



Norfolk Department of Human Services

STRATEGIC PLAN



Fiscal Years 2013-2017

Improving the Lives of Children, Families and Communities

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	3
Strategic Planning Team	3
Organization Overview	4
Introduction	5
Commitment to Families	8
Current Environment & Trends	11
Implementation	13
Conclusion	13
Strategic Goals	14
Objectives and Measures	15

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ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Our Mission: The Department of Human Services is committed to improving the lives of children, families, and communities through comprehensive services that support the well-being of Norfolk citizens

Our Vision: All citizens are productive, self-supporting, and live in a healthy, nurturing, and safe community.

Our Values: We are committed to the guiding values embraced by the City of Norfolk. As representatives and ambassadors of the City, we must behave responsibly, use good judgment, display appropriate workplace behavior and demonstrate the following values of:

- **Accountability:** Take ownership and responsibility for individual and team actions.
- **Integrity:** Model honest and trustworthy behavior by being inclusive and customer-oriented.
- **Innovation:** Support continuous improvement, generating new ideas and advancing best practices.
- **Respect:** Treat all with dignity and courtesy by listening, empathizing, and valuing opinions and perspectives.

These four values guide our commitment to providing excellent services at all times to our internal and external customers.

Our commitment to the City: The department recognizes that it cannot meet its mission and vision alone and has embraced the philosophy of the City of Norfolk to be a “well-managed government” comprised of the following building blocks:

- Efficient
- Effective
- Accountable
- Responsive
- Inclusive
- Customer-focused

This ongoing effort recognizes that in order to become a well-managed organization we must work together to provide our citizens with quality programs and services that are a priority to our community and supported by the city, state and federal governments, community partners, and public and private agencies. The department’s strategic plan goals and objectives support the building blocks.

INTRODUCTION

The Norfolk Department of Human Services (NDHS) is a multifunctional social service agency providing services to strengthen Norfolk's children, families, and individuals to help them live better lives. NDHS promotes self-reliance and safeguards the physical, emotional, and social well being of the citizens of Norfolk. The integrity of the Department's programs and services are designed to ensure that those with the fewest resources receive a basic level of health care and financial stability. In essence, the department is the City's safety net. The Department works to promote greater independence, reduce dependency on welfare, and increase personal responsibility. NDHS provides services that help to protect children and seniors from abuse and neglect thereby leading to an improved quality of life.

Current Challenges: NDHS is facing enormous challenges. A difficult economic time means that more individuals and families are in need of help. At the same time, decreasing revenues mean that there are fewer resources to meet the growing demand for services. We see fiscal uncertainty and rising deficits on a local and state level which threaten significant cutbacks in funding from those sources. Norfolk Department of Human Services must work smarter and prepare to make difficult decisions about how to best serve the community.

Increasingly, governments are challenged to "do more with less." The vast majority of the Department's funding coming through the state government, and NDHS's role is to manage the funds that it receives and provide efficient and effective services. Reductions in the amount of funds received by the Department do not change this basic fact. Now, more than ever, NDHS has to closely manage the funding that it receives and monitor the services it provides. This strategic plan will help guide the Department in allocating available resources to the programs with the greatest demand in our communities and develop strategies to ensure that services are effectively delivered.

What is a Strategic Plan? A strategic plan is a management tool to help keep an organization focused on delivering meaningful results to its clients and to the community. The plan establishes goals and measures progress towards meeting those goals. Development of a strategic plan provides an organization with the opportunity to review its resources and the needs of those it serves, prioritize services, and then evaluate and make changes and adjustments to services and operations based on sound research and data.

NDHS Strategic Plan. The NDHS Strategic Plan is a blueprint of how the department intends to meet the needs of those it serves within the limitations of the resources available. The plan includes both the steps—**strategies**—which NDHS will take to meet the goals established by the Strategic Planning Team, and measures—**outcomes**—to gauge the effectiveness of those strategies.

The Strategic Plan is not designed to do everything and will not meet every social service need in the City of Norfolk. NDHS is part of a tapestry of federal, state, and local government agencies, non-profit and faith-based organizations, and private sector providers. In determining the Department's priorities and strategies, consideration was given to the fact that other organizations may be in a better position to meet other specific needs expressed by our citizens.

Strategic planning is an ongoing process and the NDHS Strategic Plan is a living document. Tracking outcomes will allow NDHS to see what works and what does not work. The plan will be reviewed annually, adjustments made as conditions, and priorities change. By focusing on results tied to the City of Norfolk Priorities, the NDHS Strategic Plan provides accountability for performance to the city, state, and federal government.

Process. The Norfolk Department of Human Services Strategic Plan began with the Department's senior leadership team engaging in a SWOT Analysis...Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats/Challenges. This process provided a foundation for the larger strategic team to pose questions and seek answers about how NDHS could best serve the citizens of Norfolk as well as address some internal concerns.

Goals. The larger more inclusive strategic planning team moved forward with developing a set of five (5) goals that would best address the areas identified in the SWOT Analysis, meet the Department's mission and vision as well as working within the City Priority Areas, in particular, the Safe, Healthy and Inclusive Communities priority. In addition, the Strategic Plan goals will meet the standards of performance set by the Virginia Department of Social Services.

Objectives. An objective is a specific statement detailing the desired accomplishments related to the overall goal. An objective states the commitment to achieve a particular outcome or result. A good objective is impact-oriented, measureable, time limited, specific, and practical.

Strategies explain how the agency's objectives will be accomplished. They are the specific steps that are expected to ensure that the objective is accomplished. Allocation of fiduciary and human resources) and quantification of services and products (outputs and outcome measures) are directly linked to the objectives.

The NDHS Strategic Plan framework continued to be reviewed by the diverse Strategic Planning Team. After reviewing several times, the outputs and outcome measures (measures of success) were developed for all of the objectives.

Measures. Evaluating results is a key component of the strategic plan. Outcome measures attempt to track changes in a condition or quality. Did a client get and keep a job? Get a high school diploma? Show improvement in parenting their children? Outcomes go beyond

measuring what and how many services were provided and attempt to evaluate whether a program or service made a difference in the lives of people or in the community's quality of life.

- **Inputs** are resources that go into providing the program or service (funding, staff and staff time).
- **Activities** are what the program does with the inputs to fulfill its mission or objective (providing parenting classes, educating the public about child abuse/neglect).
- **Outputs** are the direct products of the program activities (number of classes taught, number of applications received).
- **Outcomes** are the benefits for the participants (obtaining employment/diploma, improved family life).

It is important to track inputs and outputs to gauge efficiency. The amount of available resources (inputs), activity design, and number of services provided (outputs) can influence the level of success (outcome). Outcome results provide an indication of effectiveness but there are important limitations. In particular, outcome measures track how many participants achieve the desired result but they do not prove that the program—and the program alone—caused the outcome.

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

NDHS is engaging and strengthening families through a variety of services delivered by our staff along with numerous organizations and agencies including the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, Norfolk Public Schools, Norfolk Police, Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Community Services Board, area hospitals, faith-based and community non-profits. Services are rendered also with funding from grants and other local and state initiatives.

We are always looking at best practice tools to enhance our service delivery as well as looking at our federal and state programs goals that support NDHS mission and vision. For example, in December 2007, the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) began a statewide child welfare reform initiative, known as the Virginia Children's Services System Transformation. With the Transformation initiative, the Virginia Practice Model was adopted and is used as a means to shift child welfare practice to increase the effectiveness in assisting at-risk children and their families, to strengthen permanent family connections for children and youth and to improve services to and outcomes for children and families.

The specific goals were:

1. Increase the number and the rate at which youth in foster care move into permanent family arrangements (permanency).
2. Increase the number of placements of at-risk children and youth with relatives and /or foster parents.
3. Devote more resources to community-based care to prevent children from entering foster care unnecessarily.
4. Embrace management by data and outcome-based performance management.

The practice model listed below is now used to provide services and sets forth a vision that this model will be used across NDHS programs including benefits and juvenile services.

Family Centered Practice Model six key principles to provide quality services to families:

1. We believe in family, child, and youth driven practice.
2. We believe that children do best when raised in families.
3. We believe that all children and youth need and deserve a permanent family.
4. We believe that all children and youth deserve a safe environment.
5. We believe in partnering with others to support child and family success in a system that is family-focused, child-centered and community-based.
6. We believe that how we do our work is as important as the work we do.



These six key principles interface with all of NDHS programs as well as support the City of Norfolk's values and concepts of a well-managed government. For example:

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program's aim is to be of temporary assistance and helping individuals move in the direction of meeting the four major goals of:

1. Assisting needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes.
2. Reducing the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.
3. Preventing out of wedlock pregnancies, and
4. Encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

TANF correlates with the Family Centered Practice Model and with the VDSS Family Strengthening & Fatherhood Initiative. NDHS and VDSS are working to focus on a holistic approach that goes beyond clients as individuals and focuses on strengthening the family unit as a whole. It requires a fundamental shift regarding how systems work with families. Over the years, much of the support provided has targeted mothers and children; however, recent shifts in programs are including fathers. This promotes ongoing opportunities to engage both parents in the lives of their children and families across all programs and services.

Family Strengthening & Fatherhood Initiative three goals are:

1. Identify strategies and resources that will engage and enhance each parent's and /or legal guardian's emotional and financial involvement with their children in order to strengthen the family.
2. Encourage responsible fatherhood and support the role of fathers to ensure the permanency, safety and well-being of their children and families to increase family functioning and co-parenting capacity.
3. Establish a state-initiated collaborative among local/state/federal partners, faith-based organizations, community-based organizations and training experts to develop education and awareness campaigns, and grant-funded opportunities to support

healthy family and fatherhood programs and /or projects that can be replicated in other state and local settings.

The integration of services and benefit programs will help to ensure healthy and safe family practices that support improving the lives of children, families and the community. The NDHS Strategic Plan continues to move the Department in this forward cross program shift.

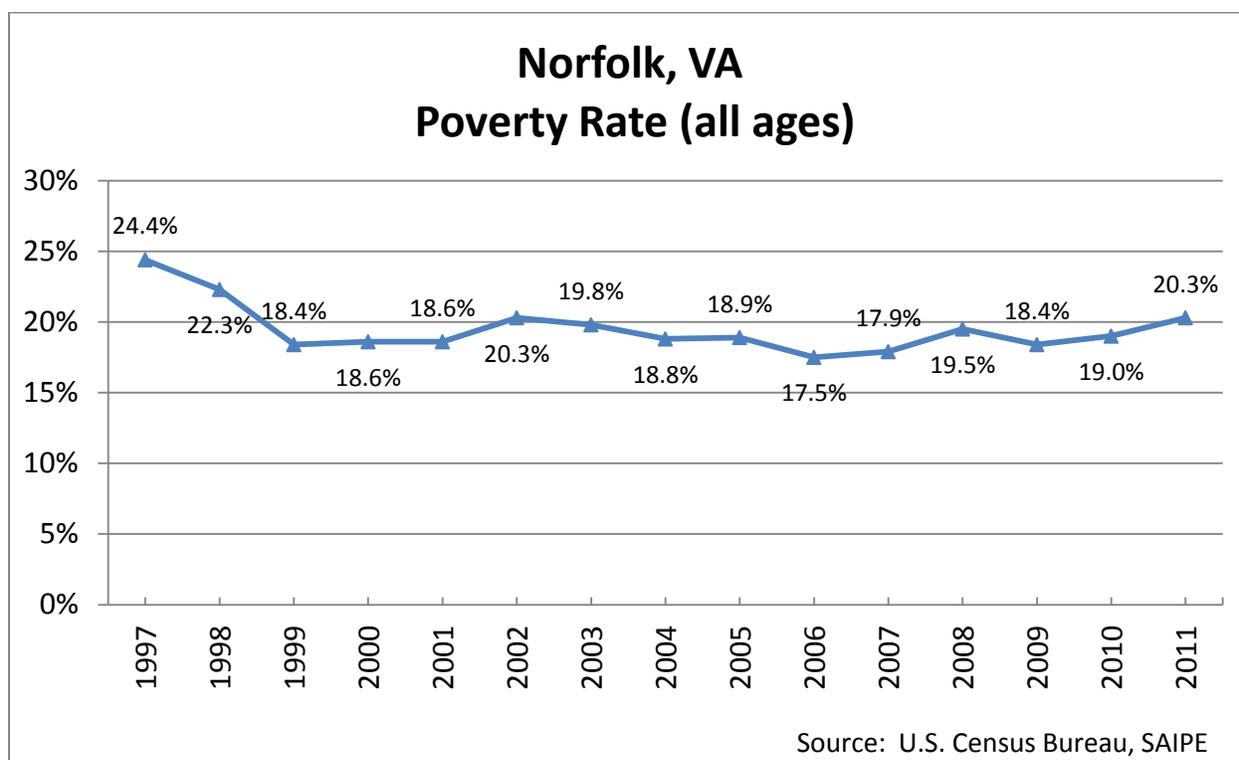


CURRENT ENVIRONMENT AND TRENDS

The 2010 Census established Norfolk's population at 242,803 with 19% of the residents living in poverty and thousands more needing assistance to meet their basic needs.

Norfolk residents have experienced fluctuating poverty rates from 1999 until 2011, with a 1.9% increase overall. The local unemployment rate reached its peak in 2010 with a 9.2% average. This rate followed closely with the U.S. average unemployment rate, but was two percent less than the State's rate of 7.1% for 2010. Norfolk's unemployment has declined to 7.6% in June 2013.

However, it remains well above the pre-recession unemployment rate of 4.1% in 2007. Many individuals and families are not able to achieve self-sufficiency due to joblessness or under-employment. Nearly one third of Norfolk residents found themselves lacking sufficient economic resources to supply the household with adequate food, housing, clothing, health care, childcare and transportation. In 2012, over 81,000 citizens received public assistance.



In addition, the Department serves our citizens in several of its other human service programs. People from all walks of life—not just the chronically poor—find they are ill equipped to survive unemployment, the financial and emotional effects of the extended recession, unexpected challenges and other family dynamics. Some have never had to ask for assistance before; they may not know where to turn for help, or that help even exists. In addition to the increase in the

requests for services, there is also an increase in the intensity of the level of need being presented by individuals and families. A few issues we face are:

- Access to all aspects of health care is limited;
- State limits on financial assistance benefits;
- Many lower-income seniors do not qualify for critical support services, and social isolation is exacerbating their financial, mental and physical health issues;
- More residents are applying for on-going state programs;
- Low-wage, part-time, and no benefits jobs are being combined with public assistance for survival; and
- Resource maximization is needed to improve transportation, medical and mental health care and affordable housing.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN

The overall strategy of the Norfolk Department of Human Services is to have programs and services designed and implemented to promote improving the lives of children, families and the community. The programming will promote the economic independence and social well-being of individuals and families.

Who will be responsible? Assigning a *Lead Person* and responsible parties is critical to ensuring that the plan is fully implemented. These roles are typically held by senior management or the core-planning group. Each of the five (5) Strategic Goals has a *Lead Person* assigned. The *Lead Person* will have in their purview of authority the clear ability to accomplish the task. The *Lead Person* also plays an important role in the management and supervision of the plan and will routinely report progress to the Assistant Director and the Research, Planning and Evaluation Team. Staff responsible for various activities must be clearly identified and must understand their responsibilities.

When will activities and goals be completed? The Departments' senior management and the *Lead Person* will review the overall plan and determine appropriate timeframes for initiating and completing the activities. *Action Plans* will be developed with each *Lead Person* and they will determine the activities, additional staff needed and timeframes to achieve activities. The priority assigned to these activities needs to be reflected in the timeframes for initiation and completion in the plan. The *Action Plans* will provide accountability and opportunity to revisit the goals and objectives periodically to ensure that progress is being made.

CONCLUSION

The strategic plan is designed to help NDHS set realistic goals, provide efficient and cost-effective service, identify areas for improvement and innovation and provide data for the department regarding the progress of service delivery for Norfolk's citizens. In light of the Department continuing to face fiscal pressures and demands for accountability from local, state and federal leaders-and citizens, the strategic plan will help to answer some of the concerns. To build public support, justify the budget and satisfy funding sources, the department needs to continually evaluate and improve our performance where needed. A strong strategic plan is a powerful management technique that the department can use to establish and move towards improved outcomes for children and families.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- I. **SERVICE DELIVERY:** Deliver the highest quality, effective, individualized, and family centered services to meet the needs of our citizens.

- II. **WORKFORCE CULTURE & INVESTMENTS:** Enhance the Human Services' workforce by emphasizing the characteristics of a well-managed government and city values in performance management, development, and recruitment.

- III. **PUBLIC RELATIONS:** Broaden the community's knowledge and understanding of human services and enhance the image of our department.

- IV. **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY:** Leverage technology to streamline information and improve access for employees and Norfolk citizens.

- V. **PARTNERSHIPS AND RESOURCES:** Maximize partnerships and resources to improve the effectiveness of the agency's operations and service delivery to citizens in our community.

OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES

- I. **Goal - Service Delivery.** Deliver the highest quality, effective, individualized, and family centered services to meet the needs of our citizens.
 - 1.1 **Objective.** Develop specific training curriculum for all levels of staff to ensure quality standards are met.
 - Output: Number of program/training curricula developed
 - Output: Number of staff trained
 - Outcome: Percent of staff passing skills test
 - Outcome: Percent of performance ratings that reflect staff are meeting quality standards
 - 1.2 **Objective.** Provide Prevention services that improve, support and strengthen the family and its members.
 - Output: Number of prevention-related programs
 - Output: Number of children diverted from out-of-home placement
 - Output: Number of adults diverted from out-of-home placement
 - Outcome: Percent of children and adults receiving Prevention services that result in permanent living arrangements
 - 1.3 **Objective.** Provide Family Team Meetings at all critical decision points according to VDSS best practice guidance to strengthen families [keep families intact when possible.]
 - Output: Number of foster care entries
 - Output: Number of Family Team Meetings that occurred when (or before) a child entered foster care
 - Output: Number of Family Team Meetings (FTM) held with youth at Norfolk's Juvenile Detention Center (NJDC)
 - Outcome: Percent of frequency of timeliness of referrals received for each critical decision point
 - Outcome: Percent of all children in NJDC returning to biological parents
 - Outcome: Percent of foster care children in permanent placements
 - Outcome: Percent of children who improve and require less critical care
 - 1.4 **Objective.** Implement a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) team to identify areas of needed improvement and implement improvement plans.
 - Output: Number of procedures reviewed
 - Output: Number of procedures revised
 - Output: Number of SNAP, Medicaid, and TANF applications received
 - Output: Number of CPS and APS complaints filed with agency
 - Outcome: Percent of SNAP, Medicaid and TANF applications processed within state timeliness standards

- Outcome: Percent of CPS and APS complaints of abuse and neglect responded to within state standards for timeliness
- Outcome: Percent of customers satisfied with service delivery

1.5 Objective. Create and implement an agency emergency preparedness and disaster recovery plan that address our most vulnerable adults, foster care children, and detention youth.

- Output: Number of emergency preparedness trainings completed with employees
- Output: Number of emergency preparedness training completed with target populations
- Outcome: Percent of all at-risk populations accounted for during drills

II. **Goal - Workforce Culture & Investments**. Enhance the Human Services' workforce by emphasizing the characteristics of a well-managed government and city values in performance management, development, and recruitment.

2.1 Objective. Enhance the hiring processes for Human Services.

- Output: Number of persons hired within two months from interview date
- Output: Number of new employees who successfully complete the probationary period
- Outcome: Percent of new hires who demonstrate proficiency and competency by receiving satisfactory performance evaluations at 3 and 6 month reviews

2.2 Objective. Develop internal opportunities for staff with advanced knowledge, skills, and abilities to assist in training co-workers.

- Output: Number of staff leading the trainings
- Output: Number of trainings offered by internal staff
- Outcome: Percent of NDHS structured trainings conducted by internal staff
- Outcome: Percent of employees demonstrating improved case knowledge

2.3 Objective. Establish a culture that values employees' contributions and skills

- Output: Number of performance evaluations completed timely
- Output: Number of specific employee commendations, recognition awards and events
- Outcome: Percent of employee performance evaluations completed timely
- Outcome: Percent of staff expressing satisfaction with the work environment

2.4 Objective. Create career paths that identify training and development needs for career progression.

- Output: Number of career ladders identified and formalized

- Output: Number of staff actively pursuing career progression with supervisor involvement
- Outcome: Retention rate for skilled and promotable employees

2.5 Objective. Improve customer service through training and emphasizing the City's guiding values of accountability, integrity, innovation and respect.

- Output: Number of required staff trainings related to customer service
- Output: Number of customer complaints
- Output: Number of customer compliments
- Outcome: Employee pre and post-training self-evaluation results
- Outcome: Percent of satisfied internal and external customers

III. **Goal - Public Relations**. Broaden the community's knowledge and understanding of human services and enhance the image of our department.

3.1 Objective. Provide consistent and accessible information on Human Service programs and services available.

- Output: Number of resources that describe programs and services delivered by Human Services
- Outcome: Percent of customers satisfied with quality and accessibility of Human Services' information

3.2 Objective. Develop public education/awareness campaigns.

- Output: Number of positive news items provided to public affairs and news media
- Output: Number of hits on the Human Services webpage
- Output: Number of viewers on Human Services Forum (TV48 Cox Cable)
- Output: Number of languages in which print materials are available
- Output: Number of videos created about the agency
- Output: Number of external request for written information about the agency
- Outcome: Percent of positive news reports (of total news reports) about NDHS

IV. **Goal - Information Technology**. Leverage technology to streamline information and improve access for employees and Norfolk citizens.

4.1 Objective. Develop centralized electronic access to systems, policies, forms, procedures, resources, and pertinent information.

- Output: Centralized electronic access developed for use by NDHS employees
- Outcome: Number of staff accessing information
- Outcome: Employee satisfaction rate pertaining to availability and accessibility of resources

4.2 Objective. Establish an IT review board to plan and discuss IT issues and projects.

- Output: IT Review Board established
- Output: Number of meetings per year
- Output: Number of issues addressed
- Outcome: Number of issues resolved

4.3 Objective. Develop encryption to maintain security and confidentiality of information.

- Output: Number of computers with encryption technology
- Outcome: Number of findings related to transfer of confidential information

4.4 Objective. Expand IT system technology for remote access.

- Output: Number of family service workers with remote access
- Outcome: Percent of cases with timely documentation

4.5 Objective. Electronic Data Case Management System for Norfolk Juvenile Detention Center (NJDC) to expedite intake processing.

- Output: Number of paper files eliminated
- Output: Remaining number of paper files
- Output: Number of intakes
- Output: Number of electronic files
- Outcome: Average time for intake processing

4.6 Objective. Install Benefits application kiosks at various Department locations.

- Output: Number of kiosks installed at NDHS sites
- Output: Number of applications prepared at each kiosk
- Outcome: Average intake processing time
- Outcome: Percent of customer's satisfied with kiosk application

4.7 Objective. All NDHS documentation becomes electronic.

- Output: Number of paper files remaining with NDHS
- Outcome: Percent of cases with electronic documentation only
- Outcome: Employee satisfaction rate pertaining to the availability of electronic files

V. **Goal - Partnerships and Resources**. Maximize partnerships and resources to improve the effectiveness of the agency's operations and service delivery to citizens in our community.

5.1 Objective. Create a resource manual that is continually updated and researched.

- Output: Resource manual developed for use by partners and residents
- Output: Number of resources integrated into centralized electronic manual
- Outcome: Satisfaction rate pertaining to availability and accessibility of resources

5.2 Objective. Advance the development of regional partnerships among local departments of social services (LDSS).

- Output: Number of compatible programs and services
- Output: Number of local department of social services (LDSS) participating
- Outcome: Number of shared projects and initiatives
- Outcome: Amount of cost savings from leveraged resources

5.3 Objective. Enhance and build partnerships with community providers, businesses, and other City departments

- Output: Number of meetings held with [non-LDSS] partners to strengthen relationships
- Output: Number of MOUs created with partners
- Outcome: Percent of partners expressing improved relationship with and knowledge of Norfolk Department of Human Services