



**MULTI-SERVICE CENTER**

Multi-Service Center  
Community Needs Assessment

Analysis Report  
2022

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## Executive Summary

### About MSC

Multi-Service Center (MSC) is building a future without poverty by creating pathways to help, hope, and dignity for our neighbors. We address the causes and barriers of poverty and homelessness with holistic services that help people live healthy, thriving lives. In 1971, a grass-roots group created MSC to provide support and services to low- and moderate-income families and individuals in South King County. Many resources and services had previously been concentrated in the City of Seattle and were difficult for residents in South King County to access. MSC was able to provide a more localized response and create access to services for families and individuals. Incorporated originally as South King County Multi-Service Center, the organization started out with several services under one roof such as credit counseling, medical and dental services, education, employment security, and a food bank. As a Community Action Agency (CAA), MSC's programs have grown and changed to meet the needs identified by the communities it serves.

MSC's service area of South King County is considered home to the largest population in King County with the greatest number of people living in poverty. Our programs confront the barriers and inequities of poverty by offering emergency and basic services to stabilize individuals and families in South King County, helping them to attain the resources and skills to rise out of poverty and become self-sufficient. Last year, MSC served over 40,000 individuals and nearly 18,000 households.

Our current community support includes the following services:

- MSC's food bank provides free access to nutritious food through our market-style food bank and home delivery service. The food bank primarily serves residents in the Federal Way School District area. MSC also provides meals to children and teens throughout the summer through our summer meals program.
- MSC's housing programs prevent homelessness and help people experiencing homelessness find permanent and affordable housing. MSC housing options include our family shelter, permanent supportive housing programs, and permanent affordable housing. MSC owns or operates over 800 units of affordable housing. MSC serves as a Regional Access Point for King County's Coordinated Entry for All program and also offers rent and emergency assistance, as well as diversion funds, to help support housing stability.
- MSC's employment programs help individuals gain skills to achieve their goals. Employment programs work with adults by providing training and job readiness services.
- MSC also offer programs specifically targeted to youth and young adults ages 16-24 to support them with education and employment goals. This includes reengaging youth to help them obtain a GED or high school diploma, obtain employment, enroll in a college or training program, and skill development in many areas.
- MSC's energy assistance program distributes funds to South King County low-income residents through the Federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Puget Sound Energy HELPS

program. Residents are also able to obtain assistance with water and sewer bills, as well as portable air-conditioning units.

- MSC’s Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program provides advocacy and education ensuring safety and dignity of residents of long-term care facilities throughout Washington.

## Community Needs Assessment Overview

MSC conducts a Community Needs Assessment every three years in order to understand the causes and conditions of poverty within the South King County community. MSC conducted a Community Needs Assessment in 2022 to assess the current economic environment, current needs of the community MSC serves, and effectiveness of existing MSC programs. The data and analysis from MSC’s community needs assessment is incorporated into MSC’s strategic planning efforts.

As part of this assessment, MSC surveyed community partners, customers, staff, volunteers and board about the most pressing needs in South King County, Washington. MSC distributed surveys online and in person. Of the respondents who indicated their relationship with MSC, 60% were community members, 17% were MSC staff, 14% were past or current MSC customers, 5% were volunteers and 4% indicated “Other” (i.e. community partner/stakeholder). The respondents identified the top five concerns they believe are facing South King County. Table 1 shows the top five concerns facing the community for all respondents of the survey and a separate column for MSC customer responses only. The top three concerns were the same for all surveys and for customer surveys.

For our 2022 Community Needs Assessment, we added COVID-19 specific questions to the assessment. The findings of this will be described in more detail later in this report. Table 2 summarizes some of our findings to the question “In what ways has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted you and/or your family?” The top five impacts were the same for all survey respondents and MSC customer respondents.

**Table 1: Top survey responses based on number of votes per issue**

Top Concerns Identified	All Survey Responses	MSC Customer Responses Only
1	Housing Affordability	Housing Affordability
2	Homelessness	Homelessness
3	Lack of available housing options	Lack of available housing options
4	Crime/lack of personal safety	Energy costs – households struggling to pay energy costs
5	Energy costs – households struggling to pay energy costs	Hunger and food insecurity

**Table 2: In what ways has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted you and/or your family? Check all that apply to you and/or your family.**

<b>Top Impacts Identified</b>	<b>All Survey Responses</b>	<b>MSC Customer Responses Only</b>
1	Increased anxiety or stress	Increased anxiety or stress
2	Loss of social connection	Loss of social connection
3	Feeling more alone	Feeling more alone
4	Decreased health	Decreased income
5	Decreased income	Decreased health

## **Methodology and Data Collection**

MSC's Community Needs Assessment includes data from the following three areas: Community Needs Survey, focus groups and independent research through primary and secondary sources. The Community Needs Survey questionnaire can be found at the end of this report in Appendix 4. MSC sent the survey electronically via Survey Monkey to a variety of stakeholders, funders, community partners, staff, volunteer and customers, and made it available on MSC's website and social media. A paper version of the survey was also available at MSC's two office locations in Federal Way and Kent. MSC conducted three focus groups with the following demographic groups: youth and young adults, veterans and Latinx community members. Data and research were also used from other primary and secondary sources including, but not limited to, the American Community Survey and school district data through Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

## Regional Context

### South King County Demographics

South King County is comprised of 19 cities, as well as a handful of unincorporated communities, nine school districts, and a diverse topography that creates pockets of very wealthy neighborhoods in mostly low- and moderate-income communities as well as pockets of low- and moderate-income neighborhoods in otherwise wealthy communities. Many of MSC's programs are focused on serving communities in South King County and Southeast King County. Tables are provided below to show the differences in size, race and ethnic, and socioeconomic differences between regions. The tables below indicate four trends: regional population growth, South King County is the most racially and ethnically diverse region with 46% of resident identifying as non-white, every region has increased racial and ethnic diversity between 2011 and 2018, and South King County is home to a high number of families and individuals living in poverty. In addition, poverty in King County overall is declining.

**Table 3: Population Growth between 2011 and 2018**

Regions	Total Population 2011	Total Population 2018	% Change in Total Population
South King County	612,070	685,828	12%
Southeast King County	61,641	68,559	11%
North/East King County	665,683	748,720	12%
Seattle	604,234	709,895	17%
King County	1,943,628	2,213,002	14%
Washington	6,652,845	7,294,336	10%

\*Totals based on 2011 and 2018 ACS 5-yr Data based on Unified School District Geographical Regions

\*\*South King County total does not include Vashon Island or portion of Fife School District in King Co.

\*\*\*North/East King County total does not include Skykomish

\*\*\*\*King County total does not include portion of Fife school district in King Co., Vashon Island or Skykomish

**Table 4: Race and Ethnicity Comparison 2018**

Regions	Percentage of Races and Ethnicities of Residents of Each Geographic Region							
	White	Black/African American	Asian	Native Haw./Pacific Islander	Native American/Alaskan	Hispanic/Latinx	Multi	Total non-White
South King County	54%	8%	15%	2%	1%	14%	5%	46%
North/East County	66%	2%	20%	0.2%	0.2%	7%	4%	34%
Seattle	65%	7%	14%	0.4%	0.5%	6%	6%	35%
King County	61%	6%	16%	1%	1%	9%	5%	39%
Washington	70%	4%	8%	1%	1%	12%	5%	30%

Source: ACS 2018 DP05 5-Yr Data

**Table 5: Latinx/Hispanic Population as a Percentage of Total Population in Each Region**

Regions	Hispanic – Any Race	
	2011	2018
South King County	14%	16%
Southeast King County	5%	6%
Seattle	6%	7%
North/East King County	6%	7%
King County	8.5%	9%
Washington	11%	12.5%

Source: ACS 2018 DP05 5-Yr Data

**Table 6: Increasing Diversity – Comparing 2011 and 2018**

Regions	2011 Total Residents of Color (Non-White)	2018 Total Residents of Color (Non-White)	% Increase in Residents of Color
South King County	224,261	308,526	37.5%
Southeast King County	6,245	8,200	31%
Seattle	178,075	227,829	28%
North/East King County	163,239	232,148	42%
King County	571,820	776,703	36%

Sources: 2011 and 2018 ACS DP05 5-yr Data

**Table 7: State of Poverty in 2018**

Regions	Families in Poverty*	% of Families in Poverty	Individuals in Poverty	% of Individuals in Poverty
South King County	14,449	8.6%	63,768	11.7%
Southeast King County	772	4.2%	3,394	6.4%
Seattle	8,838	6%	72,154	11.8%
North/East King County	6,825	3.3%	33,036	5.5%
King County	30,229	5.8%	167,708	9.5%

\*Poverty Defined by 2018 Federal Poverty Guidelines. Household of 1 earning \$12,140 or less per year. Household of 4 earning \$25,100 or less per year.

Source: 2018 ACS DP03 5-Yr Data

**Table 8: 2017-2020 Poverty Comparison in King County**

King County	Families in Poverty	% of Families in Poverty	Individuals in Poverty	% of Individuals in Poverty
2017	32,787	6.4%	176,069	10.2%
2018	30,229	5.8%	167,708	9.5%
2019	28,596	5.4%	159,706	8.9%
2020	27,273	5.1%	153,103	8.4%

Source: 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 ACS DP03 5-Yr Data

## Education and Career Readiness

South King County school districts have a wide range of diversity, students experiencing poverty and homelessness, and number of languages spoken by students other than English. South King County school districts included in the following data are Auburn, Federal Way, Highline, Kent, Renton, South Seattle, and Tukwila. Across this region, during the 2020-21 school year:

- 76% of students were students of color (4% increase since MSC's previous Community Needs Assessment in 2019), see table 7 for Race and Ethnicity across South King County School Districts.
- 57% of students were low income (2% increase since MSC's previous assessment in 2019)
- 23% of students were multilingual (1% increase since MSC's previous assessment in 2019)
- 44% of students came from non-English speaking households (8% increase since MSC's previous assessment in 2019)
- Teacher population – 78% of teachers were White with 1 in 3 teachers having 0-5 years of teaching experience.

Total population of students between the 2018-19 and 2020-21 school years decreased in every school district across the region and across the state of Washington. School districts across the state have seen decreases in total student enrollments post-COVID-19 pandemic. As far as disparities, data indicates a startlingly differences based on race. For example, in King County only 40% of Black children are ready for Kindergarten compared to 58% White children and among 4<sup>th</sup> graders 31% of Black students meet math standards compared to 73% White students. The disparities in educational outcomes based on race are a concern for many community stakeholders and community members. As the King County Public Health report entitled The Race Gap states: "Educational opportunities and attainment contribute greatly to economic stability. The wealth and resource gap between Black and White residents in King County is tied to inequities in educational opportunities and resources for Black students" (2020).

South King County students are also experiencing homelessness and poverty. Overall, 4% of all students in the region during the 2020-21 school year were experiencing homelessness. There is a racial disproportionality among students experiencing homelessness: 8% of all Native American and 6% of all Black/African American students across the region during the 2020-21 school year were experiencing homelessness, compared to only 1% of White students. Between the 2018-19 and 2020-21 school years, the percentage of the student population enrolled in free/reduced lunch increased slightly in most South King County school districts but decreased slightly as compared to students across Washington State.

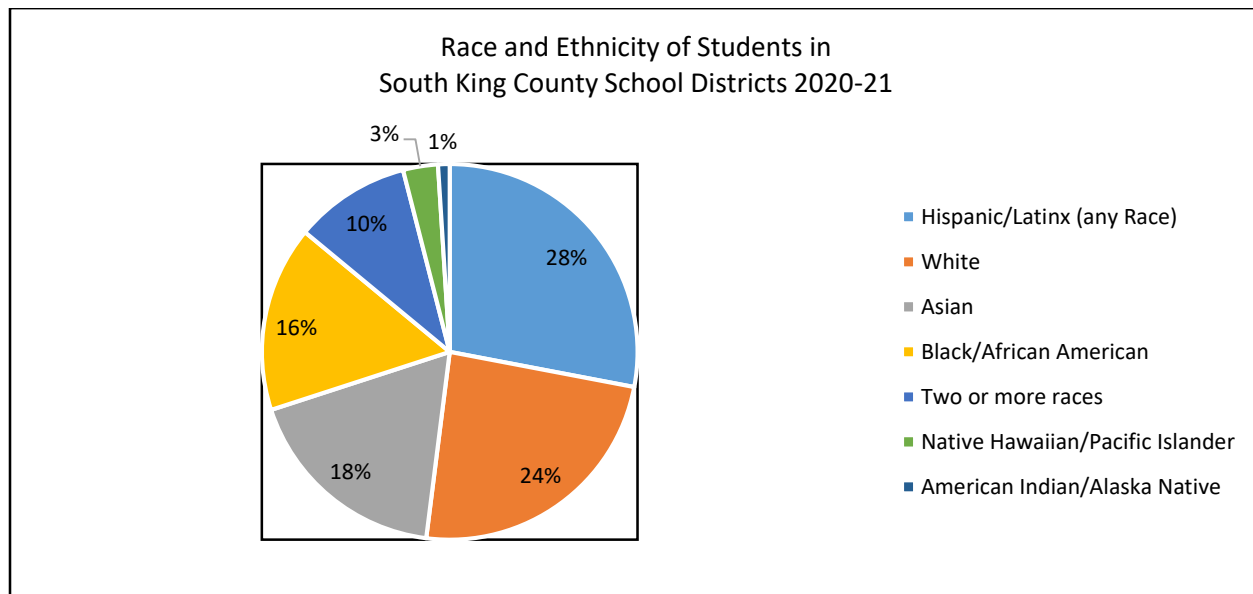
Preparing young people for the workforce is essential and many South King County youth are underprepared. Of those High School Graduates who graduated in 2015, 39% have completed a 2- or 4-year postsecondary degree by age 24 or 6 years after high school graduation. Across all of South King County, 50% of all High School Graduates enrolled directly into a 2- or 4-year postsecondary institution after graduating in 2020. Between 2013 and 2020, high school graduates who directly enroll in a 2- or 4-year postsecondary institution fell from 63% to 50%, an all-time 10-year low for the region. The COVID-19 pandemic most certainly influenced the decline in college enrollment for graduating high school students in 2020. Time will tell if the region will rebound and return sending more than half of its high school graduates to college.



It is important to note that overall, King County does have a highly educated population as compared to Washington state and the nation with 53.4% of King County residents age 25 and older having graduated with a bachelor's degree or higher, which is significantly higher than the state of Washington at 36.7% and the U.S. overall at 32.9%. Residents included in these statistics may not be King County natives but moved to the region from various places across the U.S. to take jobs in highly skilled industries such as information and technology. In addition, a 2020 King County Public Health report reported that Black adults are more than 1.5 times likely not to have a bachelor's degree compared to White adults. As a region, we need to work collectively to ensure local high school students are supported and educated to compete for living wage employment opportunities.

As we look at the education statistics of South King County, there is a strong need for culturally responsive supports to an increasingly diverse population of students. This includes diversifying the education workforce, providing supports and building off strengths of multilingual students (i.e. dual language programs), and working with community partners to support students in poverty and experiencing homelessness. In addition, South King County young people may need additional resources and supports post-pandemic as they transition to postsecondary and workforce training options to ensure they are prepared and have access to living wage employment opportunities.

**Table 9: Diversity across South King County School Districts**



**Table 10: School District Statistics 2014-15 vs 2017-18**

District Name	2018-19 School Year			2020-21 School Year			% Increase in total # of Students
	Students	Free/Reduced Enrollment	Drop Out Rate	Students	Free/Reduced Enrollment	Drop Out Rate	
Auburn	17,612	58.60%	12.90%	17,035	58.50%	9.90%	-3%
Enumclaw	4,155	33.40%	13.00%	4,097	32.40%	4.20%	-1%
Federal Way	23,562	66.20%	7.90%	21,872	66.40%	9.20%	-7%
Highline	19,285	69.00%	8.30%	18,862	70.80%	8.90%	-2%
Kent	27,215	53.30%	9.00%	25,612	54.80%	8.10%	-6%
Renton	16,334	52.30%	11.90%	15,615	50.30%	9.10%	-4%
Tahoma	8,846	15.10%	6.30%	8,739	15.60%	4.60%	-1%
Tukwila	3,043	75.70%	13.60%	2,757	76.60%	14.80%	-9%
Vashon Island	1,591	24.50%	5.10%	1,509	24.30%	2.30%	-5%
Washington	1,133,603	47.10%	11.20%	1,088,798	46.00%	9.50%	-4%

Sources: OSPI

**Table 11: High School Graduates Enrolling**

	% of ALL High School Graduates who enrolled directly into a 2 or 4 year postsecondary institution after graduating in <b>2019</b>	% of ALL High School Graduates who enrolled directly into a 2 or 4 year postsecondary institution after graduating in <b>2020</b>	% change between 2019 and 2020 ----- Pre and Post COVID-19 Pandemic college enrollment
Auburn	53%	43%	-10%
Federal Way	49%	46%	-3%
Highline	55%	47%	-8%
Kent	59%	46%	-13%
Renton	55%	47%	-8%
Tukwila	64%	55%	-9%
South Seattle	69%	67%	-2%
All South King County (as listed above) Districts	57%	50%	-7%

Source: Community Center for Education Results (CCER)

**Table 12: High School Graduates Completing College Degree Programs**

% of ALL High School Graduates from the graduating class of <b>2015</b> who <b>completed</b> a 2 or 4 year postsecondary degree by age 24 (or 6 years after high school graduation)			
By School District		By Race and Ethnicity	
All South King County Districts listed below	39%	Students	39%
Auburn	39%	Asian	52%
Federal Way	37%	White	44%
Highline	33%	Multiracial	39%
Kent	45%	Black/African American	27%
Renton	36%	Native American	26%
Tukwila	31%	Latinx	25%
South Seattle	40%	Pacific Islander	13%

Source: Community Center for Education Results (CCER)

## Economic Opportunities and Housing Affordability

King County represents the largest labor market in Washington State. In 2021, King County represented 42% (1.41 million jobs) of all nonfarm jobs in Washington State. King County's economy is diverse with regard to sector with 12% representing goods-producing industries such as construction and manufacturing and 88% representing service-providing industries such as professional and business services, public sector, retail trade, and technology/information.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment rates in King County were around 2.5%. Overall unemployment rates across King County hit an all-time high at 15.3% in April 2020 as stay-at-home orders went into effect. Since April 2020, King County unemployment rates have steadily declined and averaged at 2.7% between January and August of 2022. South King County cities on average have higher unemployment rates than Seattle and the rest of King County. In 2020, unemployment rates in the region averaged 8% in Seattle and King County while most South County Cities averaged unemployment rates of 10% or higher, see table 11 for more details. The economic impact of the pandemic exacerbated already existing inequities in King County. For example, in King County, Black residents filed more than 1.2 times the unemployment claims compared to White residents. Despite improvements in unemployment rates, South King County communities and communities of color continue to experience higher unemployment rates as compared to Seattle and King County generally.

Overall job growth has also seen a remarkable recovery post-pandemic with significant variants depending on the industry. Between February and April 2020, total nonfarm employment decreased by about 166,600 jobs; however, as of March 2022 preliminary data indicates King County is only about 10,000 jobs short of pre-pandemic levels. For example, leisure and hospitality has not fully recovered to pre-pandemic numbers. The industry has declined by about 30% as of March 2022 compared to early 2020, representing a total loss of about 44,000 jobs. Other industries that have struggled to return to pre-pandemic employment levels include but are not limited to: manufacturing (9,900 less jobs), government (9,200 less jobs), and wholesale trade (3,700 less jobs). On the other hand, some industries have added seen job growth as compared to pre- and post-pandemic numbers. For example, as of March 2022, the information technology sector has added an additional 15,500 jobs to the sector as compared to March 2020. Other industries that maintained or increased jobs include: professional and business services (added 15,600 jobs), retail trade (added 9,000 jobs), and financial activities (added 4,000 jobs). With the expansion of telecommuting, some industries were able to grow or maintain employment levels despite the impacts of the pandemic on the workforce.

Inflation is impacting all income levels in King County; however, lower income individuals and families are experiencing a greater impact as a percentage of their overall income. Between 2021 and 2022, inflation rates in the Puget Sound region have spiked to 10.1%, among the highest in the nation. For example, the cost of gasoline is up 48.4%, overall food 10.3% (meat, poultry, fish and eggs are up 25.8%), housing 8.6%, used cars and trucks 38.2%, transportation 21.6%, and household furniture and appliances 20.9%. According to a 2016 study, higher inflation for housing services disproportionately impacts young people, communities of color, and lower-income households at a higher rate because these populations are more likely to rent. Despite regional gains in salaries and wages, they have not kept pace with rising inflation rates. Between 2019 and 2021, average salary increased by 3.8%, while inflation increased by 7.6%. This difference is creating incredible economic pressure, especially on populations already struggling to meet their basic needs.

With regard to housing affordability, while it may be less expensive to own or rent in South King County than in other parts of King County, market rates are still unaffordable for low- and moderate-income families and individuals. Median rents have increased in each of the communities in South King County. Between 2018 and 2021, rent increased nearly 50% for households living South King County cities (cities included in this data are Auburn, Des Moines, Kent, Federal Way, Renton). The cost burden of housing is resulting in families struggling to pay rent. South King County communities represent a higher population of households who are cost burdened. In 2020 across South King County cities, about 40% of all renters were paying 30% or more of their income on housing costs; as compared to 34% of renters in Seattle and 36% of renters in King County overall. On average, one in four South King County homeowners are paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs.

Living wage employment helps people exit poverty, meet their basic needs, and leads to thriving, healthy communities. More jobs and lower unemployment does not always mean less financial hardship experienced by individuals and families. High housing costs, inflation and stagnate wages continue to result in individuals and families struggling to meet their basic needs.

**Table 13: Unemployment Rates**

City Name	Unemployment Rate 2020	Unemployment Rate 2021
Auburn	10%	5%
Burien	11%	5%
Des Moines	11%	5%
Federal Way	11%	6%
Kent	11%	6%
Maple Valley	7%	4%
Renton	10%	5%
SeaTac	16%	6%
Seattle	8%	4%
King County	8%	4%

Source: WA State Economic Security Department-King. Co. profile; 2020 and 2021 Unemployment Rates: WA State Dept. of Economic Security Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) for August 2020 and August 2021-Not Seasonally Adjusted.

**Table 14: Housing Affordability**

City Name	Median Rent 2018	Median Rent 2020	Median Rent 2021*	Average Rent 2022*	% Increase in Median Rents 2018-2020	% Increase in Median Rents 2018-2022	% of Renters Paying More than 35% on Housing Costs in 2020	% of Owners Paying More than 35% on Housing Costs in 2020
Algona	\$1,133	\$1,588			40%		27%	30%
Auburn	\$1,185	\$1,314	\$1,437	\$1,798	11%	52%	38%	20%
Black Diamond	\$822	\$1,710			108%		31%	22%
Burien	\$1,182	\$1,365			15%		43%	24%
Covington	\$1,744	\$1,845			6%		43%	19%
Des Moines	\$1,282	\$1,390		\$1,769	8%	38%	50%	22%
Enumclaw	\$1,101	\$1,199			9%		36%	13%
Federal Way	\$1,224	\$1,411	\$1,600	\$1,878	15%	53%	47%	28%
Kent	\$1,286	\$1,495	\$1,628	\$1,921	16%	49%	44%	24%
Maple Valley	\$1,835	\$1,984			8%		37%	23%
Normandy Park	\$1,294	\$1,642			27%		42%	23%
Renton	\$1,430	\$1,612	\$1,753	\$2,196	13%	54%	37%	26%
SeaTac	\$1,190	\$1,364			15%		41%	28%
Tukwila	\$1,208	\$1,363			13%		39%	20%
Seattle	\$1,496	\$1,702	\$1,787	\$2,334	14%	56%	34%	20%
King County	\$1,494	\$1,695	\$1,811		13%		36%	21%

\*Limited data available

Sources:

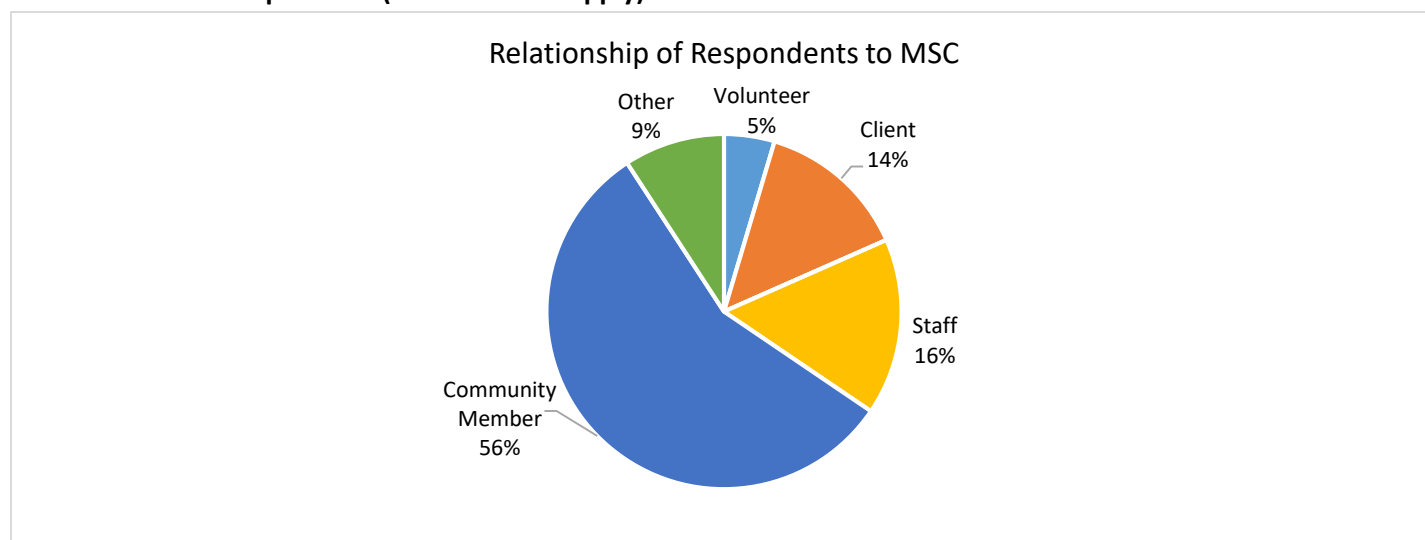
2018 Median Rent (Cities and King County): 2018 ACS DP04 5-Yr estimates; 2020 Median Rent (Cities and King County) and % of Renters Paying More than 35% on Housing Costs: 2020 ACS DP04 5-Yr estimates; 2021 Median Rent (limited Cities and King County): 2021 ACS DP04 1-Yr estimates; 2022 Average Rent (limited Cities): RentCafe last updated July 2022; 2020 and 2021 Unemployment Rates: WA State Dept. of Economic Security Local Area; Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) for August 2020 and August 2021-Not Seasonally Adjusted.

## Summary of Survey and Focus Group Results

### Community Needs Survey

MSC conducted a community needs survey in mid-2022 that was available via Survey Monkey online and paper surveys provided at MSC offices. Staff promoted the survey on MSC's website and social media accounts. Respondents included customers, community members, partners, funders, staff, volunteers and board members. Of the respondents who indicated their relationship with MSC, 56% were community members, 16% were staff, 14% were past or current MSC customers, 5% were volunteers, and 9% indicated "Other" (i.e. government agency, funder, elected official, social service partner, etc.).

**Table 15: Relationship to MSC (Check All that Apply)**



On page 2 of this report and repeated below, illustrate the top five community concerns for all respondents and MSC customers who completed the survey. Survey respondents were asked to select their top five community concerns. The top three concerns were the same for all surveys and for customer surveys: housing affordability, homelessness and lack of available housing options. Also included as top community concerns were: crime/lack of personal safety, energy costs and hunger/food insecurity.

Top Concerns Identified	All Survey Responses	MSC Customer Responses Only
1	Housing Affordability	Housing Affordability
2	Homelessness	Homelessness
3	Lack of available housing options	Lack of available housing options
4	Crime/lack of personal safety	Energy costs – households struggling to pay energy costs
5	Energy costs – households struggling to pay energy costs	Hunger and food insecurity

Respondents were asked to select two of their top five concerns to look at in more detail, providing feedback and insights on the cause of these community concerns and providing possible solutions. Detailed comments for

every response received in the surveys are provided in Appendix 2. Nearly all respondents of the survey selected the housing crisis (i.e. homelessness, lack of affordable housing, lack of available housing) as one of their two concerns they chose to take a deeper look at. Respondents of the survey provided their thoughts on the causes that have led to the housing crisis and shared possible solutions. Some causes of the housing crisis provided by respondents included but are not limited to the following:

- Low wages. Inability to find work.
- Community members are concerned about addressing homeless issue but are resistant to having affordable housing developed in their communities.
- Rising inflation
- Lack of housing options – not enough housing for everyone at all income levels.
- Not enough financial assistance programs such as Section 8 and rental assistance.
- Gentrification making communities in South King County less affordable by raising rents and pushing out lower income households to different communities or into homelessness.
- “The economy, the system, greed”
- Substance abuse issues causes homelessness. Lack of behavioral health supports.
- “Landlords/Property Management companies have been allowed to raise rents as high as they want.”
- “It's a complex issue with causes including but not limited to lack of affordable housing, lack of behavioral health and chemical dependency treatment (esp. inpatient), little growth in wages during a time of steep inflation (over a period of years), lack of health insurance, and systemic racism.”

Some solutions to the housing crisis provided by respondents included but are not limited to the following:

- Develop more housing to include all incomes and targeted populations such as seniors and low income.
- End exclusionary zoning. “More land should be used to build affordable housing.” Increase housing density.
- “Pass city/county laws that require some housing to be for low-income people.”
- Increase funding to rental subsidy and rental assistance programs.
- Increase funding to build more housing.
- Decrease rents. Rent control.
- Increase wages, increase minimum wage.
- Offer more chemical dependency and behavioral health programs. “Supportive Housing in ALL communities. Community outreach workers who have lived experience with SUD/Mental.”
- “Ideally, build more subsidized housing.”
- Lower taxes
- “Try to find a way to help the homeless get stable living, get a job so they can keep stable living for their families.”

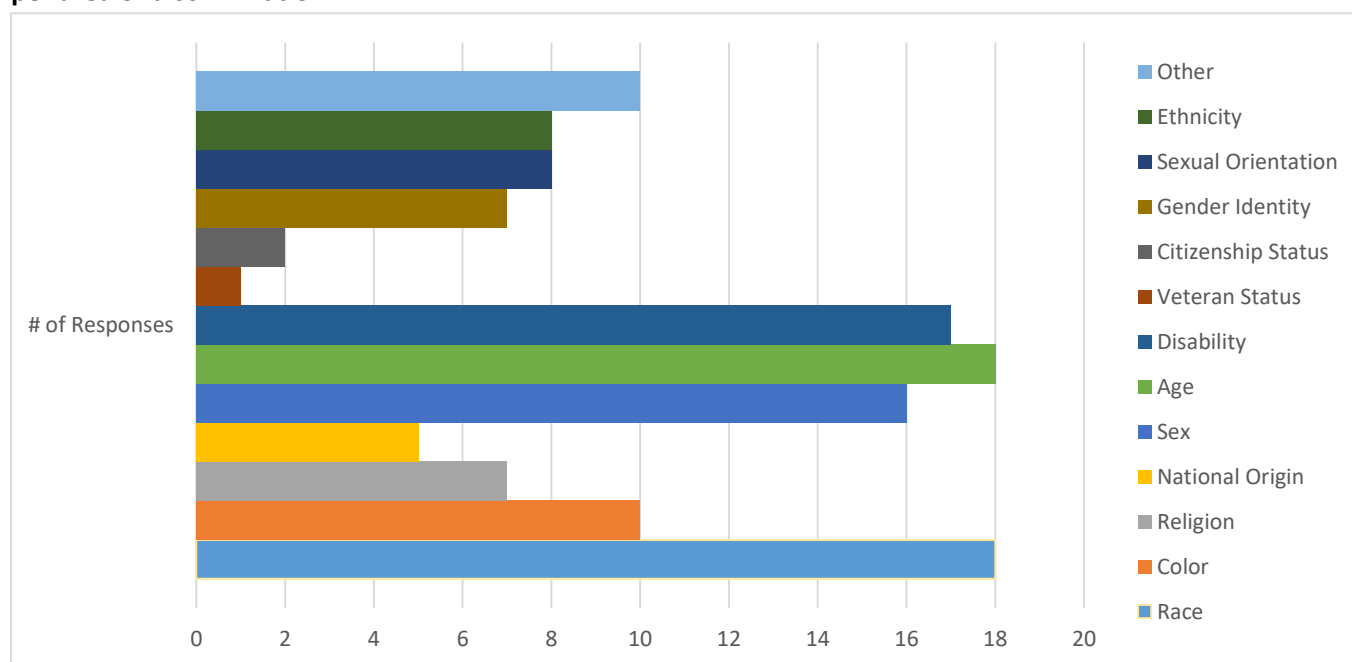
A section of the survey asks respondents to identify if they have experienced barriers or discrimination due to protected class or status that they had faced in the community and the frequency of these barriers. Respondents were able to select multiple options for this question. For example, a respondent could select that they have experienced discrimination due to race as well as disability. This question received feedback from 83 respondents, identifying 126 categories of discrimination. On average, each respondent identified one to two areas of discrimination that they personally experience. Based on the total of 159 responses, 14% reported barriers based on race, 14% reported age, 13% sex, 13% disability, 8% color, 8% other, 6% ethnicity, 6% religion,



6% sexual orientation, 5% gender identity, 4% national origin, 2% citizenship status, and 1% Veteran status. Responses under “other” category included: generational poverty, family status, English as a second language, domestic violence, homelessness, earning low wages, and criminal record. Approximately 40% of respondents said that they did not face any barriers or discrimination. Of the respondents reporting that they experienced discrimination and barriers, they identified how frequently they experience barriers in the community as followed: 71% reported *sometimes* experiencing barriers based on areas of discrimination, 17% reporting *often*, and 12% reporting *always*. All comments from respondents are included in Appendix 3. Many respondents provided comments when asked to describe the discrimination that they face in the community. Comments included but are not limited to the following:

- “Having people judge me only because I'm gay. Have been harassed by my neighbors. Possibility of getting jumped or beat up. I will fight for my piece of mind.”
- “I am disabled and I face many barriers when it comes to transportation, medical, needing to utilize cooling (energy longer than most).”
- “Finding a job is difficult with my disabilities and legal use of marijuana.”
- “South King County still struggles heavily with gender identity discrimination, and is very heavily religious.”
- “Having invisible disabilities.”
- “Due to generational poverty and systematic injustice and criminal history my spouse and I have been homeless for months, having to split up our children and send them to live with others. We have been denied at every apartment complex we have applied to due to criminal history and how much money is owed in collections. 80% of the amount we owe to collections is the cost occurred when our children were in state custody from 2018-2022.”

**Table 16: Have you experienced barriers in your community due to any of the following? Number of responses per area of discrimination.**



The survey also asked former or current customers to identify one or more service(s) that they have received from MSC. The results are below. The vast majority reporting utilizing the energy assistance program, food and clothing bank services, and housing services.

**Table 17: Number of Survey Respondents Who Have Received a Service at MSC, by Service Type**

<b>MSC Services</b>	
Community resource navigation	9
Education	1
Employment	2
Energy Assistance	12
Food & Clothing Bank	11
Housing	7
Long-Term Care Ombudsman	0
Youth Services	0

Of all those who responded to MSC's Community Needs Survey, 75% identified as female, 24% identified as male, and 1% identified as non-confirming/non-binary. In addition, when asked about ethnicity, of those who responded 8% identified as Hispanic/Latinx regardless of race. When asked about race, 76% identified as White, 14% Black/African American/African, 6% Native American/Alaska Native, 2% Asian/Asian American, 1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 1% Other.

MSC included COVID-19 related questions to the Community Needs Assessment survey:

1. In what ways has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted you and/or your family? Check all that apply to you and/or your family.
2. When thinking about you and your family's life prior to COVID19 pandemic, how has your life changed? What areas of your life have normalized? What areas of your life have changed long-term or permanently? What could MSC do to help support you and/or your family?

Question #1 allowed respondents to select from a variety of positive and negative impacts and the ability to write in a response. The results indicated that many people and their families have experienced a lot of negative impacts due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The top responses included the following: 61% of survey respondents reported increased anxiety or stress, 46% reported loss of social connection, 41% reported feeling more alone, 30% reported decreased health, 23% reported decreased income, 20% reported that they experienced a death of a loved due to COVID-19, and 18% reported that they cannot pay rent or housing costs. Some respondents reported a positive change in their lives as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic: 6% reported receiving COVID-19 related financial support, 6% feeling more connected to others, and 6% reported positive career change. One respondent reported increased access to telehealth options.

Question #2 allowed respondents to provide a narrative of their experiences during the COVID-19. Many respondents reported financial and mental health challenges. These included: people feeling alone, isolated, and struggling with mental health and stress; inflation and high costs of basic needs such as food and housing; an older adult who lost their employment due to the pandemic that then resulted in the loss of their vehicle and housing; and, a single mom with two young children with disabilities who cannot find employment is struggling

to afford housing and childcare. Their stories are powerful reminders of those in our community still reeling from the pandemic. All responses can be found in Appendix 4.

## Youth Focus Group

MSC staff who are connected to youth work in the community conducted the youth focus group. The focus group consisted of 26 youth participants: 69% female identifying and 31% male identifying with 38% identifying Black/African American/African, 27% White/Caucasian, 12% Hispanic/Latinx, 8% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 8% multiracial, 4% Native American/Alaskan Native, and 4% did not respond.

The top five community concerns that the youth identified are listed below. Interestingly, the housing crisis is also a major concern from young people in the community. Young people are also increasingly concerned about sexual and domestic violence which is important to note.

**Table 18: Youth Focus Group Top Community Concerns**

Please select what you believe are the top community concerns currently affecting south King County residents.	# of Responses	% of people who selected this issue
Sexual Violence	15	58%
Homelessness	14	54%
Housing Affordability	12	46%
Alcohol/drug/gambling abuse	12	46%
Lack of education and training	11	42%
Domestic Violence	10	38%

The youth were asked to choose one of their concerns and write about it. Their combined responses are below:

	Main Causes	Solutions
Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of communication and lack of resources.</li> <li>Job security, lack of family support, bills, insurance.</li> <li>High rent prices and COVID. Hunger and drug problems. Rent is not affordable. Cost of living too high.</li> <li>Cost of living (rent, etc.) is more than income.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connect people to resources.</li> <li>Get a good education and a good job.</li> <li>Help the community out. Community meetings and support.</li> <li>Create more resources for the homeless community. Need more shelters.</li> <li>More housing for homeless people, more advertising for helping people in need, more food banks open and places to stay.</li> <li>Lower cost of living.</li> </ul>
Sexual Violence and Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How people were raised. Kids these days don't know safe and consensual sex.</li> <li>Abuse.</li> <li>Lack of personal safety and crime.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help people feel more comfortable. Start having sex education required for every year starting at grade 6.</li> <li>Communicate.</li> <li>Come up with a plan to keep children safe.</li> </ul>

Domestic violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harm others just to get attention. People don't know how to deal with their emotions.</li> <li>• Impacts of criminal Justice system.</li> <li>• Drug abuse.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education.</li> <li>• More care and support.</li> </ul>
Housing Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capitalism.</li> <li>• Unemployment.</li> <li>• High housing costs. Housing rates too high for anyone to actually get a house.</li> <li>• Jobs don't pay enough.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create funding opportunities for homebuyers.</li> <li>• Give more section 8 to people.</li> <li>• Housing help like 211.</li> <li>• More housing services for people.</li> </ul>
Lack of mental health services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More people not having good mindset. Especially after COVID 19, many individuals have had more mental/behavioral health.</li> <li>• There are many individuals and communities within the King County that have and are going through intergenerational and historical trauma that are currently affecting the person.</li> <li>• Trauma is increasingly affecting BIPOC communities and individuals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More people to talk to.</li> <li>• One of the biggest ideas for a solution to this issue is bringing awareness to the community and individuals about trauma and mental/behavioral health.</li> <li>• I believe that this is a taboo topic for many people including BIPOC communities.</li> </ul>

The youth identified as experiencing barriers in their communities based on their race, color, religion, sex, gender, gender identity and age. Race/color, age, and sex were the top three areas of discrimination that the young people experience in the community: 69% of young people surveyed reported discrimination due to race/color, 46% based on age, 42% based on sex. One youth stated: “One of the main barriers that I have faced is getting the support needed for mental health services. I am able to access the services, but I feel like I have not been able to find a BIPOC therapist in which I can relate to.” Another young person shared the challenge of being a single parent trying to find affordable childcare and employment.

Young people were greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic with 58% feeling more alone, 46% experiencing increased anxiety and/or stress, 38% reported decreased income, and 35% reported loss of social connection. One in three young people surveyed experienced a death of a family member due to COVID-19. Young people shared powerful personal experiences from the pandemic. One stated: “My whole life changed, anxiety and depression have been normalized and I failed two years of high school due to that.” Some young people experienced positive impacts. One young person stated, “It has changed my way of thinking things and being more positive about myself and loving myself more.” Another young person expressed hope for the future despite the challenges: “My life has gotten a lot more stressful. My mental health has gotten worse. I have begun to advocate for myself more though since COVID started.”

## Latinx/Hispanic Focus Group

A MSC staff person provided targeted outreach to the Latinx/Hispanic population at a community event to gather feedback on the Community Needs Assessment. During the community event, 49 participants completed the Community Needs Assessment survey: 96% of the participants identified as Latinx/Hispanic, 80% identified female, and 20% identified male. Participants were allowed to select multiple community concerns. The top five community concerns were the following: 71% said alcohol and drug abuse, 41% said domestic violence, 37% said energy costs, 35% said hunger, and 31% said homelessness. The participants were also asked about their

experiences regarding barriers in the community. Of all the participants that completed the survey, nearly 60% said that they experience barriers related to their race and/or skin color, 41% cited immigrant or citizenship status as a barrier they've experienced, and 20% cited national origin. Of those participants stating that they experience barriers in the community, the majority say the experience them "sometimes" at 47%, and 24% said that they experience barriers often or always. The participants were also asked about their familiarity about MSC programs and services: 65% said that they were not familiar at all with MSC, 27% said somewhat familiar, 4% said fairly familiar, and 4% said that they had received a MSC service in past.

## **Veterans Focus Group**

MSC conducted a focus group at William J. Wood Veterans House (WJW). WJW opened in 2016, offering permanent supportive housing for homeless or imminently homeless veterans and their families. WJW consists of 44 one, two and three bedroom units which are all eligible for rental subsidies through the HUD VASH program in collaboration with King County Housing Authoring and the Veteran's Administration. The WJW focus group included 10 residents: 50% identified female, 50% identified male, 50% identified as white and 50% identified as African American/Black. Participants were asked to discuss and list their top community concerns. Participants were allowed to select multiple concern community concerns. The top five community concerns that the residents expressed were the following: 89% said homelessness and housing stability, 67% said access to mental health, 50% said barriers to transportation, 50% said substance abuse treatment options, and 50% said securing employment. The participants were asked to discuss their experience regarding barriers they face: 50% said they feel that their veteran status is a barrier, 30% cited aged-related barriers and/or discrimination, and 30% cited their gender and/or sex as a barrier and/or source of discrimination.

## A Closer Look at the Top Three Concerns Impacting South King County

Based on MSC's Community Needs Survey, we will now take a closer look at the top concerns affecting South King County residents: housing affordability, homelessness, lack of affordable housing options as well hunger and food insecurity.

### **Housing Affordability, Homelessness, and Lack of Available Housing Options**

Housing affordability, homelessness and lack of available housing options are top issues facing our community according to our survey results. These issues are complex and influence one another. For example, lack of affordable housing leading to increases in homelessness. A recent January 2022 report entitled Regional Housing Needs Assessment published by the Puget Sound Regional Council had many key findings that are important to highlight regarding housing issues facing the region. The report highlighted that the region needs a total of 810,000 new housing units to accommodate the region's population growth by the year 2050. The report noted that roughly 34% of this new housing will require some level of public incentive (i.e. zoning flexibility, financial subsidy, etc.) to ensure new units are affordable to moderate- and low-income households. In addition, a move diverse housing stock that includes middle-density ownership options (i.e. townhomes and triplexes) is required to meet affordability in the region and meet the needs of a growing and changing population where only one in three households have children and seniors make up a rapidly growing percentage of the population. Many households in the region struggle to make homeownership a reality given stagnant wages, rising inflation and huge increases in home values. The report cited that housing prices have increased over the last ten years but increases in income have not kept pace. Between 2011 and 2019, households struggled to afford housing costs as rent increased 53% and home values increased 67%. Homeownership, rooted in historical segregation and discrimination, continues to reflect racial disparities. At every income level, white residents are more likely to own their own home as compared to Black residents.

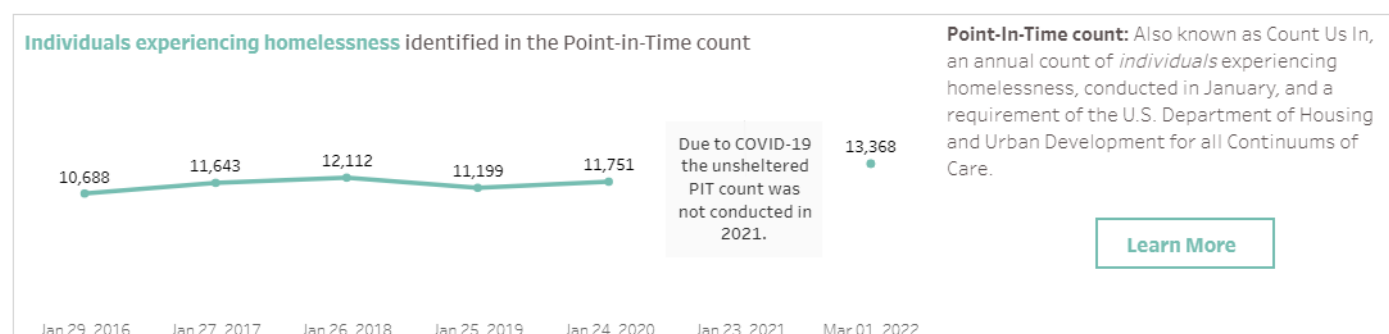
The lack of affordable housing has been a driving force in South King County poverty. Before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, housing prices were already on the rise in King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties. Between 2016-2020, one in three households in King County reported spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs. The COVID-19 pandemic caused already soaring housing costs to increase even further, pushing many residents out of the housing that they had previously been able to afford. From June 23 to July 2, 2021, the percentage of residents who were behind on housing payments peaked at nearly 13%. Residents who were unable to keep up with their housing payments during this period were disproportionately low-income, people of color, and people identifying as LGBTQ+. Of households making less than \$25,000 per year, 25% fell behind on housing payments. Of households identifying as Black alone, 19% fell behind on housing payments. And of households identifying as LGBTQ+, 15% fell behind on their housing payments.

On March 1, 2020, a Federal eviction moratorium was put in place to temporary stop rental evictions based on non-payment. This lasted until January 15, 2022, in King County and February 28, 2022, in Seattle. This moratorium allowed residents to stay in their homes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, when the moratorium was lifted landlords began to raise rents again. In the spring of 2022, the average cost for a one-bedroom apartment in King County was \$1,796 according to UW's Washington State Apartment Market Report – Spring 2022. For a household to spend less than 30% of their income on housing, HUD's definition of

affordable housing, they would have to make \$5,987 a month or \$64,656 a year after taxes or approximately \$90,000 before taxes. Due to the rising costs for rent in certain areas of King County, residents are migrating to South King County cities such as Federal Way where the average rent in October 2022 is \$1,296 according to Apartments.com, below the King County average. Increased demand in South King County for housing is driving up rental costs.

As housing becomes more difficult to afford, more families and individuals are pushed into homelessness. According to King County Regional Homelessness Authority, the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in King County continues to be on the rise. The image below shows the number of individuals experiencing homelessness rose to a new high of 13,368 individuals in March 2022. Due to the shift in counting systems between 2020 and 2022 it is impossible to make an accurate comparison between the years but the image below shows as close of a comparison as can be made. In addition, according to the Point-in-Time Count, Washington State's total homeless population is roughly 83,000 people, half of whom are living in King County.

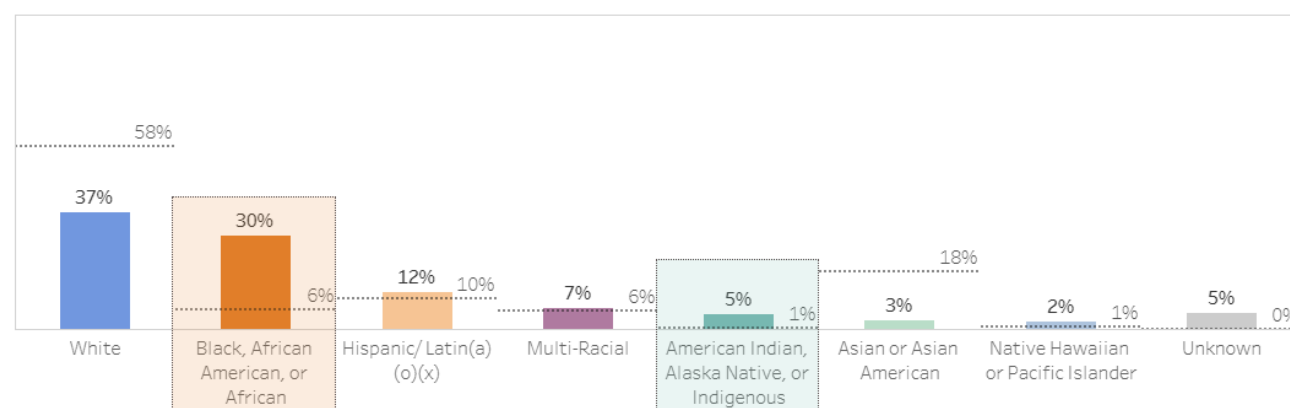
**Table 19: Individuals Experiencing Homelessness**



Source: KCRHA

In King County, homelessness disproportionately impacts people and families of color. Those who identify as Black or African American make up 6% of the county's general population but make up 30% of the county's homeless population and those who identify as American Indian/Alaskan Native make up 1% of the county's general population and 5% of the homeless population, these two racial groups show the largest disparities (see image below from KCRHA).

**Table 20: Individuals Experiencing Homelessness by Race**



Source: KCRHA

## Hunger and Food Insecurity

Based on the surveys completed by individuals that have or currently receive MSC services, hunger and food insecurity ranked in the top five concerns facing our community members in South King County. In response to this need, MSC operates the primary Food Bank in the greater Federal Way community.

South King County has a higher percentage of families living in poverty at 8.6% as compared to King County overall at 5.8%. In addition, the King County average percentage of people eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits is 8.5% as compared to Federal Way that averages about 14.5% of residents are eligible for SNAP benefits; thus, indicating a greater need for food access and resources in Federal Way and South King County. SNAP is a USDA program that helps people make ends meet and improve their diet through monthly benefits to help households buy food. One of MSC's strategies in addressing hungry and food security is through our Basic Food Assistance Outreach program, which focuses on marketing for the SNAP benefits program and can help households complete an application.

The continued impact of the pandemic on economic security and food access in South King County has been substantial. The results of a King County survey (WAFOOD Survey-June-July 2020) from a joint effort between UW and WSU taken during the height of the pandemic shows the dramatic increase in food insecurity within our community. In King County, food insecurity was experienced in 30% of households and of those, 57% had children in the household. Fair or poor diets were reported by 33% and 40% of respondents said their diet worsened during the pandemic. Also during that time, unemployment benefits were sought by 31% of household with 36% of which reported having issues applying for benefits. Within certain neighborhoods in Federal Way, the food insecurity prevalence was between 35% and 50%. The population that MSC serves is diverse and the results of the above-mentioned survey shows that 43% of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in our community face food insecurity. In addition, a 2020 King County Public Health report found that Black adults are more than four times more likely to run out of food without money to purchase more than White adults. The report also found that two out of every five Black households experience food insecurity in King County. South King County and specifically communities of color experience food insecurity at the highest rates before and after the COVID19 pandemic.

MSC's Food Bank has seen an increase pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic. Between 2020 and 2021, MSC saw a 30% increase in clients accessing services through the Food Bank. In addition to the economic strain the pandemic has caused, raising inflation have greatly increased food costs for families. With the impacts of increased inflation, MSC may continue to see sharp increases in people needing to access food. Between February 2022 and March 2022, the number of households visiting the Food Bank increased by 11% and it appears that inflationary pressures will continue into the near future.

The COVID19 pandemic has sparked innovative solutions as MSC works to address the growing and changing needs of our community. One of the solutions to food insecurity enacted in the past two years has been in the form of home delivery for those clients in need of the food bank, but who are unable to come to the food bank because of transportation, timing, or mobility barriers. MSC delivers food in a cost-effective, but meaningful manner, with weekly deliveries providing at least three days of food. The purchase of foods such as fresh produce, milk, eggs, cheese, and proteins for our standard home delivery box and culturally familiar food such as rice, beans, jalapenos, tomatillos, cotija cheese, and chorizo for our Latinx box is part of an important goal of



serving our clients with dignity and respect. Providing culturally relevant food options has become an increased focus in the Food Bank over the last three years.

In the interest of providing clients with the dignity of choice, we re-opened our market-style food bank January 2022, after providing drive-thru service during the pandemic. Clients were happy to have more interaction with staff and make their own food choices. We also discontinued a former practice of placing limits on certain items, allowing clients to choose the amount they needed. Throughout 2022, MSC has continued to build on partnerships developed during the pandemic with local farms and family produce distributors to provide a wider variety of fresh produce, dairy, and proteins for our food bank clients.

Community engagement and partnerships are a key strategy in addressing hungry. MSC's Food Bank engages a variety of stakeholders in addressing food insecurity. Businesses, civic groups, and individuals throughout Federal Way provide critical food donations throughout the year. MSC maintains strong relationships with many grocery stores, businesses, warehouses, and restaurants who also donate food as part of our grocery rescue program. MSC is an active participant in the South King County Food Coalition, a collective of food banks in the area who meet regularly to share best practices, and advocate for the nutrition needs in South King County. Volunteers also play a key part in keeping the food bank in good order, packing home delivery boxes, sorting incoming donations and purchased items, restocking shelves, preparing for clients at the beginning of each food bank distribution day, and cleaning up at the end of the day. Given rising food costs and economic uncertainties, MSC will continue to strategize and adapt to address food insecurity in South King County.

## Summary of Findings

The demographic, economic, and community information reflects the community needs and strengths that currently exist in South King County. South King County is comprised of a very diverse population. Homelessness and lack of affordable housing are key concerns. Poverty and housing instability disproportionately affect people of color. The top social problems identified by the community and customers (as per MSC's Community Needs Assessment Survey results) were primarily housing related: housing affordability, homelessness, and lack of available housing options. Other key concerns were crime/lack of personal safety, alcohol/substance abuse, energy costs, hunger and food insecurity, domestic/sexual violence, and access to mental health services.

## MSC'S Strategies for Addressing Community Needs

### MSC 2021-2022 Annual Report Overview

Between July 2021 and June 2022, MSC served over 41,000 individuals and nearly 18,000 households. Of those identifying their race and ethnicity 23% White/Eastern European, 21% were Black/African-American/African, 11% Hispanic, 11% Middle Eastern, 9% other/multiracial, 6% Asian; 3% Pacific Islander; 0.5% Native American/Alaskan Native and the remainder were unknown, either not disclosed or served by programs who do not ask for this information. Of the individuals served, 30% were under the age of 18, 4% were between ages 18 and 21, 32% were between ages 22 and 54, 18% were ages 55+, and 16% were unknown.

Of those reporting education levels, nearly 1 in 3 had some college education or a college degree. Of those reporting gender, 47% identified as female and 37% as male (please note: less than 1% identified as Transgender or Non-Binary and 15.8% were unknown). Of those reporting, 7% reported that they did not have health insurance and 11% reported that they had one or more disability. Regarding housing status, nearly 60% of reporting households were renters, nearly 10% own their home and 4% said that they are currently unhoused.

Nine in ten (90%) households that reported income were extremely low-income (at or below 30% of Area Median Income or AMI—currently no more than \$38,800 per year for a family of four) and 8% of households were low income (between 31-50% of AMI). Area Median Income is a local measurement of the region's income distribution; half of families earn more than the median and half of families earn less than the median. Between 2016 and 2022, the share of households served by MSC and categorized as extremely low income increased by 10%. Extremely low-income households now make up a greater portion of those served by MSC. These households have greater and more complex needs and struggle to meet their basic needs such as food and housing. One in three households report at least one member of the household as employed and earning a wage. Many families served by MSC are extremely low income and struggling financially even when one or more family members are working, indicating a potential lack of access to living wage employment opportunities. Between 2019 and 2022, households reporting that they receive no income or public assistance increased from 10% to 30%. This is an interesting development given the low unemployment rate and availability of jobs; however, many households struggle to engage in the workforce as reflected in our survey results due to lack of childcare, transportation, and other resources.

MSC conducts regular customer satisfaction surveys as part of our strategy plan. MSC works to ensure customers are satisfied with the experience and achieve their desired results. In our most recent survey, 95% of customers were satisfied or very satisfied and 93% felt services were accessible.

## Looking to the Future

While low unemployment rates in King County give the appearance of a strong economy, stagnant wages, lack of affordable housing, and rising cost of living have resulted in steady levels of those experiencing poverty in South King County. For our customers, most of whom do not have college degrees or advanced training, living wage employment is out of reach without help. MSC's efforts are helping to address these needs and to have a substantial positive impact on the well-being of many South King County communities. MSC brings solid experience, a proven service delivery approach, and a vast array of collaborative partnerships. MSC addresses the need of a diverse customer base with unique needs by providing services in a holistic, customized manner and through the existence of a diverse workforce representing many different cultures and ethnicities as well as more than 10 languages.

### Affordable housing development

Looking to the future, MSC will continue to pursue affordable housing opportunities as this is a current and growing need in the region. According to the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force's 2018 report, the region will need an additional 244,000 affordable homes to address the need in King County alone. In King County, there are only 27 affordable and available units for every 100 extremely low-income renter households. New housing development is not keeping pace with increased demand for housing in the region. MSC currently owns and operates more than 800 units of affordable housing throughout King and Pierce County. Last year, MSC's affordable senior housing properties housed 350 residents and 850 residents were housed in other affordable housing properties. MSC is currently in the process of breaking ground on a new affordable housing project in Federal Way located near transit that will provide 334 units of affordable housing and onsite services such as a satellite food bank and community resource navigation.

### Housing Services and Programs

MSC provides a continuum of housing and homelessness prevention services:

- Temporary shelter for families experiencing homelessness.
- Permanent Supportive Housing for veteran households and for single women in recovery.
- Coordinated entry intakes for those experiencing homelessness.
- Homelessness prevention services through rent and other emergency assistance.

MSC has been providing Family Shelter services to South King County families since 1986. MSC has had families with two parents, single mothers, single fathers, families with grandparents as head of household or in addition to parent(s), and families with adult children. MSC also is the only shelter in the area with a 5-bedroom house that allows it to serve families too large for other shelters in the area. Last year, 19 families and 83 individuals were served through the MSC shelter.

MSC's homelessness prevention services include housing navigation, rental assistance, and support services to help families, youth, and individuals at risk of homelessness to access the resources needed, either from MSC or by referral, to remain housed and increase their housing stability. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MSC saw a dramatic increase in the need for housing supports since many families and individuals were struggling financially to pay their housing costs. Last year, MSC helped over 1,000 households and nearly 3,000 individuals maintain their housing through financial assistance. As compared to pre-pandemic numbers, MSC tripled the number of households served in this program.

MSC has been one of five Regional Access Points (RAPs) in King County for the Coordinated Entry process to determine homeless housing program eligibility since 2016. The program was created to ensure that people experiencing homelessness in King County can get help finding stable housing by identifying, evaluating, and connecting them to housing support services and housing resources. In addition, the program supports homelessness prevention through diversion and housing referrals. Last year, MSC staff completed 412 household enrollments for the Coordinated Entry Systems program, serving a total of 651 unhoused individuals with Housing Triage assessments based on population type (Single Adult, Family, Transitional-Aged Youth) and related resource navigation and referral services.

MSC's housing programs provide case management and safe housing to homeless households using a strength-based, client led model. MSC staff work with clients to help them develop goals to overcome barriers to stable housing and, ultimately, self-sufficiency and help them access the resources and tools they need to achieve these goals such as: health care, education, financial education, childcare, employment, etc. MSC provides background and credit checks for clients in order to help them make any corrections or changes that could interfere with stable housing. MSC staff also work with clients to ensure they have the necessary documents for housing and other assistance programs (Social Security card, birth certificates, income verification, etc.). The case manager works with clients to access community resources, as appropriate, and provides support to help with housing readiness/stability. Of the households existing our housing programs, over 60% excited to permanent housing.

MSC's programs place a strong emphasis on identifying and meeting each customer's unique needs. Research, best practices, and promising practices indicate a combination of education, emergency assistance, crisis prevention, and supportive services are a powerful strategy for preventing further homelessness.

### **Veterans**

MSC provides supportive housing to veterans and their families. MSC's William J Wood Veterans House (WJW) is a collaborative effort with King County Housing Authority and the Puget Sound Veterans Administration (VA) to provide permanent supportive housing with onsite housing, employment, and supportive case management services provided by MSC and the VA. William J Wood Veterans House consists of 44 units for single veterans and veterans with families. Last year, 45 households and 70 individuals were provided permanent supportive housing and services at WJW. In partnership with King County Housing Authority, MSC also provides case management, supportive services, and property management to Burien Veterans House, which provides six units for single veterans who are transitioning out of housing instability or homelessness into permanent housing.

### **Food and Clothing Bank**

While food did not make the top five list this year in the Community Needs Survey, food is a necessity needed by many families and individuals coming to MSC. As a result of the pandemic, MSC pivoted several times over the last three years to a drive thru model and now back to in-person grocery store model. MSC also launched a home delivery program in partnership with DoorDash and United Way. Last year, MSC's food bank served 4,406 unduplicated households and 9,946 individuals representing nearly 30,000 home deliveries and 86,000 household visits to the Food Bank. Last year, MSC also distributed over 2.5 million pounds of food to families

and individuals in need. MSC's food bank relies on community volunteers with an estimated 350 volunteer last year providing nearly 14,000 hours of volunteer service, representing over \$200,000 of in-kind labor support donated to the food bank. During the summer of 2022, MSC also provided 1,240 meals and snacks to children throughout the community. MSC also piloted a new program focused on providing culturally relevant foods to families.

MSC's clothing bank has been closed since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. At first, the closure was due to social distancing and safety requirements. However, as the pandemic continued and MSC began a home delivery service, the space was needed to provide for the increased need in food. MSC is evaluating whether the clothing bank serves our customers in the best manner possible and at this time, a decision has not been made if it will be reopened and operate in the same manner as pre-pandemic. MSC is addressing the clothing needs of unhoused in our community by providing new essentials such as sweatshirts, sweatpants, and socks upon request.

MSC is an active participant in the South King County Food Coalition to collaborate in the fight against hunger in our communities. MSC coordinates the Coalition's Transportation Project to pool resources to pick up and distribute food collected from Food Lifeline and Northwest Harvest, two of Washington's largest hunger relief organizations helping access food for food banks in the greater Puget Sound region and beyond.

### **Education, Employment, and Community Navigation**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MSC's Education and Employment programs shifted their strategies to focus on youth and young adults and community engagement activities. MSC offers multiple youth programs, which provide services including, but not limited to, educational instruction and/or support, employment assistance, job readiness training, post-secondary education coaching, and/or leadership development. Through these programs and through partnerships with local school districts, MSC is able to ensure that many disadvantaged South King County youth are able to successfully re-engage with school, attain a GED, and/or improve their academic skills.

MSC's events in youth and community engagement during the pandemic have proven incredibly successful. Community engagement included coordinating various activities to strengthen youth development and encourage a healing culture in the community. Some of the activities offered were: hair braiding workshop for youth; a holiday event that supported 25 families supported with gifts and food; and an event called "Nothing to Lose but our Chains" which was a healing event that connected nearly 1,000 people virtually and 125 individuals in person.

In April 2021, MSC launched a Community Resource Navigation program to support community members access MSC's various programs and services. Through this capacity building effort and incredible staff dedication, this program was able to serve 326 individuals with inquiries relating to energy assistance, rent assistance, shelter, COVID-19 vaccine information, legal resources, tenants' rights and education, to name a few. Out of the individuals served, 67% identified as Black, Latinx, and other persons of color.

MSC's Community Resource Navigation program also hosted a variety of community events the last three years. In July 2021, MSC partnered with Medical Teams International and Valley Medical Center to host pop-up vaccine

events at our Federal Way and Kent offices. Flyers for these events were created and shared in 11 different languages. In August 2021 and 2022, MSC staff hosted a back-to-school backpack giveaway and resource fair in which backpacks, school supplies and hot meals were free to families in need. COVID-19 vaccines were also available for students ages 12 and up returning to in-person class instruction. MSC served over 350 households during this event. With the help of King County Public Health, MSC hosted another pop-up vaccine clinic in November 2021 and invited various community-based organizations to provide program information and resources to event attendees. Agencies like Catholic Community Services, Public Health, Open Arms Perinatal Services, Community Health Plan of Washington, and the Lived Experiences Coalition came together to offer toys, diapers, wipes, Basic Food application assistance and more to families in need. At this event, a record 97 adults and children received the vaccine. MSC has seen a lot of success with community engagement and will continue to focus efforts in this area.

### **Long-Term Care Ombudsman**

MSC's Long Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) addresses the needs of seniors. The LTCOP program advocates on local, state, and national levels to ensure that vulnerable seniors have access to needed services and have their basic rights met, particularly if they are residing in a long-term care facility. LTCOP receives, investigates, and resolves complaints made by, or on behalf of, elderly or disabled residents of long-term care facilities. Last year, more than 2,805 complaints by residents were investigated on behalf of 1,256 individuals and over 5,207 routine visits and over 20,000 consultations were made to more than 4,000 long-term care facilities (nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and adult family homes) through the State of Washington. LTCOP is grateful for the 159 volunteers providing over 14,000 hours in the last year to help support residents. During the pandemic, LTCOP's volunteer force declined by more than half and staff are working diligently on a marketing campaign to engage the community and recruit more volunteers.

### **Energy Assistance**

MSC's Energy Assistance program provides energy bill assistance, energy conservation education, and utility water and sewer assistance to households at or below 150% of Federal poverty and 80% of Area Median Income. Eligible households are also provided with one portable air conditioning unit per lifetime. Payments are made directly to service providers on behalf of the households. Levels of assistance depends on type of housing, income, household size, and home energy usage. The program is funded through Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and Puget Sound Energy (PSE). Last year, the program served 9,439 households and 24,826 individuals. The program paid a total of \$11.7 million dollars directly to energy vendors on behalf of families to help keep lights on and homes warm. Ninety-seven percent of the households served increased their fuel vendor credit rating because of the benefits paid.

### **Sustainability**

MSC has been able to withstand a challenging funding environment in a variety of ways. MSC has diversified and will continue to diversify funding so that significant reductions to one funding source do not jeopardize the agency's sustainability. MSC has a proven reputation for being a good steward of funds and for getting results. MSC is proactive in looking for ways to evaluate and demonstrate its effectiveness. MSC will use the results of this community needs assessment to ensure that agency efforts are aligned with South King County community needs, to identify potential for program development and growth, to conduct effective strategic planning, and to inform future collaborative efforts with other community-based organizations.

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## Appendixes

### **Appendix 1: Community Resources**

MSC works with many community partners, including cities, businesses, elected officials, government entities, other social service agencies, churches and service organizations to help provide for the needs of the low-income families and individuals in South King County. Appendix 1 is a list of many of the partners providing programs and services for those in need in South King County.

Abused Def Women’s Advocacy Services (ADWAS)

All Home

ALS Association Evergreen Chapter – Home Visits

Auburn Food Bank –Community Supper, Family Dinner, Financial Assistance, Grocery Delivery,

Auburn Police Department – Domestic Violence Victims Support Team

Auburn Senior Activity Center- Hot Meal Program Community Dining, Meals on Wheels, Senior Rights Assistance and SHIBA, Senior Savers Food Pantry

Black Diamond Community Center – Emergency Services, Meals on Wheels, Senior Center

Bridging a Gap (BAG) program – school feeding program in Federal Way

Caregiving Network – emergency services

Catholic Community Services – Access to Success, Emergency Assistance Services, Legal Action Center, Men’s Shelters, Pregnancy and Parenting Support Services

Catholic Housing Services Permanent Housing Administration – Low-Income Family Housing, Low-Income Housing for Seniors and Disabled Adults

Center for Career Alternatives – Employment Services

ClearPoint Financial Solutions – Credit, Budget and Debt Counseling, Debt Management Plans

Compass Housing Alliance Permanent Housing – Low-Income Senior Housing, Low-Income Veterans Housing

Communities in Schools of Federal Way-Highline – serving in-school youth

Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) – public benefits and supports

Des Moines Senior Activity Center – Hot Meal Program, Meals on Wheels, Senior Rights Assistance

Domestic Abuse Women’s Network (DAWN) – (BED BANK) Shelter

Downtown Action to Save Housing (DASH) – Liberty Square Apartments

Dynamic Family Services – South King County Early Intervention

El Centro de la Raza – housing, education, employment services

Elderhealth – Adult Day Health and Respite Services

EX3 Teen Center

Federal Way Community Center – Hot Meal Program, Meals on Wheels

Federal Way Community Giving Network – Emergency Assistance, Hot Meal and Clothing

Federal Way Day Center

Federal Way Senior Center – Food Programs, Senior Rights Assistance

Goodwill – Thrift Store

Greater Maple Valley Community Center – Meals on Wheels, Senior Hot Meal Program

Habitat for Humanity Seattle/South King County – Low Cost Housing

Healthcare for the Homeless Network

Healthpoint – Children’s Health Care, Dental Care, Primary Health Care

Highline Community College - StartZone

Hope Christian Community – Community Clothing Closet, Hot Meal and Groceries  
 Hospitality House – (BED BANK) Women’s Shelter  
 Integrated Living Services – Group Home  
 International Rescue Committee – Immigration Assistance  
 Jewish Family Service – Refugee Services  
 Kent Food Bank & Emergency Services– Clothing, Diapers, Hot Meal Program, Household Items, etc.  
 Kent Hope – Day Center and Overnight Shelter for Women and Children, Meal Program, Emergency Funds  
 Kent Housing and Human Services– Bus Tickets, Home Repair Assistance  
 Kent Lutheran Church – Kent Community Supper – Hot Meal  
 Kent Senior Activity Center – KCBA Elder Law Clinic  
 Kent United Methodist Church – Shared Bread Emergency Assistance  
 Kent Youth and Family Services – Clothing, Teen Drop-In Center, Watson Manor Transitional Living  
 King County Bar Association Housing Justice Project – Eviction Assistance  
 King County Department of Community and Human Services Veterans’ Program – Financial Assistance  
 King County Housing Authority – Weatherization Program and housing vouchers  
 King County Library System – Tax Assistance  
 King County Sexual Assault Resource Center  
 King County Sheriff’s Office Community Services Officer Division- Domestic Violence Advocate  
 LDS Family Services – Unwed Parent Program  
 Lutheran Community Services Family Resource Center – Hispanic Information, Referral & Advocacy  
 Maple Valley Food Bank and Emergency Services – Food Pantry, Rent Assistance, Utility Assistance  
 Margie Williams Helping Hands Center – Food and Clothing  
 Midway Community Covenant Church - Midway Clothing Bank  
 Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) Pacific Northwest Region – Victim Services  
 Muckleshoot Family Resource Center – Emergency Assistance, Food Pantry  
 Muckleshoot Housing Authority – Low-Income Housing  
 Multi-Service Center-Housing, Employment, Energy Assistance, Food/Clothing, Education, Youth  
 Development, Financial management Instruction, and Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program  
 Navos – Vocational Services  
 Neighborhood House – early childhood, employment, housing, wraparound supports  
 Northwest Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America – Advocacy  
 Northwest Family Life – Domestic Violence Advocacy Services for Women and Children  
 Orion Industries – Job Placement and Follow-up, Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling, Work Skills Training  
 Pacific/Algona Community Center – Food Program, Meals on Wheels  
 Plateau Outreach Ministries – The Samaritan Project, Thrift Store  
 Port of Seattle Office of Port Jobs – Apprenticeship Opportunities Project  
 Pregnancy Aid of Washington – Pregnancy Counseling/Tangible Needs  
 Project Cool: Back to school projects – support services for homeless families and children  
 Recovery Centers of King County – Co-Occurring Disorders Program  
 Renton Housing Authority  
 Renton Technical College  
 Renton WorkSource – employment services  
 Refugee Federation Service Center – Advocacy, Employment Services, Immigration Services

Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA) – Basic Food Education Program, Employment/Job Training, Senior Services Program

Renton Area Youth & Family Services (RAYS) – Healthy Start

Renton Housing Authority – Low-Income Public Housing

Renton Human Services Division – Housing Repair Assistance

Renton Senior Activity Center – Hot Meal Program, Legal Services, Meals on Wheels

Salvation Army –Community Supper, Domestic Violence Motel Vouchers, Food Bags, Rent Assistance, Thrift Shop

SeaTac Parks and Recreation Department – Lunch Program, Meals on Wheels

SKCAC Industries – Employment Training

Society of Saint Vincent de Paul Council of Seattle Area – Clothing and Household Items, Clothing Referrals, Emergency Food Bags, Furniture, Thrift Shop

Solid Ground – emergency services, housing

Somali Community Services Coalition – Immigration Services

St. James Episcopal Church – Food Pantry, Gasoline Vouchers, Utility Assistance

St. Stephen Housing Association – Transitional Housing – City Park Townhouses and Nike Manor

St. Stephen the Martyr Catholic Church – Backpacks for the Homeless

St. Thomas Catholic Church Outreach- Clothing

The Storehouse – Food Delivery

Total Living Concept – Community Guides, Intensive Tenant Support (ITS)/Supportive Living

Tukwila Food Pantry – Food Pantry

Tukwila Parks and Recreation – Senior Programs

Ukrainian Community Center of Washington – Social Services

UTOPIA Washington – Pacific Islander LGBTQIA+ services

Vadis – Employment Services

Valley Cities Counseling & Consultation – Adult and Youth Chemical Dependency Services, Adult DV Survivors Services, Adult Outpatient Mental Health Services, Advocacy, Child and Family Outpatient Services, etc.

Vashon Maury Community Food Bank – Food Pantry

Vashon Senior Center – Hot Meal Program, Meals on Wheels

Vashon Youth & Family Services – Counseling, Emergency Disaster Relief, Parenting Classes/Play Groups, Rent Assistance, Transportation Assistance, Utility Assistance

Veterans Administration

Victory Outreach Church – Recovery Home for Women

Vision Housing – Housing for Families

Vine Maple Place – Transitional Housing

Way Back Inn – Rent/Move In Assistance, Transitional Housing

White Center Food Bank – Food Pantry

Y Social Impact Center

YWCA of Seattle/King County/Snohomish County – Domestic Violence Community Advocacy Program, Employment and Housing Stability Program, Family Shelter Project, Food Stamp and Training Program, etc.

\*South King County has four regional medical centers and three hospitals.

## **Appendix 2: Survey Comments on Issue Causes and Solutions**

This appendix shows a sampling of the comments survey respondents provided on the causes and possible solutions for identified social problems in South King County. Responses may include some grammatical errors and are presented in the way the respondent wrote the comment.

### **Childcare Affordability**

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Solution</b>
Underpaid folks doing the work, supply/demand of quality providers, state subsidy isn't enough, cost to do childcare business.	Advocate for increased benefits to include subsidies and family leave, increase connections to resources for child care businesses, a host agency holding back-office support contracts. Not every business needs a bookkeeper, attorney, and/or payroll specialist but they need all that help on an hourly basis.
Childcare affordability is an issue because childcare accessibility is so low. Waitlists for safe, accredited childcare are months if not years long. Childcare providers are raising costs of care. Despite the increasing costs of childcare/daycare tuitions, childcare staff are woefully underpaid which makes it challenging to hire and retain quality caregivers. Childcare staff have been on the frontlines in the pandemic surrounded by the only age group not eligible for vaccination, thereby increasing health risks to themselves and their families. Low wages for childcare staff, increased risk during pandemic, closure of many childcare options, long wait lists for enrollment, and high cost for childcare services directly impact childcare affordability and accessibility.	Solutions to lack of childcare affordability/accessibility are to increase wages for childcare staff- equitably for classroom teachers (often administrative/office staff have higher compensation and see less turnover). Vaccine/mask incentives for childcare facilities, having workplace childcare/before and after care options, increasing before/after care hours at schools- or extending existing hours, financial compensation for friends/family caregivers, childcare stipends for families.
Low income working people need to have lower cost options to assist with child care while getting started and allow to save money for security	Leverage city state and federal money to help reduce cost for federal way citizens.

### **Disability / Fixed Income**

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Solution</b>
Workers on disability has a set pay which is for monthly cost. Government gave money with certain assistance and made people dependent on assistance. Inflation, Covid crisis, homes unaffordable and wages too low to pay for the rise of cost. Homelessness has no initiative to live in a normal society because of drugs.	Assistance from Auburn foodbank is yearly, St Vincent's de Paul in Auburn is once every 2 years. If you are on workers comp dealing with a disability and can't work, you are not making overtime or wage increases.
lack of respect for people with disabilities, ableism	More visibility

### **Domestic Violence**

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Solution</b>
Families lack support in very stressful times, and people are not getting the support and interventions needed to help break cycles of abuse. Domestic	Applying for funding for programs that support households effected by domestic violence and trafficking. We have always had a high percentage of

Violence is also often a cause of homelessness. Human Trafficking is also related to domestic violence and crime (such as gang activity) and can take place quietly and secretly, especially effecting marginalized populations with few resources.	households fleeing and attempting to flee DV presenting at our RAP for Coordinated Entry and Diversion and it seems we have little to offer other than limited financial assistance. Trying to refer households to DV-specialized providers, shelters and housing programs is also extremely challenging - it seems like they are always very full and support is limited. Again indicating the magnitude of the problem we are dealing with in the community.
Increased stress and trauma from large scale systems, especially the economy.	DSHS Medical Insurance should include couple's counseling under the medical benefits
Unhealthy relationships, hurt people, hurt those around them.	N/A
No real services.	Catholic community services should create a program for dv in the homeless community so they can immediately help the dv victim with leaving their abuser they should be able to walk into day center and get help immediately. It's a different type of abuse when you're on the streets. And if your already homeless and try and call the main dv places like dawn etc. You will not be helped you will not be housed. I know from experience.
DV has always been around and as years go by it gets worst and worst. It's a common thing now a days for someone to say they are dealing with DV.	We need more dv agencies, case managers. We get calls all the time that certain agencies don't call them back as they are over worked and not enough staff.

### Energy Costs

Cause	Solution
Fixed incomes, low wages, raising rates	More help from the energy companies
ELDERS LIVING IN COMMUNITY LACK RESOURCES TO ASSIST WITH ENERGIZING HOMES	AFFORDABLE WAYS TO ENERGIZE WITH COMPETENT, TRUSTWORTHY CONTRACTORS
Power Bills going up too high.	Energy Assistance to pay part I all of the power bills.
Expensive or Higher Cost Energy. We've been experiencing a heat wave and things are expensive. Both heating in the winter and cooling in the summer.	Lower Cost Energy or Assistance
No income.	BLANK
Charge too much	Give me rebates or discounts
Due with high cost of living at this time. My salary couldn't afford to pay some of the bills such as Energy bill.	BLANK
Water, Garbage, Electricity are the main Utilities in a home, but when your Rent increase \$500 dollars in one year, something doesn't get paid on time. So you fall behind and that becomes out of control and then what its turned off. Then the Mental Instability panics	Not enough income resources to qualify for.

and you lose your mind. Money, that is all that matters now. Everything cost money and it's getting harder to keep it.	
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### Homelessness/Housing Affordability

Cause	Solution
Pay is too low to afford rising housing costs	Housing affordability for seniors on fixed income!
Idk enough about that to answer adequately	Brother, just make them cheaper
rising inflation, lack of affordable housing choices, not enough funds for assistance programs	build more affordable housing, use unoccupied hotel space, more funding for assistance programs
Lack of appropriately designated funds from low income housing, along with the proximity to Seattle, causing "market value" to be far higher than appropriate or necessary.	More community outreach and case management services for those in need of move in cost coverage and ongoing rental assistance to avoid a return to homelessness.
King County is set on gentrification. They go in and add in fancy unaffordable housing that draw in the "upper class" and in turn force all the lower income people to search elsewhere for anything they can afford. If they can't afford anything, whole families are forced to live in cars or seek out a shelter.	You can make nice housing without charging renters out the ear to rent a unit. Especially how in reality construction is so overpriced anyway and usually is done poorly to begin with. A person should not have to work multiple jobs just to be able to rent an apartment they never get to be in as they are always working.
Price too high	Not sure
Building less low & middle income housing & higher income housing. Too many low income jobs that make housing out-of-reach.	Increase minimum wage. Build lower-income affordable housing, including for seniors. Subsidize existing housing so lower income people can live there, too.
The economy	Housing grants
I lost my house Feb 7, 2018	Find programs that I can afford in SSI (\$841/month)
Our System	Grants or opportunities for people to work for discounts.
Lack of construction of mixed income affordable housing	Financial support and focus on increasing the number of construction trades positions
High cost of housing above the median income	More low income options
Substance abuse	Actively and intentionally seeking out those affected and offering rehabilitation program and services
Landlords/Property Management companies have been allowed to raise rents as high as they want. There needs to be some restrictions on how often and how much rent can be raised. My income doesn't increase as much or as often as my rent goes up.	Lay out a set of restrictions that landlords and property management companies have to abide by. MAKE RENT AFFORDABLE
not enough housing for low income or people with disabilities	build more subsidized housing projects and integrate them into our community
It's a complex issues with causes including but not limited to lack of affordable housing, lack of behavioral health and chemical dependency treatment (esp. inpatient), little growth in wages during a time of steep inflation (over a period of years), lack of health insurance, and systemic racism.	*More affordable housing *More behavioral/chemical dependency services *Economic development and wage progression *affordable health care insurance *Systemic changes *more involvement of people with lived experience
Access	Navigators

an upsurge of homelessness	We need to find options so every homeless person can have a home. My favorite solution is small house communities with adequate oversight
Housing prices continue to grow just to buy a real house and the requirements just to get into a apartment is beginning to burden people who are struggling or just starting out their life	Make realistic requirements for the community to grow
Rents are extremely high	Rent control-
1. High rent prices 2. Low wages 3. Lack of housing availability	1. Rent Control 2. Higher wages 3. More land should be used to build affordable housing.
Restrictions upon hiring	No drug testing prior to hire. People are innocent until proven guilty WITH CAUSE.
A hot real estate market and not enough low-income housing.	Ideally, build more subsidized housing. Or, offer rent subsidies based on income and family size.
Drugs for most and no help no support for the homeless that are not on dope	I think catholic community services hires x addicts and then they play favorites and then they choose their friends when they so call help into housing. They should really truly go off that score you get when you complete that assessment the higher the number should be helped no skipped just because they weren't sitting at day center all day waiting with their hand out. There is only couple day centers in south king county to help with laundry and mail and case services for whole homeless community most time I utilized those day centers IT WAS completely wasted day and no help
Losing a job or having an illness and can't work	Try to find a way to help the homeless get stable living, get a job so they can keep stable living for their families.
High rents, high taxes and gentrification.	Lower rents Stop moving people out of their communities lower taxes for the elderly.
There are many high wage earners in our region which has caused the cost of housing to sky rocket. It's impossible to keep up if you're not in the tech industry much less if you're receiving public benefits	Increase the housing stock, pass city/county laws that require some housing to be for low-income people. Increase our funding and ability to provide permanent supportive housing
Housing trends, lack of incentive for developers to build affordable housing,	Increase incentives for developers, increase high density housing, TOD
less people can buy a home as there are not enough starter home opportunities for buyers who are just starting it out	Build condo's in Federal Way. row houses and common wall homes.
mental health, jobs, dv and affordable housing	More dv resources for clients, more agencies that provide services for mental health, dv. More affordable housing as there are so many people and not enough housing.
High housing/rental costs and lack of adequate mental help assistance.	BLANK
Substance abuse, mental health issues	Something similar to what Everett just adopted. Having a variety of housing, resources, staffing etc in

	place and as long as there are these real options not allowing living in public places.
Lack of affordable housing.	Need a genuine focus on homeless solutions. Programs that are funded ongoing; not as a "project" for 2 or 3 years
Inflation & greed	Government funded housing or regulations. Create more homes. Market drops out and everything goes to crap. Total rebuild
Housing prices as well as apartment rates are more than people can pay	More low income housing and Section 8
INFLATION, RISING REAL ESTATE MARKET	SOME SORT OF ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR MIDDLE CLASS WORKING PEOPLE TO PURCHASE HOMES
Lack of affordable housing, mental health care and the pandemic.	Build more affordable housing, place a cap on rent pricing people out of their homes to begin with, community outreach for homeless, addicted and/or mentally ill individuals. Following up for them with assistance with transportation so they can maintain their needs.
I'm getting close to that as well. The cost of living has gotten too high to work full time and survive.	Quit raising the cost for rentals when the pay they are getting is not going up with it.
Rejection	BLANK
Lack of resources, such of homeless shelters, housing that is too expensive, drug/alcohol abuse and mostly lack of being able to do something	I have seen this done in another area and it works. Start by taking the homeless that WANT off the street and give them a place to stay while learning a trade like construction. Have them learn while doing on hands training at a construction site? Those that do not want off the street, make it nearly impossible to pan handle or sleep near businesses. The place I am thinking of was able to get about 30% of the homeless off the street by offering them a temporary place to stay while teaching them and having them work. You could also contract with businesses at a discount that have an empty store for giving the homeless a roof over their head. The owner would have some sort of income until they can get another tenant and the homeless would have someplace to go
Greed	Again honest handling of funding provided for this.
Untreated substance abuse	Expand mental health services provided by Medicare and Medicaid
I only make \$841/month on SSI	Find assistance programs that I can afford
There are a lot of people that are in need of shelter and work and a lot of times works or companies don't want to hire them	If they know something about your company or if they know what to know with honesty then I say give them a chance
No affordable housing	create/support affordable housing



Mental health concerns and addiction.	Accessible mental healthcare and addiction resources. Options through the criminal justice system for therapy and care for these illnesses.
I'm not going to write an economic thesis - but it has to do with tremendous economic inequities in our region.	Preserve and repurpose Des Moines Masonic Home for some kind of housing. Also, ensure that new housing construction is energy efficient and also beautiful. People who live in comfort and beauty are more likely to care for the place they live and the community where they live.
Declining health of the community (medical and mental) that prevents people from working, systemic racism, oppression (lack of belonging and trust), generational poverty, incongruent wages and housing costs.	Consistent, wrap around services that impact all areas.
1. Mental Health Issues 2. Substance Abuse/Street Drugs 3. Lack of shelters and transitional housing in the area	1. More mental health opportunities/street outreach 2. Law enforcement needs to do more to stop criminals from putting drugs out onto our streets 3. More shelters!! Especially in the Kent/Auburn/Federal Way area and transitional/affordable housing
High cost of rent and/or house payments	Lower home owners mortgage
Lack of Affordable Housing and mental health and addiction problems.	Treatment centers for those with mental health and addiction and more affordable housing.
Affordability price points to high for average medium income worker to afford.	Establish an adequate State of WA funding source that literally builds housing with a construction completion date bonus structure to encourage development rapidly.
While everyone is not getting paid enough for basic needs. The cost of everything is going up. Recently my rent up \$500 dollars! I work a full time job that pays more than minimum wage and I am freaking out- I cannot imagine other families and how they are surviving. The fact that some people are starting to become homeless, not because they don't have a job, or have mental health/ substance abuse but because they can't afford to pay for rent is insane. To be completely honest I have no clue why this all is happening. Which makes it even more upsetting. To me there is no logical reason for the cost of everything to be going up, when everyone is suffering. Does not matter your socioeconomic status. We are all struggling to get by on a day to day basis.	Again it seems to be out of our control. Most of us are unaware of why these issues are effecting us
Greed! No Rent cap	Rent Cap
high inflation, and less supply in housing market	expanding the resources for first home buyers
not enough housing resources for marginalized populations	invest in more affordable housing

**Hunger**

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Solution</b>
Low wages, homelessness	?
Well food is more expensive all the time, and of lower quality. Plus traveling to get to the store is taxing, and delivery is also expensive	Please just make everything cheaper and pay people more thx
Rising Food Costs with Food Assistance way too low for everybody. Can't get the amount of food my household needs. Always forced to put things back because I don't have enough food benefits.	Raise the amount of food assistance for single people on Disability and families.
People living on fixed income , especially Social Security only cannot afford basic needs due to inflation right now	BLANK
Right now inflation, low wage employment,	I do not know other than keeping up with food banks and making sure there are sources for people to get to food banks
don't know	food banks
single family households coupled with unemployment, sickness, and low wages	Food banks and care organizations like MSC to help these families through difficult times coupled with employment/training help for self-sufficiency. A two income household can be encouraged to bring stability during difficult times
A lot of theft is from grocery stores for people trying to eat. Due to lack of places offering hot meals. The main causes I believe people walk out with deli food from grocery stores is due to lack of places that offer hot meals.	Have Food trucks set up throughout the community during the week that offer free meals that can be written off or hold community banquets for community by the city council or local merchants and retailers. Maybe, instead of so many companies throwing away food at the end of shifts they can have stands set up to feed the community instead of wasting food and instead of people eating from dumpsters.

**Impacts of criminal justice system**

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Solution</b>
The government makes it difficult for lower income people to be able to remove charges and convictions from a person's record. The fines that are associated with those crimes end up in collections and follow a person for years, preventing them from being able to be accepted for renting. Even family/dependency court and the fact that when children are taken away from parents, they are still required to pay child support while the foster parents are able to receive the assistance the birth parent needed to begin with and they are given those benefits without any stigma or shame to go along with it, all while it's all being billed to the birth parents just leading to this endless cycle.	Quit charging parents for the "care" and benefits given to fosters while children are in state custody. Instead why not work with those parents so they can better their situation for themselves and their children.

<p>Criminal justice systems have too often become a means for "othering" of people - whether based on race, social or economic status, or some other criteria. Rather than working for the resolution of conflicts between neighbors they set up routines of failure for too many people who are overwhelmed and weary. First, by the evolved structure Criminal has become the focus - defining crime, labeling persons with title that makes growth and progress a deep challenge. The Laws are wonderful ornamented things -- with multitudes of dimensions, let alone the effects of interpretations and case law/history of application and so forth... those deeply woven into them do wonderful things! But for everyone else it is much more akin to Alice and a Rabbit hole... nothing is what it seems to be. Reconciliation and justice wind up taking a back seat. People are broken by their histories and limited in their futures. The system is, again, in too many silos with ready access to helpful information and direction being too difficult to track. The Public Defender's office are grossly underfunded and understaffed, with the accused having to wait at the mercy of intermediate staff to determine if one is eligible for justice.</p>	<p>Take it to the streets! What if the system moved out of the courtroom ... for so many of those routine, daily details (FTAs, non-violent property, etc) ... and was simply "out there" inviting people to come to the van on the corner and deal with their outstanding issues - working on resolutions instead of how to add problems. A deep consideration of restorative justice principles and practices - in schools, in community discussions, in coffee-shops ... just talking, learning, changing toward a solutions-based approach.</p>
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#### **Lack of Access to Adequate Healthcare/Lack of Mental and Behavioral Health Services**

<b>Cause</b>	<b>Solution</b>
Proper distribution and handling of finances designated for the care.	I guess honesty in the handling of this.
Corporate greed	Medicare for all who want it
<p>chronic needs that underlay so many of our other challenges. Opening doorways to quality care, reducing barriers for stigma and shame, increasing "mental health first aid" approaches with training/mentoring/equipping a wide variety of peoples. Have often wondered how we could get out of our "silo" mentality of clinic/facility based care and got into people's everyday places and paces. Part of this simply has to be the end of "for-profit" medical care -- it is neither right nor possible to profit from the struggles of another. For-profit medical system ... for the entire model, but esp. for mental health care. When one's world is spinning out of control to demand one "shop" for best value as well as track billings, appointments, medicines, co-pays, who-pays and an endless list of other people's needs to show "value" mitigates any sort of quality of care. Universal Care systems must be put in place if we expect to make any movement toward resolving many of these issues. Of course there is no "cure-all"</p>	<p>Begin to advocate and enact broad based, people based, best practices that put health care (physical and mental/emotional) front and center. Rebuild Public Health systems; as communities, counties, regions, states develop systems of providing care which bypass corporate/profit insurance, corporate/profit medical, and put care for people first. Teach/mentor first aid of all sorts with real primary care folks - that is, moms and dads, neighbors and coaches, friends and families ... give the basic skills (as our region once did with CPR trainings everywhere - making this area, so they said, the best place to have a heart attack - so many people trained and ready to help.)</p>

-- but current systems are part of the illness of the system.	
A system that is incapable of meeting the most at need where they are (without home, insurance, transportation, ID, communication). Lack of trust of the medical system.	Sadly, none.
Resources are not readily available due to limited to no insurance and or not knowing how to navigate the Medicaid system to acquire services.	Grassroots outreach. Providing information to homeless sites, collaborating with other social service agencies to access information related to Medicaid and healthcare insurance.
Mental health needs attention as it can help recover an individual from homelessness and help sustain them into a working class. Mental health needs financing, needs salaries that attract, needs educational resources, needs facilities.	Establish an adequate State of WA funding source that is consistent and doesn't change with the political wind.
Isolation, social media and the unfulfilled promises of technology and government.	Complicated. Building true community and return to true functional households. (Doing away with social media and a computer in everyone's pocket would be a huge start)
State run medical is horrible! I am not getting quality care. Cheap insurance gets you quack doctors	Treat Apple insurance like Blue Cross or Aetna!
the expense, access, and language barriers; long wait lists;	Medicaid for all; increased funding for community mental health centers so they can increase staffing; ban all for profit health/mental health enters
Lack of people caring	Make the problem more aware
I am not sure. Our medical system is really screwed up.	Unknown
Overwhelming Need	More providers
Lack of time for themselves due to the demands of life such as making sure the bills are paid, taking care of children and/or aging parents, lack of understanding of the importance of mental and physical well-being, culturally inappropriate services, and lack of finances to pay for proper health and mental health services.	Mental health and general health services that allow the individual to have child care and elderly care during their visits. Financial assistance for those who cannot afford to pay for mental health services. More mental health services for immigrant/refugee populations that are culturally appropriate (speak the individual's language, counselor identifies with the same race/ethnicity/lived experience as individual seeking services). Group counseling could work to target specific groups that cannot often find providers from their race/ethnicity/lived experiences.
*Insufficient funding *Lack of access to local programs *Often when people are incarcerated locally they do not continue to receive mental health medication which can cause decompensation and other issues When people who are suffering from chemical dependency decide that they are ready for treatment, you have to act in that moment and help them navigate resources. We have had incidents where someone is ready but an inpatient bed isn't	*More funding in all communities, esp. for inpatient treatment *More understanding of chemical dependency and mental health issues

ready for 2 weeks or more or isn't located in an accessible community due to lack of transportation etc.	
Growing population, limited number of professionals, confusing health care coverage for mental health, lack of awareness to mental health resources, stigma about using mental health services	Increase educational programs for mental health professionals, streamline health insurance methods to approve access to health care, promotional campaigns to reduce stigma
The State has decreased the availability of behavioral health services, and safe housing options for those with serious mental health issues that includes treatment facilities.	Huge partnerships between Federal agencies, State agencies, Counties and Cities to provide reasonable options for homelessness that include in-house mental health treatment centers and housing. Systematically go through the homeless encampments and find viable solutions for most of the people, which will encourage more to come to seek services.
Mental health	Help with navigating the system

### Lack of Available Housing Options

Cause	Solution
people who want homeless individuals/families to be off the street/out of sight, but are unwilling to allow shelters or low income housing options be built near their homes	end exclusionary zoning, build more housing
Homelessness, Substance Abuse, Mental Health... it's all tied together. If one is homeless than they cannot afford treatment that will lead to supportive housing. MSC helped me personally get there!	Supportive Housing in ALL communities. Community outreach workers who have lived experience with SUD/Mental Health so then Empathy can be shown to those who need it.
The price for housing, rental and owning are all just too high for the wages people can make for the jobs that are available.	Creation of better jobs and supportive training to do those jobs, coupled with initiatives to create more affordable housing, both renting and owning.
Insufficient housing stock and multi-unit zoning in residential areas. Increase of rental prices (without sufficient increase in wages). Insufficient/inconsistent fair housing codes across SKC.	Local advocacy for more inclusive zoning changes at municipal level. Fair housing codes and tenant protections widely incorporated throughout SKC. Centralized housing navigation specialists. Incentives/financial assistance for landlords to improve rental conditions- without raising rental prices. ADU friendly zoning, with financial assistance to make habitable.
Low wages, shortage of affordable housing stock, excessive proof of ability to afford rent (ex. 2.5-3x rent for wages), lack of investment in affordable housing by local and state governments relative to the growing costs of living in King County	More money in the right hands to address the problem, more subsidized housing, legislation to support low-income renters in being able to afford to live in SKC on the wages they bring in
The price of housing has sky rocketed	don't know
Older Adults on fixed incomes are losing housing options due to increased rental rates. Double digit increases in rental rates	Increased housing vouchers for people on fixed income

### Lack of Education and Training

Cause	Solution
Lack of education, and training in the Latino Community. Lack of English knowledge and for that reason not been informed about services available for them.	English classes. Provide information in Spanish.
A lot of the programs are geared toward the youth; 16 to 24 seems to be the age range given to those that qualify. I aged out of a lot of the training programs when I started looking as an older adult. That needs to be fixed. More opportunities for middle-age and older people.	I will reiterate, more opportunities given to those in middle and older age need to be accessible.

**Lack of Misc. Resources:**

Cause	Solution
Transportation for seniors is highly inadequate. Lack of caring about senior citizens and resources stole from them by officials to help other agencies as if they are more important than a senior if it's children I won't argue but a able bodied man ?	Keep the seniors funding with them find ways like I can help alleviate problems instead of compounding on them
Make navigating the system easier	BLANK
Budget	Volunteers
I'm hoping for the best. Being poor.	rebates or discounts

**Lack of Youth Services:**

Cause	Solution
Too many youth doing no good. They need something positive to do	I don't know.
Not enough resources or information about youth programs circulating within the organization	Funding for youth outings and activities such as parks, zoos, aquariums, and other activities
Money, staffing, time, logistics	Research on what types of services contribute to a healthy community for youth and seeing where gaps in the community are in that regard; survey youth and families re: what they find most challenging about living in SKC
providers seem to be limited in quantity and scope and lack coordination with each other.	need a lead agency or city to convene and assist with coordination and make it a requirement to receive funding
Fear of social situations, bad parenting, not enough publicity	Offer more, publicize, encourage

**Multi-Generational Poverty**

Cause	Solution
Lack of affordable housing, drug, alcohol, and mental health help	More help with drugs, alcohol, and mental help. Then once those issues are helped permanent housing can be attained
Educational needs, training, and low barriers for graduation requirements. Lack of parental participation in children's educational needs for success.	More resources available for specific job training beyond high school and more parental investment of time and commitment for a child's success and ability

	to graduate, as well as testing requirements to meet standards for high school graduation requirements.
Lack of knowledge, systemic racism also no real avenue on achieving realistic wealth	Better education from schools ,parents ,and community
For the previous question, it was hard for me to choose between multi-generational poverty and systemic racism, discrimination, and oppression. Multi-generational poverty is the effect of people not being able to move beyond certain limits that they have always been accustomed to and I believe part of the reason for that is due to systemic racism and its consequences. BIPOC households have disproportionately been products of multi-generational poverty. Systemic racism, discrimination, and oppression is something we need to address as a "root" cause in our mission to reduce poverty and break down barriers to opportunities and resources.	More emphasis / robust programming related to ending racism, discrimination and oppression as part of our mission and service activities to end poverty. This is both a community and individual/family-level need, as well as an agency need for more resources and mobilization in this area.
This stems from a lot of things! When one's basic needs are not met then their focus and attention is solely on survival. When this is witnessed growing up, that is all one knows. It becomes a cycle of not seeing opportunity for growth. If a child knows their parent cannot afford schooling or training for them, then they will not even ask. This continues causing generational poverty. Lack of education, low paying jobs, low moral because cost of living! A lot of barriers around getting assistance that is needed (Not meeting requirements). Lack of support from officials.	Everything needs to be restructured, but this would have to start from the top of the pyramid- The government, this seems disheartening when the focus is on politicians that are more like reality shows and trying to turn over laws that have already been implemented like Roe Vs Wade instead of focusing on bigger issues like homelessness and hunger- Water crisis and global warming. Its infuriating

### Low Pay/Low Wages and Unemployment

Cause	Solution
Some work places they sometimes promise you to give you the right amount to get payed but they actually don't get paid	Don't lie to the people who need help with work about their payments
Employers do not or cannot afford to pay adequate wages that people can live on	Higher Wages
Systemic racism, small businesses that believe they cannot afford to pay more, limited language skills, immigration status, maybe lack of available training/education or lack of awareness about it.	Pay people to get vocational training or go to school. More ESL classes in the community; however, with the current political environment I think many people are afraid to attend. Increase minimum wage to \$15/hour (should be even more). Subsidize childcare so moms can actually afford to go to work.
Lack/Low of pay wages up the wages so that people will be able to live better.	Up the wages for people. So they don't have to live from pay check to pay check.
lack of jobs that pay a living wage	provide more training programs.
With prices of everything sky rocking and pay at jobs staying the same, working 40 hours PLUS overtime and making above min wage is still impossible to live	Not that you can help. Most jobs have hard to work with hours. I work full time and set days, but other jobs are not willing to work with other jobs.

off of even in restricted income housing. Prices for everything are too high. Gas, rent has all gone up. My 2 bed apt used to cost 1500/m, now looking everywhere its 2300+/m	Hours/days if you wanted to pick up a second part job.
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### Lack of Personal Safety/Crime

Cause	Solution
Well people that are stealing from elderly are not being discussed by police if they steal the elderly's rent money and they just move on to the next victim with the authorities not even looking into it creates more homelessness and it's another form of elder abuse after people rip seniors off them police fail. Them and without home and resources they're being abused again from everyone else. Lack of care and set aside emergency resources	Set aside a specific amount for victims fund you'll find most will pay it back in time because we know they're no help from police or government out there
The lack of the police being able to or refusal to arrest/ticket people for the smaller crimes, which means the people will go for bigger and bigger crimes. An example is the police being stationed at the doors of grocery stores, but still not being allowed to stop and arrest the people stealing food.	Add police and allow them or encourage them to stop and ticket/arrest people for the crimes they commit while being compassionate like if someone has a tail light out of a slightly expired tabs, but like if the tabs are over one month, ticket them. I have seen people in front of a police vehicle that have had tabs expired last year and they can't do anything.
homelessness, substance abuse, mental health	institutionalize them
The City Council and mayor made changes to what officers are able to do. People are not arrested or prosecuted for crimes.	Arrest and prosecute people, including minors, when crimes are committed, especially felonies.
vehicle break in, illegal dumping. Remote location and easy egress through the property.	Gate, fence, cameras, & speed bumps.
Lawlessness	Do the crime, do the time.
Police are limited in what actions they are allowed to take and the justice system releases criminals without much penalty.	Let police do their job and hire more of them. More capacity in the courts and jails.
Ever increasing gun violence and other type of crimes around neighborhood. Lack of police officers, high inflation, high living cost, more people with limited resources	increase the number of police officers, advertise and expand the community resources
Poor city, county and state politicians and prosecutors.	Support the first responders, but weed out the poor performers, and prosecute crimes instead of letting people walk away from their law-breaking. Elect people who believe in laws, justice, and sticking to their values instead of caving to political pressures
Teens that are too mad	Rec center for teens and young adults
High frequency of drug abuse. Low income jobs that keep basic human needs out of reach. Poor literacy rates in large sections of the adult population.	Increased availability of addiction rehabilitation services. Increasing the minimum wage. Literacy programs that enable adults to learn to read & thus to hold better jobs.
Understaffed police, police don't want to bother responding to a lot of calls that deal with homeless	Have someone respond to the calls asap. Best case in person but if there isn't anyone available then by



people. Either they refuse to come or take hours to respond then do nothing.	phone at least. Someone broke into cars at my complex and got the guy on video and knew where he was staying and the officers refused the video and didn't do anything.
People are not being held accountable for the crime they commit. Many are out of work and lack resources. Addiction problems. Lack of support from social service systems.	Enforce the Law-Stop letting people get away with crimes. Increase Police Patrol. Form a neighborhood watch. Police cameras in the neighborhood and where increase crime is prevalent. Find out why they are people committing these acts of crime.
lack of employment for various reasons. lack of resources	access to employment. sure there are jobs out there but most do not qualify for jobs paying livable wages.
Substance abuse, mental health issues, poverty, lack of education and occupational training. Gun culture.	BLANK
Unfortunately we will have problems with people who come to the USA illegally until the immigration laws are totally changed, inertia in congress	Support term limits for all congressmen and senators, as well as holding them accountable for sacrificing doing their jobs to play politics

### Overdevelopment of Land

Cause	Solution
Degradation of environment due to overzealous development in South King County. Big developers come in and want to develop land for warehouses/industry/port and airport services. Because our cities are relatively small (compared to Seattle and Tacoma) and young, they have not developed comprehensive, thoughtful zoning that prioritizes the health of their communities and their environmental assets. Or even if they have, they don't have the budgets to withstand any legal challenges that the commercial real estate developers are ready to throw at them if the communities try to prevent rampant development. Result: ugly, thoughtless development; more congestion on roads; thousands upon thousands of trees cut down in South King County in just the last year; more pollution in the air and water; more deleterious health impacts on South King County citizens.	Prevent further airport growth. Halt 509 extension. More electric charging stations and rebates for electric car purchase. More Metro bus routes throughout South King County. Electrify the school bus fleet and mount a campaign to discourage parents from driving their kids to and from school every day. More biking and walking trails. Moratorium on tree cutting, and assertive preservation of all remaining stands of mature trees (they are fantastic carbon sinks and are cooling agents as well). Aggressive replanting of native trees and other flora. Establishment of a paid youth corps that would employ thousands of young people in meaningful local environmental restoration and community farms.

### Substance Abuse and Gambling

Cause	Solution
Government promotion of gambling and ineffective drug treatment strategies.	Again complicated. Government getting out of the business of gambling and profiting from marijuana sales would be a good start.

### Systemic Racism

Cause	Solution
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Systemic racism, discrimination and oppression. It is just the way King County is. Either live with it or be out-casted. The police treat minorities and homeless people as criminals. Even after they have changed their lives. The system makes it impossible to rebuild and maintain living in King County after certain hardships. Honestly, it's the retailers, business owners and the city council.	Community Events that bring people together. Such as; community cleanup around store fronts, town hall banquets, and events led by city officials and officers.
Companies and people	change systems and give access
history, systems that reinforce racism and oppression, more than I can wrap my brain around in a few short sentences	education, recognizing and naming these systems

### **Appendix 3: Survey Comments on Barriers/Discrimination**

<b>Q: Please take a moment to describe one or more of the barriers you face.</b>
Businesses don't have mobility scooters
AS ELDERS WE CANNOT DO OUR OWN UPKEEP ANYMORE AND FIND IT DIFFICULT TO AFFORD UPKEEP ON OUR HOME OF 40 YEARS.
I'm biologically female so doing anything out and about is riskier than it would be if I was biologically male. Carrying around a pocket knife and a can of mace shouldn't be normal
Having people judge me only because I'm gay. Have been harassed by my neighbors. Possibility of getting jumped or beat up. I will Fight for my piece of mind.
People judge what you make yearly instead of your name.
Clients without documentation are not able to access treatment because they have no Medicaid eligibility. Clients with limited English are turned away everywhere. Clients with darker skin are viewed as dangerous just because of their skin color, making access difficult.
People thinking I am not strong, able bodied, or able to think through complex systems because I am female
I am disabled and I face many barriers when it comes to transportation, medical, needing to utilize cooling (energy longer than most)
Quite often I have been looked-over for a job due to being a woman, prior to turning 30 I was also quite often treated as if I was "too-young" to be in any sort of position of authority.
trying to keep a roof over my head
Due to generational poverty and systematic injustice and criminal history my spouse and I have been homeless for months, having to split up our children and send them to live with others. We have been denied at every apartment complex we have applied to due to criminal history and how much money is owed in collections. 80% of the amount we owe to collections is the cost accrued when our children were in state custody from 2018-2022
Sexual orientation
I became disabled and unable to work due to an injury and the amount we get on SSDI is nowhere near enough to pay for housing and the utilities. I am grateful my house is paid off, but only making \$1800 per month, and only \$10 in food stamps (due to the amount I make) it makes it impossible to pay for Rent (not me now... my mom paid off my house) electricity, water, sewer, garbage, home owners insurance, property tax, a decent phone plan, car insurance, maintenance (both home and auto) gas (especially with the gas prices right now) and food
living on the ground floor with bars in my windows, cannot leave slider door or front screen door open for fear of entry as has happened to neighbors.
Financial help
Fixed income, rising costs
Finding a job is difficult with my disabilities and legal use of marijuana.
Although they are protected, they are not accepted. Many people fear reporting or asking for help.
South King County still struggles heavily with gender identity discrimination, and is very heavily religious
lack of transportation, expensive childcare
Low income/fixed income and high costs
Expectations of power and ability - that come with my gender, race and age - which I am not able to meet. These are note barriers which limit me, so much as internal barriers in my self-understanding and expectations.
Actually, it's more for my husband, who's trying to find work - but as an older (and white) guy, he is not in demand right now with the emphasis on BIPOC, and the ever-present ageism. We're not boo-hooing here - we understand that there have been historical inequities and that we're in the midst of a long overdue shift - but you asked, and this is our current reality.

Possibly just being able to pay my bills every month and be ok. Rent and utilities are so high along with gas I worry about paying each month.
Religion - I think religion is a very sensitive topic to discuss in the US. The primary barrier I have seen is lack of prayer spaces or the respect of specific prayer times for religions such as the Islamic religion. We don't all have share the same religions at work places, malls, libraries etc. but to have spaces where someone can enter and observe his/her spirituality in a respectful manner would be nice.
having "invisible" disabilities
Occasionally I will be treated differently due to being female.
none I am blessed
Being young and having no credentials to grow or start my life out and not able to get a job because lack of experience
Communication - when English is a second language. We end up using a translator.
I notice different treatment between me and my peers anywhere I go.
Too many younger applicants. Perception is that they are more productive and more flexible. NOT always true.
I'm white, I am lucky not to experience barriers. However, my mixed race daughter gets followed in stores, called derogatory names by fellow high school students, and feels unsafe in our community because of her race.
Being disabled mentally physically and emotionally from dv issues. Can't move fast when offered a shower at day center in federal way. Time limit is hard because I have old injuries and when you only offer cold showers my body gets stiff. And I can't bathe myself without the staff telling me time is up. But they will knock on door for 30 for a drug user passed out in bathroom while other are in line waiting to use bathroom
Not being able to afford things for my children and I without assistance from another person or agency even though I provide such service to the community.
None
Making sure I have enough money to pay rent , pay bills and bye food.
Presently I have not faced any barriers besides paying high property taxes and since being employed cannot qualify for any program that might assist. Being on Social Security cannot cover them so I must continue to be employed.
I'm lucky to be filling this out as a community service provider and have not been in need of services regularly myself. Though I do think income should be on your list of barriers
There aren't many mental health providers from my faith in this area and there are many providers who use their faith as basis for their treatment
Walking into stores and having codes called on me as if I was stealing just because of the color of my skin. I say that because I can walk into a store dressed nicely, without any purse and still have someone follow me. But, someone white can walk in with a huge bag or multiple bags at the same time, rob a store blind and get away with it scot free because the store employees were told to follow me and keep an eye on people like me. True story and Barnes & Nobles in Federal Way, WA.
less pay for the same amount of work or more, less chance to be promoted
Apparently being Caucasian now means one is a racist, a slave owner, and an oppressor who should not be allowed a voice or opinion.
I am a person of color and have felt some discrimination in the work place.
lack of mental health resources for youth and adults
Ageism
Prejudice from others relative to my capacities or knowledge
Age Discrimination and disability status. Since I'm an older adult on SSI alone as my income I'm looked down upon and not given a chance. I aged out of a lot of the programs that I could've been a part of.
People always comment about well you do not look disabled
Would rather not elaborate



## Appendix 4: Survey Comments COVID19 Impacts

<b>Q: When thinking about you and your family's life prior to the COVID19 pandemic, how has your life changed? What areas of your life have normalized? What areas of your life have changed long-term or permanently? What could MSC do to help support you and/or your family?</b>
Covid Unemployment caused me to return my vehicle to bank. Now I can't get another car due to credit score. I have NO access to a vehicle to get me to/from Doctors or work. Having worked for over 40years and been successful to being homeless and carless in my senior years is devastating and humiliating
Help with energy assistance
STAYING HOME AND NOT SPENDING TIME WITH FAMILY. HELP THEM FIND AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEAR US
1. Moving out was put firmly on the back burner for a while. Just moved out in January 2. Wearing a mask is habit now 3. See number 2 4. More of what you're already doing, I suppose
Make Mental/Behavior Health Open to people to everyone especially those on Medicare that get turned away at these places. They only except Medicaid at most of these places, like Valley Cities and Sound Mental Health. People on Medicare need help too and can't get any place to accept the insurance through Medicare they have.
Covid changed the outlook of decent jobs
We now plan for meals way in advance, and spend less on going out to eat. We had a child- so our life has changed considerably because of that. We plan ahead. We go out less. We have less casual encounters with friends. Life seems harder but we are getting by.
At the beginning of the original quarantine lock down/stay-home order, I had just given birth literally a couple days before, and had just moved into an apartment after about 3 years of homelessness. I went from the ability to work full time to support my family, to not even being able to leave the house. It didn't change much for a long time due to the risk of infection in such a tiny person. Then my other child who is school aged was thrown into online school at the end of Kindergarten. It was so rough for him, he's been diagnosed with ADHD and it was borderline impossible getting him to do the classes, pay attention and sit in one spot for so long while being home and seeing things he would rather be doing/playing with around him or just a room away. He struggled through 1st grade because over half was still online, he has improved and flourished in 2nd grade, even being considered for advanced classes entering 3rd grade. I wasn't able to work at all, with 1 newborn and 1 in school - mostly online - and no available childcare. Now that newborn is 2 years old, but he's showing many signs of autism, has been diagnosed with a developmental delay at best while we wait until September for an evaluation, and sees a therapist/specialist through Birth to Three to hopefully initiate speech or some form of communication for him. Being that he has special needs I've been unsuccessful in finding a work environment flexible enough to hire me while understanding my situation. I'm completely unable to cover August's rent and I'm scared moving forward that we will again be forced into homelessness, this time with a special needs child in tow as well. Please help my family, this pandemic has really done a number on us.
It's gotten a lot more difficult. I'm working my days away and still can't afford food or gas. I'm \$900 behind on my power bill and can't seem to catch up on rent
I think my overall connection with people and the outside world have come to a point of all time low. The desire to be around others is gone. My hope in humanity is diminishing consistently every day. The way our world is run is disgusting. The views of most people to those of low income or mental health issues or even more so of those whose have had indolent with Child Protective Service and the criminal justice department is appalling.
Financially
I was social and attending all my mental appointments and medical appointments now I can't I could afford to feed myself nope can't now
I used to go out when and where I wanted without having any worry about getting sick. With Covid, I had to especially conscious about wearing my mask and where I went. My mom has M.S. and COPD while my dad had Parkinson's and end stage COPD. They were homebound so I did all of their shopping (using scooters at the

stores). I knew if I got COVID, they would not survive it, especially my dad. Now I am able to shop more via the internet and pick it up or have it delivered. Get rid of the bag tax. I use food stamps, but sometimes still get charged for bags, especially when ordering online. There also needs to be more resources that are easy to find for the low income, seniors or disabled. As it is, I don't know where to look and my parents don't know how to use a computer and a lot of places require it now
depression, live entertainment is available. depression, .....more outreach programs
I don't know
Everything has gotten worse
We don't visit as often
Help me complete CEA that is needed to put me on programs
I had more time with myself and know that the 1st priority is being good with myself before others
I am much more isolated. I do not like crowds. I would like to see more remote work opportunities and better counseling services.
Household expenses have increased. Increased need for flexible financial assistance resources. In addition to rental/utility assistance- gas vouchers, clothing, school supplies, prescriptions, phone/internet, car repairs, etc. are all more expensive. Household often do not know what type of assistance to look/apply for since help is needed in so many areas. Flexible financial assistance would alleviate that burden.
I think we are more cautious when in public. I lost my husband due to cancer but it has been hard to keep going without him
Mental health services for the youth in my family impacted by COVID
My life - much more public health awareness; a deep weariness; frustration and disappointment at the depths of denial and support for crazy politics that only bring chaos, illness and death to our communities. I realize, with the overlay of the racial justice summer, that "normal" was really very unhealthy - for our nation, neighborhood and myself. I only wish and hope we will not "go back to what was normal" but may learn some deep lessons about care for one another and what IS possible. How can you support ... be a voice honoring public lament/grief; offer tools for reflection and growth (arts/literature/physical activity/ etc.); be in the communities with people and tools that offer pattern of healthy listening and care for one another; develop and channel financial and other resources based on the public good and best practices of human service and care.
With the inflation that seems to have come in on the heels of the pandemic, we cannot afford some necessary repairs for our home and auto.
I worry about my kids possibly spreading Covid to my house when they come to visit on the weekends. I absolutely cannot afford to miss work so sometimes I don't see them when I'm supposed to.
I learned how to navigate the world virtually. I have been able to connect with people I couldn't connect with before as a result of Zoom, WebEx, WhatsApp etc. I saved a lot of money on gas. My mental health increased because I became so much more vigilant about taking walks, praying, meditating etc. to cope with the stress from the pandemic. I became more compassionate and empathetic of those struggling with depression, anxiety, and loneliness as I myself had bouts of these same emotions. I lost a few loved ones and although this brought me great sadness, it also allowed me a deeper understanding of how to navigate grief in a positive manner. I gained renewed empathy for those who had also lost a loved one and could comfort them based on my experiences. I grew in my prayer life and in my closeness to my family as a result of staying in close proximity to them for so long. I learned new anger management and conflict resolution skills as a result of being locked in with family members. I learned that even during a pandemic, the world can mobilize such creative and unique ways to continue encouraging, empowering, and loving each other - this on a global scale. The pandemic brought us closer together in a way - it taught us that even in the worst of experiences, our light still can shine.
less social interaction, making me feel almost numb, I did start a new job and am doing well
Definitely more stress and anxiety, especially given that I have a compromised immune system and my spouse and other family members have risk factors.

trying to get back to normal
Learned that others know how to become more of a community when faced with hardships and try to build pathways to strengthen each other
Family's baseline of anxiety and stress has risen resulting in part to declining health. Entire family works /worked in education and has suffered terribly. One adult left the industry, a second seriously considering.
When my kids are sick they have to take covid tests before going back to school. I have 3 young kids, my life has been changing every year for the last 7 years, I don't feel my life will ever normalize. I am not sure what MSC can do to help.
You're doing the best you can
Not much has changed, other than losing a few loved ones due to the virus. Things are just as chaotic in my family's life as they've always been. If not, even more.
I am less adamant of going outside, going to the store for groceries and shopping mall. I feel crime (violent crime) is steadily increasing and I am very reluctant to live in this community. I want to find a more gated secure community.
I need caregiver certification
COVID destroyed high school students' social and academic lives. They are unengaged and isolated. Unfortunately that is not something MSC can help with.
Went to day center to get help with motel and all I seen was people activity using drugs around day center. I am high risk population already having covid twice and spent 6 days in ICU and I was told I had to sit in day center everyday all day to gain help in those motels. I was terrified and even told staff I can't do that due to fact I'm high risk and couldn't believe it.
Change during COVID19 pandemic for family's life was 'staying away from other family members' to avoid sickness. Family together time was affected. No MSC support for this one.
I have more anxiety. I do not feel the same about interactions with others. MSC cannot fix this for me or my family
No changes, none, we don't need coddling!
up the our wages.
The main thing that stands out for my family is that less social interaction has become the "norm". We used to entertain a lot and host a lot of large holiday and other gatherings, but that has come to an end with COVID. As a result, there's more of a feeling of isolation and so much pressure on the nuclear family as they are stretched very thin physically and emotionally trying meet their family's needs without as much support from other family and friends.
Significantly less family gatherings. Church forced to close as lost income.
Stress is much higher in my family. COVID caused my daughter to develop a severe anxiety disorder. Returning to school has helped to normalize.
Our family has weathered this fairly well. However, we have seen friends and neighbors struggle. Food security resources, rent resources and mental health support
our family has decided to give more to charities and spend more time with friends and family
Covid19 is still a pandemic although we are treating as if it is gone away. People are still missing work due to businesses having to close after someone tested positive and there not being funding for lost wages easily accessible or offered.
less chance to enjoy family life due to excessive workload and the reduced community entertainment opportunities. we get to feel more uncomfortable with any in-person events. It is hard to get back to what used to be normal, such as gathering in person with friends or participating in-person events. MSC can provide services such as counseling and mental health related service.
Thankfully life has pretty much normalized now.
Not much changed. Retired, home a lot for health issues, but put lots of travel plans on hold.
Before I went to the office to work; now I work from home. I use more services online.



Life will never be the same. For a year and half I worked from home. It was back and forth. I experienced a lot of depression during this time that wasn't the best. Life is starting to get back to normal but we won't ever be the same. As a family, staff or world. There are so many stories and thoughts that everyone feels about covid and if it is true or a lie. I finally feel back to a somewhat normal person now. Being able to come into the office. Not having to wear a mask. Being able to go to events and live life. Maybe offer a 1 day a week to work from home or once a month being able to do that. I think also bringing back in person staff meetings would be awesome. Bring normal back to MSC.
Nothing.
not as close to family like before the pandemic. Not enough time for myself. A mental health day would be nice
Encourage quality professionals in mental health to relocate to our area. Encourage activities and events for citizens to engage and interact within our community. Increase feeling of pride and ownership in the community.
More intentional about who I spend time with and what their health habits are like, more intentional about spending money in case of emergencies
I was a college student before the pandemic and now I'm not... online schooling proved difficult and I had to withdraw owing some financial aid to the state that is barring me from returning.
increase in social isolation.
not at all
Lost contact with a lot of friends

**Appendix 5: Survey Form****2022 COMMUNITY SURVEY**

The purpose of this survey is to ensure MSC continues to meet real community needs. Your responses about the **community concerns** of South King County, their **causes** and **solutions** will help us to do this. Your responses are voluntary and will be confidential. Responses will not be identified by individual. All responses will be compiled together and analyzed as a group.

1. Please select what you believe are the **top 5 community concerns** currently affecting south King County residents.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol/drug/gambling abuse        | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of access to adequate health care    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barriers to citizenship            | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of education/training                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barriers to transportation         | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of youth services                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare affordability            | <input type="checkbox"/> Limited English skills/language barrier   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic violence                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-generational poverty                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elder abuse                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Low pay/low wages                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy costs                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of mental/behavioral health services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homelessness                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Crime/Lack of personal safety             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing affordability              | <input type="checkbox"/> Money management                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hunger                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual violence                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Impacts of criminal justice system | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Describe _____               |  |

2. Please choose **ONE** of the **community concerns** you marked above and write it below.

3. Tell us what you think are the **main causes** of the community concern you listed in Question 2.

4. Then please share any ideas you have for **solutions** to the issue you listed in Question 2.

5. Please choose **ANOTHER** of the **community concerns** you marked above and write it below.

6. Tell us what you think are the **main causes** of the community concern you listed in Question 5.

7. Please share any ideas you have for **solutions** to the issue you listed in Question 5.

8. Have you experienced barriers in your community due to any of the following: (check all that apply)

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Race            | <input type="checkbox"/> Sex            | <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship status |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Color           | <input type="checkbox"/> Age            | <input type="checkbox"/> Gender identity    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religion        | <input type="checkbox"/> Disability     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National origin | <input type="checkbox"/> Veteran status | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnicity          |

9. If you experience barriers in your community, how frequently do they occur?

- |                                 |                                    |   |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Always | <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Often  | <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____    |

10. Please take a moment to describe one or more of the barriers you face.

11. In what ways has the COVID19 pandemic impacted you or your family?

- Received COVID-related financial support such as rental assistance
- Increased access to food resources (I can afford food or get free food resources to help me and my family.)
- Decreased access to food resources (I cannot afford food. I cannot get access to free food resources.)
- Decreased income
- Increased income
- Increased anxiety or stress
- Less anxiety or stress
- Decreased health
- Increased health
- Cannot pay rent or housing costs
- Have become unhoused/homeless
- Feeling more alone
- Feeling more connected to others
- Decreased academic performance
- Increased childcare issues or concerns
- Loss of employment and I am seeking employment
- Loss of employment and I am not seeking employment
- Positive career change
- Loss of social connection
- Death of a family member due to COVID19
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

12. When thinking about you and your family's life prior to the COVID19 pandemic, how has your life changed? What areas of your life have normalized? What areas of your life have changed long-term or permanently?

**Answering the following demographic questions gives us a more complete picture for our needs assessment.**

**I am a: (check all that apply)**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> MSC Volunteer | <input type="checkbox"/> MSC Board Member | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MSC Client    | <input type="checkbox"/> MSC Staff Person | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____      |

**I have previously used the following MSC services: (check all that apply)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education            | <input type="checkbox"/> Food & Clothing Bank     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment           | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Assistance    | <input type="checkbox"/> Long-Term Care Ombudsman |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Services           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____              |

**My gender is:**

- ☐ Female    ☐ Male    ☐ Non-conforming/non-binary    ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**My ethnicity is:**

- ☐ Hispanic/Latinx    ☐ Not Hispanic/Latinx    ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**My race(s) is/are: (check all that apply)**

- ☐ Asian/Asian American
- ☐ Black/African American/African
- ☐ Native American/Alaska Native
- ☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- ☐ White/Caucasian
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_