

The Strategy Team wants to let you know what issues our Action Teams are working on and invite your input and participation.

1. URGENT: We are asking you to let us know if you have any disagreement with our School Transportation Equity action, outlined below.
2. We are asking you to review the direction ACT is heading regarding a coming "tidal wave" of evictions.
3. We are inviting you to join in the work of crafting a new vision for Anne Arundel County around Criminal Justice Reform, Education Equity, Jobs, Food Security, Housing, and more.
4. Please save the date for the first in a series on Race and Community Organizing, Thursday, July 16, 7-8:30 pm. ([Register here](#)).

We heard from you that we could do better in communicating what's happening across ACT. We will continue these accountability reports, but we need you to act on them, too. In a time such as this, we need the engagement of all our organizations to have the power we will need to create lasting, substantive change in Anne Arundel County.

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION EQUITY: The school board voted to re-allocate funds from Transportation to Mental Health

1. Community leaders in public and subsidized communities have worked hard to get seven new bus positions funded for new transportation routes so their children can get to school easier and not traverse busy and dangerous intersections, such as Forest Drive.
2. The school board voted, in a surprise move, to shift the \$745,100 they fought for to fund five mental health positions in the county, citing the "changing environment" around coronavirus
3. The community have come to ACT and are asking us if we will organize with them to ask the school board and the County Council, which must ratify the school board's decision, to put that hard-fought \$745,100 back into the transportation budget.
4. We believe this is an racial equity issue. Mental health is extremely important. We will work to find funding for those roles. But it cannot come at the expense of the health and safety of children in predominantly minority neighborhoods in Annapolis and Anne Arundel County.

We recommend:

1. ACT issues a statement demanding the \$745,100 be kept in the transportation budget
2. Our team looks for other areas in the school budget where \$745,100 may be taken from to support growing mental health needs
3. We organize leaders in our community to meet with and explain the importance of these seven bus routes to county council members and members of the school board
4. We make public statements to this effect within our organizations and throughout Anne Arundel County
5. We continue to take further steps to organize around this and other transportation equity issues in our school system.

HOUSING: Stop mass evictions

1. ACT won a moratorium on evictions from the County Executive that extends 30 days after the state's deadline. This means that evictions in our county can begin on August 25.

Governor Hogan set a moratorium on all evictions in the state of Maryland until July 25.

Anne Arundel County's moratorium ends on August 25.

2. Secure additional funds for the County's Eviction Prevention Program

The County Executive placed \$3m in the Eviction Prevention Program.

We are researching how much additional funding should be placed in that fund to prevent mass evictions in August

We are talking with tenants and landlords

3. Secure additional funding for Case Management and Administration for the Eviction Prevention Program

The Eviction Prevention Program is operated by on-the-ground organizations, such as Light House; ACDS; Centro de Ayuda; the Partnership for Children, Youth, & Families; and the Community Action Agency.

The Light House, an ACT member, has received over 600 applications.

They, and other administrators of the Eviction Prevention Program, have indicated they need additional staffing to process these applications in a timely manner.

We are researching with them how much we should be asking be included for staffing to process these funds quickly.

4. Secure funds for financial counseling so people can turn their lives around

First Christian Community Church has pioneered a financial counseling program, the LIFT program, that provides wrap-around services to people looking for a fresh start

The LIFT program identifies, through relationship and commitment, specific needs such as budgeting, but also identifying old debts that are keeping people from succeeding and paying them off.

Would other ACT organizations be interested in offering this type of program?

We are exploring if CARES Act funding could be placed in a fund that could be made responsibly available to participants in such a program, especially for debt payoff, so that people can "build back better"

5. Create Re-Payment Plans for tenants not renting from the Housing Commission of Anne Arundel County

Tenants renting from HACA have already been offered payment plans

How could a payment plan be similarly offered to tenants in Anne Arundel County across a variety of landlords?

A NEW VISION FOR AACo

1. ACT is working on an action to develop a new vision for Anne Arundel County that is responsive to this moment but truly installs ways for the county to "build back better." This includes:

Criminal Justice Reform with our other Maryland affiliate organizations

Expanding Good Jobs Training with Fair Wages

Green Jobs

Wrap-around counseling (such as the LIFT program)

Education Access Equity

Affordable Housing, including increased opportunities to OWN a home.

We will be inviting you to be part of creating this. Contact Maurita at aaaciaf@gmail.com if you feel called to be part of any of the above Issue Action Teams.

RACE AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Thursday, July 16, 7-8:30 pm via Zoom

ACT is working to address implicit bias through the universals of community organizing in the Industrial Areas

Foundation. Please plan to join us for our first workshop in this series, led by Rev. Dr. Karen V. Johnson, Senior Pastor of First Christian Community Church and ACT Co-Chair, and Jonathan Lange, a senior organizer with Metro Industrial Areas Foundation

ADVANCE REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR THIS MEETING:

Register by clicking [HERE](#)

Thank You letter from County Executive Steuart Pittman to ACT Volunteers. Read [HERE](#)

THE STRATEGY TEAM OF ACT.

www.actiaf.org