 miles north of Boston. The town is bordered by Manchester on the south, Hamilton on the west, Ipswich on the north, and Gloucester and the Atlantic Ocean on the east. The total area of Essex is 15.94 square miles with a total land area of 14.16 square miles.

Population and Gender	Age	Income
Individuals: 3,520	Under 18: 758 (21.5%)	Median household: \$82,009
Households: 1,402	18 and over: 2,762 (78.5%)	Persons below poverty: 2.8%
Average household size: 2.7	20 – 24: 132 (3.8%)	Median per capita: \$42,590*
Male: 1,741	25 – 34: 374 (10.6%)	Statewide comparison:
Female: 1,779	35 – 44: 423 (12.0%)	MA median per capita: \$35,485

	45 - 54: 808 (23.0%) 55 - 64: 520 (14.8%) 65 and over: 468 (13.3%)	MA median household: \$66,658 * City-Data.com 2011
Housing*	Race/Ethnicity	Education*
Housing units: 1,620 Owner-occupied: 910 Renter-occupied: 511 Vacancy rates: 199 vacant Median value of owner- occupied housing: \$495,800	White: 3,381 African American: 11 Asian: 0 American Indian or Alaska Native: 0 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0 Two or more races: 68 Hispanic or Latino: 45 Not Hispanic or Latino: 3,475	High school drop-out rate: 1.2% High school graduation rate: 94% High school graduate or higher (% of persons age 25+): 92.8% Bachelor's degree or higher (% of persons age 25+): 43.4% Veterans: 230 * Dept. of Education 2012-2013

Ipswich

Ipswich is a coastal town with a developed town center surrounded by rural landscapes and residential neighborhoods. The town is one of the top shellfish producers in the U.S. due to its prime location near the ocean and Ipswich River. Ipswich is famous for its clams and has a vibrant tourist industry due to the town's traditional New England charm and natural abundance of preserved and protected salt marshes, estuaries, and open space. Located in northeastern Massachusetts, Ipswich is 28 miles north of Boston and is bordered by Topsfield, Hamilton, and Essex on the south, Boxford on the west, Rowley on the north, and the Atlantic Ocean on the east. Ipswich's total area is 42.15 square miles with a land area of 32.61 square miles.

Population and Gender	Age	Income
Individuals: 13,271 Households: 5,930 Average household size: 2.38 Male: 6,473 Female: 6,798	Under 18: 2,784 (21.0%) 18 and over: 10,487 (79.0%) 20 - 24: 385 (2.9%) 25 - 34: 1,178 (8.9%) 35 - 44: 1,682 (12.7%) 45 - 54: 2,432 (18.3%) 55 - 64: 2,391 (18.0%) 65 and over: 2,165 (16.3%)	Median household: \$82,847 Median per capita: \$43,953 Persons below poverty: 4.4% MA median per capita: \$35,485 MA median household: \$66,658
Housing*	Race/Ethnicity	Education*
Housing units: 5,930 Housing units in multi-unit structures: 27.3% Owner-occupied: 4,243 Renter-occupied: 1,269 Vacancy rates: 418 vacant Median value of owner- occupied housing: \$426,500	White: 12,910 African American: 55 Asian: 97 American Indian or Alaska Native: 23 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0 Two or more races: 127 Hispanic or Latino: 181 Not Hispanic or Latino: 13,090	High school drop-out rate: 0.7% High school graduation rate: 89.7% High school graduate or higher (% of persons age 25+): 95.7% Bachelor's degree or higher (% of persons age 25+): 47.7% Veterans: 976 * <i>Dept. of Education 2012-2013</i>

Manchester

A fishing and seafaring town for the early settlers, it later became a summer resort for the wealthy and well-known. Manchester is acclaimed for its beautiful beaches, with seven beaches lining the coast, including Singing Beach, a popular summer destination. Manchester also features a renowned yachting harbor and commercial lobstering. Manchester is located in northeastern Massachusetts, 25 miles north of Boston. The town is bordered by Beverly and Wenham on the west, Hamilton and Essex on the north, Gloucester on the east, and the Atlantic Ocean on the south. Manchester's total area is 18.25 square miles with a total land area of 7.84 square miles.

Population and Gender	Age	Income
Individuals: 5,158 Households: 2,147*	Under 18: 1,281 (24.8%) 18 and over: 3,877 (75.2%)	Median household: \$117,063 Median per capita: \$69,269
Average household size: 2.79	20 – 24: 199 (3.9%)	Persons below poverty: 5.1%
Male: 2,676	25 – 34: 329 (6.4%)	MA median per capita: \$35,485
Female: 2,482	35 – 44: 480 (9.3%)	MA median household: \$66,658
* 2010 Census	45 – 54: 1,133 (22.0%)	
	55 – 64: 705 (13.7%)	
	65 and over: 974 (18.9%)	
Housing*	Race/Ethnicity*	Education*
Housing units: 2,276	White: 5,109	High school drop-out rate: 0.6%
Owner-occupied: 1,438	African American: 0	High school graduation rate:
Renter-occupied: 559	Asian: 0	97.3%
Vacancy rates: 3.3% vacant Homeownership rate: 72%	American Indian or Alaska Native: 0	High school graduate or higher (% of persons age 25+): 98.3%
Median value of owner-	Native Hawaiian or Pacific	Bachelor's degree or higher (%
occupied housing: \$813,800	Islander: 0	of persons age 25+): 31.5%
* 2010-2012 Census estimates	Two or more races: 14	Veterans: 290
	Hispanic or Latino: 134	* Dept. of Education 2012-2013
	Not Hispanic or Latino: 5,024	
	* 2010 Census	

Rockport					
Rockport is a quaint coastal town with a small fishing village and many small shops, inns, and restaurants. The town has an active art scene with a number of studios and galleries. Rockport has a vibrant tourist industry. The year-round population of over 7,000 nearly triples during the summer season. Tourists and locals alike enjoy Rockport's beaches, boating, and parks. Rockport is located in northeastern Massachusetts, 37 miles north of Boston. The town is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean on the north, east, and part of the south, and by Gloucester on the southwest and west. Rockport's total area is 17.59 square miles with a total land area of 7.07 square miles.					
Population and Gender					
Individuals: 7,018	Under 18: 1,136 (16.2%)	Median household: \$68,488			
Households: 2,339* (18 and over: 5,882 (83.8%)	Median per capita: \$44,055			
Average household size: 2.54	20 - 24: 132 (1.9%)	Persons below poverty: 4.4%			
Male: 3,280	25 - 34: 495 (7.1%)	MA median per capita: \$35,485			
Female: 3,738	35 - 44: 632 (9.0%)	MA median household: \$66,658			
* 2010 Census					
	55 - 64: 1,424 (20.3%)				
	65 and over: 1,753 (25.0%)				

Housing*	Race/Ethnicity*	Education*
Housing units: 4,121	White: 6,833	High school drop-out rate: 5.8%
Owner-occupied: 2,177	African American: 97	High school graduation rate:
Renter-occupied: 911	Asian: 9	84.5%
Vacancy rates: 1,033 vacant Homeownership rate: 70.5%	American Indian or Alaska Native: 10	High school graduate or higher (% of persons age 25+): 96.2%
Median value of owner- occupied housing: \$454,200	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0	Bachelor's degree or higher (% of persons age 25+): 48.1%
* 2010-2012 Census estimates	Two or more races: 17	Veterans: 696
	Hispanic or Latino: 52	* Dept. of Education 2012-2013
	Not Hispanic or Latino: 6,966	
	* 2010 Census	

Community Profile Summary

Since the last Community Needs Assessment was conducted in 2011, **Gloucester** experienced a population increase in individuals and decrease in families, a significant decrease in available and vacant housing units, a decrease in median per capita and household income, a decrease in median value of owner-occupied housing, and a decrease in both the unemployment rate and the number of individuals in the workforce. Over the next three years, ACTION will work to address a clear need for additional affordable housing units, especially single room occupancy (SRO) units, as well as for job training and education programs that enable unemployed, underemployed, and individuals who have left the workforce to reengage and secure better opportunities.

Both **Essex** and **Ipswich** experienced increases in households since 2011, with Ipswich and **Manchester** also showing a decrease in available and vacant housing units. Ipswich continues to have the second highest poverty rate in ACTON's service area; in response to a growing population and need for services, over the next three years ACTION will expand outreach and access in this area.

Rockport saw an increase in the high school dropout rate since 2011, a decrease in housing units, and an increase in the number of individuals aged 65 and over. Over the next three years ACTION's COMPASS Youth Program will partner more closely with Rockport High School to engage at-risk in-school and out-of-school youth in alternative programs, and our HomeCare division will expand care services to an assisted living facility in Rockport.

For more information, see Section 6, Service Delivery System and Goals.

4. Community Needs Assessment

Community Needs Assessment Methods

During 2014 ACTION INC. collected information on community needs through surveys, focus groups, and stakeholder interviews. To develop questions that would most effectively get at community needs and ways to address them, ACTION's Strategic Planning Committee worked closely with planning staff at other Community Action Agencies throughout Massachusetts. This collaborative approach will enable ACTION INC. to compare results with our sister agencies and to potentially reveal issues that impact a broader region, while identifying opportunities to combine resources in order to address such issues more efficiently and cost-effectively.

Community Needs Survey

A survey postcard was distributed to 4,143 households directly and dropped off at 95 public locations. We also developed an electronic version of the survey which was blasted to a list of 543 email addresses and was shared through Facebook, ACTION's website, and local media outlets. Upon closing for preliminary analysis, the survey had generated 695 responses.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were led by members of ACTION's Strategic Planning Committee and served as venues to hold candid discussions around community needs while working together to brainstorm new ideas for how to better meet those needs. We organized the following six focus groups: Cape Ann service providers, ACTION clients from a mix of programs, ACTION direct care staff, homeless men women staying at the ACTION Emergency Shelter, 18-24 year olds who graduated from the COMPASS Youth Program, and ACTION staff and Board of Directors members (through an all-day staff and Board strategic planning retreat).

Interviews

ACTION's Strategic Planning Committee identified a number of other key community stakeholders from whom it would be beneficial to get direct feedback on needs and service ideas. We interviewed the following individuals:

- Carolyn Kirk, Gloucester City Mayor
- Eric Smith, Gloucester Fire Chief
- Leonard Campanello, Gloucester Police Chief
- Erik Anderson, Gloucester High School Principal
- Elaine Wozny, Essex Board of Health Administrator
- Bob Kurtz, Ipswich Community Activist
- Sheila McAdams, Winthrop School Principal (Ipswich)
- Claudia Kearns, Rockport Housing Authority Director
- Linda Sanders, Rockport Town Administrator

Community Needs Assessment Results

Demographics

Survey Question: What year were you born? (600 of 695 answering)

- 1910s: 1.2%
- 1920s: 8.8%
- 1930s: 12.0%
- 1940s: 18.2%
- 1950s: 20.8%
- 1960s: 17.6%
- 1970s: 11.8%
- 1980s: 8.2%
- 1990s: 2.3%

Survey Question: Where do you currently live? (616 of 695 answering)

- Gloucester: 69.3%
- Rockport: 15.1%
- Ipswich: 9.1%
- Other: 6.2%
- Essex: 4.2%
- Manchester: 2.3%

Customer Satisfaction

1990s Year Born 1980s 1970s 1960s 1950s 1940s 1930s 1920s 1910s 0.0% 5.0% 10.0% 15.0% 20.0% 25.0% Gloucester Rockport Ipswich Other Essex Manchester

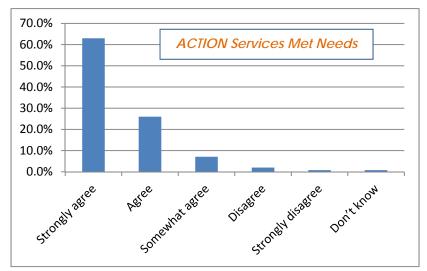
Survey Question: I and/or someone in my household accessed ACTION, INC.'s services/programs in the last year (648 of 695 answering):

Residence

- Yes: 54.6%
- No: 42.6%
- Not sure: 2.7%

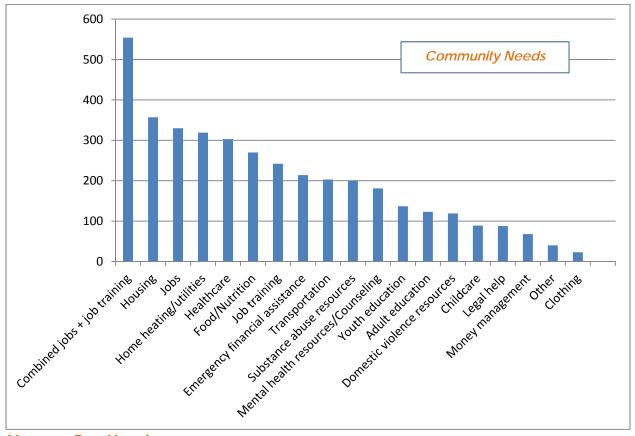
Survey Question: If yes to above, the services received met my/our needs (352 answering):

- Strongly agree: 63.0%
- Agree: 26.0%
- Somewhat agree: 7.1%
- Disagree: 2.0%
- Strongly disagree: 0.8%
- Don't know: 0.8%
- *Highlight:* 96% felt that ACTION's services met their needs.



Community Needs

Survey Question: Check what you feel are the top five needs in your community (688 of 695 answering):



More on Top Needs

Focus Groups

Focus groups included: Cape Ann service providers, ACTION clients from a mix of programs, ACTION direct care staff, homeless men women staying at the ACTION Emergency Shelter, 18-24 year olds who graduated from the COMPASS Youth Program, and ACTION staff and Board of Directors members.

- All groups identified *housing* and *jobs/job training* as top needs.
- All groups included *transportation* as a top 3 need, as related to accessing jobs and training/education opportunities.
- Both the Mixed Client and the 18-24 groups also listed *drug abuse resources/services* as a top 3 need.

Interviews

- Six of nine individuals interviewed identified *housing* and *jobs/job training* as top needs.
- Three identified *transportation* as a top need.
- Two identified drug abuse resources/prevention services and healthcare/mental health resources as top needs.
- Two identified *domestic violence resources/services* as a top need.

Spotlight on Ipswich

The town of Ipswich has the second highest poverty rate, after Gloucester, in ACTION's service area. We have also seen an increase in the number of Ipswich residents seeking help through our services over the last several years. In 2009 ACTION opened a satellite office in Ipswich to better serve residents in need. As part of the 2014 Community Needs Assessment we interviewed key Ipswich community members and, in addition to the findings highlighted previously in this section, we learned of the following pressing needs specifically affecting this town:

- Services for immigrants and non-English speaking residents
- Pre-school/Head Start for young children from economically disadvantaged families

Summary

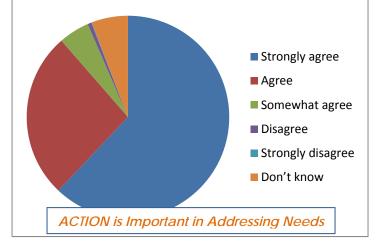
TOP Needs across Service Area, All Methods

- 1. Housing
- 2. Jobs & Job Training
- 3. Heating/Utilities
- 4. Healthcare
- 5. Food/Nutrition
- 6. Transportation
- 7. Drug abuse resources/services
- 8. Mental health resources/services

Community Perception of ACTION

Survey Question: ACTION INC. plays an important role in addressing needs in its service area (668 of 695 answering):

- Strongly agree: 62%
- Agree: 26.50%
- Somewhat agree: 4.90%
- Disagree: 0.60%
- Strongly disagree: 0.10%
- Don't know: 5.80%
- *Highlight:* 93% felt that ACTION's role in addressing community needs is important.



Ideas for Addressing Community Needs

Through surveys, focus groups, interviews, and an all-day ACTION staff and Board of Directors strategic planning retreat, we gathered some exciting and innovative ideas for new and improved programs, services, and resources to assist those in need. Though ACTION INC. and our partners may not have the capacity to explore many of these ideas, they are included here to demonstrate the power of collective brainstorming and the innovative spirit of our community.

Over the next three years, we aim to look further into a number of these potential solutions to local needs, and we encourage other individuals and groups to come together and see what can be accomplished through collaboration, compassion, and vision. Ideas are divided into five categories: technical skills training/education, basic life and job skills, information, services, and programs/facilities.

Technical Skills Training/Education				
 Computer skills classes Funding for technical training/certifications Day labor/trade opportunities for homeless ServeSafe Certification Culinary training 	 EMT course Trade school Apprenticeships with skilled trades workers CPR course Childcare and babysitter related courses 			
 Basic Life and Job Skills Preparing for work-life Resume building class Life skills/Soft skills for high school students and recent graduates 	 Health/Nutrition/Exercise education Parenting skills education Program for those raising grandchildren Money management 			
 Services Additional bus service (routes and times) Legal services (housing, custody, rental, shelter, domestic violence) Mental health and substance abuse resources for a broader client base Financial planning 	 Clothing allowance for work clothes Affordable storage Assistance for people losing pets due to housing loss/changes Free school bus service Basic home repair/safety for elders 			
 Programs/Facilities Affordable childcare and after school care Tenant-based Rental/Mortgage Assistance program model in Gloucester 24-hour housing for homeless 	 Affordable housing development, including for disabled and homeless Head Start program in Ipswich ESOL program in Ipswich 			
Information				
 Education/Outreach around housing issues More outreach to other communities Teen pregnancy/health education 	Landlord/Tenant educationCitizenship preparationSexual abuse/incest resources			

Community Needs Assessment Summary

The 2014 Community Needs Assessment revealed that the most pressing needs within our community remain unchanged, and are the same issues that were at the forefront of residents' concerns in 2011 when the last assessment was conducted. These include issues around employment, housing, income management, and health. ACTION INC.'s existing programs and services work to address these needs as well as others that were highlighted through the 2014 assessment. Our programs and goals toward addressing needs are described in Section 6, Service Delivery System and Goals. However, the assessment also generated a number of new ideas for programs and services that might help address these needs. Over the course of the next three years, ACTION's staff, Board of Directors, and partners will work to explore some of these ideas, while also working to secure continued support of existing critical programs.

The 2014 assessment did bring to light some issues that appear to be of increasing concern since the 2011 assessment. These include access to services and resources for low-income individuals and families residing in ACTION's service towns outside Gloucester, particularly in Ipswich. More specifically, access issues were noted for non-English-speaking and/or immigrant individuals and families as well as for youth. Over the next three years, ACTION will am to work even more closely with community groups, town and school officials, and partnering organizations in Ipswich to explore new ways to provide services to residents in need. As funding allows, we will also aim to expand office hours at our Ipswich satellite office.

Mental health and substance abuse issues also appear to be of increasing concern in Greater Cape Ann. ACTION employs a counselor at our Emergency Shelter who works with homeless men and women to address mental health and substance abuse issues. ACTION's Advocates in our Client and Housing Services division also provide case management to clients and refer them to mental health and substance abuse related services, resources, and facilities as appropriate. ACTION participates on the High Risk Task Force in Gloucester, a collaborative effort working to address the most at-risk cases in our community. However, ACTION is not a healthcare provider and must rely on our partnerships with healthcare related groups and institutions for further improvements in access to care.

5. Internal Needs Assessment

Internal Needs Assessment Methods

Like the 2014 Community Needs Assessment, ACTION INC.'s assessment of internal needs and areas for organizational improvement was conducted via anonymous surveys, focus groups of staff members as well as partners, stakeholder interviews, and an all-day staff and Board of Directors strategic planning retreat. We also reviewed the results of an extensive organizational assessment ACTION underwent in 2012, which was conducted by the Northeast Institute for Quality Community Action.

Results relevant to community needs and to ideas for addressing those needs have been incorporated into the previous section, Section 4, Community Needs Assessment.

Partners Results Summary

ACTION's large network of partners is crucial to meeting needs within our service area collaboratively, holistically, and effectively. Our partners provided feedback through surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

According to Our Partners

		1			
	Top Five Factors for a		ACTION's Top Five		ACTION's Areas for
	Successful Partnership		Strengths		Improvement
1.	Communication	1.	Staff	1.	Outreach about our
2.	Coordination of services	2.	Programs or areas of focus		programs to spread
3.	Trust	3.	Experience/Knowledge		greater awareness
4.	Mutual goals	4.	Dedication/Compassion	2.	Securing additional
5	Follow-through	5	Accessibility		funding for services
0.				3.	Referring more clients out

Northeast Institute for Quality Community Action Results

During 2012 ACTION underwent a comprehensive review process by the Northeast Institute for Quality Community Action, assessing the effectiveness of the organization's operations and services. After months of scrutiny, NIQCA gave ACTION one of the highest scores in the Institute's eight-year history.

ACTION exceeded best practice standards in five of six content areas that were assessed and met best practice standards in the sixth. The six areas assessed included strategic planning and community collaboration, operational management, governance, information technology, human resources, and financial management. These findings were the result of a 12-step, fivemonth self- and peer assessment process using NIQCA's Quality Community Action System.

Internal Needs Assessment Summary

The results of our Internal Needs Assessment revealed that ACTION INC. truly is a leader in providing not just much-needed local jobs, but a positive and productive environment for our staff of more than 150 employees and for our Board of 21 volunteer members. *Nearly 100% of staff said that they felt proud to work at ACTION INC.* Our partners were just as positive and clearly recognize ACTION as playing an important role in the community-wide, collaborative effort of addressing needs among disadvantaged residents.

Looking ahead to the next three years, we will aim to continue to improve operations and make ACTION an even better place to work, and an even better partner. Specifically, we will explore ways to improve communication – including internally within and across ACTION programs and between ACTION administration and staff, externally with our partners especially in terms of developing an effective referral system, and externally to the general public in regards to spreading the word about ACTION's mission, the programs we offer, and the larger issue of local, regional, and national poverty. We will also continue to seek out ways to maintain our high level of staff satisfaction and to further improve our employees' ability to assist people in need.

6. Service Delivery System and Goals

Overview

Over the next three years, ACTION will further our mission and address identified needs through our five primary programs: Client and Housing Services, COMPASS Youth Program, Energy Services, HomeCare, and Job Training and Education. We will also continue to work with a large network of partners to address needs collaboratively where possible and to refer those in need to others when we are unable to assist them directly (see Section 7, *Linkages*).

Needs Addressed by ACTION Programs*

	Client & Housing Services	COMPASS Youth Program	Energy Services	Home Care	Job Training and Education	ACTION Partner
Housing	Х		Х			Х
Jobs/Job Training		Х	Х		Х	Х
Heating/Utilities			Х			Х
Healthcare	Х		Х	Х		Х
Food/Nutrition	Х			Х		Х
Transportation				Х		Х
Drug abuse resources/services	Х					Х
Mental health resources/services	Х	Х				Х

* Top needs as identified through the 2014 Community Needs Assessment.

National Goals and Indicators

To monitor the effectiveness of our programs and the services we offer, we use National Goals and Indicators developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Services. The six overarching goals used by ACTION and other Community Action Agencies throughout the country are:

- Goal 1: Low-income people become more self-sufficient.
- Goal 2: The conditions in which low-income people live are improved.
- Goal 3: Low-income people own a stake in their community.
- Goal 4: Partnerships among supporters and providers to low-income people are achieved.
- Goal 5: Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results.
- *Goal 6:* Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

Each of these six goals has related National Performance Indicators used to track progress toward that goal. National Indicators have been identified for each service offered through ACTION's five primary programs.

6.1 Client and Housing Services

About

ACTION's Client and Housing Services program offers programs and services that address the underlying causes of poverty and homelessness, helping people to identify needs, address barriers, and find stability. Our advocates, case managers, and counselors work with people to identify their individual needs and barriers to self-sufficiency, and connect them with resources and services, whether that's a meal at our shelter, a permanent place to call home, or a number to call for help. Client and Housing Services also manages ACTION-owned affordable housing units in Gloucester.

Top needs identified through 2014 Community Needs Assessment addressed by program: Housing, healthcare, food/nutrition, drug abuse resources/services, and mental health resources/services.

New goals for 2015-2017: Based on needs determined through the 2014 Community Needs Assessment, over the next three years the Client and Housing Services program will aim to increase services and accessibility outside of Gloucester, particularly in Ipswich, and to assess the needs among non-English speaking residents. We also aim to investigate the feasibility of a program connecting homeless and/or very low income individuals with day labor opportunities through local employers, and will begin offering rep-payee services for the first time in 2015. We intend to seek out support to expand our successful Rockport Tenant Based Rental/Mortgage Assistance program into Gloucester.

Specific Programs and Services and Associated Goals

Advocacy (Non-Housing Related)

Services Offered:

Public benefits enrollment including health insurance and food assistance, case management, assistance with diapers and other baby essentials, immigration-related services and services for non-English speakers, referrals to other service providers and agencies.

Delivery Method:

Individuals seeking assistance complete a comprehensive intake with ACTION's Intake Specialist to determine needs, and are then scheduled as appropriate to meet with an ACTION Advocate.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 83 working individuals will obtain health care services for themselves or a family member (1.2G); 35 working individuals will obtain food assistance (1.2I); 5 non-working individuals will obtain health care services for themselves or a family member (6.4D); 23 non-working individuals will obtain food assistance (6.4F); 950 referrals will be provided (6.5E).

Additional Goals:

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 4 individuals will receive assistance with passport renewals; 4 will receive immigration assistance; 30 will receive diapers and other baby essentials; 90 will receive one-month follow up; 70 will receive three-month follow up; 45 will receive six-month follow up; 100 call-in and walk-in clients will be referred to ACTION programs by the Intake Specialist; 165 referrals will be made by the Intake Specialist; during 2015 we will finalize approval as a non-profit rep-payee provider.

Affordable Housing

Services Offered:

Affordable housing units and supportive services for tenants.

Delivery Method:

ACTION directly owns 11 affordable, below-market-rate, one-bedroom units at 95 Prospect Street in Gloucester, four efficiency units at 370 Main Street filled by previously homeless individuals, and four two-bedroom townhouse apartments for very low-income families (Home Together initiative). In addition to the units directly owned by ACTION, the agency also manages an additional five scattered site housing vouchers specifically for families through Home Together, as well as 21 vouchers for hard-to-place homeless individuals through the Welcome Home program.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

- 2015: 10 individuals unable to work will obtain affordable housing (6.4E).
- Each year 2016 2017: 4 individuals unable to work will obtain affordable housing (6.4E).

Additional Goals:

- 2015: 19 individuals will maintain housing in ACTION-owned units and 26 in ACTION-supported units; 3 will newly obtain housing in ACTION-owned units and 12 in ACTION-supported units; 28 individuals living in ACTION owned or supported units will receive case management.
- Each year 2016 2017: 19 individuals will maintain housing in ACTION-owned units and 26 in ACTION-supported units; 3 will newly obtain housing in ACTION-owned units and 3 in ACTION-supported units; 28 individuals living in ACTION owned or supported units will receive case management.

Housing Assistance

Services Offered:

Rental/Mortgage assistance, landlord/tenant conflict mediation, case management, referrals to appropriate partner agencies, and emergency financial assistance for housing-related needs.

Delivery Method:

Individuals seeking assistance complete a comprehensive intake with ACTION's Intake Specialist to determine needs, and are then scheduled as appropriate to meet with an Advocate.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 10 households will receive emergency vendor or utility payments (6.2B); 75 households will receive emergency rent or mortgage assistance (6.2C); 410 referrals will be provided (6.5E).

Additional Goals:

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 325 households will maintain or work to secure safe and affordable housing situations as a result of ACTION's housing advocacy services; 45 Individuals will obtain permanent sustainable housing.

Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Program

Services Offered:

Subsidized housing and supportive services for individuals and families affected by HIV/AIDS, as well as supportive services for those on the housing waiting list.

Delivery Method:

Eligible participants work with ACTION's HOPWA Case Manager to determine needs and secure services, resources, and housing.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 26 individuals with disabilities will maintain an independent living situation (6.1B); 35 referrals will be provided (6.5E).

Additional Goals:

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): In addition to HOPWA clients who are housed through the program, 55 individuals on the waiting list will have access to supportive services.

Tenant Based Rental/Mortgage Assistance

Services Offered:

Short-term (six months to one year) rent and mortgage subsidies, budget counseling, and access to support services. Available to Rockport residents with plans to expand to Gloucester by 2016.

Delivery Method:

Individuals experiencing an unexpected inability to pay their rent or mortgage (e.g. due to job loss, death in the family, etc.) are connected with ACTION's Rental/Mortgage Assistance Coordinator to receive case management and budget counseling along with temporary financial assistance to prevent loss of housing and reestablish self-sufficiency.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

- 2015: 46 Rockport residents will receive rent or mortgage assistance (6.2C); 40 (87%) will be able to maintain a budget for 90 days.
- *Each year 2016 2017:* 46 Rockport residents and 30 Gloucester residents will receive rent or mortgage assistance (6.2C); 40 Rockport residents and 24 Gloucester residents will be able to maintain a budget for 90 days.

Additional Goals:

- 2015: Of the 46 Rockport residents participating in the TBR/MA program, 44 will maintain their housing as a result of the program; ACTION will seek support to begin a new TBR/MA program for Gloucester residents.
- Each year 2016 2017: Of the 76 total participants (Rockport and Gloucester residents) participating in the TBR/MA program, 64 will maintain their housing as a result of the program.

Emergency Homeless Shelter

Services Offered:

Emergency shelter for adult men and women, meals, access to supportive services, case management, mental health and substance abuse counseling, housing counseling and assistance, employment-related counseling and services, financial counseling, healthcare services, referrals, after-care case management.

Delivery Method: ACTION INC. operates the 34-bed ACTION Emergency Homeless Shelter at 370 Main Street in Gloucester. In addition to meals and a place to sleep, the Shelter offers a wide range of supportive services to assist guests with identifying and addressing barriers to housing and employment. The Shelter employs a Counselor who meets with guests individually and in a group setting, focusing on mental health and substance abuse issues. Guests are assisted with developing Moving On Plans with goals toward becoming more self-sufficient and securing stable housing situations. ACTION's Client Services Coordinator runs a Jobs Club at the Shelter and offers financial counseling. The Shelter also hosts healthcare professionals to provide guests with access to basic healthcare and referrals to medical facilities as needed.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 20 homeless individuals will obtain jobs (1.1A); 25 will obtain skills necessary for obtaining a job (1.2A); 55 hours will be spent by staff in training (5.1G); 275 individuals will receive emergency food (6.2A); 240 individuals will receive emergency shelter (6.2E).

Additional Goals:

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 150 individuals staying at the Shelter will receive case management services; 60 will obtain safe and affordable housing as a result of case management; 3 will enter post-secondary education programs; 18 will attend Jobs Club; 24 will receive employment counseling; 18 will receive financial counseling; 125 will receive healthcare services (direct services, referrals, etc.) through the Healthcare for the Homeless initiative; 5 former Shelter guests will receive after-care case management following placement into housing; during 2015-2016 ACTION will also investigate the feasibility of new employment programs specifically for homeless individuals, such as a program linking workers to day labor opportunities; during 2014-2015 ACTION aims to obtain approval from the Gloucester Zoning Board to permanently establish 34 beds at the Shelter.

6.2 COMPASS Youth Program

About

ACTION's COMPASS Youth Program offers alternative education programs and support services for teens and young adults experiencing barriers to learning in the public school system. COMPASS staff and teachers care about every student who walks through our door. We take the time to learn about their struggles and inspire them to do their best, whether that's graduating and going on to college, passing the High School Equivalency Test and finding fulltime employment, or discovering the doors education can open.

Top needs identified through 2014 Community Needs Assessment addressed by program: Jobs and job training, and mental health resources/services.

New goals for 2015-2017: Over the course of the next three years we will investigate the feasibility and required steps to prepare the COMPASS Youth Program to become a Massachusetts Department of Secondary Education designated alternative school, which would open COMPASS up to additional funding and programmatic opportunities. Based on feedback received from students during the 2014 Community Needs Assessment, we will also aim to build additional elective courses into the program.

Specific Programs and Services and Associated Goals

Day Program

Services Offered: Daytime high school for juniors and seniors, part-time day school for secondyear freshmen, academic and career coaching, community service opportunities, case management, and referrals including to mental health and substance abuse resources.

Delivery Method: Guidance counselors at Cape Ann's public high schools work with COMPASS to identify juniors and seniors who are struggling and at risk of dropping out. As space and eligibility allow, these students enroll at COMPASS and benefit from the individualized attention and support services that complement our academic offerings. We provide academic and vocational coaching and connect students with counselors and other resources for issues such as mental health and substance abuse. We also work with community partners such as Maritime Gloucester, Cape Ann Art Haven, and Santander Bank, which host the program's science, art, and financial literacy classes respectively. Select younger struggling students who are repeating their freshmen year are able to attend COMPASS part-time through the RAYS (Re-engaging All Youth to School) initiative, after which they either enroll fully at COMPASS or transition back to the public school. RAYS students also participate in community service learning curriculum through a partnership with the Cape Ann YMCA.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 18 Day/RAYS students will obtain job skills (1.2A); 7 seniors will receive a diploma (1.2B); 18 Day/RAYS students will improve social/emotional development (6.3B2); 18 Day/RAYS students will avoid risk-taking behavior (6.3B3).

Additional Goals:

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 16 juniors and seniors will enroll in the COMPASS Day Program; 6 second-year freshmen will enroll in COMPASS through RAYS; 5 juniors will earn credits to move on to senior year; 4 RAYS students will increase attendance by 20% or more; 5 RAYS students will earn enough credits to advance a grade level.

Evening Credit Recovery Program

Services Offered: Credit recovery for students who have left public high school with at least 90 credits, academic and career coaching, case management, and referrals including to mental health and substance abuse resources.

Delivery Method: Guidance counselors at Cape Ann's public high schools work with COMPASS to identify struggling students who have left school but who have at least 90 credits. Students attend evening classes and work with COMPASS teachers as well as online credit recovery software to finish earning enough credits to graduate. Students also have access to academic and vocational coaching to work on life skills and develop a plan for post-secondary education and/or employment.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 8 students will obtain job skills (1.2A); 6 students will earn a diploma (1.2B); 6 students will improve social/emotional development (6.3B2); 6 students will avoid risk-taking behavior (6.3B3).

Additional Goals:

Each year for the next three years (2015 - 2017): 8 students will enroll in the evening program.

HiSET Preparation Program

Services Offered: Classes, online software, and coaching to prepare for the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET).

Delivery Method: Cape Ann individuals up to age 21 who have dropped out of high school without earning a diploma work with COMPASS teachers to prepare to take and pass the HiSET. Students also have access to academic and vocational coaching to work on life skills and develop a plan for post-secondary education and/or employment.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 8 students will obtain job skills (1.2A); 6 students will pass the HiSET (1.2B); 8 students will improve social/emotional development (6.3B2); 8 students will avoid risk-taking behavior (6.3B3).

Additional Goals:

Each year for the next three years (2015 - 2017): 10 students will enroll in the HiSET Program.

6.3 Energy Services

About

ACTION's award-winning Energy Services program offers programs that reduce energy use and costs through financial help, home improvements, education, and advocacy. Fuel Assistance staff help households with their home heating and utility bills, and Energy Conservation staff bring those bills down through energy-saving improvements on homes throughout the state. Energy Services provides living wage jobs to a large number of local contractors and vendors, and its programs also contribute to the health and safety of clients by improving air quality, reducing risk of fire, and reducing illnesses related to cold weather. ACTION's Vice President for Energy Services also participates in a number of regional, statewide, and national groups advocating for energy affordability (see Section 7, *Linkages*, for a full list of partners).

Top needs identified through 2014 Community Needs Assessment addressed by program: Jobs, housing, heating/utilities, and healthcare.

New goals for 2015-2017: Over the course of the next three years we will work to enhance the National Grid-funded multifamily energy conservation program by signing a new 2016-2018 contract, pursuing measures on oil-heated units not currently funded for energy conservation work, and providing conservation measures to commercial-industrial buildings with low-income users such as food pantries and daycare centers. We will also advocate for an increase in the income limit for energy conservation programs from 60% to 80% of median income in order to serve the working poor, and will advocate to create a line item in the State budget for Fuel Assistance. Finally, we will work to increase outreach about our energy programs to reach more people in need, particularly residents of Ipswich.

Specific Programs and Services and Associated Goals

Fuel Assistance

Services Offered:

Financial assistance with home heating and utility bills, assistance with shut-off notices, payment plans, etc., and information and referrals to other providers and ACTION programs for additional needs.

Delivery Method:

The Fuel Assistance program typically runs from October to April of each year. Households are required to complete an application and provide income verification in order to qualify and determine income-based assistance levels. Fuel Assistance staff work with local vendors to deliver fuel to client households.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

- 2015: 2143 households will receive emergency heating assistance (6.2B); 1593 seniors and disabled adults will receive assistance (6.4G).
- 2016: 2207 households will receive emergency heating assistance (6.2B); 1640 seniors and disabled adults will receive assistance (6.4G).
- 2017: 2273 households will receive emergency heating assistance (6.2B); 1690 seniors and disabled adults will receive assistance (6.4G).

Additional Goals:

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): Business will be provided to 34 local fuel vendors; 3 new locations/events will be selected to conduct outreach about energy programs.

Energy Conservation

Services Offered:

Home energy assessments to identify potential cost- and energy-saving measures, weatherization including insulation and weather-stripping, heating system repairs and replacements, window replacement (as funding allows), replacement of light bulbs and some appliances, and education on additional ways to reduce energy use.

Delivery Method:

Households who qualify for Fuel Assistance may be placed on a waiting list to receive energy conservation improvements. To assess potential for savings, our Building Performance Specialists conduct energy audits on each home, replace light bulbs with more efficient bulbs, educate clients on energy efficiency, and work with local contractors for weatherization and other construction-related measures. ACTION Energy Services directly serves one- to five-unit households in communities throughout eastern Massachusetts, and as a contractor for international utility company National Grid, also oversees improvement projects on multi-unit housing developments across the state.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

- 2015: 333 units in 1-4 unit households will be directly improved by ACTION Energy Services through energy conservation measures (2.1D).
- 2016: 350 units in 1-4 unit households will be directly improved by ACTION Energy Services through energy conservation measures (2.1D).
- 2017: 350 units in 1-4 unit households will be directly improved by ACTION Energy Services through energy conservation measures (2.1D).

Additional Goals:

- 2015: 9,000 units in multi-family buildings throughout the state will be improved through energy conservation measures overseen by ACTION through a contract with National Grid; business will be provided to 40 local contractors; feasibility of providing multifamily energy conservation services to oil-heated units will be investigated; feasibility of providing energy conservation services to commercial-industrial buildings will be investigated; advocate for increase in income limit for all energy conservation programs.
- 2016: 9,450 units in multi-family buildings throughout the state will be improved through energy conservation measures overseen by ACTION through a contract with National Grid; business will be provided to 40 local contractors; implementation of multifamily energy conservation services for oil-heated units; implementation of increased income limit for 1-4 unit buildings.
- Each year 2016 2017: 9,450 units in multi-family buildings throughout the state will be improved through energy conservation measures overseen by ACTION through a contract with National Grid; business will be provided to 40 local contractors; implementation of energy conservation services for commercial-industrial buildings.

6.4 HomeCare

About

ACTION's HomeCare program offers personal care, companion, Home Health Aide and other care services to help people continue to live in the comfort of their own homes for as long as possible. HomeCare is a team of healthcare professionals that includes in-house nurses as well as a staff of more than 90 to care for seniors and disabled adults within their homes, reducing the amount of time they need to spend in hospitals, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities. In addition to the services provided to our clients, HomeCare provides critical local, benefited, living wage jobs to previously unemployed and underemployed, low-income individuals.

Top needs identified through 2014 Community Needs Assessment addressed by program: Healthcare, food/nutrition, transportation, and mental health resources/services.

New goals for 2015-2017: Based on needs determined through the 2014 Community Needs Assessment, over the next three years ACTION HomeCare will increase mental health related training opportunities for staff and mental health care services for clients, by implementing a new Supportive Home Health Aide training unit with a focus on behavioral health management. During 2014, ACTION HomeCare leadership staff attended training related to hoarding and this information will be shared with employees. HomeCare will also work with our vendor partners to address increasing transportation needs, as medical facilities close and consolidate and require clients to travel greater distances for medical appointments. Finally, HomeCare has seen an increase in seniors and disabled adults who need a higher level of care, and will therefore aim to increase both the time employees spend with each client as well as the credentialing of our employees.

Specific Programs and Services and Associated Goals

HomeCare

Services Offered:

Personal care, nutritious meals, light housekeeping, laundry, shopping, medication reminders, transportation to medical appointments, caregiver respite, Home Health Aide services, hospice care, specialized care for clients with Alzheimer's and dementia, and specialized care for clients with behavioral health issues (to be implemented by 2017).

Delivery Method:

ACTION HomeCare serves as a subcontractor for multiple care agencies on the North Shore, including Senior Care, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, the Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly, Senior Care Options, the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, the VNA Network, and Hospice. Clients are referred to ACTION HomeCare and are matched with care workers with varying levels of experience and credentialing based on the client's care and schedule needs. HomeCare employs Registered Nurses to develop care plans and provide case management and supervision of care. HomeCare provides nearly 100 jobs locally and provides professional development training to increase staff capacity to serve clients with growing needs.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 500 seniors will be able to maintain an independent living situation (6.1A); 5 disabled adults aged 18-54 and 6 aged 55 and older will be able to maintain an independent living situation (6.1B); 100 staff members will attend professional development trainings for a total of 600 hours (5.1E and 5.1G).

Additional Goals:

- 2015: HomeCare will provide an average of 12 hours per week of care per client for a total of 6,000 hours; HomeCare Director will meet with vendors to discuss how to meet growing transportation needs; 90 percent of HomeCare employees who are already certified as Home Health Aides will have Supportive Home Health Aide certification in dementia added to their credentials; new behavioral health management training focus will be incorporated.
- 2016: HomeCare will provide an average of 16 hours per week of care per client for a total of 8,000 hours; HomeCare Director and vendors will develop new transportation reimbursement plan; 100% of HomeCare employees will have Supportive Home Health Aide certification in dementia; 50% of HomeCare employees will receive behavioral health management training.
- 2017: HomeCare will provide an average of 18 hours of care per client for a total of 9,000 hours; new transportation reimbursement plan will be implemented; 100% of HomeCare employees will receive behavioral health management training.

6.5 Job Training and Education

About

ACTION's Job Training and Education program offers classes, training, job-readiness and support to help unemployed and underemployed adults gain new skills and better jobs. Our educators, coordinators, and counselors help adults identify career interests, improve basic job and life skills, and seek new opportunities. We stay on top of the latest job market trends to design programs that result in real jobs and wage increases.

Top needs identified through 2014 Community Needs Assessment addressed by program: Jobs and job training.

New goals for 2015-2017: ACTION's new Adult Education Center completed in 2014 will allow us to expand our education and training programs to better meet needs. Based on the results of the 2014 Community Needs Assessment, over the next three years ACTION will investigate the need for and feasibility of running a number of new programs, including courses in computer skills, ServeSafe certification, CPR, and money management. We will look into offering an English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) class in Ipswich, where a need was identified. We also intend to offer a new basic job readiness class and remedial math course.

Specific Programs and Services and Associated Goals

Adult Education

Services Offered:

Basic classes for adults to learn reading, writing, math, and work skills; preparation to take the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET); and supportive services.

Delivery Method:

ACTION is a co-applicant and sub-grantee of North Shore Community College on a grant from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to offer three levels of Adult Education courses along with enhanced supportive services. The levels are: ABE (Adult Basic Education), PreASE (Pre Adult Secondary Education), and ASE (Adult Secondary Education). Students place into the appropriate course and work toward eventually taking the High School Equivalency Test (HiSET). Students also have access to life skills and job-readiness services.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 36 students will obtain skills beneficial for employment (1.2A); 8 students will pass the HiSET (1.2B).

Additional Goals:

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 45 students will enroll in Adult Education classes; 38 students will achieve learning gains of at least 21 points on the MAPT (Massachusetts Adult Proficiency Test) or, if applicable, 32 points on the TABE L (Test of Adult Basic Education - Literacy); 100% of students will maintain at least an 80% attendance rate; 80% of students will remain with the program for one academic year.

Healthcare Career Training

Services Offered:

Home Health Aide Training Program, Nurse Aide Training Program, life skills and job readiness services.

Delivery Method:

ACTION offers training programs that provide the clinical skills, education, life skills, and job readiness services necessary to earn a Home Health Aide (HHA) or Nurse Aide (NA) certificate and begin a career path in the healthcare industry. The 75-hour HHA program prepares students to provide care in homes, while the more advanced 84-hour NA program prepares students to work in hospitals and assisted living facilities. Beginning in 2015 these courses will be operated out of ACTION's new Adult Education Center, with two HHA and two NA sessions per year.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

- 2015: 48 students will earn job skills (1.2A).
- 2016: 50 students will earn job skills (1.2A).
- 2017: 50 students will earn job skills (1.2A).

Additional Goals:

- 2015: 26 students will enroll in the HHA course; 22 students will complete the HHA course; 22 students will enroll in the NA course; 20 students will complete the NA course; 75% of students completing the NA course will pass the Red Cross test for certification.
- *Each year 2016 2017:* 26 students will enroll in the HHA course; 22 students will complete the HHA course; 24 students will enroll in the NA course; 20 students will complete the NA course; 75% of students completing the NA course will pass the Red Cross test for certification.

Job Readiness

Services Offered:

Individual assistance and referrals to help with job readiness, Career Transitions basic job/life skills class, remedial math, and development of new employment related programs/classes according to demand, funding, and availability of related local jobs.

Delivery Method:

ACTION's Director of Job Training and Education works closely with the Gloucester branch of the North Shore Career Center to exchange referrals and offer a range of job readiness services. The Director will run a 6-8-week Career Transitions class to help with basic skills and guidance necessary to become job ready, and will also provide individual assistance to select individuals referred by the Career Center and by ACTION's Client and Housing Services Advocates, working on development of career goals, resume building, interview skills, and addressing barriers to employment. Over the next three years the Director will investigate the need for and feasibility of offering multiple classes that were noted during the 2014 Community Needs Assessment, including CPR, ServSafe, money management, and computer skills. We aim to implement some or all of these courses utilizing our new Adult Education Center.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

- 2015: 25 individuals will obtain job skills through individual assistance, basic job/life skills classes, and remedial math classes (1.2A).
- 2016: 40 individuals will obtain job skills through the above plus new money management and CPR classes (1.2A).
- 2017: 55 individuals will obtain job skills through the above plus new computer skills and ServSafe certification classes (1.2A).

Additional Goals:

- 2015: Investigation of additional job readiness class options.
- 2016: Pilot money management and CPR classes.
- 2017: Fully implement money management and CPR classes; pilot computer skills and ServSafe certification classes.

6.6 Agency-Wide Initiatives

About

In addition to the services and initiatives delivered through each of our primary programs, ACTION INC.'s administrative team operates annual donation drives including the Project Uplift holiday toy and clothing drive and the Bailee's Backpacks back-to-school supply drive, both for children from economically disadvantaged families. Bailee's Backpacks piloted in 2013 and we aim to expand the program over the next three years. ACTION will also continue to focus on the professional development of our staff, which was a priority highlighted through the 2014 Internal Needs Assessment.

Specific Programs and Services and Associated Goals

Project Uplift

Services Offered:

Holiday gifts for children ages 0-14.

Delivery Method:

ACTION's Project Uplift Coordinator works with community volunteers as well as local businesses and groups to connect program applicants with donated gifts of new toys and clothing. Donation boxes are set out at businesses throughout Cape Ann.

Goals:

Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 700 children will receive gifts through Project Uplift; 60 businesses and organizations will serve as donation collection sites; 10 volunteers will donate time.

Bailee's Backpacks

Services Offered:

New backpacks and school supplies for school-age children on Cape Ann.

Delivery Method:

ACTION's Bailee's Backpacks Coordinator works with community volunteers as well as local businesses and groups to connect program applicants with donated backpacks and supplies prior to the beginning of each school year. Donation boxes are set out at businesses throughout Cape Ann.

Goals:

- 2015: 100 Gloucester elementary and middle school students will receive packs/supplies; 15 selected students in need from Essex, Ipswich, Manchester-by-the-Sea, and/or Rockport will receive packs/supplies.
- 2016: Program will officially expand into the rest of Cape Ann; 150 Cape Ann elementary and middle school students will receive packs/supplies.
- 2017: Program will expand to also serve high school students; 200 Cape Ann students will receive packs/supplies.

Professional Development

Services Offered:

Training and educational opportunities for staff and Board of Directors members.

Delivery Method:

ACTION staff, administrators, and Board members will attend relevant trainings, workshops, and conferences, as available and as time and funding allow. New trainings/workshops will be offered to cross-train and share learnings across programs and improve agency-wide communication.

Goals Based on National Performance Indicators (Associated NPI in Parentheses):

• Each year for the next three years (2015 – 2017): 170 staff and 15 Board members will receive professional development opportunities (5.1E, 5.1F); 2100 hours will be spent by staff and 45 by Board members in professional development opportunities (5.1G).

7. Linkages

Overview

ACTION INC. works with a large network of partners to address a range of needs among disadvantaged individuals and families living both within our primary service area of Greater Cape Ann, as well as those served through the energy conservation projects ACTION oversees across Massachusetts. ACTION's role as a Community Action Agency is to identify needs and, where we are unable to meet them directly, to connect people with others who can.

During the 2014 Community Needs Assessment we identified the following top needs in our service area: housing, jobs/job training, heating/utilities, healthcare, food/nutrition, transportation, drug abuse resources/services, and mental health resources/services. ACTION addresses each of these needs both directly and indirectly with the help of our partners. For example, to help low-income households stay warm and conserve fuel, our Energy Services division works with public partners such as the U.S. Department of Energy, private partners such as National Grid, other non-profit organizations such as Community Action Agencies throughout the state, and local community groups such as senior centers. Access to affordable food is a major need impacting low-income households, and our ACTION Shelter works with the Open Door food pantry to provide hot meals for homeless individuals. Our Client and Housing Services programs work with partners in the housing and behavioral health arenas, with mental health issues creating a serious barrier for many of those we serve; this focus will increase and result in new partnerships over the next three years. To help individuals gain new career skills and jobs, we work closely with employer partners in the healthcare field, and based on the results of the 2014 Community Needs Assessment, going forward we will seek out new partnerships with employers in other fields such as biotechnology, information technology, and hospitality.

Listed below by ACTION program and partner type are all of the wonderful groups we are fortunate to work with, and intend to continue working with over the next three years.

Non-Profit Organization Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1A)			
Healing Abuse Working for Change	Community Teamwork Inc, Lowell		
Backyard Growers	North Shore Community Action Programs		
Emmaus	Birth to Three Family Center		
Harborlight Community Partners	Children's Friend & Family Services		
MA Community Action Partnership	Northeast Behavioral Health		
National Community Action Foundation	YMCA		
New England Community Action Association	Community Action Inc Haverhill		
Tides Foundation	Pathways for Children		
Open Door Food Pantry	Senior Care		
Wellspring House	Lynn Economic Opportunity		
Action for Boston Community Development	VNA Care Network & Hospice		
Faith-Based Organization Partners (National Performe	Ince Indicator 4.1B)		
St. John's Episcopal Church	Catholic Charities		
St. Vincent DePaul			
Local Government Partners (National Performance In	dicator 4.1C)		
Gloucester Housing Authority	Gloucester Department of Public Health		
Manchester Housing Authority	Gloucester Fire Department		
City of Gloucester	Gloucester Police Department		

Agency-Wide and Multi-Program Partners

State Government Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1D)			
MA Dept. of Housing and Community Development	MA Department of Transitional Assistance		
North Shore Career Center	Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission		
MA Department of Children & Families	Center for Community Recovery Innovations		
Federal Government Partners (National Performance	Indicator 4.1E)		
US Department of Housing and Urban Development			
For-Profit Business/Corporation Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1F)			
National Grid			
Consortiums/Collaborations (National Performance Indicator 4.1G)			
North Shore Continuum of Care Homeless Services Consortium			
Institutions of Post-Secondary Education/Training (National Performance Indicator 4.1J)			
North Shore Community College Salem State University/School of Nursing			
Financial/Banking Institutions (National Performance Indicator 4.1K)			
First Ipswich Bank			
Health Service Institutions (National Performance Indicator 4.1L)			
North Shore Community Health	Addison Gilbert Hospital		
Gloucester Family Health Center			

Client and Housing Services

Non-Profit Organization Partners (National Performan	ce Indicator 4.1A)		
Accord Food Pantry	Invest in People		
Babson-Webber-Mustard Fund	Ipswich Caring		
Better Off Babies	abies Lynn Shelter Association		
Beverly Bootstraps	Mission of Deeds - Reading		
Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation	Moore's Way		
Consumer Credit Counseling	Neighborhood Legal Services		
Eliot Community Human Services	Shaw Fund for Mariner's Children		
Good Friday Walk	Franklin Square House Foundation		
Grace Center	Strongest Link - Cornerstone		
Independent Living Center of the North Shore			
Faith-Based Organization Partners (National Performa	nce Indicator 4.1B)		
Annisquam Village Church	Riverdale Methodist Church		
Cape Ann Interfaith Commission	St. Paul Lutheran Church		
Holy Family Parish			
Local Government Partners (National Performance In	dicator 4.1C)		
Beverly Housing Authority	Lynn Housing Authority		
Essex Housing Authority	Rockport Community Preservation Committee		
Gloucester District Court			
Gloucester High Risk Task Force			
Ipswich Housing Authority			
State Government Partners (National Performance In	dicator 4.1D)		
Mass Housing	Veteran's Office		
MassHealth	MA Department of Mental Health		
Federal Government Partners (National Performance	Indicator 4.1E)		
Federal Emergency Management Agency	Women, Infants and Children		
Consortiums/Collaborations (National Performance Indicator 4.1G)			
Essex County Bar Association			
Housing Consortiums/Collaborations (National Performance Indicator 4.1H)			
North Shore Housing Action Group			
Financial/Banking Institutions (National Performance Indicator 4.1K)			
Cape Ann Savings Bank			
Health Service Institutions (National Performance Indicator 4.1L)			
North Shore Health Project			
Statewide Associations or Collaborations (National Performance Indicator 4.1M)			
Coalition for the Homeless – Lynn			

COMPASS Youth Program

Non-Profit Organization Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1A)			
Amelia Peabody Foundation	Maritime Heritage Center		
Cape Ann Art Haven	Moseley Foundation		
Green Foundation			
State Government Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1D)			
/A Department of Youth Services Project SAFE			
School Districts (National Performance Indicator 4.11)			
Gloucester High School	Manchester Essex Regional High School		
Ipswich High School	Rockport High School		
Financial/Banking Institutions (National Performance Indicator 4.1K)			
Santander Bank			

Energy Services

Non-Profit Organization Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1A)			
Berkshire Community Action Council	New England ISO		
Community Action of the Franklin, Hampshire, and	Quincy Community Action Programs		
North Quabbin Regions			
Community Action Programs Inter-City, Inc.	Self Help, Inc.		
Housing Assistance Corporation	South Middlesex Opportunity Council		
Menotomy Weatherization	South Shore Community Action Council		
Montachusett Opportunity Council	Springfield Partners for Community Action		
National Assoc. of Regulatory Utility Commissioners	Tri-City Community Action Program		
National Association of State Consumer Advocates			
State Government Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1D)			
National Energy Assistance Director's Association	MA Clean Energy Center		
Federal Government Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1E)			
Oak Ridge National Labs	US Department of Energy Resources		
US Department of Energy	US Department of Health and Human Services		
Consortiums/Collaborations (National Performance Indicator 4.1G)			
Low-income Energy Affordability Network The Low Income Peer Exchange			
Statewide Associations or Collaborations (National Performance Indicator 4.1M)			
MA Energy Directors Association			

HomeCare

Non-Profit Organization Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1A)		
PACE		
State Government Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1D)		
Elder Service Plan of the North Shore	MA Commission for the Blind	
For-Profit Business/Corporation Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1F)		
Adult Foster Care		

Job Training and Education

Non-Profit Organization Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1A)		
Linden Foundation	Sailors' Snug Harbor	
McCarthy Family Foundation		
State Government Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1D)		
North Shore Workforce Investment Board		
Federal Government Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1E)		
US Department of Labor		
Health Institutions Partners (National Performance Indicator 4.1L)		
Partners, North Shore	TLC@Home, LLC	
Seacoast Nursing and Rehab		

8. Funding Strategy

Overview

ACTION INC. is a financially strong organization with a diverse funding portfolio including federal, state, local, and private sources. We consistently receive positive independent audit reports with no findings, and during 2013 we underwent an extensive audit by the Massachusetts State Auditor's Office which revealed no negative findings or recommendations for improvement. Over the next three years, we will continue to contract with corporations and government agencies, to foster relationships with existing private funders and donors, and to generate additional private funding through community outreach, fundraising appeals, and grant-writing.

Corporate Contracts

ACTION is unique among most Community Action Agencies in that it serves as a contractor for international utility corporation National Grid, which trusts ACTION to oversee many millions of dollars' worth of energy conservation projects on residential units and developments throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In this role, ACTION serves as lead agency over more than 20 other Community Action Agencies across the state.

Government Contracts

ACTION also holds contracts with government agencies to provide services. These include the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which funds housing programs and vouchers, and the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, which funds beds and meals at the ACTION Emergency Shelter and also administers the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). CSBG is the core funding through which ACTION is designated as a Community Action Agency, and it is this funding which allows ACTION to be flexible and innovative in order to meet a broad and evolving set of needs specific to the communities we serve. CSBG provides programmatic and administrative support to ACTION INC. at large and to our Client and Housing Services, COMPASS Youth Program, HomeCare, and Job Training and Education programs.

Private Funding

While government and corporate contracts make up the majority of ACTION's funding, the relatively small amount of support we receive through private foundations, local businesses, and individual donors is absolutely crucial to the work we do. Most of our funding is restricted to specific initiatives, and each of ACTION's programs – Client and Housing Services, COMPASS Youth Program, Energy Services, HomeCare, and Job Training and Education – aim to operate independently and with sustainable funding support. While some programs have very large budgets and largely reliable support, others operate on very small budgets where every dollar truly makes an impact. Yet no one program is more important than another, and it is only through a holistic approach where all needs are identified and addressed that we can begin to tackle the underlying causes and effects of poverty.

Budget Projections and Funding Goals

Projected Revenue and Expenses

	Revenue	Expenses
2015	\$44,700,000	\$43,500,000
2016	\$45,200,000	\$44,000,000
2017	\$46,200,000	\$45,000,000

Funding Goals

- *Leveraged funding:* In addition to our core designating Community Services Block Grant funds, ACTION will leverage \$44,000,000 to support our programs in 2015, \$44,500,000 in 2016, and \$45,500,000 in 2017.
- *National Grid Funding:* ACTION will oversee \$38,500,000 in National Grid funding for statewide energy conservation projects in 2015, \$39,000,000 in 2016, and \$40,000,000 in 2017.
- *Private funding:* Each year for the next three years, we will aim to receive \$150,000 in individual donations, \$100,000 in private grants, and \$45,600 in rental payments.

Contact Us

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Rockport Satellite Office

Rockport Community House, 58 Broadway, Rockport, MA 01966

Energy Services

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ACTION Shelter

370 Main Street, Gloucester, MA 01930 • 978.283-4125