

CARES Projects Evaluation Summary

This document outlines the major evaluation questions, key performance measures, and methods used to evaluate Ramsey County CARES Act funded projects. For detailed evaluation plans, click on the link for each project.

All projects will address two overarching questions:

- Are Ramsey County residents better off as a result of CARES programming?
- Did the project achieve the outcomes the community was seeking?

Emergency Assistance/Emergency General Assistance

Evaluation Questions:

- Who was served who would not have been under previous eligibility rules? How do the people served compare to general county population by race/ethnicity?
- Did EA/EGA support housing stability, including decreased evictions?
- What can we learn to support easier EA/EGA application processes post-COVID?

Key Performance Measures:

- Of those who cases approved for rent assistance or rent subsidy and had a housing court cases: % released without eviction, % with unlawful detainer, % evicted, % with negotiated agreement
- % approved applicants who report their emergency was resolved
- % of approved applicants who felt they received the support needed to resolve emergency
- % approved who found application process clear and understandable

Methods:

- Telephone survey of participants
- Analysis of MAXIS and other service data
- Analysis of housing court data

Homelessness and Housing Response

Evaluation Questions:

- Who experienced homelessness during COVID?
- How well was Ramsey County able to prevent exits to homelessness and support stability among clients that were in temporary shelters during the COVID-19 response?
- Were clients able to access wraparound services while in temporary shelter?
- How well was Ramsey County able to support people who are unsheltered during the COVID response?
- Who used the respite facility? Was COVID-19 testing available for homeless clients at the respite facility

Key Performance Measures:

- % of exits from shelters to permanent housing by type of housing
- % return to homelessness within 6 months
- % connected to new services or benefits during shelter/hotel stay
- % of people in respite tested for COVID-19

Methods:

- Data analysis from HMIS and other county/state administrative databases
- Client satisfaction surveys and interviews
- Document review

Workforce Solutions

Evaluation Questions:

- Was the contracting process and experience provided in a timely and satisfactory way to Workforces Solutions and to CARES funded community agencies?
- Was the CARES programming successful at building capacity in the community to deliver services to those most negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic?
- What training and supports are necessary to develop community capacity to enhance work-readiness and attachment to the workforce for targeted populations?
- Are Ramsey County residents better off as a result of participating in CARES programming?

Key Performance Measures:

- % of CARES dollars providing full-family or multi-generational services
- Staffing ratio of contracted vendors to overall Ramsey County population by race/ethnicity
- % of CARES contracts awarded to organizations who had not previously contracted with the county

Methods:

- Monthly progress reports from community partners
- Analysis of administrative data
- Focus groups with community partners and program participants
- Survey of career lab visitors and TechPak recipients

Food and Basic Needs

Evaluation Questions:

- Did Ramsey County address the Community Needs Assessment priority areas?
- Did the CARES funding that was distributed expand and enhance the free food supply and distribution network?
- Are Ramsey County residents better off as a result of food access expansion?

Key Performance Measures

- % of people served from communities most impacted by COVID
- % of contracts with organizations who have never contracted with the county previously
- % of contracts with organizations led by people of color or American Indians

Methods:

- Monthly reporting from contracted vendors
- Web survey of users of Food Resources website and map, IS data on usage
- Surveys of people using home delivery services and vendors providing services

Service Delivery Redesign: Navigators and Service Centers

Evaluation Questions:

- What have we learned in the first six months to inform and improve practices in the next two years?

- What is the resident experience of service centers, technology access, and navigators? How does this compare to other ways of accessing services?
- What are the training and support needs of navigators to successfully serve residents?

Key Performance Measures:

- % of visitors reporting their needs were met
- % of visitors able to access requested services
- % of navigators reporting they feel supported and well-trained
- % of visitors who report they were treated with respect

Methods:

- Two pop-up interview/survey events are service centers
- Analysis of data collected by navigators, from administrative databases, and IS records of computer use
- Key stakeholder interviews

RECERT: A Mask for Everyone Initiative

Evaluation Questions:

- How well did RECERT reach the intended vendor communities with the Mask funding?
- What proportion of the Mask funds went to support BIPOC communities?
- How many masks were contributed back to Ramsey County by the contractors?
- What were the successes and challenges for contractors?
- How can Ramsey County improve its contracting processes to make them more accessible to community organizations?
- How many masks were collected through additional donations? Was RECERT successful in receiving enough donated masks?
- How can Ramsey County improve future mask collection efforts?
- Moving forward, is the donation approach an effective strategy or is it better to invest in contractors to create masks?
- What are the benefits to the county and community to use a donation and community-based contracting model? What are the limitations of this model?
 - What staff time, funds and other resources were needed to manage the mask donation process, including contracts and broader outreach for donations?
- What are the benefits to working with a single vendor to mass-produce masks ready for distribution? What is a reasonable rate for the procurement of masks for future mask production initiatives?
- How many masks were distributed? Did the masks reach the intended audiences, including racial and ethnically diverse communities?
- What staff time, funds and other resources were needed to manage the mask distribution process?
- How can Ramsey County improve future distribution efforts?

Key Performance Measures:

- # of masks collected
- % of grants to individuals or organizations from racially and ethnically diverse communities
- # of masks distributed

Methods:

- Evaluation reports submitted by contractors
- Review of contractor materials
- Analysis of mask request data
- Survey of individuals/organizations who requested masks
- Focus group or reflection session with contractors
- Survey/interviews/focus groups with Ramsey County employees involved in mask collection and distribution
- Review of staff hours, costs and other resources expended on initiative

RECERT: Media Messaging Community Partners

Evaluation Questions:

- How well did RECERT reach the intended communities with this grant?
- What proportion of funds went to support racially and ethnically diverse communities?
- Who was served by the contractors and what services/strategies did they employ?
- What impact did the work have on the targeted residents/communities?
- What were the successes and challenges for contractors?
- How can Ramsey County improve its contracting processes to make them more accessible to community organizations?

Key Performance Measures

- % of grants to organizations owned or led by racially and ethnically diverse communities
- # of Ramsey County residents served by age, race/ethnicity and zip code.

Methods

- Evaluation reports submitted by contractors
- Review of contractor materials
- Focus group or reflection session with contractors
- Surveys, interviews or focus groups with Ramsey County employees

RECERT: Trusted Messenger Community Partners

Evaluation Questions:

- How well did RECERT reach the intended communities with this grant?
- What proportion of funds went to support racially and ethnically diverse communities?
- Who was served by the contractors and what services/strategies did they employ?
- What impact did the work have on the targeted residents/communities?
- What were the successes and challenges for contractors?
- How can Ramsey County improve its contracting processes to make them more accessible to community organizations?
- How could the trusted messenger model be expanded across service teams?

Key Performance Measures

- % of grants to organizations owned or led by racially or ethnically diverse communities
- # of Ramsey County residents served by age, race/ethnicity and zip code

Methods

- Evaluation reports submitted by contractors
- Review of contractor materials
- Focus group or reflection session with contractors
- Surveys, interviews or focus groups with Ramsey County employees

Small Business Relief

Evaluation Questions:

- What impact did the Small Business Relief Fund have on small businesses and, in particular, businesses in targeted communities?
- What proportion of funds went to businesses owned by black, indigenous, and people of color?
- What can Ramsey County learn from its partnership with Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD) and partnering outreach organizations to inform Community Economic Development's future business outreach and collaborations to support and sustain small businesses?

Key Performance Measures

- % of businesses/fund recipients who are black, indigenous, or people of color?
- % of total funds distributed to black, indigenous, and communities of color?
- % of survey respondents who report a positive impact from receiving funds

Methods

- Survey of fund recipients and businesses
- Interviews with technical assistance partners, MCCD, and Alliance representatives
- Review of reports submitted by MCCD and outreach partners