



2013-2014

Annual Report

Metropolitan Social Services

800 2nd Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37201

615-862-6432 Direct Services

615-862-6494 Planning & Coordination

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Executive Director's Message

The 2013-2014 Annual Report for Metro Social Services describes some important initiatives we have continued from previous years, as well as some new activities to improve and enhance services to customers. I will mention a few of the items that are included in this annual report.

Once again, MSS provided holiday assistance to hundreds of families, with food for holiday meals, bicycles and toys. This holiday assistance again helped brighten the season for many of Davidson County's low-income families who struggle to meet their basic needs.



In March 2014, MSS Planning & Coordination presented the *2013 Community Needs Evaluation* to the Metropolitan Council's Health, Hospitals and Social Welfare Committee. The following month, it was released to the public and presented at the *Magnitude and Patterning of Poverty*, attended by about 200 people. The following day, the *Tennessean's* lead story was about the data in the needs evaluation, with the title "**19% of Nashvillians live in poverty.**"

In April, MSS again held its popular Ride 2 Thrive event at Hartman Park, for hundreds of individuals and families participated in health screenings, family fun activities and much more. Many thanks go to the Tennessee Bikers Education Association and others who contributed to organizing this event. The Metropolitan Homelessness Commission organized the How's Nashville initiative, part of the national 100,000 Homes Campaign to focus on long-term homelessness and people who are medically vulnerable.

There are many more activities described in the newsletter, including new community partnerships as well as efforts by the MSS Board of Commissioners and MSS staff to clarify the values for the department – Commitment to Excellence, Community Focus and Compassion. We hope this annual report will be both helpful and enjoyable for all readers.

Metropolitan Social Services Board of Commissioners – 2013-2014

Dr. Frank Boehm
Renard Francois
Pastor William Harris
Betty Johnson
Chrissy Kirkwood
Mary Rolando
Bill Sinclair

Ride 2 Thrive

On April 19, 2014, Metropolitan Social Services hosted [Ride 2 Thrive](#) at Hartman Park. It featured health screenings, community resources, family fun zone, food court, zumba and the Tennessee Bikers Education Association. Hundreds of children and adults attended and enjoyed the numerous activities.



Family Holiday Assistance

In December 2014, a toy run was organized by the Tennessee Bikers Education Association, in which participating motorcycle clubs caravan to the offices of Metro Social Services to deliver toys and children's bicycles that were distributed to families. Volunteers from all partner organizations helped on both days and said they continue to enjoy the big smiles on the faces of the families and children.

Metro Social Services along with the National Black Police Association – Nashville Chapter (NBPA), and the Tennessee Bikers Education Association (TBEA) served 134 families including 340 children with its annual toy-giveaway. The event's goal is to serve some of the neediest families by making their holiday season enjoyable.

In addition, each Thanksgiving and Christmas, MSS also prepares holiday food baskets for families who have received services from MSS during the year.



2013 Community Needs Evaluation

Beginning in 2009, each year [MSS Planning & Coordination](#) has produced an annual [Community Needs Evaluation](#). On March 17, 2014, Metropolitan Social Services was invited to present the recent findings from the 2013 Community Needs Evaluation to the Metropolitan Council's Health, Hospitals and Social Welfare Committee.

The presentation to the Committee and other members of the Metro Council described the magnitude, patterning and detrimental effects of Nashville's poverty, as well as needs related to Food and Nutrition,



Health and Human Development, Housing and Neighborhoods, Long-Term Supports and Services-Adults, Workforce and Economic Opportunity.

On April 9, 2014, MSS-Planning & Coordination released the newest needs evaluation to the public, at an event entitled *Magnitude and Patterning of Poverty*. At the event, MSS Board Chair Mary Rolando welcomed participants on behalf of MSS and emphasized the importance of addressing the needs of those in Davidson County who experience poverty. Dr. Paul Speer, Associate Professor of Human & Organizational Development at Vanderbilt Peabody College, and Community Needs Evaluation Research Advisor, discussed the importance of collecting and using data.

About 200 people attended the April 9 event and many others saw it on the Metro Channel 3's YouTube Channel. The following day, the lead story for the Tennessean was about the release of the 2013 Community Needs Evaluation and the April 9 event. The title, *19% of Nashvillians live in poverty*, highlighted the extent to which Davidson County individuals and families are affected by poverty.

Financial Assistance Coalition

Beginning in 2013, MSS Planning & Coordination worked with Rooftop, NeedLink and other organizations to compile data on financial assistance provided to people in need in Davidson County. The group formed the [Financial Assistance Coalition](#) to identify the level unmet need for financial assistance, beginning with data collection and analysis from Rooftop, NeedLink of Nashville, Project Return, St. Luke's, Ladies of Charity, Metropolitan Action Commission and the Financial Empowerment Center.

It also began to explore creating a system to share data that would prevent duplications, capture the number of applicants and recipients citywide and identify the length of time organizations are without resources (most agencies indicated that budgetary limitations sometimes resulted in depletion of funds). The Coalition plans to continue working toward a more coordinated effort, building interagency trust, connecting clients with resources, understanding community needs, and developing systems that are more efficient.

New Community Partnerships

In June 2014, MSS began new partnerships with three organizations: the [Metropolitan Public Defender's Office](#), the [Metropolitan Office of Conservatorship Management](#) (a division of State Trial Courts) and [Urban Housing Solutions](#). These collaborations are designed to enhance the services to program participants.

The MSS partnership with the Public Defender's Office will provide direct social services with case management to individuals who were recently released from incarceration. Working with the Office of Conservatorship Management provides assessments that address the health, safety and welfare needs of individuals who have been appointed a guardian or conservator by a court in Davidson County. Under a new agreement with Urban Housing Solutions, Metro Social Services will provide application support such as assessment, case management, and other services to people who seek subsidized housing from Urban Housing Solutions.

MSS continues to partner with the Metropolitan Development Housing Authority, the Financial Empowerment Center and Rooftop to assist customers with housing stabilization efforts. MSS helps people improve life skills needed to stabilize their housing situations, complete applications, and be connected with other community agencies.

MSS Burial Program

On August 3, 2013, the *Tennessean* article, *After 15-Year Search, Nashville Mom Finds Son in Pauper's Grave*, described the eventual identification of the man buried in Plot #555 of the Bordeaux Cemetery. Because he was the 19th unidentified man buried there, he had previously been known as John (19) Doe. Thanks to later DNA testing, after 15 years of searching and praying, Sylvia Nolan learned that her son, LeRyan Nicholson, had died and where his body was located. LeRyan had experienced mental illness and lived a short, tragic life.

For decades, the [Burial Program at Metro Social Services](#) has provided the means and the arrangements for the indigent residents of Davidson County, to ensure that each person receives a respectful burial.

Among those who died penniless this year: a country music writer who kept Johnny Cash's number in his Rolodex, the mother of a disabled adult daughter who cannot care for herself and a man whose death was mourned only by the social workers who helped him at the end of his life. They are just a few of those buried in Nashville's paupers' graves. Names and dates of many of the 10,000 buried in Nashville's paupers' graves in cemeteries throughout the city are most likely lost forever, with some burials dating back to 1798 in the Davidson County Cemetery in the 2400 block of 18th Avenue. In later years, the city buried indigent residents at the Bordeaux Cemetery until it was filled to capacity, after which the city has purchased burial plots in private Davidson cemeteries.

How's Nashville

[Metropolitan Homelessness Commission](#) (part of MSS) created "How's Nashville," as part of the national 100,000 Homes Campaign, after Will Connelly began work in January 2013 as director. Using a focus on moving people who have experienced homelessness for a long time and are medically vulnerable from the streets or shelters into permanent supportive housing is expected to improve the local housing placement process for all populations.



The Metropolitan Homelessness Commission provides organizational support for the How's Nashville initiative, which is a collaborative effort driven by community partnerships. After completing more than 500 surveys, more than 250 people were identified as medically vulnerable. The How's Nashville initiative plans to house the most vulnerable individuals and families first, to reduce street deaths from the more than three dozen people who died on the streets in 2012.

At a June 4 public briefing, How's Nashville partners set a goal to house 200 people in the next 100 days. After requesting contributions to cover move-in costs, How's Nashville received \$36,000 in pledges within 10 minutes.

On February 9, 2014, CBS News aired "100,000 Homes," after Correspondent Anderson Cooper visited Nashville to learn and report on the challenges and successes of Nashville's effort to house people who are homeless.

MSS Strategic Planning Retreat

In February 2013, MSS had a strategic planning retreat, designed to update the mission statement and identify department goals. In addition, the participating staff and Board identified values for the department.

Commitment to Excellence

- We are responsible stewards of the resources entrusted to us to earn and maintain public trust.
- We employ trained, qualified and diverse staff members who deliver services that uphold the highest professional standards.
- Our services are guided by sound research and professional judgment.
- We provide services that are valuable and positively affect the lives of our customers.

Community Focus

- We collaborate with individuals and families, service providers and the community to identify solutions to the growing and evolving need in the community.
- We promote an environment of mutual trust and respect for those we serve and with whom we work.
- We value our unique role of assessing the presence of poverty and producing reliable information.

Compassion

- We honor the dignity and rights of the people we serve.
- We inform, encourage and inspire customers to make informed decisions.
- We engage our customers by recognizing their strength to obtain self-reliance.

MSS Budget

Budget Summary		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	Expenditures and Transfers:			
	GSD General Fund	\$ 7,746,800	\$ 7,903,600	\$ 7,825,700
	Special Purpose Fund	800	31,600	800
	Total Expenditures and Transfers	\$ 7,747,600	\$ 7,935,200	\$ 7,826,500
	Revenues and Transfers:			
	Program Revenue			
	Charges, Commissions, and Fees	\$ 22,500	\$ 20,600	\$ 25,600
	Other Governments and Agencies	1,485,500	1,493,200	1,439,600
	Other Program Revenue	28,800	65,600	35,800
	Total Program Revenue	\$ 1,536,800	\$ 1,579,400	\$ 1,501,000
	Non-program Revenue	0	0	0
	Transfers From Other Funds and Units	0	0	0
	Total Revenues	\$ 1,536,800	\$ 1,579,400	\$ 1,501,000
	Expenditures Per Capita	\$ 12.19	\$ 12.66	\$ 12.31
Positions	Total Budgeted Positions	90	89	88



Metropolitan Social Services Programs and Services

Direct Services

Descriptions and Eligibility Guidelines are available [online](#).

Family Services Program – 615-862-6458

The Family Services Program helps customers in develop or improve their life skills, increase independence and improve family stability. Services include Information and Referral Services, Counseling, Case Management and other assistance.

Homeless Services - 615-880-2526

Address the needs of individuals and families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless by providing supportive services and coordinating direct services with partner agencies.

Burial Assistance - 615-862-6458

Provides assistance to families experiencing grief from the loss of a loved one.

Senior Nutrition Services - 615-880-2292

Promotes health and well-being of persons over 60 years of age by providing nutritious meals at congregate meal sites or delivering to senior homes.

Nutritional Food Supplement – 615-892-6458

Nutritional food supplement sold with doctor's prescription.

Adult Homemaker Program - 615-862-6480

Serves frail elderly and disabled adults who need help with household tasks and/or personal care

Children's Homemaker Program – 615-862-6480

Specialized services to support families with children under age 18 who are at imminent risk of entering state custody.

Planning & Coordination

615-862-6494

Planning & Coordination collects and analyzes data regarding social/human service needs to identify unmet needs and anticipate emerging issues. The information is disseminated to elected officials, funders, community organizations and to the community.

Planning & Coordination produces an annual Community Needs Evaluation, issue briefs and newsletters, and recently released [Understanding Poverty](#).