



## **LHSN Recommendations and Statements Regarding FY 2023 ARPA Funding**

### **Anticipated Funding Needs in FY 2023: Responding to the Public Health Emergency and Negative Economic Impacts of COVID-19 for Disproportionately Impacted Communities in Loudoun County**

Nonprofit member organizations of Loudoun Human Services Network (LHSN) report that they continue to experience high levels of service demand as a result of COVID-19, at levels higher than pre-COVID and in some cases, even higher than in 2020 and 2021. Many of the communities served by LHSN member organizations have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

#### *Anticipated ARPA Funding Needed in FY 2023 for COVID-19 Recovery*

After polling LHSN member organizations, it is anticipated that a minimum of \$2.5 million in FY 2023 is needed to address the elevated services requests that are described below for continued COVID-19 recovery efforts, specifically for assistance to households, preventing and responding to violence, and continued support of existing behavioral healthcare services that were funded in Tranche 1.

Fourteen nonprofit members of LHSN that also received ARPA funding in Tranche 1 responded to a poll and projected their ARPA-related funding needs as it relates to the categories below. Collectively, they report needs exceeding \$2.5 million for the following services in FY 2023: food assistance; domestic violence and child abuse assistance and prevention; employment assistance; disability services; rental and utility assistance; transportation assistance to disproportionately impacted communities; early childhood education; and mental health support. These fourteen organizations are a sample of our membership as well as the organizations that received Tranche 1 funding; therefore, it is anticipated that the funding need will well exceed the more than \$2.5 million already known.

#### *Assistance to Households*

LHSN member organizations report elevated levels of service requests for programs providing direct assistance for low-or-moderate income households and communities; households that have experienced unemployment; and households experiencing increased food and housing insecurity, at levels higher than pre-COVID and in some cases, even higher than in 2020 and 2021. This is as a direct result of the negative economic damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic which disproportionately impacted low-income and underserved residents of Loudoun County. Additional financial resources are needed in FY 2023 to address employment assistance, food security, utility assistance, housing security, and childcare and early learning services.

#### *Preventing and Responding to Violence*

LHSN member organizations report elevated levels of service requests for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse in Loudoun County as of March 2022. Additional financial resources are needed in FY 2023 to address the need for safety in our community and trauma recovery services for victims of crime.

#### *Behavioral Healthcare*

LHSN member organizations report significantly elevated levels of service requests for programs providing behavioral healthcare, including mental health treatment for children, youth, and adults. Additional resources are needed to continue supporting existing services and the program expansions that were implemented with Tranche 1 funding.

The needs and initiatives cited above fall into responding to public health and economic impacts of COVID-19, rather than transformative change.



## **Transformative Change**

LHSN member organizations agree that transformative change is highly desirable. Immediate needs related to the negative economic impacts of COVID-19 must be significantly reduced to allow for larger change initiatives.

LHSN member organizations agree with the county that transformative change in the areas of behavioral healthcare, childcare, and co-location of services are important and critically needed services in our community, especially for those populations disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. All three of those areas of need are underdeveloped in Loudoun. However, transformative impact will require significant, multi-year funding to properly build capacity for successful, meaningful implementation of new or expanded projects addressing these complex issues. To successfully address all three of these areas, LHSN recommends a \$3 million investment, in addition to the \$2.5 million needed in the upcoming fiscal year to address negative economic impacts of COVID-19.

ARPA funding allows for funding the capacity of community organizations to serve people with significant barriers to services, including people of color, people with low incomes, limited English proficient populations, and other traditionally underserved groups. This flexible approach generates a trajectory of transformative change with collaborative approaches necessary given the scope of need, funds to be allocated, and the willing investment of the nonprofit community and LHSN. LHSN recommends reviewing the 2020 Human Services Strategic Plan, making changes as needed for our new environment and developing a multi-year funding plan for transformative change.

## **Community Engagement**

Recognizing the importance of Community Engagement relative to ARPA distributions, the LHSN stands ready to partner collaboratively with the County to further increase diverse feedback from constituents, community-based organizations, and the communities themselves that ARPA funds are intended to assist for such transformative change, and to plan for how such funds will be best applied.

The series of meetings held by the County's Department of Finance and Budget to solicit feedback regarding Tranche 2 of ARPA funding have been a great starting point and LHSN seeks to offer its partnership and assistance to expand the diversity of input beyond the community-based organizations, through strategic and facilitated processes, especially in regards to initiatives tied to long-term, transformative change.

## **Final Recommendations**

With FY 2023 on the horizon, LHSN recommends that (a) \$2.5 million of COVID-recovery funding for households through nonprofit sub-grantees be allocated for released in the beginning of the fiscal year, and (b) that a facilitated planning process using the 2020 Human Services Strategic Plan and its public/private Advisory Committee as a starting point be launched to include feedback from key stakeholders, including diverse constituents, community-based organizations, and the communities themselves, in order to address areas of transformative change and develop recommendations. LHSN recommends a \$3 million allocation to support this work.