



COMMUNITY ACTION & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

2024 annual report

Message from the Mayor

In 2024, our county faced significant challenges that tested our strength and resilience. Despite these hardships, the Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD) stood at the forefront, providing critical services and building hope for our most vulnerable residents. The department's leadership and staff have worked with urgency and compassion to help children thrive, empower families, and protect the dignity of older adults and individuals in crisis.

Whether addressing housing emergencies, providing early childhood education, or extending a hand to survivors of violence and trauma, CAHSD ensured that services were available and effective. With over 200 locations across Miami-Dade County, CAHSD reached people in need in every corner of our community. Their dedication to our "No Wrong Door" approach has transformed how our community navigates social services, bringing efficiency, coordination, and humanity to every interaction.

I am deeply proud of the extraordinary team at CAHSD, led by Director Sonia Grice. Their tireless efforts reflect the highest values of public service. I also want to thank our community partners, federal and state collaborators, and the residents who trust in the department's mission.

This 2024 report captures a year of profound progress. It is a testament to what we can achieve when government meets people where they are and walks beside them toward a brighter future.



Daniella Levine Cava
Mayor, Miami-Dade County





Message from the Director

I am pleased to present the 2024 Annual Report for the Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD). This report provides a detailed reflection of the work we carry out each day on behalf of the residents of Miami-Dade County.

As Director of the Community Action and Human Services Department, I am proud to say that every day we answer the call to meet people where they are and connect them with the resources they need to move forward. Our teams operate with discipline and consistency, whether delivering meals to homebound seniors, helping families avoid eviction, or offering counseling to a survivor of violence. The strength of CAHSD lies in our ability to respond with clarity, provide stability, and create pathways that lead to better outcomes.

Throughout fiscal year 2023 through 2024, our focus remained on making services more accessible, improving how we use data, and maximizing the value of every public dollar entrusted to us. We have expanded programs, secured new funding, and introduced thoughtful innovations that improve both service delivery and internal operations.

We are a department with many points of access, but our direction is unified. We aim to create conditions that support progress for every resident who turns to us. Whether the support comes through Head Start, older adult programs, housing advocacy, or recovery services, the goal remains the same. We help people move forward with dignity and security.

To every member of our team, every partner, and every resident who placed their trust in our programs, thank you. Your commitment powers this work.



Sonia J. Grice, Director



Message from the Chairperson

It is a privilege to share this message on behalf of the Community Action Agency Board. We are proud to stand alongside CAHSD in its mission to support individuals and families throughout Miami Dade County.

Over the past year, CAHSD has continued to deliver services that respond to the most pressing needs in our community. From early childhood programs and food distribution to crisis response and case management, CAHSD remains a dependable partner to residents seeking stability and support.

This year brought increased focus on the interconnected challenges many families face. CAHSD expanded its efforts to provide mental health services and drug rehabilitation programs that meet people where they are and guide them toward long term recovery. Survivors of domestic violence received protection, counseling, and pathways to safety through trauma informed shelter services and advocacy.

Housing stability remained at the forefront. Programs such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program and Care to Share offered critical relief to residents experiencing financial hardship, ensuring access to electricity, air conditioning, and water during times of crisis. These services have helped prevent disconnection and displacement, allowing families to remain in their homes with dignity.

The Community Action Agency Board remains committed to advancing the work of CAHSD by supporting policies and programs that improve lives and strengthen communities. We extend our sincere thanks to CAHSD staff, community partners, and the residents whose voices shape this work and whose trust makes it possible.

Joyce Price

Dr. Joyce Price, Chairwoman of the CAA Board



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CAHSD Overview

The Community Action and Human Services Department (CAHSD) is the largest provider of comprehensive social services in Miami-Dade County. Through an integrated network of over 200 service locations, CAHSD works to ensure that individuals and families have access to resources that promote stability, wellbeing, and greater self-sufficiency. Formed in 2011 through the merger of the Miami Dade Community Action Agency and the Department of Human Services, CAHSD is nationally accredited by the Council on Accreditation and guided by a mission to provide high quality services across all life stages.

OUR MISSION:

To empower individuals, families, and communities through the provision of comprehensive social services.

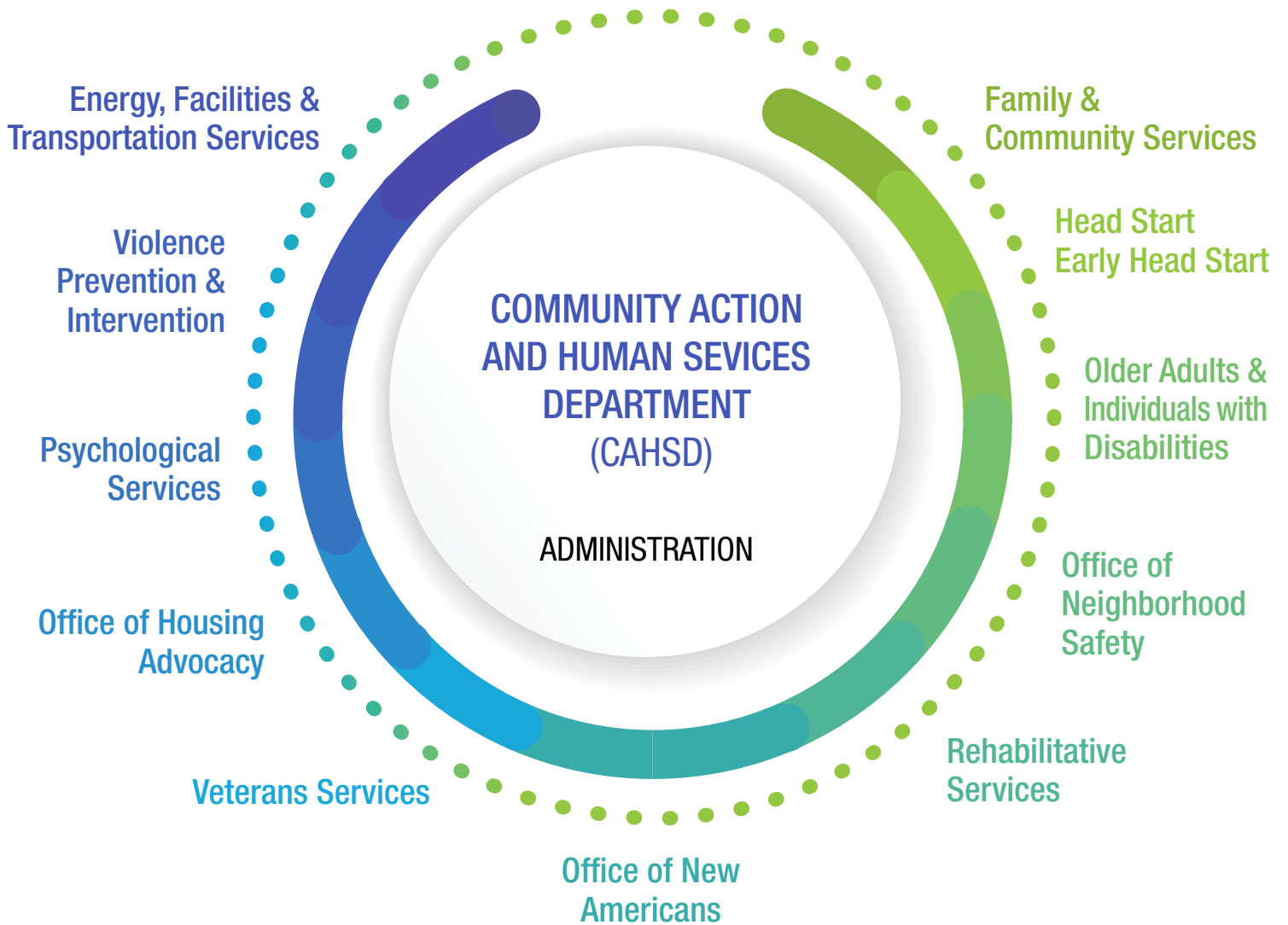
OUR STANDARDS:

CAHSD is nationally accredited by the Council on Accreditation, the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a social services agency.

OUR FOCUS:

- Improve the quality of life for seniors
- Closing the achievement gaps
- Fighting the opioid epidemic and providing rehabilitative services to combat substance and alcohol addictions
- Reducing the energy burden on low-income families
- Supporting survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking
- Strengthening resiliency among low-income individuals, families, and communities
- Supporting economic development through job training and opportunities
- Empowering youth through training, education, and employment opportunities
- Creating safer and thriving neighborhoods
- Providing integration and empowerment for Miami-Dade's immigrant communities

CAHSD serves as a safety net and partner to thousands of residents every year. The department is committed to operational excellence, fiscal responsibility, and results driven service delivery that meets people where they are and helps them build a better future.



Head Start / Early Head Start



DIVISION DIRECTOR
DR. MARIA "MAITE" Riestra

The Head Start and Early Head Start (HS/EHS) programs provide early education and comprehensive support services to income eligible families with children from birth to age five. Designed to promote school readiness, health, and family wellbeing, the program combines classroom instruction with medical, nutritional, and developmental services. HS/EHS are offered at more than 85 locations across the county in partnership with community-based organizations.

In 2024, HS/EHS supported the growth and development of 8,751 children and served 8,284 families. Children received daily instruction, developmental screenings, hearing and vision checks, and nutritious meals. Staff conducted 4,905 health screenings and served more than 3.2 million meals over the course of the year.

HS/EHS continued to meet and exceed federal requirements by enrolling more than 11 percent of participants with an active Individualized Education Program or Individualized Family Service Plan. Mental health professionals conducted more than 2,700 consultations with staff and 1,600 with families to support children's social and emotional development.

Educational assessments were conducted using COR Advantage, and Waterford SmartStart was used to strengthen learning at home and in the classroom. Parents also participated in Waterford's Family Academy, which provided tools to reinforce early learning at home.

Outreach efforts in 2024 included the Health Summit in partnership with Reach Out and Read Florida, dental care collaborations, and expanded nutrition education. During the summer months, more than 847,000 meals were served at 302 program sites to ensure children continued receiving food during school recess. The Head Start and Early Head Start programs remain a cornerstone of CAHSD's work to support families and prepare children for lifelong success.



Summer Meals

With funding from the United States Department of Agriculture, CAHSD continued to serve as South Florida's leading provider of free summer meals for children. The Summer Food Service Program ensures that children and youth up to 18 years of age receive nutritious meals during school recess when school breakfasts and lunches are not available.

DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

- 8,751 children served across all program sites
- 8,284 families received education, health, and support services
- 4,905 hearing and vision screenings completed
- Over 3.2 million meals served including breakfast, lunch, and snacks
- 2,735 staff consultations and 1,657 family consultations provided by mental health professionals
- 847,000 meals distributed at 302 summer food program sites
- Achieved a 7% increase in meals served compared to the previous year

AWARDS/RECOGNITION

- National Head Start Association Program of Excellence Designation
- Edward Zigler Innovation Award from Region IV and Florida Head Start Association
- NACo Achievement Award in the Children and Youth category



Family and Community Services



DIVISION DIRECTOR
LETAH M. PARRISH

The Family and Community Services Division (FCSD) services individuals and families seeking assistance across a wide range of social service needs. With the “No Wrong Door” Community Resource Centers located throughout Miami-Dade County, FCSD delivers critical support such as case management, emergency food, clothing, and employment services. In partnership with other local organizations, staff work to stabilize families, strengthen household resiliency, and connect individuals with resources that improve their quality of life. With a focus on improving access to social support FCSD leads initiatives such as the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, Share Your Heart, and the Farmworker Career Development Program.

SHARE YOUR HEART

Through its ongoing partnership with Share Your Heart and Victory for Youth, FCSD supported residents facing food insecurity and urgent personal needs. A total of 14,871 Miami Dade County residents received nonperishable food items. Each month, approximately 30,000 pounds of food were distributed across our No Wrong Door Community Resource Centers. Residents were able to visit these centers Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., to receive prepackaged bags of shelf stable groceries.

In addition to food services, Share Your Heart operated a helpline to assist individuals and families in crisis, offering referrals, case coordination, and follow-up support as part of the division’s broader emergency response strategy.

EMPLOYMENT PREPARATION AND TRAINING

FCSD supported adult job seekers and youth preparing for the workforce with resume coaching, job readiness training, and connections to technical education programs. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program completed 8,506 filings and returned over \$12 million to residents.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SERVICES & SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

Through programs like the Youth Success Afterschool Program, more than 2,000 young people gained access to academic support, mentorship, civic engagement, and career exploration. One participant, a graduating high school senior, earned a full scholarship to Florida International University and later returned to mentor youth in their former program. All students who completed 150 program hours received a certificate of completion and a tablet. The Children’s Trust funded this initiative.

SCHOLARSHIP RECOGNITION

Seventeen students were awarded scholarships through the Peace and Prosperity Plan. The recipients, many of whom faced barriers related to poverty or violence, were recognized at a ceremony that highlighted their academic achievements and future aspirations.

DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

In 2024, Family and Community Services staff provided direct assistance to more than 48,000 residents. Services included food distribution, employment readiness, energy assistance, and emergency support for housing and utilities. FCSD coordinated 300 outreach events countywide and expanded partnerships to enhance access to critical programs and support.

FCSD managed several key initiatives with measurable results:

- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program: Provided \$12.4 million in federal energy assistance to income eligible households to help offset the cost of heating and cooling. Eligible residents received up to \$1,350 in annual home energy support or up to \$5,000 in crisis assistance to prevent utility disconnections.
- Community Services Block Grant: Delivered \$4 million in support for emergency needs including education, nutrition, housing, and employment. These flexible funds were used to help residents address sudden financial hardships and maintain household stability.
- Farmworker Career Development Program: Assisted more than 400 individuals from agricultural households with education and workforce services. Participants received skills training, job placement assistance, and resources to overcome employment barriers.

These programs reflect the division's commitment to practical solutions that meet people's immediate needs while supporting long term progress. Two major No Wrong Door events underscored this commitment:

- The first No Wrong Door Family Fun Day event was held in partnership with the Juvenile Services Department at the Reverend Dr. Edward T. Graham Miami Gardens Community Resource Center. The event attracted over 200 residents and featured 29 community partners, family-friendly activities, healthy meals, and resources for health and social services resources.
- FCSD held the Family Fun Day Summer Bash at the Naranja Community Resource Center in partnership with the Mayor's Children's Commission and Juvenile Services Department. More than 150 attendees connected with 31 community partners offering health screening, job placement support, free haircuts, and giveaways for the youth.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- Community Impact Award from the Florida Association for Community Action
- National Community Action Partnership recognition for innovative outreach and engagement
- A proclamation from the Miami Dade County Board of Commissioners for recognizing youth programming and public service impact



Energy, Facilities, and Transportation Services



DIVISION DIRECTOR
ADRIAN FRAZIER

The Energy, Facilities, and Transportation Services Division (EFTD) manages key infrastructure and operational systems that support the mission of the Community Action and Human Services Department. EFTD oversees all CAHSD-owned and leased properties, coordinates renovations and maintenance activities, and provides reliable transportation for program participants across the County.

EFTD also plays a vital role in enhancing the energy efficiency and comfort of homes for eligible residents through its management of weatherization programs. These initiatives promote sustainability while supporting the health and safety of low-income households.

WEATHERIZATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) helps reduce energy costs for income eligible households by increasing the energy efficiency of homes while ensuring health and safety. Weatherization revitalizes communities by stimulating economic growth, reducing environmental impacts, and implementing measures that improve air quality, insulation, and energy efficiency.

WAP is funded by the United States Department of Energy and administered through the State of Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. Service priorities are given to individuals who are considered vulnerable, including the elderly, persons with disabilities, households with high energy burdens, and low-income families.

Cost-effective weatherization improvements include:

- Energy recovery ventilators
- Bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans
- Air sealing techniques such as weather stripping, thresholds, and caulking
- Repairs to windows, doors, walls, ceilings, and floors
- Installation of attic insulation and window solar films
- Replacement or repair of inefficient HVAC units and water heaters

In addition to state and federal funding, Miami-Dade County allocated \$4million to expand WAP services through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. This investment, branded as the Energy Efficiency Program, supported comprehensive home renovations for 90 qualified homeowners. Upgrades include new roofs, HVAC systems, plumbing, electrical panels, windows, and doors, with benefits totaling up to \$50,000 per household.

The Mayor's H.O.M.E.S. Program provided \$3million to assist 207 homeowners with energy-efficient improvements. Services included installation of air conditioners, appliances, electrical upgrades, insulation, and hot water heaters. These efforts prioritized families with children, older adults, persons with disabilities, and residents with high energy burdens.

Between these initiatives, more than 350 households received substantial home improvements that enhanced safety, comfort, and long-term affordability.

SPOTLIGHT

This year, EFTD modernized vehicle tracking and dispatch systems to optimize fuel efficiency and reduce emissions across its fleet. This investment supports the County's broader commitment to environmental sustainability while improving service response and route coordination for clients.

Additionally, during National Weatherization Day, CAHSD weatherization auditors conducted advanced inspections at the home of Mr. Felix Gonzalez. As a result, the home received multiple energy upgrades that improved air quality, enhanced safety, and increased the property's overall value. These services directly contributed to better living conditions for Mr. Gonzalez and his wife while serving as a model for community impact.

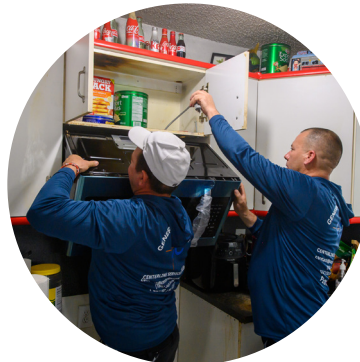
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

EFTD provided reliable door-to-door transportation for CAHSD clients, ensuring access to essential services and community-based activities. Transportation was provided to and from the "No Wrong Door" community resource centers, including adult day care sites, meal centers, and residential facilities. Services also support client trips to field trips, grocery stores, and local parks.

In addition, transportation is provided for participants in the Youth for Success Program and the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, supporting school readiness and youth engagement. EFTD served 289 clients and completed 30,844 trips, ensuring consistent and equitable access to services across Miami-Dade County.

DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

- Completed critical home improvements for 17 properties, including roof repairs and HVAC replacements, to ensure residents could remain safely in their homes.
- Provided more than 30,000 rides to older adults and individuals with disabilities. Transportation supported access to essential appointments and social services, using a fleet of ADA accessible vehicles and safety focused operations.
- Maintained more than 80 facilities across the county and completed major renovations at five community resource centers, focusing on improving service access, safety, and operational efficiency.



Office of Housing Advocacy



DIVISION DIRECTOR
DELORES HOLLEY

The Office of Housing Advocacy (OHA) serves as a centralized resource for residents navigating housing challenges across Miami-Dade County. OHA works to stabilize vulnerable households through direct assistance, education, and community partnerships. Whether facing eviction, rent increases, or displacement, residents can turn to OHA for support, legal guidance, and access to essential housing programs. OHA supports Miami-Dade County's commitment to housing access and tenant protection by coordinating targeted outreach, legal interventions, and resource navigation services across all commission districts.

EVICTON DIVERSION PILOT PROGRAM

OHA implemented The Eviction Diversion Pilot Program. The initiative connected tenants at risk of eviction with free legal representation and mediation through a partnership with Legal Services of Greater Miami and the Miami Workers Center. This program reduced court filings and preserved housing for many families on the brink of homelessness.

Additionally, OHA collaborated with Camillus House (CH) to administer the CH House Emergency Rental Assistance Program, offering financial relief for rent and utilities to households at risk of eviction or in crisis due to economic hardship.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Tenant education remained a top priority in 2024. OHA coordinated a series of Know Your Rights workshops, empowering renters with knowledge about landlord responsibilities, legal protections, and pathways to assistance. These sessions were held throughout the County, often in partnership with libraries and community centers, and provided accessible information in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole.



OHA also prioritized meaningful engagement through:

- Community meetings that offered residents a space to voice concerns and learn about new programs
- Resident surveys designed to evaluate satisfaction and improve service delivery
- An enhanced process to track and respond to emails through the housing advocacy inbox
- Client testimonials shared on the OHA website to highlight successful outcomes and inspire others to seek help

DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

- Assisted more than 6,800 residents experiencing rent increases, eviction threats, or housing instability.
- Handled an average of 400 monthly inquiries through the Housing Advocacy hotline, direct mail, and walk-ins.
- Coordinated oversight of the Eviction Diversion Pilot Program
- Expanded visibility and outreach with multilingual materials, updated communications, and digital access tools.
- Supported implementation of the Camillus House Emergency Rental Assistance Program, offering financial relief and helping residents maintain stable housing.



Office of Neighborhood Safety



DIVISION DIRECTOR
ANNIKA HOLDER

The Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) leads Miami-Dade County's efforts to prevent and reduce gun violence through a community-focused approach. ONS manages several core initiatives, including the Peace and Prosperity Plan and the Miami-Dade Community Violence Intervention Initiative. ONS focuses on prevention, intervention, and reentry strategies to improve public safety and support community healing.

Vision: Every Miami-Dade County resident is safe, prosperous, and thriving

Mission: To advance community-driven solutions to build safe and prosperous neighborhoods

Mantra: Nothing about you without you

Values:

- Treat lived experience as data and community members as experts
- Convene and communicate with purpose, kindness, and respect
- Co-design all actions with those who will be impacted by them
- Everyone has a role in building neighborhood safety
- Be bold, transparent, and accountable
- Challenge the status quo wherever and whenever our community can be better served through change

Through strong collaboration with other County departments, local organizations, and residents, ONS addresses the root causes of violence by empowering historically underserved communities. This work fosters partnerships that guide policy decisions and implement innovative solutions to introduce safety and quality of life in neighborhoods mostly impacted by violence.

Miami-Dade County's role as one of 16 jurisdictions selected for the White House Community Intervention Collaboration has solidified ONS' role on a national scale. ONS is an active member of the National Offices of Violence Prevention Network, a coalition of government offices committed to violence reduction. In May 2024, ONS was invited to the White House to meet with the Office of Gun Violence Prevention, recognizing its leadership in this critical area.

More than **7,300** engagement touchpoints via **36** events including community-led events, meetings, job fairs, and a gun buyback initiative.

\$3,163,222 invested in Peace & Prosperity Plan programming

305 Second Chance Job & Resource Fair engaged **988** justice-involved/ formerly incarcerated individuals.

In collaboration with the Miami-Dade Police Department (now Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office) and The Miami Foundation, awarded \$1.6 million in 2023 State Appropriation funds to nine local organizations that reached more than 2,500 adults and children with various anti-gun violence prevention, intervention and community healing services.

119 college scholarships awarded valued at **\$253,500**

Safe in the 305 Grants Program

- 454 Safe in the 305 Grant Applications Received since program inception in July 2022 (174 in FY2023-24)
- 130 Safe in the 305 Grantees since program inception (42 awarded in FY2023-24)

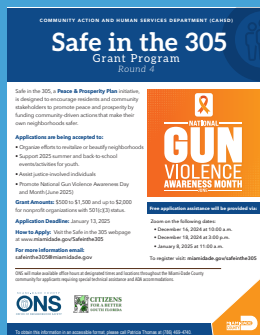
2 Job & Resource Fairs Organized and Hosted by **ONS**



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PEACE & PROSPERITY PLAN

The FY2023-24 Peace & Prosperity Plan ("Plan") invested \$3,163,222 in anti-gun violence initiatives and was adopted with unanimous support from the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners. The Plan is a strategic approach to strengthen the County's community violence prevention and intervention infrastructure to reduce violence, promote safety, and create thriving neighborhoods. The Plan's primary funding source, the Anti-Gun Violence and Prosperity Initiatives Trust Fund, is funded from the naming rights revenue of the County-owned arena and home to the Miami Heat, known as the Kaseya Center.

174 Safe in the 305 Grant Applications Received, **42** projects awarded funding



396 youth interns in Fit2Lead Afterschool session completing **137,195** hours and earning **\$2,416,005**

513 youth interns completed **78,256** hours and earned **\$1,378,098** during the 2024 Fit2Lead Summer session.

- 89% of Fit2Lead interns enjoyed their internship experience
- 94% considered their job site a favorable place to work
- 81% found their work aligned with their career goals

Since the inception of the **Turn Around Police Academy**, **81%** of JSD's TAP participants have received assessments and completed their JSD treatment plans.

144 youth have participated in **YOU and YAMI** programming since the programs started in 2021.

HIGHLIGHTS - FY 2023-24 SAFE IN THE 305 GRANTS

Safe in the 305 Grants Program

Safe in the 305, a Peace & Prosperity Plan initiative administered by ONS, is a microgrant program designed to **activate** community participation in creating safer neighborhoods, **amplify** the voices of residents and community leaders against violence, **build** capacity in communities, and **bridge** gaps with neighborhood stakeholders and government to address quality of life issues. ONS has launched five rounds of the Safe in the 305 Grants program and has funded **130 projects valued at \$147,598.56**. Projects have been diverse in their crime prevention efforts—encompassing neighborhood beautification efforts, mental health and wellness seminars, bridging literacy gaps, bolstering youth engagement, second chance services, and public education/awareness campaigns. Awards ranged from \$500 to \$1,500.

In FY 2023-24, ONS received **174** applications and funded **42** projects throughout Miami-Dade County, investing **\$44,999.06** in community-focused and led initiatives across four of the five focus areas (Figure 1).

Building Bridges to a Better Future - Empowerment Zone Reentry Initiative - \$1,100

The community outreach project started by the Empowerment Zone Reentry Initiative focused on reaching the unhoused and underserved residents of Overtown. In an effort titled “Overtown Mobile Outreach Event,” E.Z.R.I. partnered with City of Miami Police Department and other local organizations to provide food, water, hygiene products, testing, and medical resources. With the help of the Safe in the 305 Grant program, E.Z.R.I. was able to provide over 30 individuals with hygiene products, assist five people in obtaining their driver licenses, and aid five individuals with obtaining a copy of their Birth Certificate



South Dade Violence & Family Intervention Program - Sprout Up, Inc. - \$1,000

The six-week program developed by Sprout Up, Inc. helps combat gun violence in communities through promoting family and community connections. The program and curriculum guide participants in building up and strengthening family bonds. This initiative offers children and families empowerment workshops, engaging STEM activities, and innovative skills. Program participants created a community gardening program and learned about the importance of mental health. The program also provided small group mental health sessions with a licensed mental health clinician on a weekly basis to decrease the stigma of seeking out help for mental health issues and overall well-being.



Four Campaigns Outreach and Follow Up - Informed Families - \$1,316

Part of a larger Miami Kids Back to School Event, community members and residents received back-to-school readiness supplies and learned about valuable resources in their community. Informed families attended various back to school readiness events with its “Lock Your Meds” campaign. Through a \$1,316 Safe in the 305-grant award, the organization provided medicine boxes with locks to ensure that prescription medications are kept out of reach of children and teens. Participants learned about substance abuse resources and the dangers of alcohol abuse, where participants were able to increase their awareness of impaired vision through their “drunk goggles.”



Back to School Bash - His Hands and Feet, Inc. - \$1,500

His Hands and Feet, Inc. gathered families in a back-to-school event that provided 500 backpacks with essential school supplies to children starting the 2024-2025 academic year. The organization aims to address financial hardships faced by families and strengthen community bonds. With support from the Safe in the 305 Grant program, His Hands and Feet, Inc. reached more than 700 families throughout the span of three separate events in Homestead and Kendall communities.



Ready for Work: Providing IDs for a Second Chance of Employment - Transition Inc., - \$1,495

With support from the Florida Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles Department, and via the Safe in the 305 grant funds, this project offers complimentary IDs and Driver License Renewals to justice-involved and justice-impacted individuals, reducing barriers for those returning to their communities after a period of incarceration. Attendees at the event are also connected with a range of county, state, and community resources.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Community Violence Intervention is a national model and a community-centered approach to gun violence prevention that identifies those who are at the highest risk and works to reduce violence through targeted community-based intervention strategies. The Miami-Dade County Community Violence Intervention ("CVI") Initiative is an \$8.9 million investment to address some of the root causes and impacts of gun violence. The CVI Initiative is a countywide and community-led strategy, managed by the Office of Neighborhood Safety and the Office of Management and Budget, which expands and bolsters the County's existing anti-gun violence infrastructure.



In partnership with the Carrie Meek Foundation, an RFP was released inviting nonprofit organizations, including small grassroots groups, to apply for \$7,155,560 in grant funding, to lead innovative programming in communities impacted by gun violence. The Foundation received 246 proposals for more than \$87 million, of which 82, or 33%, of the proposals were funded.

246 proposals received, valued at more than \$87 million

82 proposals funded (33% of submissions)

33% of funded proposals were awarded to grassroots organizations

7,145 individuals served to-date through August 31, 2024, including:

- 40% male
- 30% aged 17 or younger
- 61% reside in Commission Districts 1, 2, 3, 8, and 9.

CVI HIGHLIGHT- PEACE & PROSPERITY: EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP

In February 2024, ONS launched the first of two rounds of the county-wide **Peace & Prosperity: Empowerment through Education Scholarship Program**, a component of the Miami-Dade County Community Violence Intervention Initiative. Over two years, the program will award a total of 150 scholarships, in the amount of \$2,500 each, paid directly to each recipient's institution of higher education, for a grand total of \$375,000.

During the first round, applications were accepted from Miami-Dade County resident high school seniors entering a college or university in the Fall of 2024. ONS received 107 applicants and awarded 75 scholarships, which totaled \$187,500.

Scholarship applicants were asked to self-report personal challenges, barriers, and hardships highlighting the varied backgrounds of the scholarship applicants. The 75 scholarship recipients reported the following personal challenges, hardships and/or barriers:



- 65.3% are first-generation college students
- 41.3% live in single-parent households
- 33.3% have been directly affected by gun violence
- 22.6% have experienced homelessness in the past five years
- 8% reside in public housing
- 4% are neurodivergent
- 4% have an incarcerated parent or sibling
- 1.3% are in foster care

In addition, 16 percent identified, at the time of submitting their application, as a current/past participant of Fit2Lead, Turn Around Police Academy, Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust's Teen Court, and/or CAHSD's Youth Success programs.

The 2024 Peace & Prosperity: Empowerment through Education Scholarship recipients are attending 29 institutions of higher education across the U.S. These colleges and universities range from Miami-Dade College to Florida International University to Florida A&M University to Howard University, to name a few.

ONS SCHOLARS

For a third consecutive year, ONS partnered with the Family and Community Services Division, to provide \$1,500 scholarships to youth that live in communities disproportionately impacted by gun violence. Over the summer, 44 scholarships were awarded to young adults residing in the 16 Miami-Dade County Community Service Block Grant Target Areas. ONS scholars are attending 20 universities/colleges.



Office of New Americans



DIVISION DIRECTOR
KATHY BIRD CARVAJAL

The Office of New Americans (ONA) supports immigrant communities in their journey towards full civic and economic inclusion. At its core, ONA is designed to assist legal permanent residents in navigating the path to United States citizenship by providing free or low-cost legal referrals, access to naturalization workshops, and educational resources about the rights and responsibilities of becoming a citizen. ONA serves as a trusted resource for new arrivals by offering personalized assistance, referrals to essential services, and direct engagement with the community. Through its work, ONA ensures that Miami-Dade remains a welcoming community where every resident can thrive.

ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2024, ONA experienced a historic rise in demand. Requests for assistance doubled compared to the prior year, reflecting the increasing needs of immigrant communities throughout the County. ONA provided critical support to more than one thousand residents from Venezuela, Haiti, and Ukraine in applying for Temporary Protected Status. By guiding applicants through complex eligibility requirements and connecting them with legal support, ONA helped vulnerable populations stabilize their lives and remain safely within the United States.

In response to the growing number of legal permanent residents in Miami-Dade County, ONA expanded its focus on naturalization support. Residents were connected with referrals to language support and civics classes to help applicants prepare for the United States naturalization test. They also received personalized guidance to ensure a smooth transition from permanent residency to full citizenship. To broaden access to essential services, ONA extended its referral network to include English language learning, healthcare access, degree validation, and small business development.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND LEGAL PARTNERSHIPS

A cornerstone of ONA's impact in 2024 was the launch of Miami-Dade's first Welcoming Day celebration. This event convened over 25 community partners to provide information, support, and encouragement to recent immigrants. Featured on the front page of the Miami Herald, the event marked a milestone in the County's ongoing commitment to creating a sense of belonging for all.

To support residents in need of immigration legal aid, ONA expanded its partnership with private attorneys and institutions like Florida International University Law School. These relationships allowed ONA to deliver accurate, timely support for citizenship, Temporary Protected Status, and work authorization applications.

Throughout the year, ONA staff participation in key outreach events, including Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, World Refugee Day, National Immigrant Heritage Day and Citizenship Week, and year-round workshops for naturalization, TPS, and employment authorization.

DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

- More than 1,000 individuals supported in applying for Temporary Protected Status
- Expanded referrals to services including language classes, healthcare, and business development
- Strengthened legal aid with partners such as Florida International University Law School
- Increased community partnership by 30% to reach more immigrant families



Older Adults and Individuals with Disabilities



DIVISION DIRECTOR
ELVIS CAINES

The Older Adults and Individuals with Disabilities Services Division (OAIDS) is committed to supporting the health, independence, and dignity of older adults and individuals with disabilities throughout Miami-Dade County. Through essential services such as home-delivered meals, adult day care, case management, and community engagement, OAIDS helps residents remain active and connected. OAIDS delivers a wide range of supportive programs tailored to help individuals safely age in place while maintaining their quality of life.

With a person-centered approach, OAIDS continues to expand its reach through innovative wellness events, educational partnerships, and culturally enriching programs that promote healthy aging and community inclusion.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

OAIDS offers volunteer opportunities through four key programs: the Senior Companion Program, Foster Grandparent Program, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), and the Respite for Elders Living in Everyday Families (R.E.L.I.E.F) Program. These programs engage seniors in meaningful service and ensure that residents across the County receive compassionate support.

Foster Grandparent Program Funded by AmeriCorps, the Foster Grandparent Program connects older adults with children in early learning and elementary school settings. Volunteers serve as mentors and tutors, helping young learners grow academically and emotionally while creating meaningful intergenerational bonds.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program is a national volunteer initiative that invites residents aged 55 and older to share their life experiences and skills to support local organizations, nonprofits, and healthcare facilities. Volunteers choose how and where to serve, making a difference through civic engagement and compassion outreach service to their communities.

Senior Companion Program matches trained older adult volunteers with frail or homebound seniors. Through regular visits, these volunteers support aging residents through companionship and caregiving services that reduce the need for institutional care and help prevent social isolation.

Respite for Elders Living in Everyday Families Through integration with SCP, R.E.L.I.E.F. initiative provides temporary in-home support to older adults, allowing family members time to rest and manage other responsibilities. This service helps maintain stability at home and eases the demands of long-term care.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

OAIDS maintained a strong presence in neighborhoods across Miami-Dade County through outreach, education, and connections to critical resources. The Care Planning Unit continued to play a central role in receiving constituent calls and emails, assessing individual needs, and referring residents to appropriate support services including nutrition programs, transportation, and respite care.

In addition to participating in health fairs, church events, and County-sponsored initiatives, OAIDS organized quarterly outreach events to ensure services reached residents in both North and South Dade. OAIDS also hosted community resource fairs and awareness campaigns at local libraries, senior centers, and parks, ensuring we meet residents in familiar, accessible locations.

Highlighted event locations included South Dade Regional Library, Miami Gardens Senior Center, Goulds Park, Arcola Lakes Park, and Betty T. Ferguson Recreational Center. These events helped older adults and individuals with disabilities access health screenings, resource referrals, educational presentations, and social programming in welcoming and familiar environments.

DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

- Summer Golden Tours introduced a new cultural enrichment initiative in partnership with the Office of the Mayor, Department of Cultural Affairs, and the Board of County Commissioners. The program brought live performances, music, and art activities directly to senior centers and adult daycare facilities across the County. Approximately 700 older adults and individuals with disabilities participated, benefiting from engaging experiences that promoted movement, memory, creativity, and social connection.
- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day educated over 250 seniors on fraud prevention and personal safety with support from 35 community resource vendors
- Digital inclusion initiative launched in partnership with Senior Planet and the Comcast Foundation to train 50 AmeriCorps volunteers as digital navigators for homebound seniors
- Annual Holiday Party gathered more than 500 seniors and individuals with disabilities for a festive day of celebration, connection, and community resources
- Care Planning Unit continued to coordinate referrals and assessments for constituent inquiries, ensuring residents were matched with personalized services and support
- Meals on Wheels delivered 266,032 meals and enrolled 828 new clients, helping older adults remain safely in their homes while addressing nutritional needs tied to food insecurity and economic hardship



Psychological Services



DIVISION DIRECTOR
TIFFANY AMRICH, PSY.D.

The Psychological Services Division (PSD) is dedicated to promoting wellness and healthy development through early identification, assessment, and intervention. Services are grounded in evidence-based practice and informed by current psychological science. Interventions are delivered by doctoral-level psychology interns, as well as master-level and undergraduate students in the fields of mental health and social work. These students receive close supervision and guidance from licensed clinicians working within a multidisciplinary team across CAHSD.

PSD also leads CAHSD's Psychology Internship Program, which has maintained accreditation by the American Psychological Association since 2002. This program is designed to prepare interns to become skilled and compassionate health service psychologists. Interns are trained across nine core competency areas using a mentor-practitioner model, which pairs each student with a senior clinician for guided professional development within real-world, community-based settings.

ACHIEVEMENTS

In fiscal year 2023-2024, PSD delivered a total of 2,028 direct services, including individual and group therapy, consultation, and professional training. This reflects a steady increase from the 1,777 services provided in the prior year. Among these, 796 individual therapy sessions were completed, a 26 percent increase compared to fiscal year 2022-2023.

Four psychology interns conducted comprehensive program evaluations across CAHSD. These evaluations offered valuable insights through outcome data and recommendations for service improvement and program impact.

PSD prioritized training in evidence-based practices. Interns and supervisors completed a two-day workshop on the Unified Protocol for Transdiagnostic Treatment of Emotional Disorders in Children and Adolescents. They also participated in a specialized training on DC:0-5, the diagnostic classification system for mental health and developmental disorders in infants and young children. Following this training, interns received 20 hours of reflective group supervision, qualifying them for the Family Associate Endorsement through the Florida Association for Infant Mental Health.

Community engagement remained central to the division's work. Two supervisors and one former intern presented at the 2nd Annual Youth Mental Health Summit, co-sponsored by Miami-Dade County and Miami-Dade County Public Schools. This conference fostered knowledge-sharing and public awareness around youth mental health.

Interns also gained valuable exposure to Countywide behavioral health planning through attendance at board and advisory meetings, including the Community Action Agency Board, the Domestic Violence Oversight Board, and the Miami-Dade County Behavioral Health Advisory Board.

Professional advancement remained a key feature of the internship program. Two interns completed 2,000 hours of supervised training and transitioned into full-time roles, while two others accepted offers at formal post-doctoral residency programs.

DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

- Provided 2,028 direct services, including therapy, consultation, and training across CAHSD programs
- Completed 796 individual therapy sessions, reflecting a 26% increase from the previous year
- Conducted comprehensive program evaluation in three division, offering research-based recommendations
- Completed advanced training in the Unified Protocol and DC:0-5, with interns qualifying for Family Associate Endorsement
- Two interns completed 2,000 clinical hours and entered full-time employment



Rehabilitative Services



DIVISION DIRECTOR
LILLIAM ALAMO

The Rehabilitative Services Division (RSD) provides evidence-based residential and outpatient treatment to individuals experiencing substance use disorders, co-occurring disorders, and mental health challenges. Through comprehensive care that includes therapy, medical and psychiatric support, medication-assisted treatment, and case management, RSD helps clients build healthier lifestyles, maintain recovery, and reconnect with their communities.

RSD's mission is to reduce the harm caused by behavioral health conditions and empower individuals with the skills and support needed to sustain long-term wellness. Services are designed to meet the unique needs of adults with complex behavioral health conditions, including those involved with the criminal justice system or at risk of further system involvement.

PROGRAM ACHIEVEMENTS

The New Direction Residential Treatment Program served 460 individuals in fiscal year 2023–2024. Of these, 128 clients were referred by courts including Marchman Court (27), Drug Court (32), and Criminal and Veterans Court (69), while 294 clients entered voluntarily. New Direction remains the largest residential provider for Drug Court in Miami-Dade County.

Every client received Narcan Nasal Spray training at admission and was discharged with a Narcan kit. RSD also provided overdose prevention education to all clients, and no overdose fatalities reported in the program.

Through the Diversion and Treatment Program (DATP), RSD delivered outpatient services to 244 clients across three locations: Coconut Grove (106), North Dade (102), and Florida City (36). DATP continues to serve as the largest outpatient provider for Drug Court.

The Central Intake Unit (CIU) completed 1,711 assessments for individuals seeking substance use treatment. Clients were provided with Narcan kits when eligible and willing. CIU also supported the 4-MASTER Project, which delivered comprehensive case management to 204 minority clients with substance use or co-occurring disorders who are HIV-positive or at risk for HIV.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Throughout the year, RSD participated in a wide range of public events and education initiatives, including Second Chance Job and Resource Expo, wellness and mental health workshops, overdose prevention training, National Recovery Month celebrations, and public awareness campaigns on opioid misuse and suicide prevention. These events provided opportunities to educate the community, support recovery, and collaborate with regional service providers.

DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

- Served 460 individuals through the New Direction Residential Treatment Program
- Provided Narcan training and kits to all clients with no overdose fatalities reported
- Delivered outpatient treatment to 244 clients through the Diversion and Treatment Program
- Completed 1,711 behavioral health assessments through Central Intake
- Reached 204 clients with intensive case management through the 4-MASTER Project



Veterans Services

Led by the Community Action and Human Services Department, the Miami-Dade County Veterans Services Coalition brings together a multi-disciplinary team of professionals representing organizations that support veterans across the County. Established in 2019, the coalition meets bi-monthly to improve coordination among service providers, strengthen communication, and raise awareness about the wide range of benefits and resources available to veterans and their families.

Through this collaborative effort and direct assistance from CAHSD staff, more than 2,500 veterans and dependents were supported during fiscal year 2023–2024. Veterans received help navigating complex benefit systems and securing access to services that promote stability and well-being.

Support services included:

- Pension and Compensation Claims
- Home Loan Guaranty Certificates
- Burial, Memorial, and Life Insurance Benefit Applications
- VA Claim Appeals
- Military Medal and Records Application
- Social Services Referrals
- Enrollment in VA Healthcare System
- Veterans Educational Benefits

Through this collaborative effort and direct assistance from CAHSD staff, more than 2,500 veterans and dependents were supported during fiscal year 2023–2024. Veterans received help navigating complex benefit systems and securing access to services that promote stability and well-being.



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY VETERANS SERVICES COALITION - MEMBERS

- Association of American Retired Persons
- Advocate Program Inc.
- Borinquen Healthcare Services
- Cuban America Bar Association Pro Bono Legal Services
- Camillus House
- City of Miami
- Clear Captions
- Equality Lab
- Florida International University
- Healing Hands Institute
- Marine Corps League (Miami)
- Miami Dade College
- Miami-Dade County CAHSD
- Miami-Dade County Military Affairs Board
- Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces
- Miami-Dade County Veterans Treatment Court
- Miami VA Healthcare System
- Miami-Vet Center
- Town of Miami Lakes
- United Way-Mission United
- Operation Sacred Trust-SSVP
- Project ID/Spread the Vote
- Providence Healthcare Services
- Salvation Army
- Small Business Administration
- Team Paradis sailing, Inc.
- Tri-Rail
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Securities and Exchanges Commission
- VAREP
- Veterans Ocean Adventures
- Veterans Upward Bound Program
- Vitas Healthcare
- Volunteers of America, Florida



Violence Prevention and Intervention Services



DIVISION DIRECTOR
SHAREEFAH ROBINSON

The Violence Prevention and Intervention Division (VPID) provides specialized services to support victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and human trafficking in Miami-Dade County. Through a network of trauma-informed, victim-centered programs, VPID works to ensure safety, stability, and long-term recovery for individuals and families impacted by violence.

VPID operates both residential and non-residential programs across the County. The Coordinated Victims Assistance Center, Miami-Dade County's only Family Justice Center, serves as a central hub where victims can access a full range of services under one roof. For those in need of shelter, the division manages certified 24-hour emergency shelters at SafeSpace North, SafeSpace South, SafeSpace Central, and the SafeSpace Empowerment Center. In addition, VPID offers transitional housing and a twelve-month rapid rehousing program that helps survivors move toward long-term independence and stability.

VPID's holistic model includes crisis intervention, counseling, safety planning, housing support, legal advocacy, and case management. VPID partners with law enforcement, courts, and community providers to strengthen the County's response to violence and promote coordinated, trauma-informed care.

STAFF SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

VPID recognizes the importance of supporting its own team to better serve the community. In partnership with the Psychological Services Division, the division VPID launched peer support initiatives that included training on emotional intelligence, time management, stress relief, and team building. These sessions have helped staff manage workplace challenges, increase resilience, and foster a culture of support and collaboration.

Client care coordination has also improved through the introduction of victim-centered team meetings, which bring together advocates, social workers, supervisors, and family members to discuss client needs, safety planning, and progress. These multidisciplinary sessions ensure that survivors receive comprehensive and coordinated care tailored to their circumstances.

VPID continues to grow its visibility in the community through tabling and outreach events across Miami-Dade County. These efforts increase awareness of services, provide direct access to information, and reinforce the County's commitment to ensuring safe and accessible support for all residents affected by violence.



DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

VPID launched several major improvements aimed at increasing efficiency and expanding services for survivors:

- Transitioned to a fully digital intake process, eliminating paper forms and expediting the check-in experience. This new system improves efficiency aligns with sustainability goals and ensures a smoother intake for clients and staff.
- Secured \$600,000 in housing assistance funding from the Florida Department of Children and Families to support emergency shelter, counseling, case management, and safety planning services.
- Received full Victims of Crime Act funding with no reductions. These funds help deliver critical services including shelter, crisis response, advocacy, and transportation.
- Maintained 100% of adult victims who remained in SafeSpace and 99% of children assessment for shelter clients.



Budget



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
RICHARD SIGNORI

The Community Action and Human Services Department continues to maximize resources and invest strategically in programs, facilities, and infrastructure that serve the residents of Miami-Dade County. Through a combination of capital funding, operational planning, and partnerships, CAHSD delivers long-term value while meeting the immediate needs of the community.

The adopted budget and multi-year Capital Plan for fiscal year 2023 through 2024 supported a range of facility improvements and strategic investments, including:

- **Casa Familia Community Center-** CAHSD's Capital Plan includes funding for the construction of the Casa Familia Community Center. This facility will offer recreational activities, social opportunities, and educational programs designed to foster self-sufficiency and community engagement. The Center is part of a broader affordable housing development that includes 50 apartment units, with a total development cost of approximately \$25 million and a center-specific investment of \$3.5 million.
- **Countywide Infrastructure Investment Program (CIIP)-** CAHSD continued participating in the CIIP to enhance the condition and performance of County-owned facilities. Improvements include updates to furniture, equipment, electrical systems, plumbing, air conditioning, elevators, roofing, and other core infrastructure needs, with a total project investment of \$8.6 million.
- **Culmer Overtown Neighborhood Service Center Renovation-** The full renovation of the existing Culmer Overtown Neighborhood Service Center was completed, modernizing the space to better serve residents. This project was funded at \$9.1 million.
- **Kendall Cottages Complex Refurbishment-** Work continued at the Kendall Cottages Complex, including the demolition and rebuilding of cottages, sidewalk upgrades, and construction of a new parking facility. The project is funded at approximately \$4 million, with \$249,000 allocated this fiscal year.
- **New Direction Residential Treatment and Rehabilitation Facility Renovation-** Renovation efforts are ongoing at the New Direction Residential Treatment and Rehabilitation facility. This multi-year overhaul will enhance safety, functionality, and comfort for residents and staff. The projected total cost of the project is \$23.3 million.
- **Wynwood Regional Neighborhood Service Center Redevelopment-** CAHSD is exploring cost-effective options for redeveloping the Wynwood Regional Neighborhood Service Center. This capital initiative is supported by the Building Better Communities Bond Program, with a projected total cost of \$15 million, including \$3.5 million allocated for current planning and pre-development activities.
- **Fleet Replacement-** As part of the County's fleet modernization efforts, CAHSD secured funding to purchase 9 new vehicles, replacing aging units that have become costly to maintain. This investment of \$850,000 is expected to reduce fuel costs, minimize repair-related downtime, and improve overall service reliability. The initiative is supported through the Non-Departmental Capital Program.

Through sound financial planning and strategic capital investment, CAHSD continued to stretch the value of local dollars. For every one dollar of local tax support, CAHSD leveraged approximately three dollars from outside funders. This strong return reflects CAHSD's ongoing commitment to responsible stewardship and service expansion through effective partnerships.

FY 2023-24 ADOPTED BUDGET AND MULTI-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

Operating Financial Summary

(dollars in thousands)	Actual FY 20-21	Actual FY 21-22	Budget FY 22-23	Adopted FY 23-24
Revenue Summary				
Court-Related Revenues	0	67	0	0
General Fund Countywide	35,763	25,183	46,511	49,928
Interest Earnings	0	7	0	0
Miscellaneous Revenues	18	3	2	2
Carryover	0	0	0	10
Fees for Services	35	2	75	75
Grants From Other Local Units	64	108	126	126
Other Charges For Services	70	26	15	15
Other Revenues	346	16,802	1,405	1,278
Rental Income	105	13	506	506
State Grants	2,326	1,680	2,426	2,195
Federal Grants	121,908	150,802	118,771	123,776
Interagency Transfers	488	2,744	861	2,069
Miami-Dade Rescue Plan Fund	0	0	0	13,750
Total Revenues	161,123	197,437	170,698	193,730
Operating Expenditures Summary				
Salary	33,477	35,362	45,320	45,063
Fringe Benefits	14,088	14,426	18,703	19,731
Court Costs	10	0	1	0
Contractual Services	11,480	14,355	10,420	26,460
Other Operating	8,430	11,892	9,696	9,454
Charges for County Services	3,139	4,107	3,184	3,190
Grants to Outside Organizations	88,785	116,985	83,186	89,595
Capital	955	734	185	237
Total Operating Expenditures	160,364	197,861	170,695	193,730
Non-Operating Expenditures Summary				
Transfers	4	0	0	0
Distribution of Funds In Trust	3	17	3	0
Debt Service	0	0	0	0
Depreciation, Amortizations and Depletion Reserve	0	0	0	0
Total Non-Operating Expenditures	7	17	3	0

(dollars in thousands)	Total Funding		Total Positions	
Expenditure By Program	Budget FY 22-23	Adopted FY 23-24	Budget FY 22-23	Adopted FY 23-24
Strategic Area: Health and Society				
Administration	5,688	6,238	41	43
Office of Neighborhood Safety	1,456	1,458	5	5
Office of New Americans	800	793	4	4
Head Start	90,190	91,799	102	102
Rehabilitative Services	7,446	7,548	50	50
Elderly and Disability Services	19,700	18,929	168	167
Psychological Services	302	344	1	1
Energy and Facility Services	6,226	10,854	24	23
Greater Miami Service Corps	3,843	3,008	10	10
Transportation	1,857	1,947	18	18
Family and Community Services	22,372	39,022	109	109
Violence Prevention and Intervention Services	10,121	11,016	127	127
Office of Housing Advocacy	694	774	7	7
Total Operating Expenditures	170,695	193,730	666	666

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Daniella Levine Cava
Mayor

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COMMUNITY ACTION AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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