

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COLLABORATIVE OF THE EASTERN PANHANDLE

STRONG AND STABLE FAMILIES WORK GROUP

2017 FACT SHEET

A prosperous and vibrant community depends on the health, education and economic well-being of its residents. The Eastern Panhandle is rich in many resources but there are challenges exist that seriously threaten this well-being .

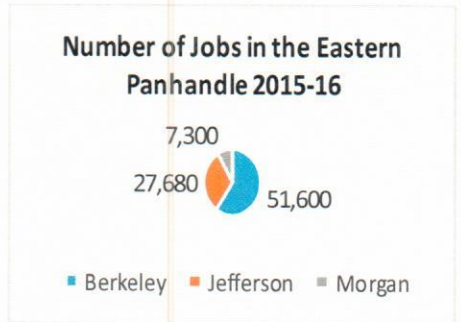
While we do have jobs in the Eastern Panhandle, low proficiency levels in reading and math, poor employment readiness and a culture of poverty have created a population of people who are ill equipped to work. This challenges employers in hiring and maintaining staff. Many of the jobs are part-time or seasonal. Traditionally viewed as “starter jobs,” these positions are more the norm than the exception. Families are not able to rely on regular paychecks so they rob Peter to pay Paul, living precariously on the verge of homelessness. Many do lose their homes, and more. It takes months to recover and families, including many children, are shifted into survival mode, sleeping in shelters or where friends or relatives welcome them. Their belongings are placed in storage or lost to the streets and they bounce between agencies and churches seeking help.

Millions of dollars are spent trying to keep these families afloat—not just in tax revenue and community donations that provide emergency assistance and other programs but also in the infrastructure and employees needed to support such programs. The provision of assistance to the needy is itself a business—but not a business on which vibrant communities are built.

Most of the data on this fact sheet are taken from 2015 reports. All sources are noted as the data appears. The purpose of the fact sheet is to illustrate the breadth and depth of the challenges families face with regard to self-reliance. It is meant to be a tool for community organizations and elected officials as they

Our Vision: All persons in Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan Counties will have access to resources to enable them to reach their fullest potential.

Our Mission: To identify needs, create and implement programming and advocate for funding and access to resources that help families reach their fullest potential.



Education Levels <i>US Census Bureau American Fact Finder https://factfinder.census.gov</i>	Berkeley County	Jefferson County	Morgan County	West Virginia	Frederick County, MD
Population	111,901	56,482	17,524	1,844,128	6,006,410
Less than High School Diploma	17%	14.1%	13.3%	13.7%	8.3%
High School Graduate or Equivalency	40.8%	24.5%	51.3%	36.1%	29%
Some College or Associates Degree	32.2%	55.3%	26%	42.2%	48.4%
Bachelors Degree or Higher	10%	6.2%	7.6%	7.9%	14.3%

Self-Reliance in the Eastern Panhandle	Berkeley County	Jefferson County	Morgan County	West Virginia	Frederick County MD
Percentage of people in poverty (A family of four—2 adults and 2 children living on \$24,036 or less) <i>US Census Bureau Quick Facts 2015</i> http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/54	13.2%	10.2%	13%	17.9%	7.4%
Percentage of children living in in poverty, (2015) <i>US Census Bureau</i>	22.9%	24.2%	33.5%	25%	9%
Percentage of school children eligible to receive free or reduced lunch (2014-15 school year) https://wvde.state.wv.us/feed-to-achieve/FTA-Scorecard.pdf	54%	43%	68%	60%	26.6%
Total # of individuals receiving assistance from SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) <i>West Virginia Department of Health And Human Services July 1, 2015—June 30, 2016</i>	18,731	6,670	2,929	367,908 https://w.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/snap/2015-State-Activity-Report.pdf	N/A
The Cost of SNAP <i>West Virginia Department of Health And Human Services (July 1,-2015-June 30, 2016)</i>	\$2,342,748	\$816,237	\$337,272	\$497,288,953	N/A
Total amount spent in Temporary Aid To Needy Families in Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan Counties in 2015 <i>West Virginia Department of Health And Human Services (July 1,-2015-June 30, 2016)</i>	\$2,247,202			N/A	N/A
Total amount spent in Emergency Assistance in Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan Counties by DHHR <i>West Virginia Department of Health And Human Services, Martinsburg Office (July 1,-2015-June 30, 2016)</i>	\$199,210			N/A	N/A
Emergency assistance provided by community agencies through the Regional Resource Connection (2015) These services were provided to families in Berkeley and Morgan County only during this time period.	Amount Requested \$892,956 Amount Met - \$526,222 Unmet - \$256,6977			N/A	N/A
Median Income <i>(US Census Bureau Quick Facts)</i>	\$55,239	\$66,667	\$39,324	\$41,751	\$83,700
Self-sufficiency wage for a family of four http://lmi.workforcewv.org/SelfSufficiency/SelfSufficiencyStandard.html	\$50,866	\$54,009	\$50,866	N/A	N/A
Percentage of people with a disability under the age of 65 <i>(US Census Bureau Quick Facts)</i>	10.6%	9.3%	11.9%	14.4%	7.2%
Unemployment Rate-Average for year of 2015 <i>(WorkForce WV and www.maryland.gov)</i>	5.0%	4.1%	5.5%	6.7	4.5%

The January 2017 Legislative Session

The Strong and Stable Families Work Group believes education is key to ensuring West Virginians reach their fullest potential and therefore **urges representatives during the 2017 Legislative Session to make this minor change to the *West Virginia Department of Health and Human Services Income Maintenance Manual , Chapter 24.13:***

Change the following sentence from this:

If the participant is under the age of 20 and does not have a high school diploma or its equivalent, the requirement to participate in educational activities must be included in the Personal Responsibility Contract.

To this:

If the participant is under the age of 30 and does not have a high school diploma or its equivalent, the requirement to participate in educational activities must be included in the Personal Responsibility Contract.

This simple change will encourage more young people to complete their high school education at little extra expense to the State since the Adult Education Centers already exist and are staffed across the State.