

January 2026

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, 2024 to September 30, 2025



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 time period of October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025, SCS provided 57,776 units of service, which represent 12,422 households (some households may have received services from more than one program). Of this number, there were 5,985 unduplicated households, comprised of 10,946 individuals.

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

Southwestern Community Services, Inc. (SCS) distributes 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.

Throughout the last year, SCS continued to provide a wide array of programs and services to the community, including Fuel Assistance, Electric Assistance, Weatherization, Head Start, Affordable Senior and Family Housing, Shelter Services, Transportation in Sullivan County, Commodity Supplemental Foods, and Resident Services, among others. The data related to those services can be found within this publication.

SCS also experienced several challenges throughout the last year. Two of the larger challenges included the flooding incident at our Marlborough Homes Senior Housing property in January 2025 and the government shutdown in late 2025. Some smaller challenges included many projects at various properties that were both time consuming and costly, including things like a septic system replacement and hot water heater replacements.

Agency teams have worked through these challenges each and every day:

- Assisting with temporary placements, as needed, for Marlborough Homes tenants
- Working with contractors and stakeholders on the rebuild of Marlborough Homes

- Communicating on an ongoing basis on the progress of that work
- Addressing needs at individual properties to ensure that other large projects were completed
- Working through the government shutdown while assessing the situation on a daily basis
- Communicating as best we could during the shutdown to ensure that individuals and families knew that our programs and services were still available

As we look ahead to 2026, we will be emerging on the other side of many of these projects and challenges while we prepare our next five-year Strategic Plan. Some areas of focus within the Strategic Plan may include, for example, increased program and housing development as well as emergency preparedness planning.

Whatever the challenge – a pandemic, a government shutdown, a major flooding event, etc. – SCS will continue to do everything it can to meet the needs of the community while striving to be a good working partner to other area organizations, stakeholders, and local contractors.

Wishing everyone a healthy and happy New Year,

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, <i>Chair</i> Clarke Companies (retired)
David Edkins, <i>Vice-Chair</i> Town of Walpole, NH
Dominic Perkins, <i>Treasurer/Secretary</i> Senior Vice-President, Retail Administration Savings Bank of Walpole
Anne Beattie Newport Service Organization
Andy Bohannon Deputy City Manager City of Keene
Derek Ferland Sullivan County Manager
Heather Cameron Head Start Policy Council Parent Representative
Jay Kahn Mayor, City of Keene
Kerry Belknap Morris, M.Ed. Early Childhood Education River Valley Community College
Rep. Hope Damon State Senator, District 8
Ron Nason SCS Tenant
Taralyn Bielaski Population Health Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center

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

SCS in Action – Fundraising

100+ Women Who Care: Cheshire County



Economic Impact

Southwestern Community Services has a special role in the economy of the two counties it serves (Table II, SCS Programs, pp. 14-15). 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 \$15,937,113 was provided in direct assistance to consumers (Table I, Economic Impact, pp. 5-6). It is important to note that the table includes only those funds which contribute to direct assistance to consumers. Therefore, the agency payroll of \$9,719,180 (including taxes and fringe benefits) has been excluded from this table. Also excluded is the impact of SCS' property assessments, which totaled \$30,476,563. 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. 10; and Table IV, Development History, pg. 11).

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	202	68,483	171,209
Alstead	366	245,281	613,202
Charlestown	5,842	681,626	1,704,066
Chesterfield	361	267,579	668,946
Claremont	28,842	3,255,492	8,138,730
Cornish	323	67,093	167,734
Croydon	134	90,281	225,702
Dublin	162	57,106	142,766
Fitzwilliam	441	183,663	459,157
Gilsum	189	126,127	315,316
Goshen	133	109,126	272,816
Grantham	212	46,422	116,055
Harrisville	69	29,747	74,367
Hinsdale	1,191	500,767	1,251,916
Jaffrey	981	615,785	1,539,463
Keene	4,753	3,697,940	9,244,850
Langdon	101	53,359	133,397
Lempster	238	139,938	349,845
Marlborough	509	253,774	634,436

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	167	113,275	283,187
Nelson	67	53,072	132,681
Newport	9,025	1,093,390	2,733,474
Plainfield	126	52,280	130,700
Richmond	182	173,665	434,163
Rindge	575	318,869	797,172
Roxbury	48	22,647	56,619
Springfield	154	66,103	165,257
Stoddard	201	87,114	217,786
Sullivan	161	84,199	210,498
Sunapee	323	134,969	337,422
Surry	138	55,896	139,741
Swanzy	1,913	1,226,942	3,067,354
Troy	600	253,710	634,276
Unity	242	94,748	236,869
Walpole	492	200,018	500,046
Washington	155	64,465	161,164
Westmoreland	171	112,396	280,991
Winchester	1,981	1,239,765	3,099,412
TOTALS	57,776	15,937,113	39,842,782

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.

SCS in Action - Impact Facts

It takes more than numbers to tell the story of how Southwestern Community Services functions as a Community Action Agency. To illustrate more clearly what we do, we have captured a snapshot of facts that represent a sample of the many activities accomplished over the past year.

ADMINISTRATION

Throughout the last year, agency leadership has completed the Community Needs Assessment, which will be utilized to prepare the agency's next five-year Strategic Plan. The agency also completed the most recent Emerging Leaders Program, which is a 12-month leadership program that is offered at the agency and is focused on both agency-wide information and leadership/management training. SCS also participated in several statewide events to raise awareness of Community Action Month and Community Action's impact on communities throughout the last sixty years; activities included the Governor's Proclamation for NH Community Action Agencies, the Hearts Across NH Event at the Statehouse, and the hosting of the Governor and Council breakfast, including a presentation to the Council.



COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM

CSFP works to improve the health of low-income persons at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA foods. Currently this program delivers locally to 20 different sites in Cheshire and Sullivan counties on a bi-monthly basis, assisting over 350 households who face the challenges of food insecurity.

ENERGY SERVICES PROGRAM

Here are just a couple of examples of the impact made each season by the Fuel Assistance Program:

A client's furnace stopped working on Christmas Eve. The program staff helped work the case and communicate with the vendor after hours to get the client's furnace up and running and to get them a minimum delivery, so the family had heat on Christmas Day.

In another case, a client came into the office as the office was closing on a Friday. This household was new to the program. Staff helped the family fill out the application and explained how the program works in terms of both the application and payment process. The energy team was able to assist this family with a minimum delivery through the GAPS Warm Dollars donation fund to get a delivery to them that evening.

HOUSING STABILIZATION SERVICES

With continued challenges in finding affordable housing and with low vacancy rates, the Housing Stabilization Programs were able to give shelter to 318 individuals in 257 households and had over 54 clients exit to Permanent Housing. Of those who exited the program, 19 individuals increased income. Of those staying in the program, 50 individuals increased their income.

NEW HOPE NEW HORIZONS

New Hope New Horizons supports adult individuals with all abilities to experience community in a variety of ways. New Hope is very lucky to have an intern from Antioch University spending 8 months with the program: she has incorporated a move and doodle group, as well as individual time with our participants. This year, our clients contributed by doing weekly volunteer work for the Feeding Tiny Tummies program. New Hope had a booth at the Feeding Tiny Tummies Fall Festival where they sold fried bread dough, French fries, and homemade food goods made by New Hope participants. The program was also invited to a fun-filled inclusion night with the Keene Swamp Bats. Everyone got to parade around the baseball field with the Keene Swamp Bats at Keene High School's Alumni Field! Throughout the year, many participants experienced day trips to the Keene Public Library, Stonewall Farm, Kimball's Ice Cream, and Washburn's Windy Hill Orchard for apple picking. In addition, New Hope New has many work sites that individuals work at, including Keene Parks and Recreation, Keene School District's Food Service Programs, Timken, Meals on Wheels, Hannaford, and more!

TEFAP

The Emergency Food Assistance Program helps provide critical emergency food support for the most vulnerable families in our communities. Through TEFAP, USDA purchases a variety of nutritious, high-quality USDA Foods, that SCS then distributes to local soup kitchens, food pantries, shelters, and other charitable organizations. This past year the TEFAP program provided food for over 3,000,000 meals to citizens in Cheshire and Sullivan County (approx. 8,000 meals per day for the year).

SCS WIC

WIC was established in 1974 and is structured as a public health nutrition program focused on driving health incomes. By providing nutritious foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and healthcare referrals, SCS WIC plays a pivotal role in ensuring healthier birth outcomes, fostering healthy child development, and enhancing dietary quality. For every dollar invested in WIC, approximately \$2.48 is returned in healthcare cost savings.

DEVELOPMENT

Southwestern Community Services has been actively collaborating with representatives of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NH DOT) and the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) to complete the transit facility project. This grant award will result in the transformation of a former auto body facility at 148 John Stark Highway in Newport, NH into the Sullivan County Transit facility. SCS has engaged the services of KCS Architects to begin the design and rehabilitation of the property. The efforts will provide new office and gathering space for the program's dispatchers and drivers as well as both interior or exterior covered parking for the program's eight transit vehicles, which includes seven 12-14 passenger buses and an accessible minivan. The development's construction work is forecasted to be publicly bid in late 2025/early 2026 with construction planned to be complete by early 2027.

HOUSING

In the past year, the Property Management team has housed 44 new households (19 families and 25 seniors). Many of the children in the families are participating in extracurricular activities at no cost through SCS sponsoring their involvement with Kids Collaborative.

ENERGY CONSERVATION PROGRAM

This year, the Energy Conservation/Weatherization program sealed and insulated 48 homes to cut drafts and improve ventilation. We also replaced 27 broken or failing heating and hot water systems, restoring safe, reliable heat and hot water where it was urgently needed. Crews fixed health and safety issues, including unsafe or blocked vents, missing or expired smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and dryer vents that did not exhaust properly. Homes tested tighter after weatherization, saving on energy costs while increasing comfort. The Weatherization team works to maximize impact by focusing efforts on serving seniors and some of the most vulnerable populations (Seniors: 45%; Households with Disabilities: 21%). By partnering with local contractors, the program keeps weatherization dollars circulating in the community and supports local families and businesses.

HEAD START

The SCS Head Start Program is built on a strong foundation of early education, a carefully designed program to prepare children for kindergarten through a comprehensive range of services. Its curriculum is rooted in evidence-based practices that target essential skills across several important areas: early literacy and language development, basic numeracy and problem-solving, and crucial social-emotional growth. By emphasizing children's health and wellness, incorporating engaging, age- and developmentally appropriate activities, and fostering family and community involvement, the program helps children develop self-regulation, curiosity, and the academic skills they need to succeed in a nurturing, structured environment. The ultimate goal is to close achievement gaps by providing individual educational support, ensuring that children have a solid and equitable foundation as they move on from Head Start into their formal schooling.

SULLIVAN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION

Sullivan County Transportation provided 38,545 bus rides last year, which was an increase of 8% from the prior program year. This includes bringing students to Head Start, employees to work, customers to grocery stores, and patients to all types of doctors' appointments (from Primary Care and Urgent Care to Emergency Medicine, Eye doctors, Orthopedics, Cardiology, and much needed Dialysis). The Volunteer Driver Program assisted with 1,783 rides to various appointments. Volunteer drivers bring customers to a variety of appointments, often in other states or over longer distances outside of the existing bus routes.



SCS PROGRAMS TABLE II	
HOUSING STABILIZATION SERVICES	
Emergency Homeless Shelters	
Street Outreach	
Homeless Permanent Housing Program	
Shelter Plus Care Program	
COC Rapid Re-Housing	
Coordinated Entry Program	
TRANSPORTATION	
Public Transit/Bus Service	
Volunteer Driver Program	
Mobility Management	
SCS PROPERTY MANAGEMENT	
Workforce Housing	
Senior Housing	
HUD 202 Senior Housing	
Commercial Property & Head Start Facilities	
Resident Services	
NUTRITION/HEALTH PROGRAMS	
Women, Infants, & Children Nutrition Program (WIC)	
Breastfeeding Peer Counseling	
Pilot Diaper Program	
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)	
Head Start Dental Program	
USDA Childcare Food Program	
Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP)	
SCS Food Pantries	

SCS PROGRAMS TABLE II	
EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS	
Financial Literacy Counseling	
Tenancy 101	
EDUCATION & CHILD DEVELOPMENT HEAD START CENTERS	
Claremont Head Start	
Jaffrey Head Start	
Keene Head Start	
Newport Head Start	
Swanzey Head Start	
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)	
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS	
Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA)	
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	
Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)	
Affordable Housing Program (NH Housing)	
HOME Investment Program (NH Housing)	
NEW HOPE NEW HORIZONS	
Employment Services	
Community Participation Services	

Capital Investment

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

CAPITAL INVESTMENT TABLE III		
COMMUNITY	PROPERTY ASSESSMENT	PROPERTY TAXES PAID
Alstead	707,500	24,762
Ashuelot	736,700	7,691
Charlestown	1,224,500	15,049
Claremont	2,821,000	29,020
Keene	9,233,580	173,719
Marlborough	950,883	23,423
Newport	2,490,100	28,342
Rindge	983,800	24,900
Swanzey	6,202,100	52,702
Troy	456,500	8,486
Winchester	4,669,900	136,595
TOTALS	30,476,563	524,690

“Decent, affordable housing should be a basic right for everybody in this country. The reason is simple: without stable shelter, everything else falls apart .”

Matthew Desmond

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	\$8,900,000
TOTAL	\$34,665,000
COMBINED TOTALS	
TOTAL SCS REAL ESTATE AND CONSULTING CONTRACTS	\$120,894,500

Southwestern Community Services' Presence in Our Communities

Primary Administrative Offices

63 Community Way, Keene, NH
31 Pleasant Street, Claremont, NH
6 Kinney Place, Claremont, NH

Workforce (Family) Housing

11-29 Citizens Way, Keene, NH
92 Water Street, Keene, NH
28-32 Main Street Swanzey, 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

SCS in Action – Community Outreach



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
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
37 West Street, Swanzey, NH
6 Kinney Place, Claremont, NH
360 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH

Shelters & Supportive Housing Facilities

Shelters: Three in Keene, NH
Shelters: Three in Claremont, NH
Supportive Housing: One in Keene, NH
Supportive Housing: One in Ashuelot, NH
Supportive Housing: Three 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
31 Pleasant Street, PMB 4
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.scshelps.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/scshelps.

In Memoriam



Mary Lou Huffling

SCS Board Member

Fall Mountain Food Shelf

Alstead Friendly Meals

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
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Claremont, New Hampshire 03743
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or

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www.scshehelps.org



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