

This update to the Waldo Community Action Partners Community Assessment was completed in May & June 2020 in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic.

I. Background

This Community Assessment Update is in response to a global health pandemic that has not only affected every community in the United States but has also led to the most significant economic disruption since the Great Depression. This assessment is an initial effort to capture some of the emerging needs in the community as well as to forecast how those needs may evolve over the coming weeks and months.

Because of the urgent and widespread needs affecting all sectors of the community, this Community Assessment update is intended to provide some initial information to describe the scope of this crisis on our community and to support the many different responses that will be required to address emerging, evolving needs. It is likely that as needs evolve, some of those needs will not be captured in this update and therefore some necessary community responses may not connect to the needs identified in this document.

The *community* assessed in this document, related to the below information, is defined as the following: **Waldo County, Maine**

The needs assessed will inform services to those affected by the crisis. It is significant to note that Congressional action will permit FY20 and special supplemental CSBG funding to serve families at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) (as defined by [the US Census Bureau](#)).

Community Action Partnership Report

Location

Waldo County, ME

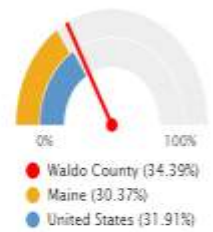
Population Profile

Poverty Rate 200% (ACS)

In the report area 34.39% or 13,250 individuals are living in households with income below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). This indicator is relevant because poverty creates barriers to access including health services, healthy food, and other necessities that contribute to poor health status.

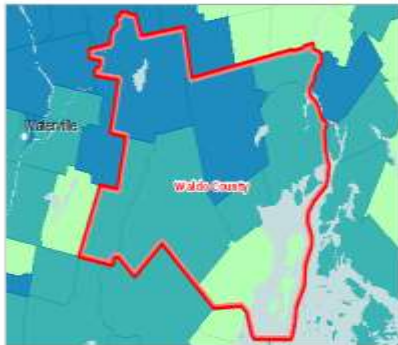
Report Area	Total Population	Population with Income at or Below 200% FPL	Percent Population with Income at or Below 200% FPL
Waldo County, ME	38,531	13,250	34.39%
Maine	1,296,990	393,885	30.37%
United States	314,943,184	100,490,740	31.91%

Percent Population with Income at or Below 200% FPL



Note: This indicator is compared to the state average.

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-18. Source geography: Tract [Show more details](#)



Population Below 200% Poverty Level, Percent by Tract, ACS 2014-18

- Over 50.0%
- 38.1 - 50.0%
- 26.1 - 38.0%
- Under 26.1%
- No Data or Data Suppressed
- Waldo County, ME

[View larger map](#)



Poverty Rate 125% (ACS)

In the report area 18.27% or 7,039 individuals are living in households with income below 125% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). This indicator is relevant because poverty creates barriers to access including health services, healthy food, and other necessities that contribute to poor health status.

Report Area	Population, Total	Population with Income at or Below 125% FPL	Population with Income at or Below 125% FPL, Percent
Waldo County, ME	38,531	7,039	18.27%
Maine	1,296,990	217,827	16.79%
United States	314,943,184	58,418,702	18.55%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-2018. Source geography: Tract → Show more details

Family Poverty Rate 125% (ACS)

In the report area 11.67% or 1,285 family households are living with income below 125% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

Report Area	Family Households, Total	Families with Income at or Below 125% FPL	Families with Income at or Below 125% FPL, Percent
Waldo County, ME	11,011	1,285	11.67%
Maine	347,959	38,269	11.00%
United States	78,697,103	10,803,905	13.73%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey. → Show more details

[← Data Indicators](#)

Waldo County Federal Poverty Level Population Numbers

200% FPL	13,250
125% FPL	7,039
Increase	6,211
% of increase	47%

The following table illustrates how the 200% eligibility standard will expand the number of Waldo County residents eligible for services:

Age group in Waldo County	# below 125% (CSBG standard)	# between 125% and 200%	Total # below 200% (updated CARES standard)	% of increase of population to serve
Under 6 yrs old	163	58	221	26%
Between 6 and 60	1065	393	1458	27%
Over 60 yrs	628	354	982	36%
Total # of people	1856	805	2661	30%

(disclosure: HEAP clients served from Sept 3, 2019 to May 31, 2020)

Waldo CAP hosted two drive-through food distributions to the general public and our Early Childhood Program families in May 2020. We completed surveys on the 243 families participating in the drives. From data collected in the surveys, we can determine:

- 35 % were first time users of Waldo CAP services
- 19% were disabled and 4% were Veterans
- 55% of those served were below the 125% FPL
- 31 % increase of populations when serving the range between 125% and 200% of FPL

Drawing on the collective data from our May food distribution and HEAP applications and the Community Action Partnership Report, we can predict an increase between 30% to 45% in the number of Waldo County residents eligible for service when the eligibility standard expands to 200% of FPL.

However, given the infusion of stimulus packages and added temporary resources, we anticipate this need will potentially grow with time.

II. National, State and Local public health crisis

State and local health authorities responded to the outbreak by placing restrictions on travel, business and recreation that have had several impacts on the community.

As a result of this unprecedented public health crisis, Waldo Community Action Partners is updating its Community Assessment because there is currently a significant impact on the community, and several short-, intermediate- and longer-term impacts are expected.

III. Immediate impacts on the community

The immediate impacts of COVID-19 have been felt across all sectors of society. Some of the greatest impacts relevant to the Community Action Network have been in the areas of health, education, employment, human services provision, and community resources. In this community, areas of highest vulnerability are in those communities with high population density, high uninsured rates and a high proportion of older residents.

Nationwide, early data suggest that the following groups have experienced disproportionately higher rates of infection and/or complications/death as a result the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Males
- Individuals 65+ years old
- People of color, particularly African Americans and Native Americans
- People with underlying health conditions (especially, lung disease, asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, liver disease, severe obesity, and individuals with immunocompromised conditions)

In Waldo County Maine as of May 28th, 2020 there have been 51 cases, 4 hospitalizations, and 14 deaths. Most deaths have been attributed to a breakout at a local nursing and assisted living facility.

The following outlines some of the critical areas of impact to the local community thus far:

Health impacts:

Individuals over 65, especially those with underlying health conditions have been shown to be at particular risk for severe health implications from COVID-19. Those in congregate settings (e.g. nursing homes) are a concern in this community.

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community

In our community, vulnerability is highest in the following areas:

- 20.3% of Waldo Counties residents are aged 60 or older
- 17.8% of adult Waldo County residents smoke.
- 22.5% of Waldo County residents have diabetes.
- 4.3% of Waldo County residents have asthma.
- 21.3% of Waldo County residents have cardiovascular disease.
- Waldo County residents are 10% more likely to be overweight than the general population of Maine.

Residents in congregate living facilities, retirement communities, etc. are at higher risk of severe COVID-19 outcomes because of older age and because they may have underlying health conditions, such as chronic heart disease, diabetes, or lung disease. They also may be at higher risk of getting and spreading the virus because of community characteristics, such as frequent social activities, and shared dining facilities and communal spaces.

- The Maine CDC listed Belfast's Tall Pines Nursing home was listed as top concern. The state shipped personal protective equipment for staff at Tall Pines and provided guidance on testing, assessing who was at risk and other needs. The Maine National Guard responded to assist with distribution of equipment and additional cleaning.

Community health resources will be stretched thin as resources devoted to those sick with COVID-19 will limit resources available to others. Limited Intensive Care and other hospital services in this community would mean others NOT directly affected by COVID might lack access to care.

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community
- Waldo County General Hospital serves the health needs of area residents through Waldo County General Hospital, Waldo County Medical Partners, five rural health centers, home health and hospice services, public health nursing Penobscot Shores and educational programs. Waldo County General Hospital is a 25-bed, not-for-profit, critical access, medical and surgical hospital with 4 ICU beds. It's ability to respond in a crisis is limited to its size.
- Beginning May 19, Maine will now test specimens from any person who has one or more symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19. Testing must be ordered by a clinician. Until this date, access to testing was limited.

Behavioral health resources will need to be available in new and increased ways to deal with the many different stressors/traumas caused by the pandemic, especially its impact over an extended time period. Issues such as domestic violence, elder abuse, child abuse, drug abuse, suicide and other indicators of behavioral health issues are a concern in this community.

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community

- 45% of people report an increase in mental health distress due to COVID-19
- There are only 5 mental health treatment centers in Waldo County, and most resources are in surrounding counties. However, stay at home order stalled public transportation.
- Waldo County General, the county's hub of healthcare, does not provide inpatient or outpatient services for mental health and substance use.
- People residing in mental health treatment facilities are at a high risk of contracting COVID-19.
- Sweetser School, a mental health treatment facility/school for children, located in Belfast was closed to the public
- Mental health resources are turning to telehealth methods during the pandemic to continue serving their clients, however, 17.8% of Waldo County households do not have internet

Nutrition for school-aged children previously accessing free/reduced breakfast, lunch, and snacks is impacted as many are now removed from that food source due to school closures.

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community

- The local school districts have been continuing to provide school lunches to students throughout Waldo County using school buses and bus drivers to deliver lunches. It is estimated that in RSU#71, one of the three school districts in Waldo County, that 8,000 bags of food were delivered in a week.

Employment impacts:

Employment impacts of the pandemic have been immediate and profound. Anecdotal information as well as early data about unemployment claims from March and April confirm a significant emerging need in the area of employment. Local indicators show that national patterns of unemployment are being seen in this community.

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community

- In two days, May 1-2, about 10,500 Mainers applied for Unemployment, causing the phone systems to crash due to the influx of calls. The online system is moving slowly due to the number of users filing claims.
- The delay in allowing self-employed workers to file for unemployment is causing a backup in current filings.
- Claims are delayed in being processed and distributed, leaving those who were not already in the system without any source of income for weeks.
- Job Loss: Maine unemployment rate hit record high of nearly 11 percent in April. The state lost more than 98,000 jobs last month as the economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic hit the state with full force.

Individuals in the health care field are at high-risk of exposure to COVID-19 and are under tremendous stress due to additional work hours and challenging work conditions. Many of those workers with close, frequent contact with vulnerable individuals are lower-wage individuals.

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community

- On March 24th, Waldo County General Hospital officials say one of their nurses has tested positive for COVID-19.

- The closing of childcare facilities impacted first responders, essential service providers and health care workers ability to report for work

Individuals in the educational field – especially teachers and assistants in Head Start and Early Head Start as well as other early childhood care settings – are working remotely due to school shutdowns. Lower-wage workers in these fields are more vulnerable to layoffs and/or may lack the technology resources in their home to work remotely.

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community

In May, 2020 the Early Childhood Program surveyed all families to understand what the impact of COVID on their primary income source has been:

- Total people/families counted: 357 Families:
- Primary Earner 50% (212). Secondary- 40% (145)
 - Income Change:
 - People whose income changed: 26% (95)
 - People whose income did not change: 74% (262)
 - Reasons for income change:
 - Laid off: 36% (34)
 - Working less hours: 26% (25)
 - Furloughed: 1% (1)
 - Working more hours: 1% (1)
 - Other: 36% (34)
 - When income did not change:
 - Work stayed the same: 57% (149)
 - Already wasn't working: 31% (76)
 - Allowed to work from home: 8% (30)
 - Other: 4% (7)
- Secondary whose income changed: 26% (38)
 - 40% of those whose income changed
- Primary whose income changed: 27% (57)
 - 60% of those whose income changed

Individuals in many sectors of the economy – but particularly the service sector, the retail sectors, gig economy, and others most affected by quarantine policies – are currently experiencing sudden and unexpected unemployment. Some are unaware of resources available to them and their families as they are experiencing unemployment for the first time.

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community

- The coronavirus pandemic has turned the Belfast economy upside down. Restaurants have closed their dining rooms, offering take-out meals and/or delivered food.
- Many businesses, such as theaters and hair salons, were shut down.

The hospitality sector was hit hardest by staff layoffs, with restaurants, bars and hotels shut down or forced to severely restrict service. That sector shed 42,600 jobs statewide, or 61 percent, between February and April according to Maine Dept of Labor.

There are many restaurants and lodging establishments that contribute significantly to the local economy. A report from Hospitality Maine indicates the dollar impact on Maine Restaurants & Lodging compared from March of 2019 to March 2020.

	Mar-19	Mar-20	
Maine Restaurants	\$ 257,842,000	\$ 166,346,000	decline of 35%
Belfast Restaurants	\$ 4,983,000	\$ 4,455,000	decline of 10.5%
Maine Lodging	\$ 44,330,000	\$ 24,107,000	decline of 45%
Belfast Lodging	\$ 589,000	\$ 365,000	decline of 38%

Local fair, festivals and music events are a major attraction for visitors in Waldo County. The Common Ground Fair attendance in 2019 reached over 60,000 attendees and utilized 2500 volunteers. This is a list of the events closed for 2020: 2nd Annual Maine Authors Book Festival, Arts in the Park Belfast, Belfast Harbor Fest, Maine Celtic Celebration, Marsh River Theater, Common Ground Fair and many other smaller events.

Educational impacts:

Closings of public schools in the Community Assessment area are having an immediate impact on children’s education. Children with less access to resources (broadband internet, computers/tablets, technology expertise, language barriers, etc.) are most at-risk for suffering learning loss during a potentially protracted period of school closure.

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community
 - Last days: RSU 3. 22, 20, 71: March 13. Distance learning for all began March 16-23 and continued throughout the remainder of the 19/20 school year. School districts faced challenges from lack of technology, compounded by Waldo County’s lack of high speed, or any internet service, in many rural and island locations

Caregivers of school-age children must secure day care arrangements for their children or sacrifice employment to care for their children. These same caregivers are also expected to be primary teachers for their children during the period of the closure. Parents with limited resources face numerous challenges as a result of this situation and educational outcomes for their children will be affected.

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community
 - We know that the closing of childcare facilities impacted first responders, essential services providers and health care workers’ ability to report for work.
 - Parents were suddenly facing responsibility to support the education provided by their child’s teacher. We have heard from our families that this additional level of teaching and support brings new levels of stress and they report being tired.

- Prior to April 1, WALDO CAP served as the CACFP sponsor for 17 childcare providers with a total enrollment of 229 children; As of April, only seven providers were open at some point during the month, providing care for 34 children. In May, there are nine providers open with 88 children.

As school closures swept the country due to the coronavirus pandemic, parents everywhere raised concerns about putting plans into place to keep their kids entertained and educated, while also managing the parents' own work schedules. For many parents for whom working from home isn't an option, this is a hardship (as it is for parents who rely on schools for lunches, special needs therapy and aftercare). But parents fortunate enough to work from home also scrambled to figure out how they'd best balance the needs of their kids and their employers.

Impacts on human services provision:

Services to vulnerable populations are being curtailed or drastically changed. Some service providers are not operating, leaving gaps in services to the community. Other service providers have had to alter their service provision in significant ways, leaving some family needs unmet. Finally, for those service providers continuing to operate, the changed circumstances have required significant, immediate adaptations that will require additional resources to support over a longer period:

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community

Social distancing requirements have made people unable to utilize face-face substance use treatment or go to support meetings.

- Waldo County has shown to have about double the amount of overdose calls as compared to the state average of the years.
- Isolation has led to an increase in substance use nationwide.
- Waldo County Dentists were required to close and are now only available for dental emergencies.
- Waldo County is a federally designated underserved area for dental care.
- Waldo County's domestic violence resource center, New Hope for Women, stopped seeing clients face-to-face
- Though Protection from Abuse court is still open during the pandemic, victims are no longer accompanied by trained legal advocates to their hearing dates.
- Spectrum Generations, the agency serving Meals on Wheels to Waldo County, cited a strong need for more volunteers as households and delivery routes were added to their list. Criteria for receiving Meals on Wheels has expanded to include more clients, putting more pressure on the delivery system.

Community resource impacts:

The impacts of COVID-19 on community resources are numerous and include a reduction in the availability of resources (access to group activities, commercial services), a scarcity of some resources (health care, food and emergency supplies) and/or needs for resources that have not previously been required in this community in any significant capacity.

- This applies to this community
- This does NOT apply to this community

- Waldo County YMCA closed to the public and remains closed till after June 1, removing much needed access to health and fitness opportunities in the community. Additionally, the YMCA closed their childcare services, however, they will reopen childcare services on June 1.
- In keeping with the Governor's directive, childcare providers closed down
- In May, there were 53 childcare providers in Waldo County, 3 of which are new and not yet operational. Licensing capacity indicates 1095 slots, yet most are not available due to the pandemic. As of June 9th, only one daycare had four open slots in Waldo County.
- Food Insecurity: We identified 16 Food Pantry/Soup Kitchen Locations in Waldo County, mostly run by volunteers and dependent on food supplies by Good Shepard Food Bank. Some food pantries did not have capacity to pick up food when deliveries to their site was not available. While some very organized and active food pantries in Waldo County, there are communities not served by a pantry or the pantries is only open once a month. We found gaps (no food pantry in the following towns: Prospect, Waldo and parts of Lincolnville. Our food nutritionist developed a list of the food pantries in Waldo County, which was shared on our website and Facebook pages. From the data we collected:
 - 56 % of food pantries maintained regular hours, 38% added additional open times and 6% suspended service.
 - All pantries reported when they were open, they witnessed a higher than normal volume with increased requests for emergency food boxes. A map of food pantry service area is available
 - Throughout the county, people on fixed incomes, such as social security, SSI or other sources of unearned income may not have seen a decrease in income. However, their cost for food, transportation, increased need for cleaning supplies and other necessities have all increased in price. In some situations, due to isolation, internet and phone costs may have increased. Additionally, shut-ins may have to pay to have groceries or medicine delivered, thus negatively impacting their household budget.
 - Hunger across Maine is climbing due to the economic impacts of COVID-19. Good Shepherd Food Bank, Maine's largest hunger relief organization, is assessing the local impact in each of Maine's sixteen counties, as statewide rates of hunger are projected to grow by as much as 40 percent in 2020. Waldo County is projected to see an increase in Child Food Insecurity of 42% as compared to the 2018 baseline. Projected Food Insecurity for the entire county is project ted at 38%.

Nutrition for school-aged children previously accessing free/reduced breakfast, lunch, and snacks is impacted as many are now removed from that food source due to school closures.

- This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community
- Full Plates Full Potential, the Maine-based nonprofit working to end child hunger statewide, announced that Maine K-12 Schools and Community Organizations using USDA Child Nutrition Programs are reaching at least 59,257 students daily with breakfast and lunch meals during the pandemic-related school closures. On-site programming for many Maine K-12 schools ended March 13, and on March 16 schools responded by transforming their food programs and operations. With kids learning from home, school nutrition programs began operating their in-person school year meal service like summer food programs. Schools are benefiting from unprecedented flexibility granted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and actions by the Maine Department of Education. The MDOE has submitted and received approval of some 20 waivers that prioritize access to nutritious meals by allowing innovation like home delivery.

- USDA-approved waivers and flexibilities to school meal service are scheduled to end June 30, but state and federal advocates are pushing for them to be extended through September.

The broad impacts of COVID-19 on this community have created an even more urgent need for coordination and collaboration of resources among the public sector, the public health sector, first responders, educators, the business community, the faith community and many others. Waldo Community Action Partners plays an important role convening organizations, people and resources to support families.

- This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community
- Waldo CAP has taken an active in becoming a Good Shepard Food Bank partner in Waldo County and participates in the Waldo County GSFNB networking and coordinating meetings.
 - Waldo CAP has taken an active role in promoting, coordinating and assisting food banks in Waldo and Knox county pick up food supplies for distribution with our Transportation resources.
 - Waldo CAP has reengaged and seated United Way World Wide’s Emergency Food and Shelter local board for the next round of funding.
 - Waldo CAP has participated in efforts with the Waldo County Bounty a local movement to get local produce to end users and pantries, support local farmer, educate the community in gardening and maximize gleaning efforts.
 - Waldo CAP will be the Applicant on behalf of Waldo County Bounty for an AmeriCorps planning grant designed to improve food security for people in Waldo County during the COVID-19 crisis
 - Waldo CAP has provided support and food to local Meals on Wheels for elderly shut in who are waiting for services.
 - Waldo CAP has provided support, including food and supplies, to six Veterans living in a local Veteran’s homeless shelter as well as other Veterans in the County.
 - Waldo CAP has collaborated with the local hospital to provide independent childcare resource info for healthcare workers and first responders.
 - Waldo CAP has coordinated with local community groups and distributed diapers to needy families.
 - Waldo CAP is currently planning to deliver summer food services for a school district in Knox County.
 - Waldo CAP has is convening a Community Food for Children partner group and has received a grant to provide meals for 0-18-year-olds this summer via volunteers.
 - Waldo CAP has implemented a collaborative rental assistance program in partnership with Maine Housing and the Governor’s office providing a one-time \$500 payment for rent.

IV. Anticipated near- and long-term impacts

The needs above are already established through initial data and anecdotal reports from customers, staff, board members and community stakeholders. Based on these already-observed events, it is likely that there will be near-term (1-3 months) and longer-term (greater than 3 months) impacts that that require immediate planning. A partial, but not complete, list of the anticipated impacts includes:

- *Prolonged service disruptions:* The disruptions in service delivery to customers are expected to continue for a substantial time. This is likely to lead to ancillary challenges for customers that may become long-term issues. For example, learning loss and domestic violence/child abuse have become larger problems due to service disruptions.
 - This applies to this community

- This does NOT apply to this community
 - The Superintendents of Schools in Waldo County are preparing their plans for the Fall School year beginning in Sept 2020. Given the challenges of maintaining 6ft social distancing, it remains unclear what the plan will be. The two ends of the spectrum are a full opening (back to normal) or continuing with remote learning. Superintendent Mary Alice McLean has indicated that the decision has yet to be made but school will look very different than it has in the past. Waldo County is a very rural county and bussing students will be time consuming and costly.
 - Some students do very well with remote learning (few distractions, more introverted) and other students who are more social, reported not doing as well (they miss their teacher and friends). It is especially difficult with special needs students to receive the services they need remotely.
 - Since January, Waldo County's domestic violence resource center has worked with 94 people in the county and anecdotally, we know this is a growing issue.
- *Exacerbated housing issues:* Due to the immediate economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, renters face one or more months where they may lack the funds to pay rent; homeowners with a mortgage may miss mortgage payments.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community
 - We know that high unemployment is impacting a family's ability to pay their rent. Waldo CAP is partnering with the Maine State Housing Authority COVID-19 Rent Relief Program for renters who cannot afford to pay their rent due to circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic. The program is designed to provide a onetime payment of up to \$500, until the federal relief funds get to the individuals who need them. Waldo County has been allocated \$90,000; to date we have received 133 applications, of which 117 have been processed and \$56,823 has been distributed to landlords. We expect this challenge to continue and perhaps worsen over the next three months.
 - *Prolonged employment issues:* Sudden layoffs and other employment disruptions are being addressed by emergency response measures; however, it is anticipated that long-term recovery efforts will be required to help customers reconnect to the workforce, particularly those for whom employment assistance has not previously been required.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community
 - The National rate unemployment rate is 14.7%, up from 4.4% in March 2020
 - Maine's unemployment rate as of April is 10.6% (70,753 people), up from 3% in March 2020.
 - Waldo County's unemployment rate as of April is 10.3%, up from 3.5% one year ago. We expect the unemployment rate to continue and perhaps worsen over the next three months as seasonal businesses are unable to reopen, due in part to the 14-day quarantine of out of state visitors, which currently remains in place. Many small businesses have not had the financial resources to reopen and have permanently closed. Data is not available on the number of small business closed in Waldo County as a result of COVID-19.
- *Prolonged agency capacity issues:* Policies limiting in-person staff/customer interactions may be in place for an extended period and agencies will need to maintain remote work and remote customer-interaction infrastructure to be responsive to these needs in a more sustainable capacity.
 - This applies to this community

- This does NOT apply to this community
- Waldo CAP has created a plan to transition to reopening programs and services including a timeline. Included in the plan is guidance on physical distancing, prevention, cleaning, human resources and office operations. This will serve as a guiding document over the next three to six months and will be updated as necessary.
- *Prolonged community resource/coordination issues:* The short-term community coordination needs cited in this Assessment are presumed to continue into the long-term. Current conditions may persist for an extended period; recovery efforts will require coordination; ongoing community preparedness to guard against a future outbreak will also require ongoing convening and new community readiness strategies based on what is shown to be effective during the current crisis.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

Waldo CAP is preparing, to the greatest extent possible and allowed by the Governor’s guidance, to provide the following essential programs:

- Transportation Services
- Food Distribution Activities
- HEAP - for emergency need with prior approval, appointments, and Screening.
- Other Service areas will start preparing for the reengagement of services which will be outlined in finalized Plans in the coming weeks.
- Expanded Transportation
- Housing Services
- Resource Advocacy
- Early Childhood Programs

V. Addressing Equity Implications

Though immediate data may not yet be easily obtained regarding the demographics of those most impacted by the COVID-19 epidemic, previous Community Assessments, as well as countless government and academic studies have established that structural racism, xenophobia, sexism, stigmatization and othering persist – and are often exacerbated – in times of crisis. Waldo CAP recognizes the obligation to ensure that the barriers of structural race, gender, and other inequities are addressed during this time of crisis and beyond. Therefore, it is with this lens that communities are invited to use the equity lens and the question, “why”, to understand the specific needs of the diverse populations served.

Though Waldo County does not have much racial diversity, the county is diverse in many ways. When looking at the effects of Covid-19 on the population, it is important to consider added layers of oppression that make the effects more severe. Listed below are some of these populations.

Victims of Domestic Violence:

Those experience violence at the hands of an abuser are in much more danger in the wake of COVID-19.

- Many are unable to flee as shelters are not doing intakes or are already full
- It is difficult to call for help when the abuser is quarantining with them.
- Waldo County Sheriff’s office reports continuing to use electronic monitoring as a means of tracking defendants that are deemed to have higher risk of re-offending or where there is victim safety concerns.

- The nation is seeing an increase in violence at home and certainly in Waldo County
- Since January, Waldo County's domestic violence resource center has worked with 94 people in the county.

People Living in Poverty:

People living in poverty are at a high risk in this pandemic

- Many do not have the option to stop working or work from home.
- With businesses shutting down, people supporting their families have no source of income.
- There is less access to healthcare for those in poverty, and many who are being laid off are losing healthcare.
- 13.9% of Waldo County is living in poverty.
- 11.4% of Waldo County is uninsured
- Workplace mobility in Waldo County is down 24% since the pandemic started.

Homeless Population:

Those who are experiencing homelessness do not have resources the resources to lower the risk of Covid-19

- Staying home, frequent hand washing, and stocking up on food are impossible for people who live on the street or in their car.

In 2017-2018, WALDO CAP worked with 16 homeless youth aged 0-5 years through their Head Start program.

LGBTQ+ Community:

Being LGBTQ+ is an added layer of oppression of many of the populations already listed.

- This community makes up a disproportionate part of the homeless community.
- Often have service-oriented jobs if they have jobs at all. This is especially true for the Trans community specifically.
- Evangelical leaders blame this population for the spread of COVID-19
- Waldo County hosts the only pride parade in Midcoast Maine