



Strategic Plan

Helping People & Changing
Lives in New Hampshire



2025 - 2029

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Agency Overview	4
Strategic Framework	5-6
Strategic Goals	7-9

Executive Summary

The Community Action Partnership Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties (CAPHR) has been serving individuals and families with low incomes for the last six decades. Rooted in the mission of promoting upward economic mobility and building strong communities, we utilize a Whole Family Approach to service delivery, providing a comprehensive set of services that address the needs of individuals at every stage of life, from prenatal to seniors.

Every five years we undergo a strategic planning process, which results in the development of a five-year agency strategic plan. This process is required under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), which is the legislation that regulates Community Action Partnerships (CAPs). Guided by the CSBG Organizational Standards, our Strategic Plan ensures that our work meets the needs and priorities of the local communities we assist.

The Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap for our future and defines the goals, action steps, and outcomes that will guide our progress over the next five years. It establishes a shared vision of impact, positioning the agency to respond effectively to emerging community needs while strengthening internal systems, partnerships, and capacity.

The successful implementation of this plan will rely on the collective effort of CAPHR's leadership including the Board of Directors, staff, community partners, stakeholders, and those we assist.

CAPHR's strategic plan focuses on improving how families access services, strengthening internal communication and workforce engagement, and increasing community awareness of both the agency and the Community Action movement. The plan focuses on strategies that emphasize better data collection, stronger and more consistent communication, a unified brand identity, the Whole Family Approach, and the use of an integrated agency-wide database.

The agency will work to reduce barriers to services by expanding appointment options, creating welcoming client experiences, and expanding the availability of tools that support easier application and documentation processes. Outreach efforts will be expanded through digital campaigns, community events, and clearer guidance to help households understand the programs for which they may qualify. Internally, CAPHR will enhance collaboration through improved communication systems, cross-program committees, consistent training, and stronger onboarding and retention practices rooted in ongoing staff input.

To deepen our community presence, CAPHR will coordinate partnerships more effectively, track partner referral activity, participate more broadly in community events, and formalize collaborations that address unmet community needs. We will also strengthen our public identity by strengthening our brand voice, unifying messaging across platforms, and launching outreach efforts that build recognition of our new name. Staff will be equipped to communicate the agency's mission confidently, and CAPHR will expand visibility on college campuses and within public school systems to strengthen referral pathways and future workforce pipelines.

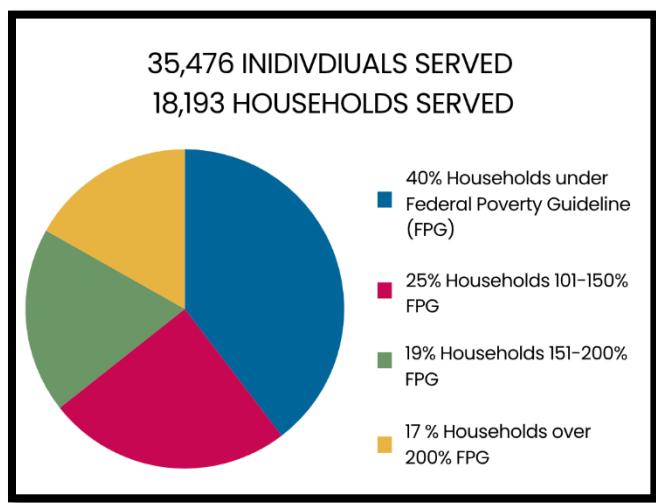
Agency Overview

The Community Action Partnership Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties (CAPHR) has been serving NH communities for over sixty years. Chartered in 1965 as Southern New Hampshire Services, Inc., we initially served Hillsborough County. In 2011, following a merger with Rockingham Community Action, we expanded our service area to include Rockingham County. Today, we provide services in each of the 65 municipalities within this region, with some programs operating statewide.

In 2024 we changed our name to Community Action Partnership Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties (CAPHR), a change that was made based on a number of factors. During our previous strategic planning cycle, it came to light many clients identified with the program they were receiving services from, but many were not aware that it was part of a larger organization and national network. The name Southern New Hampshire Services also created confusion with other local institutions such as a university and hospital with similar names. Adopting CAPHR strengthened the alignment with our four sister agencies in NH and with the National Community Action brand and provided clearer recognition as a CAP agency.

CAPHR is one of approximately 1,000 CAPs nationwide and the largest of the five serving NH. Community Action was established in the 1960s as part of President Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty." Since that time, CAP agencies have been grounded in a commitment to eliminate the causes and conditions of poverty while increasing access to opportunity. A hallmark of Community Action is the flexibility provided through the CSBG funding, which allows agencies to design services to meet the unique needs of the local communities they assist.

In 2024 we adopted a simplified mission statement from our longer mission statement in an effort to create a mission that was more succinct and reflects the core values of Community Action. *"We dedicate ourselves to addressing poverty in the midst of plenty in this nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training; the opportunity for work; and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity."*



independence.

CAPHR operates more than sixty programs spanning the following areas of service: Workforce Development, Child Development, Food and Nutrition, Energy Assistance, Housing and Homelessness Prevention, Volunteerism, and Community Services. Through a Whole Family Approach, we ensure that the individuals and families receiving assistance get a holistic set of services to meet the needs of every family member, with the ultimate goal of upward economic mobility leading to financial

CAPHR is governed by a tripartite Board of Directors, as required by CSBG, which is a unique and defining feature of Community Action. A minimum of one third of the board is representatives of the individuals and families with low income, one third are public officials or their representatives, and one third is from the private sector. This structure ensures the *maximum feasible participation* of people with low income in shaping the programs and services designed to support them.

Strategic Framework

The guiding framework for our strategic planning process is grounded in the CSBG Organizational Standards and Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA), both of which Community Action Agencies are required to comply with. The CSBG Organizational Standards require that CAPs complete a Strategic Plan every five years, and that the plan be informed by the data and analysis within the Community Needs Assessment (CNA).

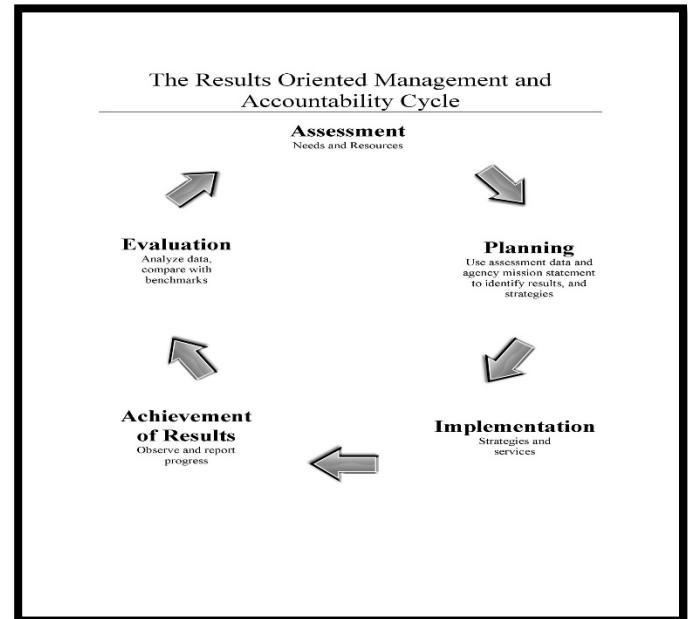
To develop this plan, we incorporated data from multiple sources, including our most recent Community Needs Assessment and a series of strategic planning surveys completed by CAPHR clients, staff, partner organizations, and community members. Our Board of Directors' Planning and Evaluation Committee was involved in developing the survey tools, and the full board received a progress update on the strategic planning process at the recent board annual meeting.

In alignment with the principle of *maximum feasible participation*, a core tenet of Community Action, we ensured that our clients had opportunities to shape the Strategic Plan. Their experiences, perspectives, and priorities were incorporated through both the CNA and the strategic planning survey process. These inputs directly influenced the themes and strategies that emerged.

The CNA identified the following areas of community strengths and needs, which were further reinforced by the strategic planning survey data.

Strengths:

- Strong collaboration among community organizations working to meet local needs cooperatively.
- Opportunities for individuals with low incomes to participate in policy design and decision-making processes (*maximum feasible participation*).
- Community members supporting their neighbors in times of need.
- Strong economy and job market.



Needs:

- The top identified need was affordable housing, accompanied by a related need for rental and utility assistance.
- Supports for income and asset building, including budgeting, credit building, and debt management.
- Greater access to food, given the increasing grocery costs and household food insecurity.

Customer satisfaction findings from the strategic planning survey also informed the development of this plan.

- 76% of CAPHR clients reported being satisfied with the services they received, with 14% giving a neutral rating.
- 90% indicated they were treated with dignity.

The strategic planning survey data indicates that CAPHR's strengths as:

- connecting individuals and families to agency programs and services;
- filling gaps by offering a wide variety of programs;
- connecting families to community resources; and
- achievement of mission—88% of respondents reported that CAPHR is meeting its mission somewhat well or very well.

Additional key findings from the CNA and strongly supported by the strategic planning survey include:

- Many who could benefit from CAPHR services are unaware of the full range of programs and services offered.
- Despite our efforts to increase visibility and name recognition following our name change, 60% of strategic planning survey respondents were unaware that SNHS is now CAPHR.
- Fewer than half of respondents rated their knowledge of what CAPHR does as “good” or “excellent.” The tendency to relate to a particular program rather than the larger agency, which was identified in our CNA persists in our strategic planning survey data.
- Barriers to accessing services include the concern of stigma around accessing services, difficulty providing eligibility documents, transportation to appointments, and the hours of operation.

The strategic planning process was carried out by an internal team representing multiple departments across the agency. Members of this team participated in a Strategic Planning Accelerator training presented by the National Community Action Partnership, which provided structure, tools, and best practices for designing a data-driven plan. Through this work, the team identified three core strategic priority areas. These priorities reflect the data collected through the CNA and surveys and support the continued advancement of our mission in the years ahead.

Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal 1: Advance CAPHR's service delivery by implementing strategies to improve coordination and access.

Objective 1A: Identify and remove barriers to receiving services.

Based on the feedback received, we will explore offering appointments virtually, and having more availability in the early morning, and evening hours to accommodate those who are working and/or facing transportation challenges. To reduce any stigma experienced by clients, we will continue to create a welcoming and respectful client experience. Some of the ways we will do this will include ensuring staff interactions uphold dignity and maintaining privacy within office spaces. In addition, we will continue to replicate the Opportunity Center model at other CAPHR resource centers as funding allows, to provide the opportunity for individuals to help themselves by using the available computers and office tools to obtain and submit eligibility documentation with greater ease. We will continue to collect data from our clients to assess improvements to accessing services and any barriers that persist so we can focus on continued improvement.

Objective 1B: Increase awareness of available services to eligible individuals and families through continued use of a Whole Family Approach to service delivery.

CAPHR will increase awareness of our wide range of services by strengthening outreach efforts and reinforcing the Whole Family Approach across all programs. We will utilize digital marketing and outreach campaigns to highlight available services and we will increase participation in community events to help connect eligible individuals and families with needed supports. We will develop an eligibility screener to be made available on CAPHR's website, which will give applicants a clearer understanding of all programs they may qualify for. Staff will utilize the agency-wide database to track all programs each household receives. This will facilitate internal referrals based on presumptive eligibility. Additional training on the Whole Family Approach will be provided to CAPHR staff to promote cross-program referrals.

Strategic Goal 2: Strengthen internal communication, workforce engagement, and data-informed decision making.

Objective 2A: Promote increased communication opportunities and coordination across the agency and programs.

CAPHR will strengthen communication across the agency. Our intranet site, CAPPER, will be updated consistently to provide up-to-date news and information to all employees. Exit interviews will be conducted with outgoing staff to capture information about organizational strengths and areas for improvement to support ongoing culture enhancement. CAPHR will establish committees that bring together staff from different programs to share insights, strengthen collaboration, and advance best practices for client services. In addition, we will consistently gather staff input, which will be considered in the decision-making process related to service delivery, workforce development, and overall employee experience.

Objective 2B: Reinforce connection to the agency mission and Community Action.

CAPHR will provide ongoing training on all agency programs to support cross-program referrals and better assist clients. We will bring all staff together for training and team building to foster a core culture focused on Community Action.

Objective 2C: Use established systems to support ongoing data and information collection to track progress on recruitment, hiring, and retention.

CAPHR will be utilizing new additional marketing opportunities to recruit staff, including events that are helpful for different programs to target attendees with information about available jobs. We will make the first impression of hiring a better experience by recognizing the first experience is “onboarding” which is primarily related to benefits and documentation along with a brief overview of the agency and safety policies.

CAPHR will strengthen employee retention by having programs expand and standardize their new hire orientations to ensure that new employees receive consistent training and orientation related to their specific department. After the new staff member has onboarded and received “program” orientation, we will follow-up with an agency orientation. The agency orientation is being refreshed to ensure that it takes a deeper dive into the Community Action Movement, which will include history, maximum feasible participation and its meaning along with the requirement and purpose of our tripartite board. This will help the new staff member have a better understanding of what we do, why we do it, and how we do it. Armed with this information, we believe they will have a different sense of the role and purpose they play in the bigger picture.

Strategic Goal 3: Expand awareness of CAPHR's services in the community through strengthened strategic partnerships and marketing efforts.

Objective 3A: Improve internal coordination of community partnerships amongst agency programs.

CAPHR will strengthen the coordination of community partnerships by using the agency-wide database to track partner relationships, document program interactions with partners, and capture referral data to assess partnership effectiveness. We will increase participation in community partner events, ensuring that staff attending are cross-trained on agency programs to ensure a broader agency-wide perspective. CAPHR will also enhance its internal outreach event-tracking process to improve coordination of outreach activities and ensure consistent representation at community events.

Objective 3B: Strengthen community partnerships to fill service gaps within the community.

CAPHR will expand partnerships with organizations that can help address identified service gaps, including rental assistance, mental health supports, and additional food resources. Formal collaborations will be reinforced through more frequent use of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs). We will also provide partner organizations with clear, concise overviews of all programs and services to support effective referrals and ensure families are connected to the full range of available resources.

Strategic Goal 4: Promote awareness about our new name and the Community Action movement among all audiences (clients, staff, and the community at large).

Objective 4A: Increase awareness of CAPHR through brand management.

CAPHR will refine and strengthen its brand voice that reflects our mission and values. All communications will present a consistent, professional, and client focused identity. We will expand visibility through consistent outreach across social media, our website, printed materials, and community events. A multi-media outreach campaign will be launched to improve public recognition of the CAPHR name and increase key brand awareness metrics such as website visits, social engagement, and campaign reach.

Objective 4B: Increase employee engagement in promoting CAPHR's brand image.

CAPHR will refresh agency messaging that includes our simplified mission statement, "elevator pitches," program summaries, and consistently always wearing our agency identification badges, and agency branded clothing. We will ensure that all staff are trained and consistent in how they communicate about the agency. We will enhance our visual identity, messaging, and storytelling to improve recognition and reinforce our mission. We work toward creating a *speakers bureau* of service recipients who are willing to speak to members of the media or elected officials to tell their stories of how our services impacted their lives.

Objective 4C: Implement strategies to promote CAPHR to the future workforce and partners.

CAPHR will expand our presence on college campuses through career fairs and events to enhance awareness, increase referrals, and support future staff recruitment pipelines. We will also continue to deepen partnerships with public school systems to ensure families are easily connected with our resources.

In conclusion, this Strategic Plan demonstrates the continued commitment of the Community Action Partnership Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties. Guided by our mission and informed by the voices of those we serve, this plan charts a clear path toward greater impact and opportunity. Our success will depend on the collective dedication of our staff, Board of Directors, partners, and the communities we serve. Together, we will continue to break down barriers, foster upward mobility, and build stronger, more inclusive communities. Let us continue to move forward with purpose, united by our shared vision and inspired by the possibilities ahead.