**ALLEGHENY COUNTY**
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

2024
Accomplishments

Human Services for Allegheny County

Allegheny County has some great advantages. Our levels of **college education and per capita income are over 10 points higher** than the nation, we have **40% more primary care doctors** per capita than state and national averages, and compared with other counties, ours is **9 points higher in the share of people who live close to parks/recreation.** These are just some of the factors that place our county higher than average in national rankings.[1]

10 points higher
education and income

40% more
primary care doctors

9 points higher
in people who live close to parks
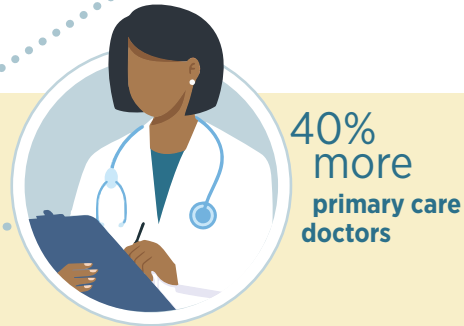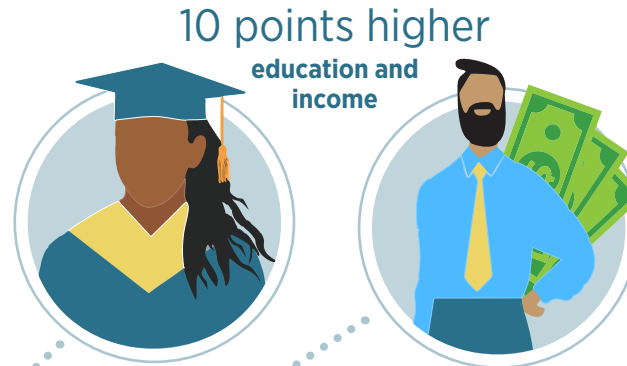
Less well-known is that our county has a social services sector that **prevents crises and improves lives.** From mental health treatment and housing to child welfare and Senior Centers, **over 200,000 people get County human services help each year.**

Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) is responsible for making sure we come together to **provide care and support that truly helps people, especially those who need it most.**

[1] University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps 2024. www.countyhealthrankings.org. Accessed at: https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/pennsylvania?year=2024
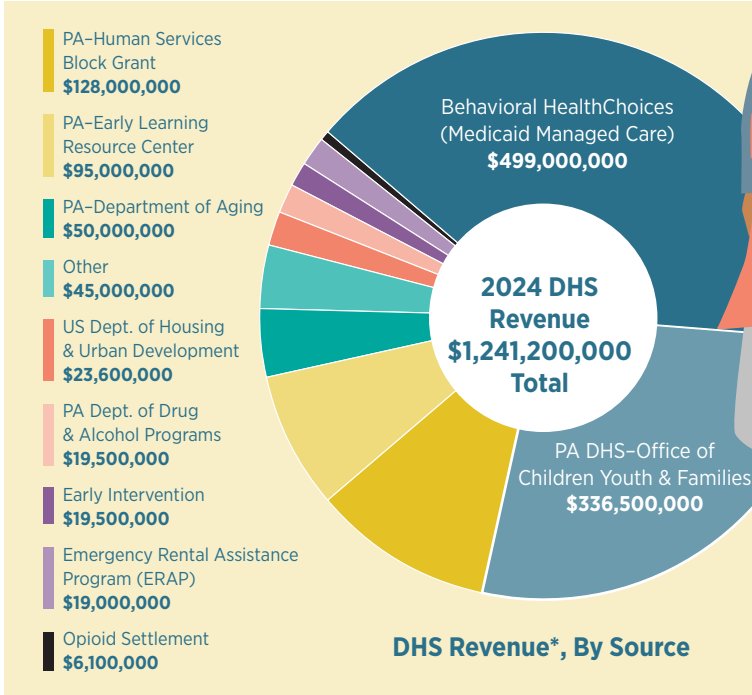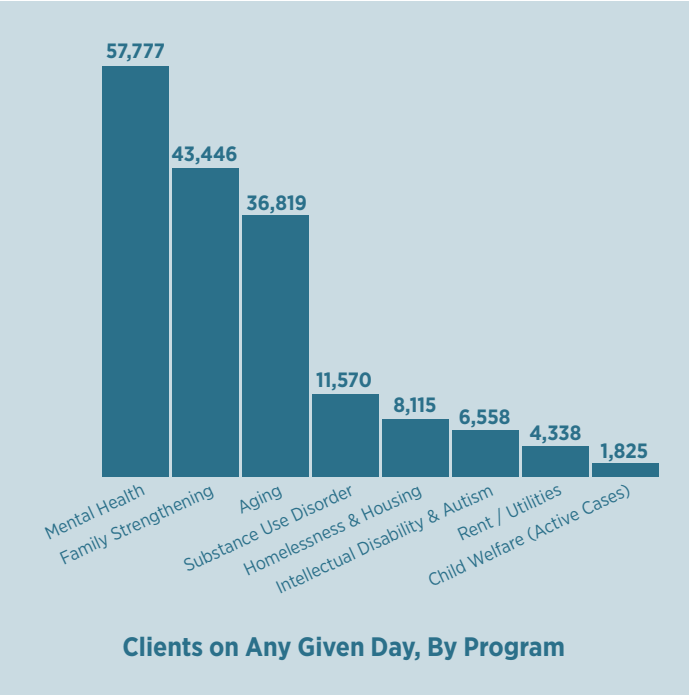
About DHS

OUR PURPOSE

Help people during their most vulnerable times

Prevent crises whenever possible by investing in preventive services

Advocate for support and services so people can thrive

Clients on Any Given Day, By Program

- Mental Health: 57,777
- Family Strengthening: 43,446
- Aging: 36,819
- Substance Use Disorder: 11,570
- Homelessness & Housing: 8,115
- Intellectual Disability & Autism: 6,558
- Rent / Utilities: 4,338
- Child Welfare (Active Cases): 1,825

DHS Revenue*, By Source

2024 DHS Revenue $1,241,200,000 Total

- Behavioral HealthChoices (Medicaid Managed Care) **$499,000,000**
- PA DHS–Office of Children Youth & Families **$336,500,000**
- PA–Human Services Block Grant **$128,000,000**
- PA–Early Learning Resource Center **$95,000,000**
- PA–Department of Aging **$50,000,000**
- Other **$45,000,000**
- US Dept. of Housing & Urban Development **$23,600,000**
- PA Dept. of Drug & Alcohol Programs **$19,500,000**
- Early Intervention **$19,500,000**
- Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) **$19,000,000**
- Opioid Settlement **$6,100,000**

approximate

About DHS

OUR GOALS

1 Improve access to care

2 Prevent harm

3 Reduce use of involuntary services

4 Increase economic security

5 Ensure quality

OUR STRATEGIES

To propel us more quickly towards these goals, DHS implemented its Strategic Initiatives during 2024. **This Report highlights 11 results.** To see the full set of Strategic Initiatives, read DHS Goals and Key Initiatives: 2024.

OUR PROVIDER PARTNERS

While DHS employs hundreds of caseworkers and other "direct service" staff, most of the people who provide human services in the County are the staff of 300+ contracted providers. Everything from substance use treatment to meals at Senior Centers is possible because of the community-based agencies we fund.

ALLEGHENY COUNTY DHS
Director, Erin Dalton

PROGRAM OFFICES

Aging Services
Director, Shannah Tharp-Gilliam

Behavioral Health
Director, Stuart Fisk (through 2024)

Children, Youth and Families
Director, Mandeep Gill

Community Services
Director, Abigail Horn

Developmental Supports
Director, Brenda Bulkoski

SUPPORT OFFICES

Administration
Director, Loren Ganoe

Analytics, Technology & Planning
Director, Alex Jutca

Equity & Engagement
Director, Jessica Ruffin

Featured 2024 Initiatives

1 **Improve Access to Care**
- Make it easier to find help
- Increase access for seniors

2 **Prevent Harm**
- Move from homelessness to housing
- Reach families in greatest need
- Deliver critical, life-saving behavioral health treatment and care
- Reduce intimate partner violence

3 **Reduce Use of Involuntary Services**
- Reduce involvement by child protective services
- Reduce law enforcement encounters

4 **Increase Economic Security**
- Launch *Allegheny Go*
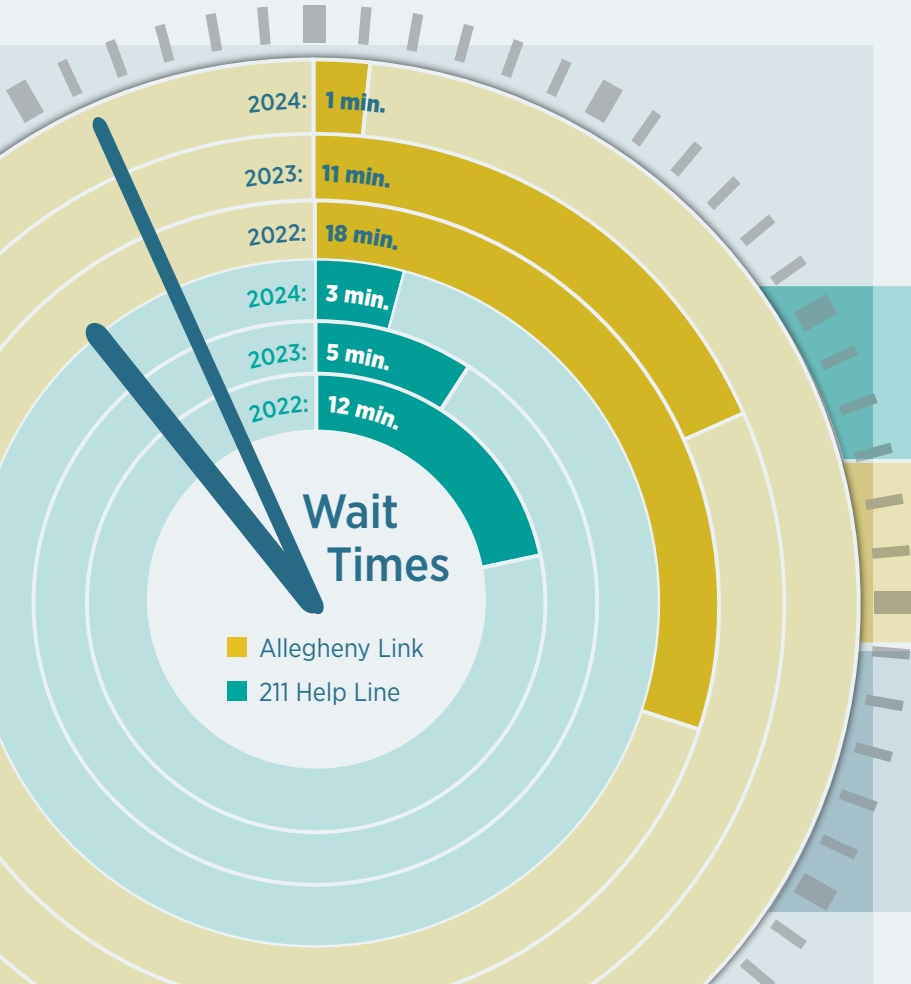- Advocate for resources that stabilize households

5 **Ensure Quality**
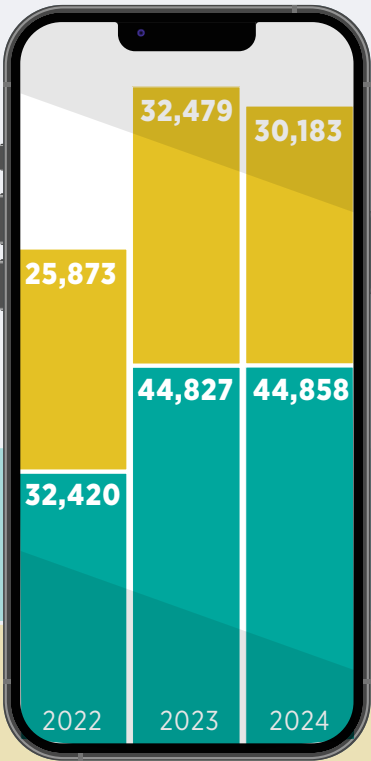- Use community feedback to improve services

1 Improve Access to Care

Make it Easier to Find Help

Wait Times

2024: 1 min.
2023: 11 min.
2022: 18 min.

2024: 3 min.
2023: 5 min.
2022: 12 min.

- Allegheny Link
- 211 Help Line

Calls Answered

- Allegheny Link
- 211*

25,873
32,479
30,183

32,420
44,827
44,858

2022   2023   2024

We invested in the **211 helpline** so they could **expand staff** and **answer calls more quickly.**

We **reduced wait times at the Allegheny Link**, the place people call when they are homeless or need to prevent an eviction.

We built a cadre of **super navigators with deep experience about health and human services** in the County who are now available to answer questions for agencies helping clients.

super
NAVIGATORS

* includes texts and chats

Increase Access for Seniors

3,713 seniors

2024

3,583 seniors

2022

3,599 seniors

2023

50,000 seniors reached

Through our **new texting platform**, we are communicating directly with **over 50,000 seniors** about available help, events and tips.

540
2022

332
2023

217
2024
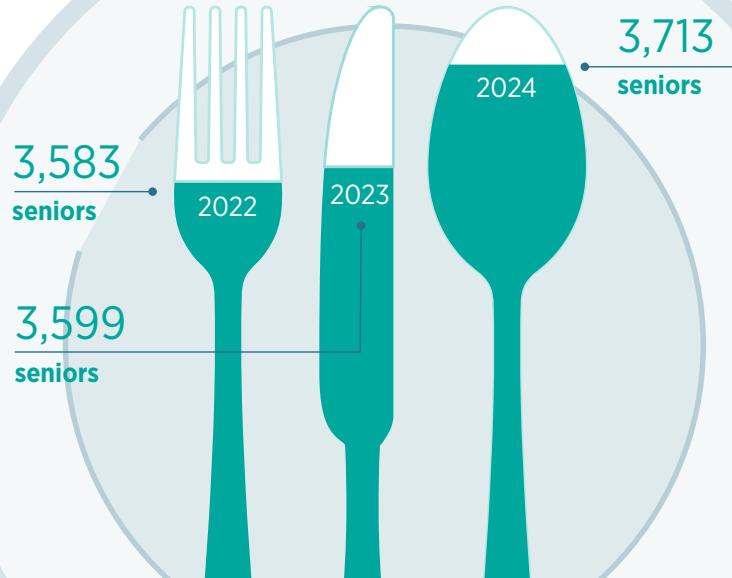
Meals & Nutrition

We **redesigned** our **Senior Meals** program and **expanded** other **nutrition services** to better reach more seniors.

We created **demand pricing for in-home services**, which **reduced the waiting list** and reached seniors we hadn't been able to serve before.

Waitlist for In-Home Services

2
Prevent Harm

Move from Homelessness to Housing

500 IN 500

208 People → 164 Housing Units

Individuals living in homeless shelters have been staying there longer than in years' past because of the affordable housing shortage. Starting in June 2024, the Allegheny County Executive led a coalition to identify 500 housing units for people living in shelters, to lease within 500 days. **From June through December of 2024, this "500 in 500" initiative created 164 housing units and 208 formerly homeless people moved in.** The County is on pace to meet its goal of 500 units in 500 days.

Length of Stay in Year-Round Shelters (Median Days)

	2022	2023	2024
Individuals	23	30	41
Families	73	75	56

■ Individuals   ■ Families
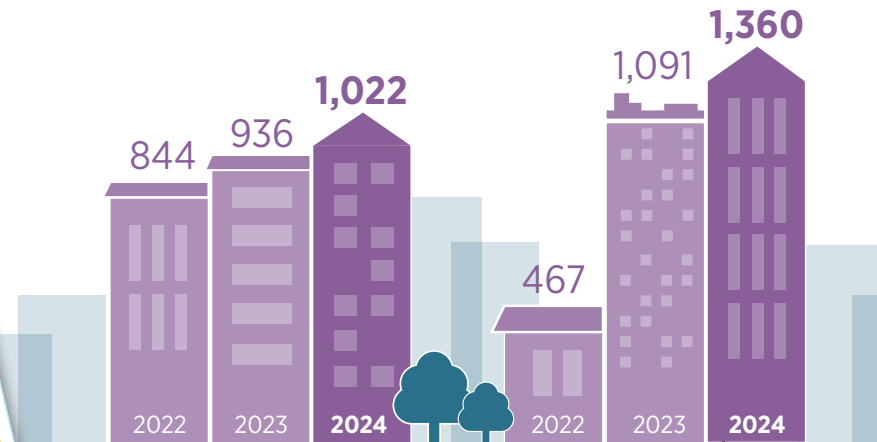
Number of People Entering Permanent Housing from Shelter

2022	2023	**2024**
844	936	1,022

Eviction Filings Prevented through Mediation

2022	2023	**2024**
467	1,091	1,360

DHS also **helped more clients enter permanent housing** from homelessness, **reduced the length of time families** needed to stay at shelters, and **prevented eviction filings**. We still have work to do to bring down the length of stay in shelters for individuals.

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH SMI

For people with **serious mental illness,** DHS made changes to the process that led to a **reduced wait list** and **served a larger share of highly-vulnerable people** without anyone losing housing.

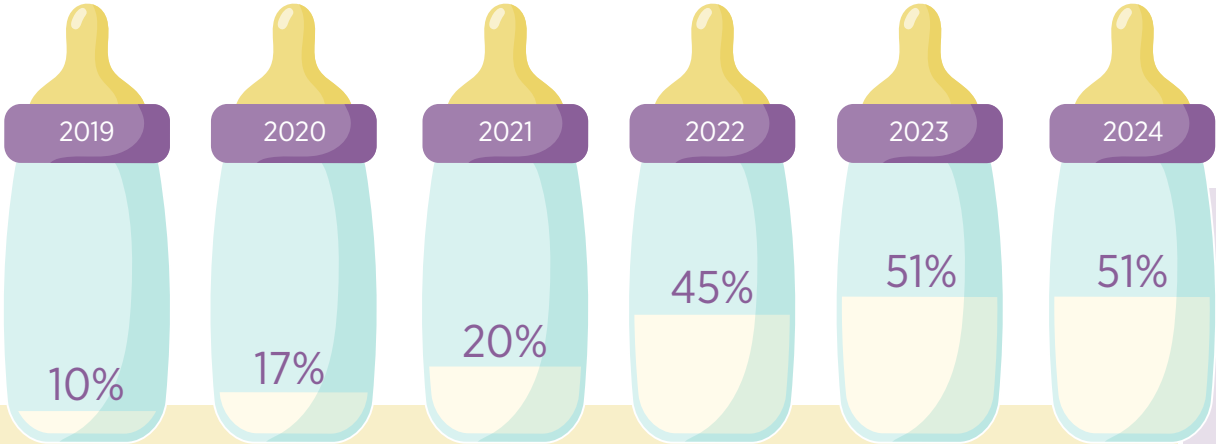**169** people waitlisted
23% highly-vulnerable clients served
2021

→

19 people waitlisted
60% highly-vulnerable clients served
2024

Reach Families in Greatest Need

1,508 high-priority families
served by Hello Baby and Family Centers

2019 — 10%
2020 — 17%
2021 — 20%
2022 — 45%
2023 — 51%
2024 — 51%

Share of the County's Highly Vulnerable Families Served by Hello Baby and Family Centers

hello baby

Is it possible to **prevent** child welfare involvement? Our **Hello Baby** program is working to do just that, and on a scale larger than other programs in the nation.

Hello Baby provides a combination of home visiting by peers, family support, help with housing and child care, and essentials like diapers and formula—focused on families with the highest need/greatest risk of harms. Hello Baby and other programs have succeeded in **engaging 51% of the highest-need families in the County.** Hello Baby and our Family Centers served 1,508 families with high vulnerability in 2024.

Reach Families in Greatest Need

12,094 children

12,605 children

12,861 children

94%

95%

93%

2022 2023 2024

**Child Care Subsidies — Children Enrolled**

DHS also **increased child care subsidies to serve 12,861 children** and **tripled the families served by basic needs** (e.g., meals and furniture), thanks to increases in County and State investments. Almost every family receiving these services received public benefits (Food Stamps, Medicaid, SSI or Temporary Assistance to Needy Families).

900,000 diapers
to families in 2024

7,000 cans of formula
to families in 2024
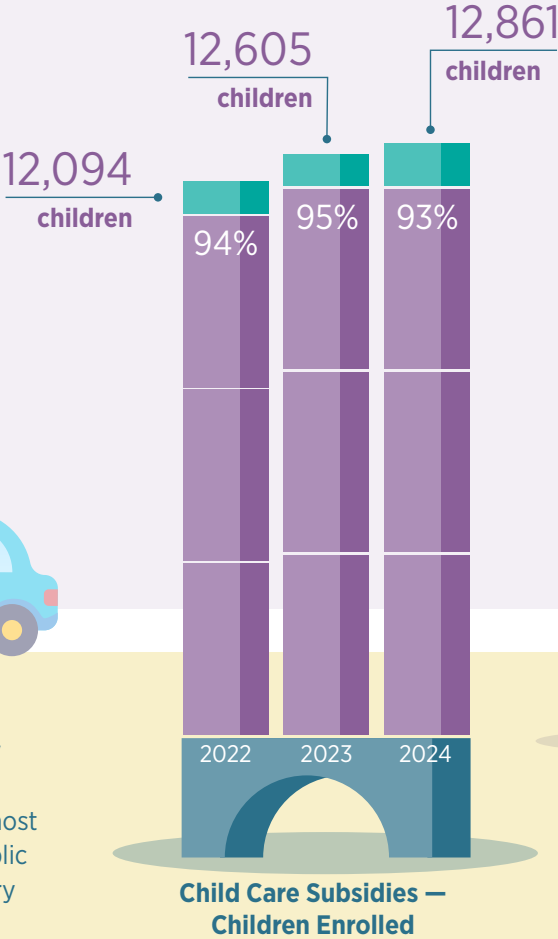
■ Share of Families Receiving Public Benefits

■ Share of Families Not Receiving Public Benefits

Deliver Critical, Life-Saving Behavioral Health Treatment and Care

2022 **15x** 2024

increase in people accessing MOUD in the jail
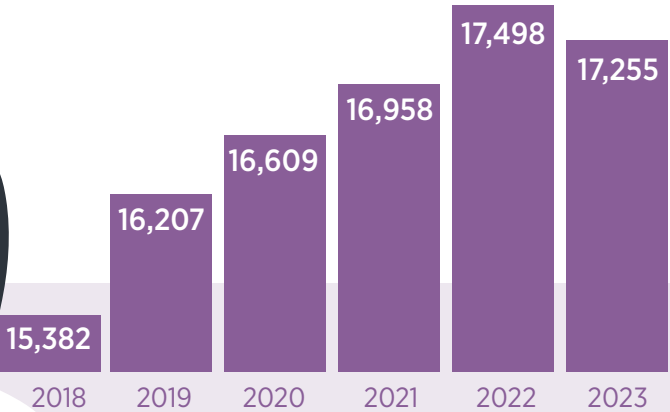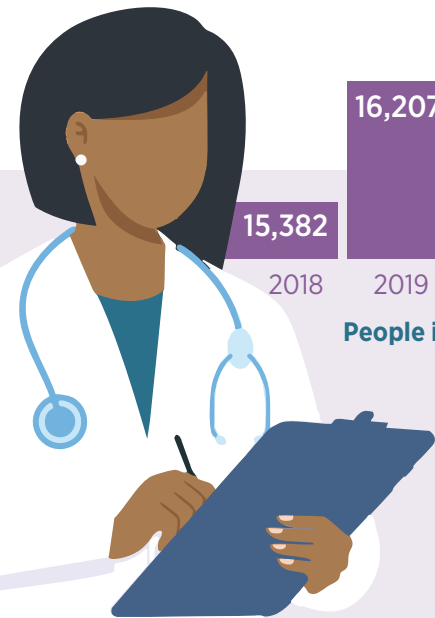
People in Allegheny County Receiving MOUD*

| Year	Value
2018	15,382
2019	16,207
2020	16,609
2021	16,958
2022	17,498
2023	17,255

Medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) have been shown to reduce overdose and improve wellness for people with opioid and alcohol use disorders.

* Includes prescriptions for buprenorphine (all payors) and prescriptions for methadone or naltrexone (paid by Medicaid). Most recent PDMP data available.
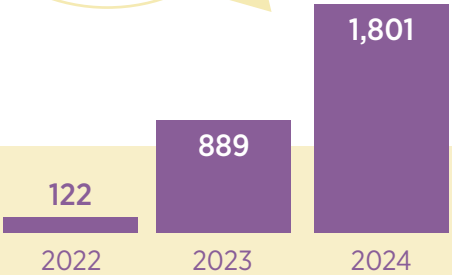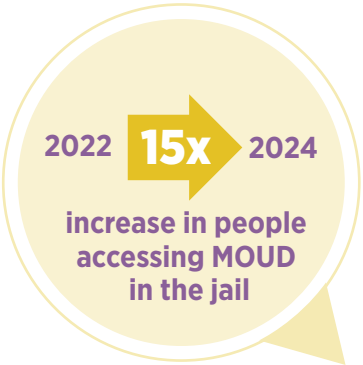
People Receiving MOUD at the Jail

Year	Value
2022	122
2023	889
2024	1,801

By working with the Allegheny County Jail, we increased the number of people in the ACJ who accessed MOUD.
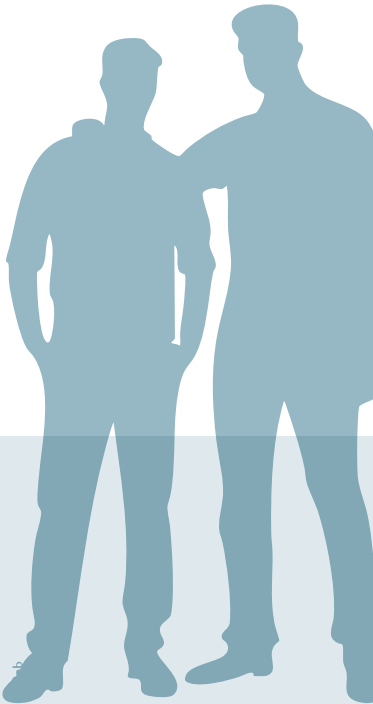
The MOUD program in the Jail connects clients with peers who support them through and after release.
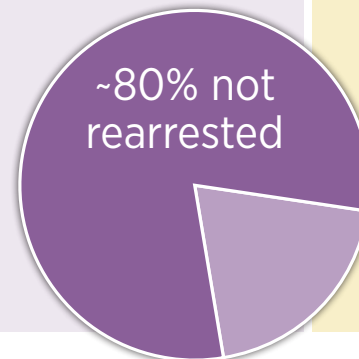
Reduce Intimate Partner Violence

76
Cases Reviewed

21
Active Monitoring

12
Recidivists

"Allegheny County's high-risk team communicates and coordinates at an exceptional level to address intimate partner violence. They are not only reducing violence, but transforming communities to be safer."

— **Fatma Zahra, Deputy Director,**
National Network for Safe Communities at John Jay College

"For victims, this group has provided information, validation, and support for those who are most at-risk in our community.

— **Kate B., Systems Response Manager, Women's Center and Shelter**

Each day more than 80 calls come in to 911 about domestic violence. To reduce the incidence of intimate partner violence (IPV) in the County, DHS and its partners created an IPV response team to **review high-risk cases** of IPV and **act quickly** to reduce future IPV cases. For the participants in this initiative, the rates of IPV recidivism are lower, with **close to 80% not being rearrested** for a new IPV crime within six months.
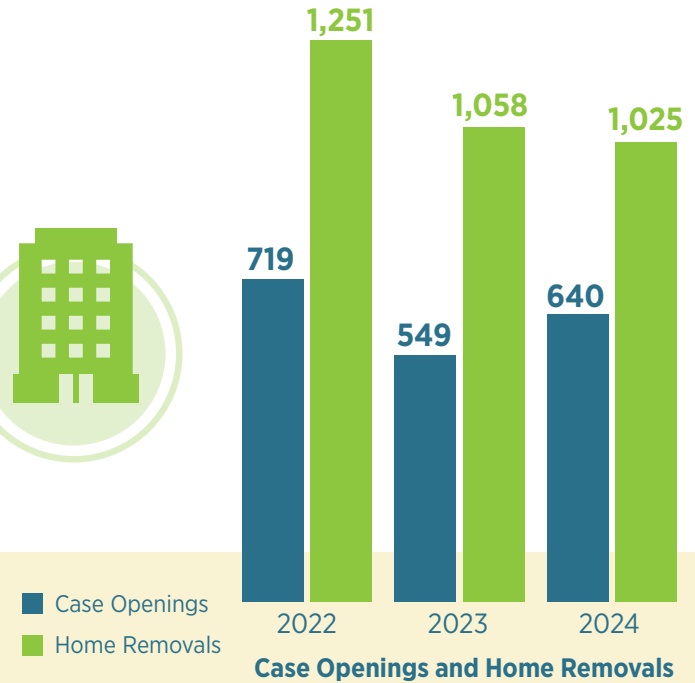
~80% not rearrested

Since IPV in a family can reduce children's safety, we **trained mediators and divorce court staff** about IPV and creating safety plans. We also created an IPV "flag" for child welfare case workers so they can be alerted to **check on and protect children.**

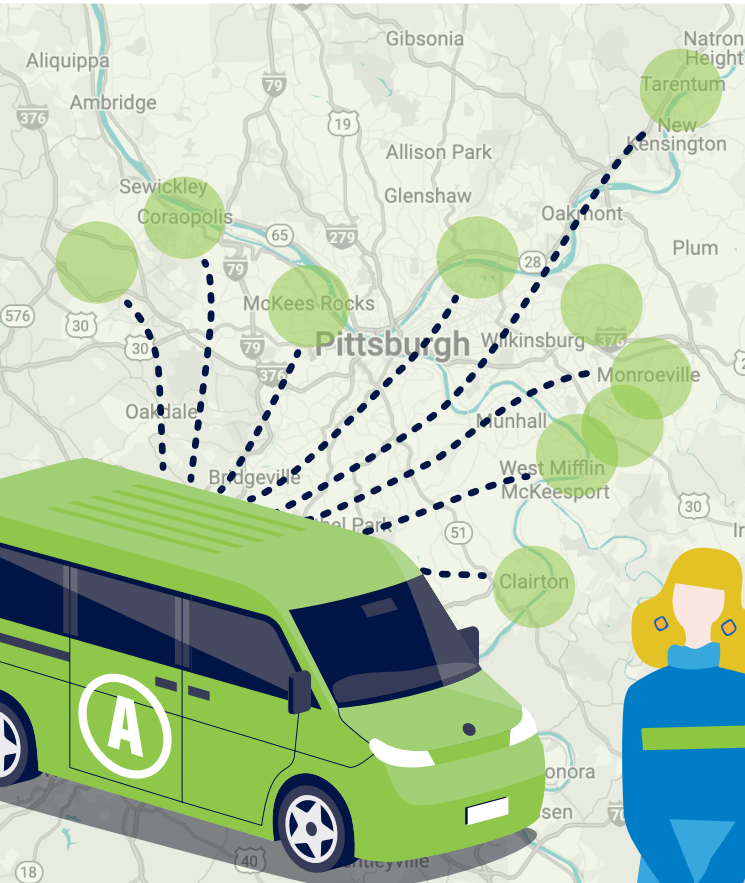# 3 Reduce Use of Involuntary Services

Reduce Involvement by Child Protective Services

↑25%

share of families who received services and support

Case Openings and Home Removals

- Case Openings
- Home Removals

Year	Case Openings	Home Removals
2022	719	1,251
2023	549	1,058
2024	640	1,025

Each year, DHS receives 15,000 calls of concern about children. Most of these referrals are related to a family need (for example, housing), rather than abuse. Instead of opening a child protective services "case," DHS works to connect families with a network of community partners who can help. DHS **increased by 25% the share of families who received services and support without needing to become a case** (2024 compared with 2022).

This approach has helped **safely reduce the number of times DHS needed to remove a child** from their home to place them with foster care and it allowed DHS to work on actual instances of abuse.

Reduce Law Enforcement Encounters

MUNICIPALITIES ADDED IN 2024

Clairton
East Pittsburgh
Homestead
North Braddock
Rankin

ORIGINAL MUNICIPALITIES

Aspinwall
Braddock Hills
Chalfant
Churchill
Etna
Forest Hills
Millvale
Shaler
Swissvale
West View
Wilkins

Instead of law enforcement responding solo to calls to 911 involving a behavioral health crisis, **a new team of trained behavioral health first responders is being dispatched** to accompany police, join them at the site, or respond in lieu of law enforcement. These **"Alternative Response"** teams were designed with Allegheny County Emergency Services, the police departments of McKees Rocks, Monroeville and Penn Hills, and the Allegheny County Housing Authority.
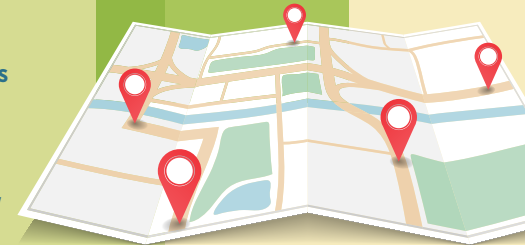
The Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program is deflecting people from possible arrest to social services like job training, employment, and treatment. DHS and its partners have **expanded LEAD to accept referrals from 16 municipalities** outside of the City of Pittsburgh and a number of community organizations. The City of Pittsburgh also has a LEAD program.

The crisis services organization for the entire County (called "resolve") added a **team in downtown Pittsburgh** to respond to crisis calls, make rounds, and engage people who are homeless. Through 2024, they responded to nearly 700 calls and helped hundreds more people through their outreach. In 2025, resolve added a North Side team.

Increase Economic Security

4

Launch *Allegheny Go*
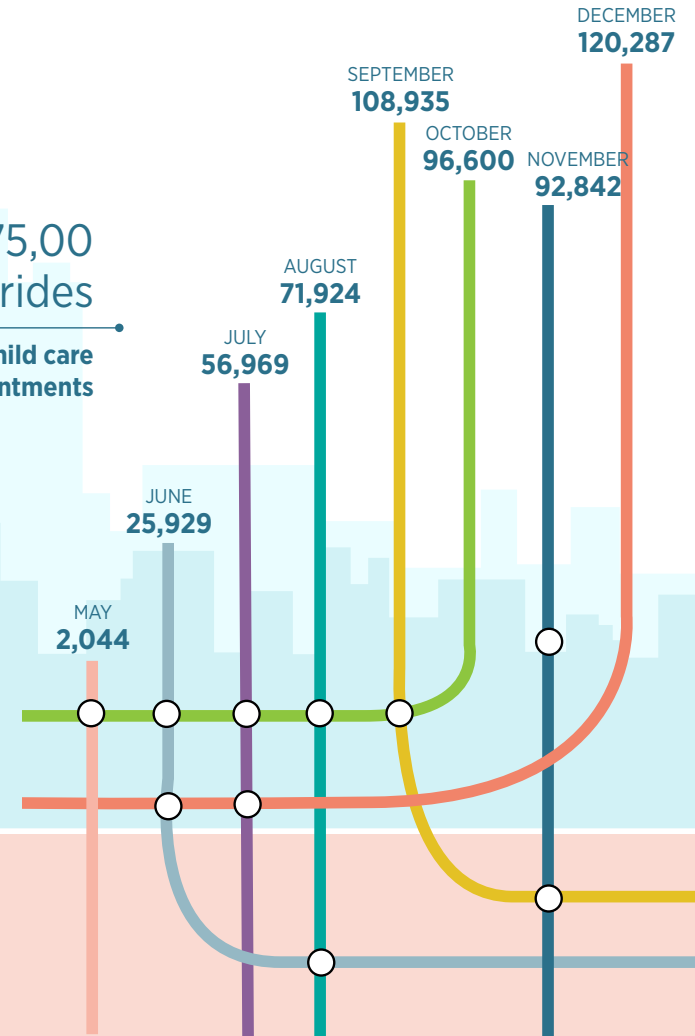
6,800 people signed up

allegheny go

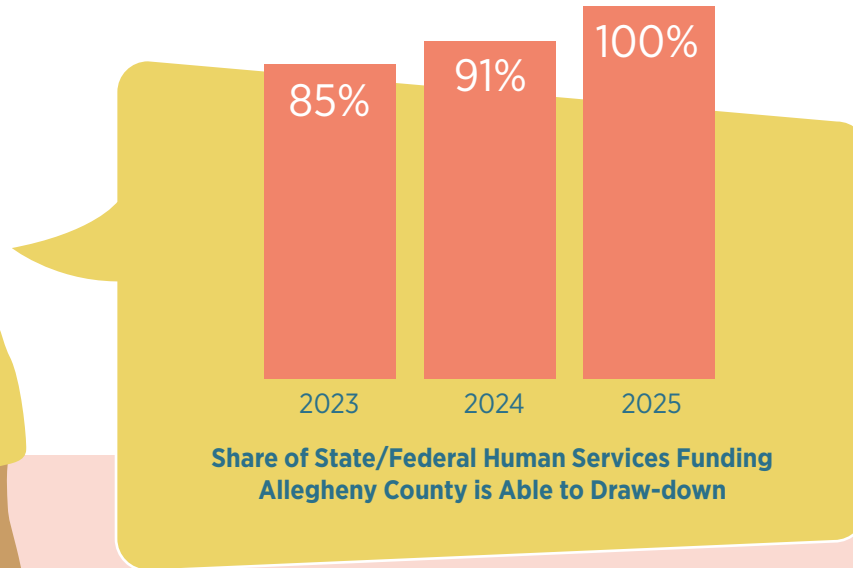**575,00 transit rides** to work, child care and appointments

Food Stamp recipients can now **pay half-price to take the bus**, once they enroll in *Allegheny Go*. **Over 6,800 people signed up** and increased their ridership—**taking 575,000 transit rides** to work, child care and appointments.

Now that the program is fully up and running, **DHS will double the enrollment in Allegheny Go.**

2024 Monthly Rides by Allegheny Go Participants

MAY **2,044**

JUNE **25,929**

JULY **56,969**

AUGUST **71,924**

SEPTEMBER **108,935**

OCTOBER **96,600**

NOVEMBER **92,842**

DECEMBER **120,287**

Advocate for Resources that Stabilize Households

85% 91% 100%

2023   2024   2025

Share of State/Federal Human Services Funding Allegheny County is Able to Draw-down

Hundreds of clients, family members and other residents spoke with their elected representatives about how important human services is in this County. They made the case for increasing the "County match" so Allegheny County could collect all of the State and Federal funding available to it. As a direct result of their advocacy, support from County Council and the County Executive, and our partnership with the City of Pittsburgh, **Allegheny County is now able to draw-down 100% of available funding.**
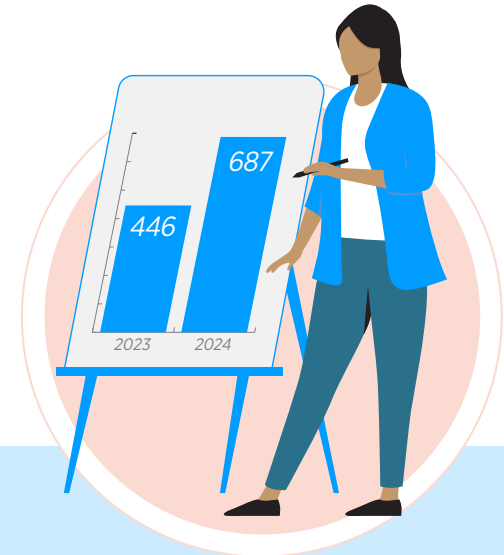
5 Ensure Quality

Use Community Feedback to Improve Services

2024
4,000
2023
540

6,375
2024

5,524
2023

687
446
2023   2024

Feedback from Texts and Point of Service Queries

Director's Action Line: Client Calls

Feedback Sessions

DHS gathered input from a larger number of clients, community members and providers — asking them how to best meet community needs and where we could do better. **We heard from 41% more people in 2024** compared with 2023, and used their feedback to add and change programs, shift funding, and improve our program monitoring.

6,510
points of feedback in 2023

11,062
points of feedback in 2024

41%
increase