

January 2022

Economic Impact Report



Southwestern
Community Services

People helping people in Cheshire and Sullivan Counties



The Economic Impact of
Southwestern Community Services
on the Communities of
Cheshire and Sullivan Counties
for the Program Year
October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021



Southwestern Community Services

Southwestern Community Services is a major provider of social services to the residents of Cheshire and Sullivan Counties in New Hampshire. During the year 2021, SCS provided 59,456 units of service, representing 12,553 households.

Southwestern Community Services provides assistance through emergency shelter programs, workforce and senior rental housing, education and childcare, nutrition and health, energy conservation, utility programs, day and employment services for developmentally disabled individuals, public transit services, and community food programs.

**"Real change,
enduring change,
happens one step
at a time."**

RUTH BADER GINSBERG



Message from Our CEO

Each year, Southwestern Community Services, Inc. (SCS) puts together this Economic Impact Report to provide community members with an overview of SCS programs, services, and the amount of direct client assistance provided to residents throughout the towns of Cheshire and Sullivan counties. The goal is to provide a 12-month snapshot of what SCS does and the impact of that work on the communities we serve.

It's challenging to quantify all the efforts of SCS throughout the past two years of the ongoing pandemic and the direct and indirect impacts of it. These efforts covered *new initiatives*, such as opening temporary shelters to act as "decompression sites," coordinating summer food programming, opening a fourth bus route in Sullivan County, providing summer sessions of Head Start, collaborations that made it possible to offer on-site vaccination clinics to senior housing tenants and shelter guests, implementing the Emergency Rental Assistance Program, and so much more. Additional efforts included *ongoing services*, including Fuel Assistance benefits, Head Start enrollments, WIC benefits, Weatherization work, and beyond.

The pandemic brought two things into sharp focus for us:

1. Households can find themselves vulnerable in a variety of different ways and sometimes unexpectedly; and
2. Community Action Agencies have some capacity for remaining stalwart providers of services that individuals and families need each year, while also being adaptive enough to meet some emergent community needs as they are unfolding.

It also meant *connection*, which I realize sounds like a paradox in a time known for isolation. Whether it was the Sullivan County Community Partner Meetings, the forming of the Sullivan County Housing Coalition, the ongoing Monadnock Food Provider Meetings, the Food Access Coalition, all of the Greater Sullivan Strong community efforts, the Monadnock United Way Community Relief Fund, or many other examples of partnership and collaboration, community members and social service providers came together to ensure there was a safety net in place during these times of uncertainty for so many. This safety net took on many forms: outfitting some facilities to continue operations, providing emergency assistance to households in need, increasing access to food, creating pop-up vaccination clinics for underserved populations, conducting Zoom meetings to maximize participation and conversation, and converting many training resources to free and accessible webinars.

I have much to learn in this new position as CEO of Southwestern Community Services, Inc., but I do know these things to be true: vulnerability can take many forms, SCS will always be ready to jump in and do their part, and community connection is what makes our southwestern corner of New Hampshire such a great place to live.

On behalf of both the staff and Board of Directors of SCS, I want to thank you for your ongoing support of our efforts. Our motto of "People Helping People" is clearly evident among our network of devoted community partners.

Beth Daniels

Southwestern Community Services
People Helping People

Proudly serving the families of
Cheshire and Sullivan Counties
since 1965

VISION STATEMENT

SCS seeks to create and support a climate within the communities of Southwestern New Hampshire wherein poverty is never accepted as a chronic or permanent condition of any person's life.



MISSION STATEMENT

SCS strives to empower low-income people and families. With dignity and respect, SCS will provide direct assistance, reduce stressors, and advocate for such persons and families as they lift themselves toward self-sufficiency.



COMMUNITY STATEMENT

In partnership and close collaboration with local communities, SCS will provide leadership and support to develop resources, programs, and services to further aid this population.

Who Are We?

SCS is a Community Action Program.

In 1965, a group of local leaders came together and responded to the call of President Lyndon Johnson. President Johnson proposed the "War on Poverty" and created "Great Society Programs" after the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 established the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO).

Community Action Programs are the cornerstones of this vision, reaching into local communities at the grassroots level and creating opportunity with local leadership guiding the mission.

This legislation provided funding to CAP agencies, such as SCS, to create local initiatives to design, coordinate, and deliver services to meet the needs of eligible residents of their local communities. In 1981, Congress passed legislation that replaced OEO with the state-administered Community Services Block Grant. It created a network of 1,100 local CAP agencies nationwide. SCS was incorporated in May of 1965, and is one of five CAP agencies in New Hampshire. SCS serves all of the communities within Cheshire and Sullivan counties.

"Today is the first time in all the history of the human race a great nation is able to make, and is willing to make, a commitment to eradicate poverty among its people."

President Lyndon B. Johnson, on signing the
Economic Opportunity Act,
August 20, 1964

Southwestern Community Services
Board of Directors

Kevin Watterson, *Chairperson*
Clarke Companies (retired)

David Edkins, *Vice Chairperson*
Town of Walpole, NH

Anne Beattie
Newport Service Organization

Beth Fox
City of Keene, NH

Brianna Trombi
Head Start Policy Council
Parent Representative

Derek Ferland
Sullivan County Manager

Dominic Perkins
Savings Bank of Walpole

Jay Kahn
State Senator, District 10

Kerry Belknap Morris, M.Ed.
River Valley Community College

Mary Lou Huffling
Fall Mountain Food Shelf and
Alstead Friendly Meals

Ron Nason
SCS Tenant



Southwestern Community Services
Senior Leadership Team

Beth Daniels
Chief Executive Officer

Diane Lucas Plotczyk
Chief Information Officer

Heather Amer
Chief Operating Officer

Keith Thibault
Chief Development Officer

Mandy White
Chief Human Resources Officer

Meg Freeman
Chief Financial Officer

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, “Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.” To this day, I remember my mother's words, and I am comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers—so many caring people in this world.”

— Fred Rogers

Economic Impact

Southwestern Community Services has a special role in the economy of the two counties it serves (Table II, SCS Programs, pp. 5-6). More than 98% of the funds used in operating programs and providing services are generated from outside the geographic area of Cheshire and Sullivan Counties. This fact is extremely important when examining the economic impact of SCS. Funds that are *new* to the local economy have a greater impact, because they are dollars that were not originally generated within that local economy.

This report shows that a total of \$19,059,095 was provided in direct assistance to consumers (Table I, Economic Impact, pp. 3-4). It is important to note that the table includes only those funds which contribute to direct assistance to consumers. Therefore, the agency payroll of \$6,700,246 (including taxes and fringe benefits) has been excluded from this table. Also excluded is the impact of SCS' property assessments, which totaled \$24,580,480. There is a separate section in this report that details the impact of the agency's real estate development efforts (Table III, Capital Investment, pg. 9, and Table IV, Development History, pg. 9).

Table I, on the following two pages, reflects the number of units of service provided, the amount of direct assistance provided, and the economic impact on the community. This represents an accurate measure of the amount of assistance provided to our neighbors.

ECONOMIC IMPACT TABLE I			
TOWN NAME	UNITS OF SERVICE	DIRECT ASSISTANCE	ECONOMIC IMPACT
Acworth	139	94,078	235,194
Alstead	401	282,290	705,726
Charlestown	1,896	845,171	2,112,928
Chesterfield	383	222,807	557,016
Claremont	11,155	4,344,133	10,860,332
Cornish	126	85,822	214,555
Croydon	99	54,640	136,600
Dublin	121	43,602	109,005
Fitzwilliam	388	189,494	473,736
Gilsum	186	96,472	241,180
Goshen	179	105,521	263,804
Grantham	89	52,771	131,927
Harrisville	84	42,420	106,050
Hinsdale	1,026	679,173	1,697,933
Jaffrey	868	663,715	1,659,288
Keene	26,874	4,514,091	11,285,227
Langdon	110	85,992	214,980
Lempster	202	151,173	377,933
Marlborough	529	252,554	631,385

Units of Service: Units of Service may vary in value and count. For example: A FAP benefit compared to a food box.

Direct Assistance: The amount of dollars recorded is the actual amount of benefits distributed on behalf of the residents in each community.

ECONOMIC IMPACT TABLE I			
TOWN NAME	UNITS OF SERVICE	DIRECT ASSISTANCE	ECONOMIC IMPACT
Marlow	144	74,141	185,353
Nelson	64	29,594	73,985
Newport	3,049	1,583,597	3,958,993
Plainfield	156	84,701	211,752
Richmond	143	142,292	355,729
Rindge	582	342,453	856,132
Roxbury	36	22,875	57,187
Springfield	159	60,604	151,510
Stoddard	181	117,338	293,345
Sullivan	114	45,961	114,904
Sunapee	255	162,263	405,657
Surry	117	45,835	114,588
Swanzey	6,049	1,403,688	3,509,220
Troy	723	485,722	1,214,304
Unity	238	91,130	227,824
Walpole	429	304,980	762,450
Washington	184	65,320	163,299
Westmoreland	113	92,510	231,275
Winchester	1,865	1,098,173	2,745,432
TOTALS	59,456	19,059,095	47,647,736

Economic Impact Multiplier: In conducting the research and developing this report, a very conservative economic multiplier of 2.5 was used to measure the real economic impact of the agency.



Reporting numbers for transportation services is somewhat unique, as transportation is a service offered by SCS that is open to the public. The number of customers using public transportation fluctuates somewhat depending on weather, the needs of the riders, as well as the current Covid situation. During the past year, SCT provided 12,453 public transportation rides; 6,656 of these rides were provided to 234 vulnerable passengers in the towns of Charlestown, Newport, and the city of Claremont.

The number of riders utilizing the Volunteer Driver Program, again, depends upon the needs of the riders. It is not unusual for riders to cancel or reschedule due to illness, or medical providers not being able to provide care on the day of a scheduled appointment. Rising Covid numbers have also been a factor. In order to provide appropriate numbers, SCS has included in Table I (see pages 7 and 8) numbers for direct assistance provided and the economic impact of that direct assistance. This assistance is provided for our most vulnerable households, including some of our elderly households, individuals with disabilities, low-income individuals with disabilities, and low-income individuals receiving Medicaid assisted services. The Volunteer Driver Program tells part of the story of Sullivan County Transportation, but certainly not all of it.

SCT follows all of the sanitation protocols that were first administered in the early onset of the Covid pandemic. Each of the new transit vehicles come equipped with professionally installed sneeze guards and driver barriers. SCT continues to work with other agencies in the State of NH regarding enhanced air filtration in our vehicles for better air quality. All passengers on public transportation continue wearing masks per guidance from the CDC and Federal Transportation Authority.

SCT worked closely with Sullivan County and Lower Grafton County partners to initiate the operation of the long-awaited Claremont to Lebanon route expansion. As of June 30, 2021, the route was approved and began operations in July, 2021. The need for this service had been well-documented by local planning and transportation officials as far back as 2009. Daily, direct trips between the towns of Newport and Lebanon will commence in early 2022.

Three trips per day currently connect Sullivan County residents to the “Upper Valley.” Stops along this route, among others, include the Dartmouth Coach transit facility and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. The DMHC stop allows rider to utilize the extensive, local transport provided by Advanced Transit, while the stop at Dartmouth Coach allows riders to continue travel throughout New England and beyond. SCS is proud to have been able to institute this service while celebrating the five-year anniversary of taking over the helm of this public transit program in October of 2016.

SCS PROGRAMS TABLE II	
HOUSING STABILIZATION SERVICES	
Emergency Homeless Shelters	
Homelessness Prevention/Intervention Services	
Homeless Outreach Intervention Program	
Balance of State Continuum of Care	
Housing Security Guarantee Program	
Shelter Plus Care Program	
Emergency Housing Program	
Homeless Permanent Housing Program	
Housing Stabilization Counseling/ Financial Literacy Counseling	
Tenancy 101	
Life Skills Education Training	
Rapid Re-Housing	
Homeless Housing Access Revolving Loan Fund (HHARLF)	
Housing Relief Program (HRP)	
NH Emergency Rental Assistance Program (NHERAP)	
HOUSING REHABILITATION PROGRAMS	
Cheshire County HandyMan Program	
TRANSPORTATION	
Public Transit/Bus Service	
Volunteer Driver Program	
NEW HOPE NEW HORIZONS	
Employment Services	
Community Participation Services	

“My heart is in helping the helpers.”
— Mandy White

SCS PROGRAMS TABLE II
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
WIOA: Dislocated Workers
WIOA: Disadvantaged Workers
ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAMS
Weatherization Assistance Programs (WAP)
Building Weatherization Program (BWP)
Core/Home Energy Assistance (HEA)
ENERGY SERVICES PROGRAMS
Fuel Assistance Programs (LIHEAP)
Electric Assistance Program (EAP)
Senior Energy Assistance Program (SEAS)
Neighbor Helping Neighbor (NHN)
EDUCATION & CHILD DEVELOPMENT HEAD START CENTERS
Ashuelot Head Start
Claremont Head Start
Jaffrey Head Start
Keene Head Start
Newport Head Start
Swanzey Head Start

“From a young age I knew it was in my nature to be a helper. And while I was able to help others on my own in various ways over the years, it wasn’t until arriving at SCS that I found my community of helpers. I found my home.”

— Diane Lucas Plotczyk

SCS PROGRAMS TABLE II
NUTRITION/HEALTH PROGRAMS
Women, Infants, & Children Nutrition Program (WIC)
Breastfeeding Peer Counseling
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)
WIC Dental Project
USDA Childcare Food Program
Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP)
SCS Food Pantries
Summer Food Program
SCS PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
Workforce Housing
Senior Housing
HUD 202 Senior Housing
Commercial Property & Head Start Facilities
Resident Services
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA)
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston (FHLB)
Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)
Affordable Housing Program (NH Housing)
HOME Investment Program (NH Housing)
Community Development Investment Program (CDIP/CDFA)
202 Senior Housing (HUD)

“Whether it is the \$5 guest fee or the \$200,000 requisition, it all ends in someone being warm, fed, safe and sound tonight. It is why we do what we do.”

— Meg Freeman

Program Development: Housing Stabilization Services

Housing Stabilization Services (HSS) is one of nine (9) program departments within SCS. The other departments include WIC, Head Start, Affordable Housing, New Hope New Horizons, Sullivan County Transportation, Community Food, Energy Services, and Energy Conservation.

In addition to launching the New Hampshire Emergency Rental Assistance Program (NHERAP) in 2021, Housing Stabilization Services (HSS) has been at the forefront of providing support during the COVID 19 pandemic. This has required the HSS team to quickly learn *new programs and regulations*, devote time and energy to various *facility improvements*, maintain *COVID protocol* within the several programs it operates, and assist with getting *relief funds out to community members* quickly.

HSS first took on the Housing Relief Program (HRP), during which a total of \$2 million dollars was provided to third party vendors on behalf of households within the last six months of 2020. This program then closed, and re-opened in March 2021, as NHERAP. As of November 2021, an additional \$5 million dollars has been paid out to third party vendors through NHERAP. Both programs required the team to learn a new application process, new software, and program regulations.

At the same time, the team was spearheading work within various facilities dedicated to housing stabilization. This included major renovations to the family shelter in Keene, the men's shelter in Claremont, and supportive housing buildings in both counties. In addition to that, HSS also opened three (3) "decompression sites" (or temporary shelters) to provide additional room for "spacing out" shelter guests during COVID.

While administering NHERAP and overseeing renovations and improvements within its facilities, HSS was also responsible for helping get community relief funds out to those who needed them most in the early days of the pandemic. While there was a sense that longer term state and federal resources would come to bear, those things were not in place during the earlier months of the pandemic. During that time, the Monadnock United Way raised community relief funds and the HSS team helped distribute those funds out into the community, including rent payments, electric bill payments, assistance with securing technology, food boxes, and many other things. Similarly, the Greater Sullivan Strong group was formed in Sullivan County and SCS acted as the "hub" for partner agencies to make referrals to access community relief funds for assistance with things such as daycare bills, car repairs, and phones.

While all of that activity was unfolding throughout 2020 and 2021, HSS also managed to operate:

- Emergency Housing Program (EHP)
- Homeless Housing Access Revolving Loan Fund (HHARLF)
- Housing Security Guarantee Program (HSGP)
- Emergency solutions Grant (ESG)
- Shelter Plus Care (S+C)

The team even found time for special projects, including holiday stockings for all shelter guests, helping coordinate on-site vaccination clinics for shelter guests and staff, a clean-up project of a large encampment in Keene, presentations to various groups, distribution of blankets, tents, sleeping bags, and food to those experiencing homelessness, picking up food boxes for supportive housing clients from The Community Kitchen and distributing them, co-chairing the Greater Keene Homeless Coalition and the Sullivan County Housing Coalition, and working with local police departments for holiday sponsorships for families in need.

While both 2020 and 2021 have pushed HSS beyond its maximum capacity, the team has responded with determination, compassion, and a solution-focused approach. Whether it be constant media attention focused on NHERAP, trying to balance safety protocol for congregate living spaces with sheltering as many vulnerable individuals as possible, or simply completing all of the necessary paperwork, documentation, and data entry required, the team has worked its way through the challenges it faced during this unprecedented time period.

While they cannot solve all challenges surrounding the community-level issues of homelessness and housing insecurity, they have certainly done their part to be part of the solution.

SCS is proud of its Housing Stabilization Department and the impact their combined efforts had on the communities we serve.

“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”

— Coretta Scott King

“During the past 28-plus years, I have witnessed countless acts of kindness, helpfulness, inspiration and hope by SCS’ staff on behalf of the people in our region and beyond. I could not be any more proud to have spent the bulk of my career working alongside such truly caring, warm and wonderful individuals doing such meaningful work. Thanks and proud tidings to all with whom I have worked with here at SCS. I consider myself a ‘richer’ man to have had a part in this impactful experience.”

— Keith Thibault

Capital Investment

Southwestern Community Services owns and manages commercial and affordable rental units in the following communities:

CAPITAL INVESTMENT 2021 TABLE III		
COMMUNITY	PROPERTY ASSESSMENT	PROPERTY TAXES PAID
Alstead	707,500	17,278
Ashuelot	397,500	7,900
Charlestown	879,000	12,095
Claremont	1,705,600	28,667
Keene	8,301,700	159,636
Marlborough	1,488,280	21,894
Newport	1,797,800	23,717
Rindge	995,400	22,356
Swanzey	3,194,200	42,080
Troy	475,700	13,444
Walpole	634,600	10,666
Winchester	4,003,200	115,292
TOTALS	24,580,480	475,025

Development History

SCS has developed a significant amount of real estate since the early 1990s. The first half of the chart illustrates the cumulative total development costs of the real estate currently owned and operated by the organization. The second half of the chart is the value of real estate developed through consulting contracts with the assistance of the SCS development team.

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY TABLE IV	
SCS OWNED REAL ESTATE	
Housing Development	\$75,181,500
Child Care Facilities	\$3,205,000
Commercial/Retail Space	\$8,643,000
TOTAL	\$86,229,500
SCS CONSULTING DEVELOPMENTS	
Housing Developments	\$25,765,000
Commercial Real Estate	\$8,100,000
TOTAL	\$33,865,000
COMBINED TOTALS	
TOTAL SCS REAL ESTATE AND CONSULTING CONTRACTS	\$120,094,500

Southwestern Community Services' Presence in Our Communities

Primary Administrative Offices

63 Community Way, Keene, NH
96 Main Street, Claremont, NH
6 Kinney Place, Claremont, NH

Workforce (Family) Housing

11-29 Citizens Way, Keene, NH
92 Water Street, Keene, NH
161 Main Street, Ashuelot, NH
28-32 Main Street Swanzey, NH
4 Common Road, Drewsville, NH
96-102 Main Street, Claremont, NH
112 Charlestown Road, Claremont, NH
57 Warwick Road, Winchester, NH
2-28 Woodcrest Drive, Winchester, NH
40-43 Wedgewood Drive, Winchester, NH
145 Mechanic Street, Winchester, NH

“There is no better feeling than that of leading an organization that helps to empower the citizens of our community.”

— Heather Amer

Southwestern Community Services' Presence in Our Communities

Elderly and Senior Housing

110 Railroad Street, Keene, NH
111 Railroad Street, Keene, NH
49 Community Way, Keene, NH
23 School Street, Marlborough, NH
60 Payson Hill Road, Rindge, NH
13-15 Water Street, Troy, NH
Pleasant Street, Alstead, NH
52 Warwick Road, Winchester, NH
68 Warwick Road, Winchester, NH
107 Lovers Lane, Charlestown, NH
2-4 Meadow Road, Newport, NH
183 Monadnock Highway, Swanzey, NH

Head Start Centers

63 Community Way, Keene, NH
35 Oak Street, Jaffrey, NH
161 Main Street, Ashuelot, NH
37 West Street, Swanzey, NH
6 Kinney Place, Claremont, NH
360 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH

Emergency & Transitional Home Facilities

Emergency: Two in Keene, NH
Emergency: Two in Claremont, NH
Transitional: Two in Keene, NH
Transitional: Two in Claremont, NH

For Additional Information:

Southwestern Community Services, Inc.
PO Box 603
63 Community Way
Keene, NH 03431-0603
Phone: (603) 352.7512
Fax: (603) 352.3618
TTY Relay: 711

Southwestern Community Services, Inc.
PO Box 1338
96-102 Main Street
Claremont, NH 03743
Phone: (603) 542.9528
Fax: (603) 542.3140
TTY Relay: 711

SCS has information about its various programs and services online at www.scshehelps.org.

Here you will find general agency information and a list of the Board of Directors, as well as program-specific information and employment opportunity listings. Housing and employment applications are also available for download.

A donations page offers an additional means for contributing to SCS programs.

You can find agency news and updates on Facebook at www.facebook.com/scshehelps.

Southwestern Community Services



A Community Action Agency Serving
Cheshire and Sullivan Counties

CHESHIRE COUNTY

PO Box 603
63 Community Way
Keene, New Hampshire 03431
Phone: (603) 352.7512
Fax: (603) 352.3618
Open 8:30 to 4:30, Monday-Friday

SULLIVAN COUNTY

PO Box 1338
96-102 Main Street
Claremont, New Hampshire 03743
Phone: (603) 542.9528
Fax: (603) 542.3140
Open 8:30 to 4:30, Monday-Friday

Toll Free: (800) 529.0005

or

Visit us on the web at
www.scshehelps.org



<https://www.facebook.com/scshehelps>

