



State of Rhode Island

Recovery Plan Performance Report

State Fiscal Recovery Fund

July 2024 Report

Submitted by the State of Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office

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This project was supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number SLFRP0136 awarded to the State of Rhode Island by the U.S. Department of Treasury.

**Rhode Island
July 2024 Recovery Plan**

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General Overview

This report is submitted by the State of Rhode Island pursuant to Section 602 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). This report is intended to provide the U.S. Department of Treasury (U.S. Treasury) and the citizens of Rhode Island with an explanation of the State's planning and spending activities for the State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF).

Executive Summary

As Rhode Island began to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Dan McKee understood that the well-being of all Rhode Islanders, families, businesses, and communities depended on the State's recovery plan. The Governor's strategy included a collection of near-term expenditures to offset the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and longer-term investments to transform and modernize key elements of the Rhode Island economy to ensure the state is well-positioned to continue its strong recovery.

His approach focused on leveraging all resources, including the federal funds allocated to the State in ARPA, to bring immediate relief to businesses and households while laying the groundwork for sustainable economic prosperity. The Governor's strategy involved appropriating \$119 million of the State's \$1.13 billion SFRF allocation in State Fiscal Year 2022 for Rhode Island Rebounds (RI Rebounds) projects. These projects were designed to address the state's most pressing needs that resulted from or were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. These needs included supports for small businesses and impacted industries, retention incentives for workers in sectors directly impacted by the pandemic, additional affordable housing units, and better access to medical services for children and families. The enacting legislation for the RI Rebounds projects was passed on January 4, 2022.

In his State Fiscal Year 2023 budget, the Governor recommended spending priorities for the remainder of the \$1.13 billion SFRF allocation. The General Assembly incorporated most of the Governor's proposed uses of the State's SFRF allocation in its State Fiscal Year 2023 budget that was signed into law on June 27, 2022.

The Governor proposed alternative uses in his State Fiscal Year 2024 budget for a portion of the State's SFRF allocation for projects that did not incur spending in State Fiscal Year 2023. Two projects – Blue Economy Investments, \$70 million, and Bioscience Investments, \$30 million – could not move forward because the use of SFRF was contingent on the State securing additional federal matching funds that were not awarded.

The State Fiscal Year 2024 budget submission recommended providing previously approved SFRF projects with additional funds and creating new projects focused on transportation, K-12 education, higher education, and economic development, including a reconfigured Bioscience Investments project with enhanced SFRF funding of \$45 million. The State Fiscal Year 2024 budget was signed into law on June 16, 2023.

The State Fiscal Year 2025 budget submission and amendment process recommended new projects, additional appropriations for existing projects, and the removal of projects, such as Ongoing COVID-19 Response, \$41.8 million, South Quay Marine Terminal, \$35 million, and PFAS Water Treatment Plant, \$20 million.¹ The General Assembly made additional changes to the Governor's proposals, and the State Fiscal Year 2025 budget was signed into law on June 17, 2024.

¹ The funding for the PFAS Water Treatment Plant project was shifted from SFRF to the Rhode Island Capital Plan Fund.

The State is implementing SFRF projects, with the goal of providing recovery funds without onerous requirements, while ensuring that the State can collect and analyze data to assess the performance of recipients in achieving the projects' goals. The State is committed to making choices based on evaluating the best, available data within a framework that emphasizes the needs of all Rhode Islanders.

Process

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) into law. Immediately thereafter, the Rhode Island Department of Administration (DOA), the Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office (PRO), and the Rhode Island Office of Management and Budget (OMB) engaged state agencies in anticipation of the State receiving its SFRF allocation. A survey soliciting potential projects was sent on March 19, 2021, with agencies filling out the criteria for each project and submitting their proposed projects by March 31, 2021.

After U.S. Treasury issued the SFRF interim final rule on May 13, 2021, DOA re-solicited from agencies potential projects with tighter criteria around the use of funds. These initiatives were vetted and considered while developing the RI Rebounds projects presented in this report. The vetting process gave special consideration to projects that demonstrated evidence of timely implementation and execution, the ability to generate benefits within one year, and transformational capacity.

On October 7, 2021, the Governor unveiled his plan, seeking legislative approval to appropriate \$119 million of Rhode Island's SFRF allocation for the RI Rebounds projects. The Rhode Island House of Representatives and Senate Committees on Finance held multiple hearings on the projects to perform their due diligence and receive feedback from constituents.

Upon passage of the legislation enacting the RI Rebounds projects, PRO collaborated with the state and quasi-public agencies responsible for the projects. This collaboration consisted of establishing procedures to comply with U.S. Treasury's reporting requirements for expenditure information and performance metrics. PRO worked with state and quasi-public agencies on the development of mandated state-determined metrics to supplement U.S. Treasury's own performance metrics.

The Governor's State Fiscal Year 2023 budget, which was submitted to the General Assembly on January 20, 2022, proposed projects for the remainder of the State's SFRF allocation. Together, the projects proposed further investments to support expanding affordable and middle income housing; ensuring every young Rhode Islander reaches their full potential; bolstering growing sectors of the state's economy; investing in the workforce to prepare Rhode Islanders for the jobs of the future; and strengthening the health care system in the event of surges in COVID-19 cases or the emergence of new variants. On June 9, 2022, the House Committee on Finance unveiled its State Fiscal Year 2023 budget proposal, which funded most of the SFRF projects proposed by the Governor in his initial budget submission.

Mirroring the process used for the RI Rebounds projects, PRO collaborated with the state agencies, quasi-public agencies, and other entities on their State Fiscal Year 2023 SFRF projects to ensure compliance with U.S. Treasury's reporting standards. PRO continued this collaboration for all SFRF projects approved in Fiscal Year 2024 and will continue doing so in future fiscal years.

This recovery report only includes information about projects that have advanced through PRO's reporting and compliance approval process and thereby are authorized to spend SFRF appropriations. Similar information about new SFRF projects that were approved in State Fiscal Year 2025 will be included in future reports to U.S. Treasury.

Table 1. provides the breakdown of all SFRF projects for which appropriations have been made as of the enactment of the State Fiscal Year 2024 revised budget signed on June 17, 2024.

Table 1. SFRF Appropriations

Project	Total
9-8-8 Hotline	\$3,475,000
Adult Education Investment	\$5,000,000
Affordable Housing Predevelopment	\$10,000,000
Aid to the Convention Center	\$10,000,000
Auto-Enrollment Program	\$1,614,068
Bioscience Investments	\$45,000,000
Broadband Mapping and Planning	\$500,000
Butler Hospital Short Term Stay Unit	\$8,000,000
Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics	\$30,000,000
Child Care Enhanced TEACH Program	\$2,000,000
Child Care Family Provider Support	\$600,000
Child Care Quality Improvements	\$1,000,000
Child Care Retention Bonuses	\$37,400,000
Child Care Workforce Registry	\$1,000,000
Community Revitalization	\$20,000,000
COVID-19 Operational Support: Analytics	\$19,346,136
COVID-19 Operational Support: Epidemiology	\$10,080,721
COVID-19 Operational Support: Testing	\$2,770,226
Crisis Intervention Trainings	\$2,200,000
DCYF Sign-On Bonuses	\$810,848
DCYF Workforce Stabilization	\$22,109,918
Destination Marketing	\$3,000,000
Development of Affordable Housing	\$15,000,000

Project	Total
Development of Affordable Housing Phase II	\$75,000,000
DOC Operating	\$20,000,000
Down Payment Assistance	\$30,000,000
Early Intervention Provider Relief and Recovery	\$11,000,000
Enhanced Real Jobs	\$30,000,000
Female Youth Residential Facility Design	\$1,000,000
Fresh Start Scholarship	\$5,000,000
Health Care Facilities: For-Profit Hospital Assistance	\$4,515,113
Health Care Facilities: Health Center Assistance	\$2,500,000
Health Care Facilities: Nonprofit Hospital Assistance	\$40,484,887
Health Care Facilities: Nursing Home Assistance	\$30,000,000
Home Repair Program	\$4,500,000
Homelessness Assistance	\$1,500,000
Homelessness Assistance Phase II	\$13,000,000
Homelessness Assistance Warming Center and Shelter	\$7,000,000
Homelessness Infrastructure	\$5,000,000
Homelessness Infrastructure Phase II	\$30,000,000
Hospitality, Tourism, and Events (HTE) Direct Grants	\$8,000,000
Hospitality, Tourism, and Events (HTE) Marketing	\$2,000,000
Hospitality, Tourism, and Events (HTE) Placemaking	\$3,000,000
Housing Related Infrastructure	\$3,000,000
Middle Income Housing	\$20,000,000
Minority Business Accelerator	\$5,200,000
Minority Business Accelerator: Rhode Island Black Business Association Grant	\$500,000

Project	Total
Minority Business Accelerator: Roger Williams University Start-Up Clinic	\$300,000
Municipal Fellows	\$1,300,000
Municipal Homelessness Support Initiative	\$2,200,000
Municipal Public Safety Infrastructure	\$11,000,000
Municipal Roads Grant Program	\$20,000,000
Nonprofit Assistance	\$20,000,000
OER Heat Pumps	\$25,000,000
OHCD Support and Capacity	\$1,500,000
Out of School Time Education Providers	\$4,000,000
Pandemic Recovery Office	\$15,378,934
Pediatric Provider Relief and Recovery	\$7,500,000
Pediatric Provider Relief and Recovery Phase II	\$7,500,000
Permanent Supportive Housing: Crossroads	\$10,000,000
Port of Davisville	\$65,000,000
Preservation of Affordable Housing	\$500,000
Priority Projects Fund	\$22,000,000
Proactive Housing Development	\$1,400,000
Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility	\$11,000,000
Public Health Clinics: Free Clinic	\$2,000,000
Public Health Clinics: Open Door	\$2,000,000
Public Health Response Warehouse Support	\$3,400,000
Public Housing Pilot Program	\$10,000,000
Rhode Island College Cybersecurity Institute	\$2,000,000
Rhode Island Community Food Bank	\$3,000,000

Project	Total
Rhode Island Reconnect	\$8,000,000
RI Rebounds Administration	\$1,500,000
R-Line Free Service Pilot	\$3,250,000
Safety Barriers Study	\$1,750,000
Site Acquisition	\$25,000,000
Small Business Direct Grants	\$12,500,000
Small Business Energy Efficiency	\$600,000
Small Business Public Health Capital Improvements	\$6,900,000
Small Business Technical Assistance	\$9,800,000
Statewide Housing Plan	\$2,000,000
Support for Survivors of Domestic Violence	\$10,500,000
Transit-Oriented Development Districts	\$4,000,000
Transit-Oriented Zoning Municipal Technical Assistance	\$1,000,000
Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund Contribution	\$100,000,000
Washington Bridge Small Business Support	\$1,300,000
Total	\$1,039,185,851*

** The remainder of Rhode Island's SFRF appropriation was reprogrammed in State Fiscal Year 2025.*

Use of Funds

The McKee Administration prioritized SFRF projects that:

- Address the short- and long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Minimize ongoing financial obligations.
- Generate outyear savings and efficiencies.
- Result in lasting benefits.
- Leverage existing administrative infrastructure, with simple and effective program design.

The following section describes the projects that have advanced through the Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office's reporting and compliance approval process as of the end of State Fiscal Year 2024.

Aid to Small Business and Impacted Industries and Economic and Workforce Development

Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund Contribution: \$100,000,000: The State partially replenished its unemployment insurance (UI) trust fund. An infusion of at least \$78,625,000 was needed to move down the UI tax rate schedule from schedule H to schedule G. The contribution to the UI trust fund was made on September 26, 2022.

Enhanced Real Jobs: \$30,000,000: The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training is addressing unemployment and underemployment by providing career readiness, workforce development, and supportive services to impacted workers to place them in sustainable jobs and on resilient career paths.

Small Business Supports

The project is comprised of four programs – *Direct Grants*, *Technical Assistance*, *Public Health Capital Improvements*, and *Energy Efficiency* – available to entities that demonstrated a negative impact from the pandemic. At least 20% of the funds was reserved for minority business enterprises, including women-owned businesses, as defined by state law.

Small Business Direct Grants: \$12,500,000: Businesses initially received grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000 that were used for operating, reopening, personnel, and other costs. Some businesses received supplemental grants in the amount of \$800.

Small Business Technical Assistance: \$9,800,000: Technical assistance providers assisted small businesses apply for *Small Business Direct Grants* and *Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Direct Grants*. The providers also are offering targeted finance, technology, marketing, and planning assistance to boost small businesses' knowledge base and resiliency.

Small Business Public Health Capital Improvements: \$6,900,000: Intermediaries are purchasing furniture, heat lamps, tents, outdoor Wi-Fi, lighting, power sources, signage, etc. needed for outdoor settings. Additionally, small businesses are receiving technical assistance and needs assessments to improve ventilation systems.

Small Business Energy Efficiency: \$600,000: The project is supporting small business owners that request a comprehensive, no-cost energy assessment of their business. Upon completion of the assessment, businesses receive measures they may implement to lower their energy costs and improve energy efficiency at their facilities.

Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Industries Supports

The hospitality, tourism, and events industries were hit especially hard by the pandemic. Rhode Island's leisure and hospitality sector lost about 37,000 jobs in the initial months of the pandemic, representing a 61.5% decline in employment.² As of December 2021, the sector was about 7,000 jobs below pre-pandemic levels.³ Businesses are eligible to receive funds or services from the following projects if they experienced a negative impact from the pandemic.

Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Direct Grants: \$8,000,000: Businesses in the hard-hit hospitality, tourism, and events industries received grants of up to \$250,000 to compensate for lost revenue and other negative financial impacts. This project was completed with a full expenditure of the appropriation on November 15, 2023.

² [Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training's Current Employment Statistics Seasonally Adjusted Data 2020](#)

³ [Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training's Current Employment Statistics Seasonally Adjusted Data 2021](#)

Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Placemaking: \$3,000,000: The project is supporting clean and safe placemaking, attraction development, and event programming, such as outdoor performances, outdoor food festivals, and other special events that attract visitors and residents to impacted businesses.

Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Marketing: \$2,000,000: The project advertised Rhode Island as a destination in key gateway cities, supporting direct advertising for the state's tourism regions, and sponsoring regional and event partnerships. This project was completed with a full expenditure of the appropriation on September 12, 2023.

Aid to the Convention Center: \$10,000,000: The pandemic forced the cancellation of events, and the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority (RICCA) is intent on accelerating revenues and improving operations. The funds provided the RICCA with working capital to tailor its operations to a post-pandemic environment by reimagining the use of its spaces to ensure the comfort and confidence of patrons and attract new events to its facilities. This project was completed with a full expenditure of the appropriation on July 28, 2023.

Minority Business Accelerator: \$5,200,000: Intermediaries are serving minority-owned businesses and increasing their access to capital and technical assistance.

Minority Business Accelerator: Rhode Island Black Business Association Grant: \$500,000: The Rhode Island Black Business Association (RIBBA) is building out the Minority Business Hub, a co-working space for RIBBA's clients, members, and partners. Additionally, the project is increasing the capacity of RIBBA's Small Business Program – its outreach program to help small businesses scale. This project was completed with a full expenditure of the appropriation on December 31, 2023.

Minority Business Accelerator: Roger Williams University Start-up Clinic Grant: \$300,000: The Roger Williams University School of Law is working with the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation to grow minority business enterprises.

Destination Marketing: \$3,000,000: The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, in cooperation with the Rhode Island Airport Corporation, and partner airlines, is targeting key gateway cities, including Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Detroit, with a campaign focused on driving leisure travel to Rhode Island.

Bioscience Investments: \$45,000,000: The project is investing in the biosciences industry in conjunction with the creation of the Rhode Island Life Science Hub (RILSH), which includes the development of one or more wet lab incubator spaces; the creation of a fund to support wrap-around services to aid in the commercialization of technology and business development; the growth of the biosciences talent pipeline, and support for staff to implementing the project. As of June 30, 2024, PRO had approved the expenditure of \$2 million by RILSH for start-up costs.

RI Rebounds Administration: \$1,500,000: In the Rhode Island Rebounds legislation, the Executive Office of Commerce was appropriated funding to administer the *Small Business Supports* projects and the *Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Supports* projects.

Public Health

Health Care Facilities: Nonprofit Hospital Assistance: \$40,484,887: The State distributed grants to all 10 nonprofit hospitals in Rhode Island in accordance with a formula provided by the Rhode Island General Assembly. Each nonprofit hospital received a base payment of \$1 million supplemented by a pro rata share of the remaining appropriation based on the hospitals' operating costs from their 2021 Medicare cost reports relative to the aggregate operating costs of all hospitals – both nonprofit and for profit – from

all 2021 Medicare cost reports. This project was completed with a full expenditure of the appropriation on September 30, 2023.

Health Care Facilities: For-Profit Hospital Assistance: \$4,515,113: The State distributed grants to both for-profit hospitals in Rhode Island in accordance with a formula provided by the Rhode Island General Assembly. Each for-profit hospital received a base payment of \$1 million supplemented by a pro rata share of the remaining appropriation based on the hospitals' operating costs from their 2021 Medicare cost reports relative to the aggregate operating costs of all hospitals – both nonprofit and for profit – from all 2021 Medicare cost reports. This project was completed with a full expenditure of the appropriation on September 30, 2023.

Health Care Facilities: Nursing Home Assistance: \$30,000,000: The State distributed grants to nursing homes to support their direct care workers and operations. The per-facility distribution was based on the number of Medicaid bed days a facility had out of the total number of Medicaid bed days for all nursing facilities as indicated in each nursing home's 2020 cost report. Nursing homes were required to dedicate at least 80% of the funds to direct care workers. This project was completed with a full expenditure of the appropriation on November 15, 2023.

Health Care Facilities: Health Center Assistance: \$2,500,000: The State distributed grants to the eight federally qualified health centers in Rhode Island to be used for worker retention incentives.

COVID-19 Operational Support: Analytics: \$19,346,136: The Rhode Island Department of Health's COVID-19-related activities are grouped by workstreams, and these funds are supporting work being completed by the administrative assistance, communications, quant/data and analytics, and technology enablement workstreams.

COVID-19 Operational Support: Epidemiology: \$10,080,721: The Rhode Island Department of Health's COVID-19-related activities are grouped by workstreams, and these funds are supporting work being completed by the epidemiology and operations workstream, which oversees case investigation and outbreak response.

COVID-19 Operational Support: Testing \$2,770,226: The Rhode Island Department of Health's COVID-19-related activities are grouped by workstreams, and these funds are supporting work being completed by the testing workstream, which supports outbreak testing for congregate care settings and other key populations, genomic sequencing to identify circulating and new variants, and wastewater testing to provide alerts on increased COVID-19 prevalence.

Public Health Response Warehouse Support: \$3,400,000: These funds are being used for the proper storage of personal protective equipment and other supplies including other COVID-19 response-related supplies.

Auto-Enrollment Program: \$1,614,068: HealthSource Rhode Island (HSRI) is creating a pathway for individuals to retain health and dental insurance coverage as they are transitioned off Medicaid due to the end of the public health emergency. The program is auto-enrolling individuals and families terminated from Medicaid who have household incomes at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) onto a qualified health plan (QHP) offered through HSRI and effectuating that coverage on their behalf by paying the premium for the first two months. Additionally, if these enrollees select a dental plan, the State is paying the premium for the first two months. For individuals and families with a household income greater than 200% of FPL and less than 250% of FPL, who are not eligible for auto-enrollment but are transitioning off Medicaid and into a QHP by making an active selection for a medical and/or dental plan, the program is paying for the first two months of coverage.

Public Health Clinics: Open Door: \$2,000,000: The State provided a grant to Open Door Health to acquire land to expand services for people disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Public Health Clinics: Rhode Island Free Clinic: \$2,000,000: The State provided a grant to the Rhode Island Free Clinic to improve access to primary care and the quality of care for uninsured adults and to increase access to dental care for uninsured adults.

Housing

Development of Affordable Housing: \$15,000,000: The Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (Rhode Island Housing) is deploying no-interest, long-term loans to complement other state and federal resources to finance the production and preservation of units affordable to households earning less than 80% of the area median income.

Development of Affordable Housing: Phase II: \$75,000,000: Rhode Island Housing is deploying no-interest, long-term loans to complement other state and federal resources to finance the production and preservation of units affordable to households earning less than 80% of the area median income.

Homelessness Infrastructure: \$5,000,000: The Rhode Island Department of Housing is expanding the shelter system's capacity by adding temporary and permanent shelter beds through contracts with providers and targeting key constituencies, including families, couples, individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, and victims of domestic violence.

Homelessness Infrastructure Phase II: \$30,000,000: The Rhode Island Department of Housing is expanding the shelter system's capacity by adding temporary and permanent shelter beds through contracts with providers and targeting key constituencies, including families, couples, individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, and victims of domestic violence.

Down Payment Assistance: \$30,000,000: Rhode Island Housing is providing up to \$17,500 in down payment assistance and closing cost assistance to eligible first-time homebuyers to promote homeownership.

Priority Projects Fund: \$22,000,000: Rhode Island Housing is subsidizing the development of projects that create new permanent supportive housing units or units designated for the following populations: extremely low-income Rhode Islanders, individuals transitioning out of state care, or vulnerable persons (includes people with disabilities, people fleeing dangerous living situations, and other populations are particular risk of homelessness or housing insecurity).

Site Acquisition: \$25,000,000: Rhode Island Housing is providing grants to developers to purchase properties for the purpose of developing affordable housing units.

Community Revitalization: \$20,000,000: The project is supplementing existing funds to invest in spaces for housing units, commercial uses, and health, education, and employment training programming. Rhode Island Housing is distributing grants to for-profit/nonprofit developers, municipalities, owners of existing affordable housing developments, and public housing authorities to redevelop existing real estate for these uses.

Middle Income Housing: \$20,000,000: Rhode Island Housing is supporting the development of housing units that are affordable to households earning up to 120% of the area median income.

Affordable Housing Predevelopment: \$10,000,000: Unreimbursed predevelopment costs for multifamily projects can range from \$100,000 to \$750,000, and create delays and financial hardships, particularly for non-profit, mission-driven developers. The funds are offsetting these costs and expediting the production of affordable housing.

Permanent Supportive Housing: Crossroads: \$10,000,000: Crossroads Rhode Island is launching the Summer Street project to replace The Tower with 176, one-bedroom units, with private bathrooms and kitchens.

Public Housing Pilot Program: \$10,000,000: Rhode Island Housing is providing no-interest loans and grants to public housing authorities to increase the supply of affordable housing and stabilize existing affordable housing. These funds are being used to build technical capacity, secure predevelopment services, and begin the process of redevelopment and/or repositioning of existing units.

Homelessness Assistance: Warming Center and Shelter \$7,000,000: The State-owned Cranston Street Armory in Providence and other *Homelessness Assistance* projects provided shelter and supportive services to people experiencing homelessness.

Home Repair Program: \$4,500,000: The pandemic meant fewer households had the necessary resources for major home repairs and improvements, which are needed to ensure a safe and healthy living environment. The Rhode Island Department of Housing developed a residential rehabilitation program to assist properties in distressed areas in meeting their housing rehabilitation needs.

Housing Related Infrastructure: \$3,000,000: The project administered by the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank is providing funding to municipalities and other public entities to improve public infrastructure necessary to develop additional housing units that meet the affordability criteria established by the Rhode Island Department of Housing.

Transit-Oriented Development Districts: \$4,000,000: Rhode Island Housing is subsidizing the development of affordable housing in Transit-Oriented Development Districts, where density is often permitted to be higher than in other areas.

Municipal Homelessness Support Initiative: \$2,200,000: The Rhode Island Department of Housing is administering a program that provides grants to municipalities where new overnight shelter(s) have been opened or existing shelters have had their capacity expanded since May 1, 2023.

Statewide Housing Plan: \$2,000,000: This project is making it possible for the Rhode Island Secretary of Housing to develop reports required by the Rhode Island General Assembly.

Homelessness Assistance: \$1,500,000: The Rhode Island Department of Housing is implementing a range of new housing stabilization services, especially those targeting homeless populations that have traditionally had difficulty accessing services.

Homelessness Assistance Phase II: \$13,000,000: The Rhode Island Department of Housing is implementing a range of new housing stabilization services, especially those targeting homeless populations that have traditionally had difficulty accessing services.

OHCD Support and Capacity: \$1,500,000: The Rhode Island Office of Housing and Community Development is onboarding staff or contractors to expand and enhance agency capacity in the areas of housing/homelessness.

Municipal Fellows: \$1,300,000: The project is supporting a housing development-focused municipal fellows program within the Rhode Island Department of Housing. It procured a third party to administer the program that involves implementing a shared learning program for the fellows to enhance their efficacy and expertise and matching municipalities with a fellow for planning, zoning, and/or a development project that relates to increasing the housing stock.

Transit-Oriented Development Zoning Municipal Technical Assistance: \$1,000,000: Complementing the ongoing development of regulations implementing a pilot program for the creation of additional Transit-

Oriented Development Districts, these funds are providing technical assistance grants to municipalities to support zoning changes that enable additional housing development in proximity to transit.

Preservation of Affordable Housing: \$500,000: This program is creating a fund that preserves affordable housing through foreclosure prevention or rehabilitation. The Rhode Island Department of Housing is awarding a grant to establish the fund.

Climate

Port of Davisville: \$65,000,000: The Quonset Development Corporation is making infrastructure improvements at the Port of Davisville, including the reconstruction of a portion of Pier 1, constructing a new terminal, creating approximately 40 additional acres of cargo laydown space, and creating new access drives and security gate in compliance with federal standards.

OER Heat Pumps: \$25,000,000: The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources' project is aimed at stimulating the market for high-efficiency electric heat pumps by providing financial incentives to make this efficient heating and cooling technology more accessible and affordable.

Children, Families, and Education

Child Care Retention Bonuses: \$37,400,000: The Rhode Island Department of Human Services paid \$1,500 semiannual retention bonuses (up to \$3,000 per person) during State Fiscal Year 2022 to all child care staff who were employed with a provider for at least six consecutive months. The State extended the project through State Fiscal Year 2023 and State Fiscal Year 2024, with quarterly \$750 bonuses paid to all child care staff who were employed with a provider for at least three consecutive months.

DCYF Workforce Stabilization: \$22,109,918: The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families is providing foster care, congregate care, and home- and community care-based provider staff who earn less than \$75,000 annually with retention payments of up to \$694.50 per month for work since July 1, 2021.

Nonprofit Assistance: \$20,000,000: The Rhode Island Foundation provided general operating grants to nonprofit organizations that are working to address food insecurity, housing instability and homelessness prevention, and behavioral health needs.

Early Intervention Provider Relief and Recovery: \$11,000,000: As of February 2022, all nine Early Intervention (EI) providers in Rhode Island struggled to accept referrals due to significant staffing shortages. This project helped reopen referrals by providing stabilization grants to EI providers to cover operating costs, such as staffing, outreach, and professional development. The project also provided performance payments to EI providers for meeting specified targets, such as recovering referrals to their 2019 levels, increasing the percentage of children referred who complete the eligibility process and engage in services, and reducing disproportionality for families with Medicaid coverage and families of color. This project was completed with a full expenditure of the appropriation on March 31, 2024.

Support for Survivors of Domestic Violence: \$10,500,000: The Rhode Island Department of Public Safety is providing funds to nonprofits whose primary mission is supporting survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Rhode Island Reconnect: \$8,000,000: The project is providing free supports to individuals in their pursuit of educational and workforce training advancement. Students are paired with a dedicated navigator who facilitates success by addressing external barriers to completion, providing personalized academic coaching, and mentoring.

Pediatric Provider Relief and Recovery: \$7,500,000: The Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services designed this project to place children on a path toward healthy development, improved mental health, and school readiness. Pediatric and family practice primary care providers who serve Medicaid-covered children received a portion of \$6 million in grant funds to improve access to services, as well as a portion of \$1.3 million in performance-based grants. Finally, approximately \$200,000 was used to retain a technical assistance contractor to assist recipients of the performance-based grants. This project was completed with a full expenditure of the appropriation on March 29, 2023.

Pediatric Provider Relief and Recovery Phase II: \$7,500,000: This phase of the project continued incentivizing pediatric primary care providers to improve access to care, immunizations, and screenings, and invest in primary care practices to support the staffing and infrastructure necessary to rebound from pandemic-related delays in care. The Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services made six payments to participating practices. This project was completed on April 18, 2024, with \$7,499,871 in expenditures.

Adult Education Investment: \$5,000,000: Rhode Island's publicly funded network of 19 adult education providers delivers high-quality services that support adults in reaching their diverse college and career goals, including high school equivalency preparation, English for Speakers of Other Languages, digital literacy skills development, and workforce preparation and training. This project, administered by the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is providing direct grants to adult education providers to create regional hubs, purchase devices and software, support the integration of digital literacy, and expand services.

Fresh Start Scholarship: \$5,000,000: The scholarship provides working adults with tuition, fees, and books allowance support for up to one year at the Community College of Rhode Island.

Out of School Time Education Providers: \$4,000,000: The project is building upon an investment in the Advancing Learning Beyond the 180-Day School Year program in support of the Learn365RI initiative, with the long-term goals of improving student learning outcomes and increasing three key metrics: Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System math and English language arts scores; school attendance rates; and Free Application for Federal Student Aid completion rates.

Rhode Island Community Food Bank: \$3,000,000: The Rhode Island Community Food Bank is purchasing food to distribute to its member agencies, which provide food across the state to individuals who are food insecure.

Child Care Enhanced TEACH Program: \$2,000,000: The project, administered by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services, is supporting the TEACH Early Childhood RI (TEACH) program that helps child care businesses implement best practices, reduce staff turnover, onboard staff, and continue to provide high-quality early child care learning and education. TEACH provides access to a higher-education curriculum on the academic, social, and cognitive skills that develop from birth through school age.

Rhode Island College Cybersecurity Institute: \$2,000,000: The funds are providing the resources needed to establish and launch the Rhode Island College Institute for Cybersecurity and Emerging Technologies, which will engage with the cybersecurity community to deepen the Institute's alignment to the field and expand the College's ability to deliver education and workforce training.

Child Care Workforce Registry: \$1,000,000: The Rhode Island Department of Human Services is creating a workforce registry to better serve child care providers by targeting interventions to the workforce's needs. Having an accurate list of past and present educators will allow the State to survey

educators on the working conditions in child care facilities and tailor policies to address these conditions and reduce staff turnover.

Child Care Quality Improvements: \$1,000,000: The project is increasing the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children's capacity to improve the environmental rating scale (ERS) scores for child care providers. ERS scores are tied to improved quality interactions and environments for children, while also increasing reimbursement rates for participating programs.

DCYF Sign-on Bonuses: \$810,848: The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families is offering \$750 sign-on bonuses to newly hired employees at contractor agencies after 90 days of employment.

Child Care Family Provider Support: \$600,000: The Rhode Island Department of Human Services provided \$2,000 grants to new family child care (FCC) providers to cover the startup costs associated with opening an FCC setting.

Behavioral Health

Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics: \$30,000,000: The Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services is providing infrastructure development grants to community-based behavioral health and social services providers to recover from the pandemic and comply with federal Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) standards. These grants are supporting CCBHC providers and organizations seeking to become designated collaborating organizations.

Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility: \$11,000,000: The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families is adding 12 psychiatric residential treatment facility (PRTF) beds, with the construction of a new facility or facilities on the campus of the state's only existing PRTF provider.

Butler Hospital Short Term Stay Unit: \$8,000,000: The project is supporting the construction of a 25-bed short-term stay unit at Butler Hospital, a nonprofit psychiatric hospital, to provide behavioral health care services, crisis intervention, and related services. The unit will care for patients with mental health needs and alleviate the overcrowding at emergency departments.

9-8-8 Hotline: \$3,475,000: The project addresses the increased demand for mental health services related to the pandemic. Congress designated 9-8-8 as the new, easy-to-remember dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. 9-8-8 is a mental health safety net, intended to reduce suicides and mental health crises and provide a pathway to well-being.

Crisis Intervention Trainings: \$2,200,000: The Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals, in conjunction with Thundermist Health Center, is expanding the Crisis Intervention Training program, which is aimed at training, educating, and building networks for law enforcement, mental health providers, hospitals, etc., to better respond to communities' behavioral health needs.

Female Youth Residential Facility Design: \$1,000,000: The Rhode Island Department of Administration, Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance is assisting with the design and architectural plans for a new residential facility to care for female clients, ranging in age from 13 to 18. The new facility will provide 16 residential beds, classrooms, treatment rooms, recreation areas, and support spaces for youth, staff, and families.

Public Infrastructure, Technology, and Administration

Municipal Roads Grant Program: \$20,000,000: The program provides funding to cities and towns for the construction or maintenance of roads, sidewalks, and bridges. Of the \$20 million available, \$5 million is

equally divided among the 39 municipalities, and the remainder is divided proportionately based on municipalities' share of non-federal lane miles.

Pandemic Recovery Office: \$15,378,934: The funds are supporting state employees and contractors to administer and oversee State Fiscal Recovery Fund projects. The Pandemic Recovery Office creates and publishes reports required by U.S. Treasury and the Rhode Island General Assembly, and it posts monthly transaction data and final reports for all State Fiscal Recovery Fund projects once all the funds are spent and key performance indicator data are collected.

Municipal Public Safety Infrastructure: \$11,000,000: The Rhode Island Department of Administration is awarding grants for matching support to municipalities with an ongoing or immediate public safety infrastructure need through a competitive grant process. Eligible activities include design, predevelopment, construction, and direct administrative costs related to a public safety infrastructure project.

R-Line Free Service Pilot: \$3,250,000: The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority implemented a free fare pilot project on the R-Line – a route from Pawtucket through Providence that has the system's heaviest ridership. The project was designed to see if ridership could be brought back to pre-pandemic levels. This project was completed with a full expenditure of the appropriation on January 2, 2024.

Safety Barriers Study: \$1,750,000: The Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority retained a consulting firm to develop a detailed report on what, if any, safety barrier measures are possible on four bridges to reduce the incidence of suicide.

Broadband Mapping and Planning: \$500,000: About one-in-five Rhode Islanders do not have in-home wireline broadband internet. Half of the state does not reliably access internet download and upload speeds above the new federal minimum of 100mbps/20mbps. This funding helped hire a statewide broadband coordinator, build the broadband maps for a strategic plan, and complete the plan to guide the work moving forward. This project was completed with a full expenditure of the appropriation on April 30, 2023.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes Overview

The pandemic placed in stark relief the inequities that pervade society and, in many cases, exacerbated them. Rhode Island recognizes the challenges and gaps facing underserved communities and appreciates the urgency to find solutions. As state agencies developed proposals for State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) projects, they considered the importance of equity and carefully tailored proposals to promote equitable outcomes. These projects and their focus on equity are described in the project inventory.

The historically underserved, marginalized, or adversely affected groups that the State intends to serve with the SFRF projects include, but are not limited to, (1) minority business enterprises (MBEs); (2) racial and ethnic minorities; (3) employees in industries that suffered disproportionate economic harms; and (4) low-income individuals at risk of experiencing homelessness or struggling to access health care services.

The State's experience administering programs funded by the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) and direct federal awards, as well as programs carried out before the pandemic, positions Rhode Island to connect with hard-to-reach audiences. The State is using various outreach strategies to inform residents and businesses of the opportunities made available by the SFRF. These strategies include, but are not limited to, earned media, press conferences, remote and in-person community forums, mailers, and social media. Additionally, the State is relying on partners, including nonprofit organizations, representatives from the

State's health equity zones, and community groups as trusted messengers who can use word-of-mouth and one-on-one conversations to inform constituencies.

The State is ensuring that administrative requirements will not discourage prospective SFRF beneficiaries. It is critical that the State's SFRF-financed projects do not impose onerous burdens on groups targeted for assistance, while complying with all federal reporting standards. The State is committed and able to strike this balance.

Community Engagement

In 2021, Governor McKee and Lt. Governor Sabina Matos convened a process called Rhode Island 2030 (RI 2030) to develop a long-term strategy for a more resilient, prosperous, and equitable Rhode Island over the next decade and beyond. These discussions centered on creating a brighter future that, in part, could be realized by the effective use of Rhode Island's State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) allocation.

Throughout the spring and summer of 2021, the Governor and Lt. Governor held 13 Community Conversations with participation from members of the General Assembly, policy experts, community leaders, and others to discuss subjects such as housing, the economy, climate change, children and youth services, health, and higher education. For those who could not watch live, recordings with automatically generated captions were made available on Facebook. Outreach for each event was conducted via email, social media, and promotion in the local press.

On October 15, 2021, Governor McKee and Lt. Governor Matos released a working document, titled RI 2030, with goals, objectives, and opportunities that were shaped by the input and insights from the Community Conversations. In October and November 2021, the Administration held in-person public input sessions to solicit feedback on the RI 2030 working paper to further shape the vision. Translation services were available at these events, giving non-native English speakers an opportunity to provide input. In addition to these events, Rhode Islanders were encouraged to submit feedback online.

In addition to the engagement that informed the development of RI 2030, state agencies are leading robust outreach campaigns to notify potential beneficiaries about funding opportunities through the SFRF. Below is a description of the outreach conducted by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS) around the *Child Care Retention Bonuses* and *Child Care Family Provider Support* projects and by the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce) for its *Small Business Supports* programs.

DHS has made all outreach materials, applications, program materials, and the [Funding Opportunities](#) webpage available in English and Spanish. All application materials are accessible via mobile or desktop, require no more than 15 minutes, and are free of jargon or technical language. Ninety-seven percent of applicants for the second round of the semiannual retention bonuses responded neutrally or positively to a question regarding the ease of the application process. For the *Child Care Family Provider Support* grant project, 100% of applicants responded neutrally or positively to the same question.

DHS works closely with vendors and community partners who have trusted relationships in the field and act as its liaison on all programming. Intensive outreach across both programs includes:

- Emails to child care programs, potential applicants, vendors, etc.
- For the *Child Care Retention Bonuses* project, all employers and previous grant recipients received direct outreach with updates on the program.
- For the *Child Care Family Provider Support* project, all current providers received emails, encouraging them to share the opportunity with their networks. Any recent participants in the family child care provider orientation also received repeated outreach.

- For the first round of the *Child Care Retention Bonuses* project, the team conducted 1,837 direct outreaches.
- DHS worked with community partners to share social media posts advertising the opportunities and a promotional video about the *Child Care Family Provider Support* project that resulted in an increase in applications.
- When an applicant requires additional support, DHS, a vendor, and community partners collaborate on direct outreach via phone or email, often multiple times, to resolve the issue and provide technical assistance where necessary.

As a result, in the first round of the current retention bonus program, a vast majority of licensed programs had at least one employee apply.

For its *Small Business Supports* programs, Rhode Island Commerce worked with eight marketing/outreach partners – East Greenwich Chamber of Commerce, North Kingstown Chamber of Commerce, Newport Chamber of Commerce, Multicultural Innovation Center, Social Enterprise Greenhouse, Rhode Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Rhode Island Hospitality Association, and Innovation Studio – to provide support through social media campaigns, website homepage takeovers, webinars, and e-blasts to their constituents. Additionally, Rhode Island Commerce distributed print flyers in English and Spanish at community event locations, launched a paid advertising and social media campaign, and spread the word through Main Street events in Central Falls and South Kingstown.

Project Inventory

The project inventory provides an overview of each initiative (including problem statement, use of evidence, key performance indicators, labor requirements, etc.) that has advanced through the Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office's reporting and compliance approval process in State Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023. The project inventory provides an overview of each initiative (including problem statement, use of evidence, key performance indicators, labor requirements, etc.) and is divided by Governor McKee's Rhode Island 2030 categories.

Aid to Small Business and Impacted Industries and Economic and Workforce Development

Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund Contribution

Project Identification Number: 10029

Funded Amount: \$100,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$100,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.28 Negative Economic Impacts: Contributions to Unemployment Insurance Trust Funds

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Unemployment Insurance (UI) provides temporary income support to workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own and meet the State's eligibility requirements. UI benefits are funded from State and Federal UI taxes paid by Rhode Island employers. UI tax rates are calculated using a statutory formula based on the balance of the State's employment security fund. In calendar year 2022 when this project was approved by the Pandemic Recovery Office (PRO), schedule H – with rates ranging from 1.2% to 9.8% – was in effect, and the taxable wage base for most Rhode Island employers was \$24,600. For employers at the highest tax rate, the taxable wage base was set \$1,500 higher at \$26,100.⁴

The COVID-19 pandemic contributed to an unprecedented increase in unemployment insurance (UI) claims in Rhode Island – peaking at 100,265 in April 2020.⁵ This increase contributed, in part, to the depletion of the UI trust fund. From January 27, 2020, to August 1, 2022, the balance decreased from approximately \$525.9 million to \$258.2 million. The lower balance resulted in the UI tax rate schedule moving up from schedule F to H in calendar year 2021 and remaining at schedule H in calendar year 2022, costing businesses approximately \$31 million in additional UI taxes. Without a contribution to the UI trust fund, businesses would have continued paying higher UI tax rates than they had been before the pandemic.

Project Overview: The State partially replenished its UI trust fund. An infusion of at least \$78,625,000 was needed to move the UI tax rate schedule down from schedule H to schedule G. The UI tax rate schedule for calendar year 2023 moved to schedule G after receipt of this deposit.

Timeline: The State deposited \$99,970,000 of State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) into the UI trust fund in September 2022.

⁴ [Department of Labor and Training Announces Unemployment Insurance Tax Rates for 2022](#)

⁵ Department of Labor and Training - Monthly Update for April 2020

Mechanisms and Partners: The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training (DLT) deposited the funds in the UI trust fund.

Use of Evidence: While this intervention has not been identified as evidence based, the analysis of the key performance indicators evaluated its effectiveness.

Equity Impact: About 7.4% of Rhode Island businesses are minority owned, with most employing between one and 10 people.⁶ This intervention provided tax savings to these businesses.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Reduction in UI tax rate schedule	Reduction from schedule H to schedule G	0	1
Number of businesses impacted	Number of businesses that contribute to the UI trust fund in calendar year 2023 that realized tax relief	0	24,595
Total tax impact on businesses	Total tax savings to businesses in calendar year 2023	0	\$12,165,052

Enhanced Real Jobs

Project Identification Number: 10035

Funded Amount: \$30,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$22,623,998

Project Expenditure Category: 2.10 Negative Economic Impacts: Assistance to Unemployed or Underemployed Workers

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: The pandemic resulted in thousands of Rhode Islanders becoming unemployed or underemployed. As of August 2022, the underemployment rate was 7.4% (approximately 41,292 workers), according to the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training’s (DLT) Labor Market Information Section.⁷ The percentage does not include employed individuals seeking a position with greater opportunities for economic advancement. The rate of employees who voluntarily quit their job is another data point used to assess employment dissatisfaction and gauge individuals’ interest in seeking better opportunities. At the start of the pandemic, the rate was 9%. It fluctuated between 12% and 14% in the first half of 2022, underscoring the need for upskilling and better job opportunities.

⁶ [Rhode Island BIPOC Small Business Ecosystem Assessment](#)

⁷ [US Bureau of Labor Statistics - Alternative Measures of Labor Underutilization for States](#)

Project Overview: The *Enhanced Real Jobs* (ERJ) project, which is built on the existing Real Jobs Rhode Island (RJRI) initiative, is addressing unemployment and underemployment by providing career readiness, workforce development, and supportive services to impacted workers to place them in sustainable jobs and on resilient career paths.

Specific training modules are developed through a collaborative process in which ERJ Partnerships identify skills gaps, job openings, and career opportunities, and work with training providers and community-based organizations to establish curricula and related services. The Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC) is providing supportive services, including transportation, child care, training supplies, general workplace skills training, financial literacy training, etc. Participants who complete an ERJ training program are matched with an employer or are provided with new skills and/or credentials that increase the participant's career and earning prospects.

Timeline: As of May 2024, DLT has obligated \$27.5 million contracts with 50 entities. The remaining \$2.9 million is expected to be obligated by December 2024. The project is scheduled to assist the workforce from October 2022 through June 2025.

Mechanisms and Partners: The project is leveraging the RJRI platform for procurement, performance management, and functionality. The procurement involved a competitive solicitation for bids from industry clusters that represent a collaboration of employers, training providers, community groups, and labor to create workforce development solutions. The industry clusters submitted training programming proposals to DLT for consideration to be recognized as ERJ Partnerships.

The ERJ Partnerships submit training programming proposals to DLT, which evaluates the proposals for breadth, effectiveness, likelihood of success, and anticipated job placements or skills/income gains before approving or denying the proposals. The ERJ Partnerships are contracted through their fiscal agent, which can be the ERJ Partnership itself or one of its entities. Grant amounts are based on the financial requirements of the specific proposal.

DLT treats the ERJ Partnerships as contractors who provide consultant-style services in the development of trainings, identification of job opportunities, recruitment of participants, and delivery of training. The ERJ Partnerships perform the services or contract with another entity to provide them. DLT staff oversee the contractual relationships and direct ERJ Partnerships in the collection of key performance indicator data.

Use of Evidence: Adult vocational training and sector-based workforce initiatives receive the highest and second-highest ratings for evidence-based positive impacts, according to the Pew Results First Clearinghouse.⁸ Additionally, support services, such as child care subsidies, receive the highest rating.⁹

Equity Impact: DLT is emphasizing outreach to historically marginalized communities, low-income communities, and communities of color. It is also requiring ERJ Partnerships to prioritize equity in selecting training cohorts. DLT's Office of Community Engagement, in conjunction with the Director of DLT, has established diversity, equity, inclusion, and access policies for the operation of the RJRI platform that include a targeted outreach mechanism and tracking of participant demographic data to ensure that programming is designed and implemented with an equity focus. This means that RJRI programming is designed to serve people of color and women at rates that exceed workforce participation percentages to address their systemic and long-standing underrepresentation in the delivery of workforce development services.

⁸ [Penn State Social Science Research Institute Clearinghouse Database](#)

⁹ [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#)

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers enrolled in sectoral job training programs		0	6,226
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers completing sectoral job training programs		0	4,822
U.S. Treasury Required Number of people participating in summer youth employment programs		0	0
Percentage of participants placed in jobs	Participants who find employment upon completion of or during participation in program services as measured against the entire participant universe	0	51%
Percentage of participants upskilled	Participants with a measurable skill gain upon completion of programming services as measured against the entire participant universe	0	77%

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Percentage of participants in sustainable employment one year from ERJ training completion	Participants who remain employed in the job in which they were placed, or are in a job of equivalent or greater pay, or are employed in a substantially similar or better-compensated position or in a substantially similar or related field	0	51%
Percentage of participants upskilled to higher-level jobs	Incumbent (employed at time of training) upskilled workers who move into higher-level jobs	0	82%

Aid to Small Businesses and Impacted Industries

The State is implementing interventions targeting *Small Businesses* and those in the *Hospitality, Tourism, and Events* (HTE) sector.

- In March 2021, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) noted that the pandemic’s effects on small businesses were felt most acutely in metropolitan and coastal areas, along with restaurants, educational support services, taxi/limousine services, child day care services, self-employed individuals, and Black and Asian business owners.¹⁰ The State is assisting small businesses through four projects: *Small Business Direct Grants*, *Small Business Technical Assistance*, and *Small Business Public Health Capital Improvements*. These projects are targeting small businesses with less than \$2 million in annual gross revenues that demonstrate a negative impact from the pandemic as determined by the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce). Under these projects, total support cannot exceed \$10,000 per eligible business through any of the three projects separately and \$30,000 in the aggregate.
- The hospitality, tourism, and events industries were hit especially hard by the pandemic. Rhode Island’s leisure and hospitality sector lost about 37,000 jobs in the initial months of the pandemic, representing a 61.5% decline.¹¹ As of December 2021, the leisure and hospitality sector was still about 7,000 jobs below pre-pandemic levels.¹² Hospitality, tourism, and events businesses are eligible to receive funds or services from three projects – *Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Direct Grants*; *Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Placemaking*; and *Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Marketing* – if they demonstrate a negative impact from the pandemic as determined by Rhode Island Commerce.

¹⁰ [The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Small Businesses](#)

¹¹ [Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training’s Current Employment Statistics Seasonally Adjusted Data 2020](#)

¹² [Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training’s Current Employment Statistics Seasonally Adjusted Data 2021](#)

The pandemic further stressed minority- and women-owned businesses. According to a McKinsey & Company study from 2020, there is a “\$290 billion ... [gap in the] opportunity to grow overall wealth by achieving revenue parity between Black- and white-owned businesses. Furthermore, Black business owners have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic-linked economic downturn, in part, because they were more likely to be in a precarious position (e.g., more likely to be in communities with business environments more likely to produce poor business outcomes). Indeed, about 58 percent of Black-owned businesses were at risk of financial distress before the pandemic compared with about 27 percent of white-owned businesses. The pandemic contributed to tipping 41 percent of Black-owned businesses into closure from February to April 2020.”¹³ These data are not specific to Black-owned businesses in Rhode Island but are illustrative of the data that support minority- and women-owned businesses as being historically underserved or marginalized.

At least 20% of the *Small Business* funds are reserved to assist minority business enterprises (MBEs), including women-owned businesses, as defined by state law.¹⁴ For the purposes of the *Small Business* projects, a “minority-owned business” must be (1) at least 51% owned by such individuals who also control and operate the business; or (2) in the case of a publicly owned business, at least 51% of the stock is owned by one or more such individuals. “Minority” means a person who meets one or more of the following definitions:

- Woman.
- Black (a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa).
- Hispanic (a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race).
- Portuguese (a person of Portuguese, Brazilian, or other Portuguese culture or origin, regardless of race).
- Asian American (a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands).
- American Indian and Alaskan Native (a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America).
- Members of other groups or other individuals found to be economically and socially disadvantaged by the SBA under § 8(a) of the Small Business Act, as amended, 15 U.S.C. § 637(a).¹⁵

Small Business Direct Grants

Project Identification Number: 10008

Funded Amount: \$12,500,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$12,172,971

Project Expenditure Category: 2.29 Negative Economic Impacts: Loans or Grants to Mitigate Financial Hardship

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: In March 2021, the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) noted that the pandemic’s effects on small businesses were felt most acutely in metropolitan and coastal areas, with restaurants, educational support services, taxi/limousine services, child day care services, self-employed individuals, and Black and Asian business owners most impacted.¹⁶

¹³ [Building support ecosystems for Black-owned US businesses](#)

¹⁴ [R.I. Gen. Laws § 37-14.1-3](#)

¹⁵ [15 USC 637](#)

¹⁶ [The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Small Businesses](#)

Project Overview: The project initially provided \$2,500 or \$5,000 grants to small businesses to be used for salaries to avoid furloughs or layoffs, operating costs, reopening costs, and other expenses. Eligible businesses were those that had less than \$2 million in gross receipts or sales in either tax year 2020 or tax year 2021 and suffered a revenue loss because of the pandemic. Industries eligible to receive grants were accommodation/hotels, agriculture, arts, entertainment, recreation, child care providers, construction, education services, finance, insurance, health care, manufacturing, personal care services, professional/science and technical services, restaurants, bars, caterers, food trucks, other food services, retail, transportation, wholesale, and warehousing. Between March 2022 and August 2022, 2,471 small businesses received grants totaling \$11,352,500.

The provision of these \$2,500 or \$5,000 grants did not exhaust the \$12.3 million in funding for direct grants; the remaining \$0.2 million in project funding was for a vendor who provided payment processing support to the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce), the subrecipient for the project. Rhode Island Commerce decided to distribute the remaining funds to small businesses that received a previous grant that operate in one of the following industries: food services, drinking places, personal care services, and arts, entertainment, and recreation. Of the original 2,471 beneficiaries, 1,055 were eligible for a supplemental grant of \$800. Between March and August 2023, 794 small businesses received a supplemental grant totaling \$635,200.

Timeline: In January 2022, the project framework and technology solution were implemented. In mid-January through the end February 2022, the technical assistance partners were activated, trained on the technology solution, and trained on program requirements, including the SAM.gov registration process. Applications were accepted between February 1 and February 15, 2022. Grants were distributed from March through August 2022. Supplemental grants were distributed from March through August 2023.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Rhode Island Executive Office of Commerce (EOC) executed a subaward agreement with Rhode Island Commerce to deliver the project on behalf of EOC.

Use of Evidence: Research indicates that direct financial support to small businesses has a positive impact on the economy. According to an analysis of the Paycheck Protection Program by the Hutchins Center on Fiscal and Monetary Policy at Brookings, there is “a direct cumulative increase in GDP of roughly 25 cents over the course of 3 years for every dollar of grants to small businesses.”¹⁷ Additionally, the Congressional Budget Office reported in *The Effects of Pandemic-Related Legislation on Output* that “grants ... will provide liquidity to businesses experiencing financial distress, increasing the likelihood that they will survive and preserve jobs for their employees while economic activity is weak.”¹⁸

Equity Impact: The *Small Business Direct Grants* project required that at least 20% of the funds be dedicated to minority businesses enterprises (MBEs). The project expanded upon previous efforts to serve historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected small businesses by selecting technical assistance partners with the knowledge, experience, and existing networks to assist minority- and women-owned businesses. Partners assisted in outreach to make eligible businesses aware of the program and provided one-on-one assistance ranging from applying for direct grants to registering on SAM.gov. Additionally, application materials and advertisements were produced in multiple languages.

Of the recipients of the *Small Business Direct Grants*, 60% were MBEs, including women-owned businesses.

¹⁷ [What Could Additional Fiscal Policy Do for the Economy in the Next Three Years?](#)

¹⁸ [The Effects of Pandemic-Related Legislation on Output](#)

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of small businesses served	0	0
Number of businesses provided a small business grant	0	2,471
Dollars disbursed	0	\$11,987,700
Number of MBEs, including women-owned businesses, served	0	1,498
Percentage of businesses in operation at least six months after receiving grant	0	65%
Number of businesses provided a supplemental grant award	0	794

Small Business Technical Assistance

Project Identification Number: 10013

Funded Amount: \$9,800,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$8,700,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.30 Negative Economic Impacts: Technical Assistance, Counseling, or Business Planning

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Businesses, particularly small businesses, suffered from a lack of experience with agile business practices as they faced pandemic-related disruptions. Many businesses did not have the knowledge or resources to quickly pivot to e-commerce, access federal and state funding, and generally plan for and adapt to a changing world.

Project Overview: This project provides targeted finance, technology, marketing, and planning assistance to improve small businesses' knowledge base and resiliency. The first phase of the project helped

businesses apply for *Small Business Direct Grants* and the *Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Direct Grants* and was administered by three vendors: Roads Consulting Group, the Rhode Island Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the Center for Southeast Asians. In the second phase, vendors selected through a competitive procurement are providing a range of technical assistance services. A central vendor conducted the procurement, is processing applications from small businesses, and matching eligible small businesses with approved vendors.

Timeline: The first phase of the project began in late January 2022 and ended with the last *Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Direct Grants* disbursed in November 2022. The second phase began in September 2023, and the technical assistance vendors had to submit invoices for reimbursement by June 30, 2024.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Rhode Island Executive Office of Commerce (EOC) executed a subaward agreement with the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce) to deliver the project on behalf of EOC.

Use of Evidence: There is a growing body of evidence to support the provision of technical assistance to small businesses. In a September 2018 report, the Milken Institute stated, “[Technical assistance] is one of the most effective methods for building the capacity of entrepreneurs and small-business owners.”¹⁹ Additionally, a 2014 evaluation of the U.S. Small Business Administration’s (SBA) Small Business Development Center programming found that most small businesses served had a positive experience with the program.²⁰

Rhode Island Commerce is evaluating and measuring the project’s impacts by collecting data from the application and intake processes. For the first phase, Rhode Island Commerce is assessing the impacts that the technical assistance had on businesses’ successful application for the *Small Business Direct Grants* and the *Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Direct Grants*. Technical assistance partners are required to track the businesses they support, the amount of time they work with a business, the type of support provided, and the business size, industry, and minority business status. This allows Rhode Island Commerce to track applications and awards to provide data on the interventions’ efficacy.

For the second phase, Rhode Island Commerce is evaluating the project’s success against input and output metrics, specifically: the number of eligible small businesses that are served, the percentage of these businesses that are minority- or women-owned businesses, the hours of support provided to each business by service type, and the percentage of served small businesses that a) remain in business, b) have maintained or increased staff, and c) increased revenue after one year.

Equity Impact: The *Small Business Technical Assistance* project requires that at least 20% of funding is dedicated to minority business enterprises (MBEs), including women-owned businesses. Rhode Island Commerce is working with “concierges” for businesses that a) have trusted relationships in historically underserved and marginalized communities and b) can provide interpretation assistance for business owners whose preferred language is not English. These efforts – along with targeted marketing and outreach – directly support equity results. The first phase of the project supported businesses in applying for direct grants in the following languages: Spanish, Portuguese, French, Korean, Mandarin, Hmong, Vietnamese, Laotian, Khmer, and Tagalog.

According to a report by The Hamilton Project, as of 2007, minority-owned businesses had considerably fewer employees, on average, than nonminority-owned businesses, and women-owned businesses had

¹⁹ [Best Practices for Technical Assistance Programs Serving Black and Hispanic Entrepreneurs and Small-Business Owners](#)

²⁰ [Small Business Management and Technical Assistance Training Programs](#)

fewer employees than those owned by a man. In 2002, average gross receipts for minority-owned businesses were approximately \$167,000 compared to \$439,000 for nonminority-owned businesses; receipts were particularly low for African American-owned businesses at \$74,000. A post-recession survey of businesses led by a woman showed that their annual revenues were approximately \$154,000, although it is hard to compare this number to those above because the recession disproportionately affected women and minority business owners.²¹

The first phase of the *Small Business Technical Assistance* project was designed to assist businesses in meeting administrative requirements (e.g., SAM.gov registration, grant agreement/W9 uploads, and fluency in contractual English) that create disparities in the ability to complete applications.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of eligible small business served	0	2,188
Hours of support provided to each business	0	67,743
Percentage of small businesses served remaining in business one year after support	0	N/A at this time
Number of successful applications to the <i>Small Business Direct Grant</i> program due to service provision	0	784

Small Business Public Health Capital Improvements

Project Identification Number: 10010

Funded Amount: \$6,900,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$5,869,603

Project Expenditure Category: 1.8 Public Health: COVID-19 Assistance to Small Businesses

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Data clearly show that infectious diseases like COVID-19 are less transmissible in outdoor settings.²² To support this public health imperative, it is important that small businesses can relocate more of their services to outdoor settings and enhance their ventilation systems.

²¹ Minority and Women Entrepreneurs: Building Capital, Networks, and Skills

²² [Indoor Air and Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) | US EPA](#)

Studies have shown that good air circulation inside buildings (ventilation) reduces the spread of COVID-19 in aerosols.²³ Ventilation upgrades not only help small businesses conduct business in a safer manner, but also provide the public with a sense of safety.

In the summer of 2021, the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce) conducted a survey of over 500 businesses and found that 77% of responding food service businesses and 88% of responding nonprofits/social assistance businesses would benefit from outdoor capacity supports.²⁴

Project Overview: This project consisted of two subprojects: outdoor activity support (*Take It Outside*) and indoor ventilation support (*Ventilation*).

Take It Outside, \$4.9 million: This subproject provided grants to intermediaries (e.g., merchant/industry associations, chambers of commerce, nonprofits, downtown improvement districts, municipalities, and others) that procured, installed, or otherwise enabled the use of the following: chairs, tables, heat lamps, tents, outdoor Wi-Fi systems, masks, hand sanitizer, staffing, security, insurance costs related to specific outdoor activities, lighting, power sources, relevant signage, bike racks, and other goods or services that increase outdoor opportunities for impacted businesses and other entities.

Ventilation, \$2.0 million: This subproject provided initial technical assistance and needs assessment services to help small businesses improve their ventilation systems. The project also supported the purchase and installation of air filters and other ventilation equipment to increase air flow through buildings. Ventilation vendors provided small businesses a needs assessment and made necessary ventilation enhancements to improve air quality and better position businesses to address any future surges of COVID-19.

Timeline: *Take It Outside:* Intermediaries completed activities from June 2022 through May 2024.

Ventilation: A request for proposals was issued to solicit intermediaries to support the program in March 2023. Business applications for ventilation services began in March 2023. Intermediaries invoiced for reimbursement from April 2023 through March 2024.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Rhode Island Executive Office of Commerce (EOC) executed a subaward agreement with Rhode Island Commerce to deliver the project on behalf of EOC. *Take It Outside* intermediaries were selected through a request for proposals process to procure, install, or otherwise enable the use of *Take It Outside*-related goods and services. The *Ventilation* subproject used numerous heating, ventilation, and air conditioning vendors and a payment processing vendor to distribute ventilation-related goods and services.

Use of Evidence: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend a layered approach to reduce exposures to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. This approach uses multiple mitigation strategies, including improvements to building ventilation, to reduce the spread of disease and lower the risk of exposure.²⁵

Equity Impact: The *Small Business Public Health Capital Improvements* project required that at least 20% of funding be dedicated to minority business enterprises (MBEs), including women-owned businesses. Rhode Island Commerce worked with intermediaries to leverage local relationships and ensure effective outreach to underserved businesses, as well as relied on experience with other grant programs to ensure effective subscription levels. 502 businesses were served through *Take It Outside*, of which 228 are

²³ [Ventilation in Buildings](#)

²⁴ [RI Small Business Coalition Survey](#)

²⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/ventilation.html>

MBEs, including women-owned businesses, and 166 businesses were served through the *Ventilation* subproject, of which 101 are MBEs, including women-owned businesses.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of small businesses served		0	0
<i>Take It Outside:</i> Number of business reporting expanded outdoor capacity supports	Reported by geography and industry	0	502
<i>Take It Outside:</i> Number of businesses reporting expanded business operations	Reported by survey data	0	502
<i>Take It Outside:</i> Number of MBEs, included women-owned businesses, served	Number of businesses that report expanded business operations, as reported by survey data	0	228
<i>Ventilation:</i> Number of small businesses served	Reported by geography and industry	0	166
<i>Ventilation:</i> Number of small businesses that received ventilation technical assistance	Reported by geography and industry	0	40
<i>Ventilation:</i> Number of small businesses with increased indoor air flow (air quantity)	Reported by intermediaries and in alignment with approved projects/purchases list. Reported by geography and industry	0	136
<i>Ventilation:</i> Number of small businesses	Reported by intermediaries and in	0	143

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
with increased indoor air quality	alignment with approved projects/purchases list. Reported by geography and industry		
<i>Ventilation</i> : Number of MBEs, including women-owned businesses, served		0	101

Small Business Energy Efficiency

Project Identification Number: 10083

Funded Amount: \$600,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$600,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The *Small Business Energy Efficiency* project is providing small business owners a comprehensive, no-cost energy assessment upon request. Once the assessment is completed, businesses receive measures they may implement to lower their energy costs and improve energy efficiency.

Business owners use an online application to upload their energy efficiency assessment. The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce) reviews applications and pre-approves businesses for up to \$10,000 in reimbursements for eligible costs. After pre-approval, businesses are notified of their eligibility. Businesses then provide documentation to demonstrate the energy efficiency projects were completed for reimbursement.

Timeline: The application window opened on February 5, 2024, and the deadline for reimbursement requests was June 30, 2024.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of small businesses served	0	60
Number of applications received	0	141
Number of minority- and women-owned businesses served	0	25

Hospitality, Tourism, and Events (HTE) Direct Grants

Project Identification Number: 10009

Project Completion Date: November 15, 2023

Funded Amount: \$8,000,000

Final Expended Amount: \$7,999,999

Project Expenditure Category: 2.35 Negative Economic Impacts: Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: While there has been a range of federal and state supports for the hospitality, tourism, and events sector (e.g., Paycheck Protection Program, Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Program, Rhode Island Hotel, Arts & Tourism Grant Program), it continued to face significant negative economic impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic. Strategic investments in the hospitality, tourism, and events sector support a strong, equitable, and broad-based economic recovery. Eligible recipients of grants through this program are restaurants, events-related businesses, valet operators, hotels, travel/tour-related businesses, and arts and culture organizations.

Project Overview: The project provided direct grants to businesses in the hard-hit hospitality, tourism, and events sector to compensate for lost revenue and other negative financial impacts. The arts and culture organizations are a key component of Rhode Island's tourism industry and fall under the supersector North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code for leisure and hospitality. Eligible businesses are in one of three categories:

- *Restaurants, Events, and Valet Operators:* Businesses had to demonstrate a revenue loss of at least 25% to be eligible for a \$12,500 grant.²⁶ National and regional chains were ineligible.
- *Hotels, Travel Agents, and Tour Operators:* Businesses had to demonstrate a revenue loss of at least 35%. Grant amounts were pro-rated based on actual 2021 net financial need. Recipients were awarded a percentage of their demonstrated net need or \$250,000, whichever was less. Entities that received over \$100,000 had to remain operational as of September 1, 2022. Entities with publicly traded stock or that are majority owned by publicly traded companies were ineligible.
- *Arts and Culture Organizations:* Businesses had to demonstrate a revenue loss of at least 35%. Grant amounts were pro-rated based on actual 2021 net financial need. Recipients were awarded a percentage of their demonstrated net need or \$250,000, whichever was less. To be eligible, applicants had to own their facility, or spend at least 20% of their operating budget on rent or performance space or have been a recipient of a U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Shuttered Venue Operators Grant. Entities that received over \$100,000 had to remain operational as of September 1, 2022. National and regional chains were ineligible.

The breakdown in grant recipients by the three categories was as follows: 113 restaurants, events, and valet operators; 26 hotels, travel agents, and tour operators; and 24 arts and culture organizations.

Timeline: Applications were received in March and April 2022. Between May and November 2022, 163 grants were awarded for a total of approximately \$7.5 million. Additional grants were awarded to 32 recipients in the hotels, travel agents, and tour operators (11 recipients) and the arts and culture categories (21 recipients) in March and April 2023. These recipients originally received less than \$250,000 (the maximum for those categories) and had remaining, unmet, net financial need. Additional awards were

²⁶ For entities that received a grant under the *Small Business Direct Grants* project, the maximum *Hospitality, Tourism, and Event Direct Grant* that can be received is \$12,500 less the amount of the *Small Business Direct Grant* received.

made to bring all recipients to the same percentage of net financial need met or \$250,000 (whichever was less). These additional awards totaling approximately \$0.4 million addressed underspend due to updated data from the financial review process of applications.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Rhode Island Executive Office of Commerce (EOC) executed a subaward agreement with the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce) to deliver the project on behalf of EOC.

Use of Evidence: While this intervention has not been identified as evidence based, the analysis of the key performance indicators evaluated its effectiveness.

Equity Impact: There are clear economic and equity implications for investing in Rhode Island’s tourism, hospitality, and events industries. According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data, women and Hispanic/Latino workers are disproportionately represented in the leisure and hospitality industry.²⁷ As such, investments in this sector create business and employment opportunities for these historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected individuals. Leisure and hospitality workers also typically work in lower-wage jobs and have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, so there are clear equity objectives in supporting these workers.

Minority business enterprise (MBE) status was tracked for two subprograms: Hotels, Travel Agents, and Tour Operators, and Restaurants, Events, and Valet Operators. Between those subprograms, 44% of grant recipients were MBEs. Of the grant recipients who were determined to be an MBE, 51% were identified as a racial or ethnic minority.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Dollars disbursed	0	\$7,882,314	\$7,881,122
Number of restaurants, valet operators, and events-related organizations assisted	0	215	113
Number of hotels and travel agents/tour operators assisted	0	20	26
Number of arts and culture organizations assisted	0	35	24
Percentage of businesses operational within six months of receiving awards	0	70%	83%

²⁷ [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics – Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey 2021](#)

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Number of leisure and hospitality supersector employees (seasonally adjusted) within six months of receiving awards	53,700	54,237	57,100
Number of businesses receiving supplemental grants	0	32	32

Hospitality, Tourism, and Events (HTE) Placemaking

Project Identification Number: 10014

Funded Amount: \$3,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$3,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: This project supports clean and safe placemaking, attraction development, and event programming, such as outdoor performances, outdoor food festivals, and other special events that attract visitors and residents to impacted businesses. This effort ensures that these types of events, which have a positive economic ripple effect for local restaurants, hotels, retailers, and other Main Street businesses, continue and adapt to the pandemic. This initiative also allows for new events to launch, supporting general consumer confidence and the economic recovery. The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce) is awarding a small number of grants of up to \$250,000 for large-scale projects, such as renovations of and programming for outdoor performance venues.

Timeline: Applications to a request for proposals (RFP) for intermediaries to support the grant program were opened in April 2022, with funds disbursed by February 2024. After this RFP, \$365,000 remained. A second RFP was issued on March 25, 2024, and October 31, 2024, is the deadline to invoice.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of hospitality, tourism, and events businesses impacted by events/activities	Based on grantee estimates (reported via survey data)	0	130
Number of customers/individuals participating/taking	Based on grantee estimates (reported via survey data)	0	131,460

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
advantage of the event/activity			
Number of events/activities held	Reported via survey data	0	75

Hospitality, Tourism, and Events (HTE) Marketing

Project Identification Number: 10015

Project Completion Date: September 12, 2023

Funded Amount: \$2,000,000

Final Expended Amount: \$2,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.35 Negative Economic Impacts: Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Rhode Island hosted 21.6 million visitors in 2020, a 17.5% decline from pre-pandemic levels.²⁸ While the share of day visitors and leisure visitors increased, a drop in business travel negatively impacted mid-week hotel occupancy rates particularly in Providence, Warwick, and the Blackstone Valley. International travel was severely restricted through 2021, resulting in significant declines in visitation and spending by international travelers. The pandemic's impact to the Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC) included:

- Passenger traffic declined by 96.9% year over year in April 2020, the lowest point.
- Of the nine airlines that serviced Rhode Island T.F Green International Airport before the pandemic, four stopped flying there in 2020 (Delta, Frontier, JetBlue, and United). The airlines resumed service to the airport between June 2020 and March 2021.
- Passenger traffic in calendar year 2020 was down 67% from 2019.
- Passenger traffic in calendar year 2021 was down 42% from 2019.
- The earliest that passenger traffic is expected to reach pre-pandemic levels is 2024.²⁹

The pandemic underscored tourism's importance to Rhode Island's economy and its potential moving forward. Marketing is a key tool to aid in that recovery. In 2021, Rhode Island's lodging sector sustained a 26% loss in sales compared to 2019. Lodging sales make up approximately 14% of visitor spending in Rhode Island, according to Rhode Island's tourism impact study prepared by Tourism Economics.³⁰ Furthermore, direct visitor industry employment (related to spending by visitors to Rhode Island who spent the night or traveled at least 50 miles for a day trip) registered 28,412 in 2020, a 27.8% decline from 2019.

²⁸ [Economic Impact of Visitors in Rhode Island 2020](#)

²⁹ <https://flyri.com/riac/passenger-numbers/>

³⁰ [Economic Impact of Visitors in Rhode Island 2020](#)

Project Overview: The project targeted advertising in key gateway cities³¹, supported direct advertising for the state’s tourism regions, and sponsored regional and event partnerships. The goal was to boost tourism and business travel to pre-pandemic levels. Promotion included digital marketing, billboards, radio, and an international marketing plan. Such programming aimed to increase mid-week hotel occupancy rates and visitation for inland regions. Funding was allocated as follows:

- *RIAC*, \$1,000,000: RIAC advertising included digital marketing, billboards, radio, and an international marketing plan with Brand USA.
- *Tourism Regions*, \$749,400: Direct grants were awarded to the state’s tourism districts to engage in marketing campaigns.
- *Regional Marketing*, \$250,000: The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce) used these funds for regional and event partnerships, increased public relations efforts, and other media.

Timeline: In November 2022, Rhode Island Commerce launched a targeted, integrated marketing campaign to attract visitors from the competitive four-hour drive market. In January 2023, regional tourism organizations received subawards to be used on advertising media in support of regional tourism drive market initiatives. Rhode Island Commerce also deployed air service destination marketing programs on behalf of RIAC, targeting select gateway cities. The campaigns began in December 2022, with pre-purchased media through June 2023.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Rhode Island Executive Office of Commerce (EOC) executed a subaward agreement with Rhode Island Commerce to deliver the project on behalf of EOC.

Use of Evidence: While this intervention has not been identified as evidence based, the analysis of the key performance indicators evaluated its effectiveness.

Equity Impact: Rhode Island Commerce integrates inclusive marketing messaging across all social platforms, advertising placement, content development, and public relations efforts. Rhode Island Commerce uses internal business-to-business channels to encourage Rhode Island businesses and regional tourism partners to adopt inclusive marketing practices. In addition, Rhode Island Commerce shared strategy, imagery, and messaging. This was tracked through a Tourism Economics dashboard that provides spend, geolocation, and census data.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Rental home occupancy rate	Occupancy data is provided by AirDNA monthly	December: 40%	December 2022: 43%	June 2023: 65%
Meals tax revenue	Revenue collected from 1% meals tax	July through December: \$16,910,255	July through December 2022: \$17,755,766	July 2022 through June 2023: \$38,620,204

³¹ Gateway cities are cities that have direct flights to Rhode Island T.F. Green International Airport and include Atlanta, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Detroit, Charleston, SC, Charlotte, Philadelphia, Raleigh-Durham, and Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Airplane load factors	Percentage of total seats filled on flights to Rhode Island T.F. Green International Airport	45%	December 2022: 50%	June 2023: 88%
Consumer visitation overnight vs. daytime	Ratio of visitors to Rhode Island that stayed overnight to those that did not	2.57	December 2022: 2	June 2023: 4.1
Hotel occupancy rate	Daily occupancy rates statewide broken down by regional tourism district	October through December: 64%	December 2022: 68%	June 2023: 75%
Group sales	Meetings and conventions lead generation metrics	90	July through December 2022: 97	July 2022 through June 2023: 817

Aid to the Convention Center

Project Identification Number: 10018

Project Completion Date: July 28, 2023

Funded Amount: \$10,000,000

Final Expended Amount: \$10,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The transfer of approximately \$10 million in SFRF provided the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority (RICCA) with sufficient working capital to tailor its operations to a post-pandemic environment by reimagining the use of its spaces to ensure the comfort and confidence of patrons and attract new events to the facility.

Timeline: Two transfers of approximately \$5 million each were made to RICCA. The first transfer was made in August 2022, and the second transfer was made in December 2022.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Dollars disbursed to RICCA	0	\$9,997,000	\$9,997,000

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Fiscal Year 2023 operating margin	Projected Fiscal Year 2023 operating margin without State Fiscal Recovery Funds: \$(472,536)	\$9,524,464	\$14,317,436

Minority Business Accelerator

Project Identification Number: 10041

Funded Amount: \$5,200,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,225,368

Project Expenditure Category: 2.32 Negative Economic Impacts: Business Incubators and Start-up or Expansion Assistance

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Reports make it clear that the pandemic disproportionately impacted minority- and women-owned businesses. The Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland concluded in an October 2020 report that these businesses were “facing higher rates of closures and sharper declines in cash balances as compared to nonminority-owned small businesses.”³² A May 2020 report from McKinsey stated that “minority-owned small businesses in the United States are also more likely to have conducted layoffs or furloughs or to have shut down their businesses: 55 percent compared with 48 percent for all respondents.”³³

In Rhode Island, minority-owned small businesses make up a smaller percentage of firms than population statistics would indicate. While Black or African Americans make up 8.8% of the state’s population,³⁴ Black- or African American-owned businesses comprise only 3.7% of firms in the state.³⁵ Similarly, while Hispanic residents make up 17.1% of the state’s population, Hispanic-owned businesses comprise only 9.2% of firms in the state.

Project Overview: The project is funding the following initiatives:

- \$2.5 million to support a network of intermediary organizations that serve minority-owned businesses.
- \$1.7 million to increase access to capital, with grant awards of up to \$20,000.
- \$500,000 for a full-time staff member and contract support to operate the project.
- \$300,000 to fund technical assistance for applicants to the *Small Business Direct Grants* project that would otherwise be ineligible for the *Small Business Technical Assistance* project.
- \$200,000 for trainings for intermediary organizations.

Together, these initiatives are designed to increase the percentage of minority business enterprises (MBEs), including women-owned businesses, in Rhode Island and support existing businesses.

³² [An Uphill Battle: COVID-19’s Outsized Toll on Minority-Owned Firms](#)

³³ [COVID-19’s Effect on Minority-owned Small Businesses in the United States](#)

³⁴ [U.S. Census Bureau](#)

³⁵ [Rhode Island BIPOC Small Business Ecosystem Assessment](#)

Timeline: The application for the request for proposals (RFP) for technical assistance providers closed in April 2023, and work began in July 2023.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Rhode Island Executive Office of Commerce (EOC) executed a subaward agreement with the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce) to deliver the project on behalf of EOC.

Use of Evidence: The project draws on the success of the Cincinnati Minority Business Accelerator, which has a portfolio of minority-owned businesses with annual revenues of at least \$1 million and potential for accelerated growth in two to five years. As of 2020, the program reported 67 companies being supported, \$150 million in new business secured, \$1.2 billion in regional minority business spending, over \$100 million in new credit commitments awarded in 2019, and over \$2 million secured in new grant support since 2018.³⁶

Equity Impact: The project is addressing inequities in business ownership in Rhode Island. There is ample data to support the finding that minority-owned businesses and communities of color are historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by economic downturns.³⁷ The Rhode Island Department of Administration, Division of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion’s (DEDI) disparity study underscores minority-owned businesses’ difficulties in accessing state procurement opportunities and the necessary progress toward a more inclusive and equitable landscape for business ownership.³⁸

Success relies on ongoing and extensive outreach to historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected individuals and communities. Outreach and strategic partnerships with intermediaries are playing a central role. Rhode Island Commerce is relying on business support organizations and marketing to raise awareness of the services, including efforts to reach individuals who may not speak English fluently, have less reliable internet access, or struggle with literacy.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers enrolled in sectoral job training programs		0	0

³⁶ [Making Cincinnati the National Epicenter for Minority Business Development](#)

³⁷ [Building Supportive Ecosystems for Black-owned US Businesses](#)

³⁸ [Disparity Study Final Report](#)

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers completing sectoral job training programs		0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of people participating in summer youth employment programs		0	0
Number of MBEs, including women-owned businesses, served	Examples include attending an entrepreneurship training session, using a co-working space, receiving a grant, attending a procurement seminar, etc.)	0	981
Number of programs, trainings, or initiatives started by intermediaries		0	574
Number of businesses helped by the program that submitted a complete application to the DEDI directory		125	70
Percentage of businesses that received financial assistance that are still in operation following receipt of the assistance		0	N/A at this time

Minority Business Accelerator: Rhode Island Black Business Association Grant

Project Identification Number: 10051

Project Completion Date: December 31, 2023

Funded Amount: \$500,000

Final Expended Amount: \$500,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Black Business Association (RIBBA) is a nonprofit dedicated to advancing opportunities for Black-owned and minority businesses in Rhode Island. Black and Latino businesses were among the hardest hit by the pandemic. According to news reports, Black business ownership rates dropped 41% between February and April 2020, the highest rate of any racial group.³⁹

RIBBA provides an array of business development services, including technical assistance, access to contracts, loan programs, business coaching and mentorship, workshops, and leadership opportunities.

The funds are supporting the build-out of the Minority Business Hub, a co-working space for RIBBA's clients, members, and partners. It will serve as a co-working center, providing access to workspace and Wi-Fi, private offices, conference rooms, and meeting spaces for RIBBA's clients and other organizations. These tools are essential to small and micro-businesses' success. A 2015 study by the Harvard Business Review shows that employees thrive in co-working settings. According to the report, employees in these spaces tend to see their work as meaningful, have more job control, and feel like part of a community.⁴⁰

Funds are also supporting the Small Business Program, RIBBA's premier outreach program to help small businesses scale by increasing the capacity of the program team.

Timeline: The grant funding was transferred to RIBBA in March 2023, and key performance indicator data was tracked through December 2023.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Number of small businesses with their MBE certifications	0	20	29
Number of small businesses that are bankable by partnering with local banks and credit unions	0	10	16

Minority Business Accelerator: Roger Williams University Start-Up Clinic Grant

Project Identification Number: 10048

Funded Amount: \$300,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$300,000

³⁹ [Black-owned small businesses hit harder by pandemic than White-owned firms](#)

⁴⁰ <https://hbr.org/2015/05/why-people-thrive-in-coworking-spaces>

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The Roger Williams University School of Law worked with the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce) to enhance the growth of minority business enterprises (MBEs). Client services included business registration, internal governance and operating document review and preparation, contract law guidance, regulatory law guidance, employment law guidance, trade secret and trademark law guidance, trademark registrations, and translation services.

Timeline: The clinic was anticipated to operate through June 30, 2024.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of discrete legal services provided to MBEs, including women-owned businesses	0	97
Number of MBEs, including women-owned businesses, in existence	0	54

Destination Marketing

Project Identification Number: 10056

Funded Amount: \$3,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$2,999,820

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: Air travel to Rhode Island T.F. Green International Airport was heavily affected by the pandemic, with the airplane load factor decreasing by as much 77%.⁴¹ While air travel is recovering overall, business travel, which traditionally drives off-season travel, remains sluggish. Additional leisure travel marketing is necessary to offset the effect of current travel trends.

The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (Rhode Island Commerce), in cooperation with the Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC) and partner airlines, is targeting key gateway cities, including Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Detroit, with a campaign promoting leisure travel to Rhode Island. The project is comprised of the following components:

- Integrated campaigns that drive interest in Rhode Island, targeted at cities that have air service to Rhode Island T.F. Green International Airport.
- New England sports media buys that will encourage fan travel to professional sporting events.
- In-market experiential events and installations in high-visibility locations that create top-of-mind destination impressions.

⁴¹ Data provided by the Rhode Island Airport Corporation

- A lodging value campaign during January when lodging occupancy is at its lowest statewide.

Timeline: The components of the project will be implemented from January 2023 through December 2024.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Airplane load factors	Increase factor to match pre-pandemic levels	81%	85%
Matching funds from hotel tax		0	\$2,577,959

Bioscience Investments

Project Identification Number: 10082

Funded Amount: \$45,000,000⁴²

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$2,000,075

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The project invests in the biosciences industry in conjunction with the creation of the Rhode Island Life Science Hub, which includes the development of one or more wet lab incubator spaces; the creation of a fund to support wrap-around services to aid in the commercialization of technology and business development; the growth of the biosciences talent pipeline; and support for staff to implementing the project.

The State Fiscal Year 2024 budget established the Rhode Island Life Science Hub to be the central entity and coordinating organization of life science initiatives on behalf of the State and will:

- Facilitate the development of medical advances and scientific breakthroughs with companies who specialize in the fields of medical devices, biomedical technology, medical therapeutic therapies, biogenetics, biomedical engineering, biopharmaceuticals, genomics, and life sciences; and,
- Incubate Rhode Island-based life science companies that will promote economic and workforce development and allow the State to successfully compete in the national and international life science industries.

The initial \$2 million approved for expenditure is supporting start-up operations for the Rhode Island Life Science Hub, including staff salaries and related employee expenses, professional and consulting services, marketing, travel, and office supplies and technology.

Timeline: It is anticipated that the initial \$2 million approved for expenditure will be spent by the first quarter of State Fiscal Year 2025.

⁴² The total appropriation for this project is \$45 million. The Pandemic Recovery Office (PRO) will consider a project(s) for the remaining \$43 million for approval once an updated project is submitted.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
File articles of incorporation for the Rhode Island Life Science Hub*	0	1
Issue professional and consulting service requests for proposals for the Rhode Island Life Science Hub	0	6
Hire president and CEO for the Rhode Island Life Science Hub*	0	0
Schedule and hold inaugural board meeting for the Rhode Island Life Science Hub board of directors*	0	1

*These are yes/no binary indicators: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.

RI Rebounds Administration

Project Identification Number: 10085

Funded Amount: \$1,500,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,500,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: In the Rhode Island Rebounds legislation enacted on January 4, 2022, the Executive Office of Commerce (EOC) was appropriated \$1.5 million to administer seven State Fiscal Recovery Fund projects: *Small Business Direct Grants; Small Business Public Health Capital Improvements; Small Business Technical Assistance; Small Business Energy Efficiency; Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Direct Grants; Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Placemaking; and Hospitality, Tourism and Events Marketing.*⁴³ The funding is paying for:

- Technology (e.g., website hosting and creation of *Small Business Direct Grants* calculator and the data aggregator tool).
- Staffing costs (e.g., cost sharing for staff assigned to Rhode Island Rebounds projects).

⁴³ [Rhode Island Rebounds legislation](#)

- Consulting (e.g., translation services, contractor to support administration of projects, and grants administration consultant for *Small Business Direct Grants* and *Hospitality, Tourism, and Events Direct Grants*).
- Legal (e.g., ongoing support of projects, developing subaward agreements, and other legal documents).
- Auditing (e.g., federal single audit and year-end financial statement audit).
- Other operating (e.g., purchase of checks to process certain payments).

Timeline: This project is incurring spend throughout the implementation of the Rhode Island Rebounds projects.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Completed projects supported by these funds	0	3
Implementation of the data aggregator tool*	0	1
Hire contractor to support administrative operations*	0	1

*These are yes/no binary indicators: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.

Public Health

Health Care Facilities: Nonprofit Hospital Assistance

Project Identification Number: 10030

Project Completion Date: September 30, 2023

Funded Amount: \$40,484,887⁴⁴

Final Expended Amount: \$40,484,887

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 Negative Economic Impacts: Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: The waves of COVID-19 variants stressed the already-limited financial and staffing resources of the state's 10 nonprofit hospitals, which incurred operating losses of \$13 million in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019, the last pre-pandemic federal fiscal year. The 10 hospitals are:

- Butler Hospital
- Emma Pendleton Bradley Hospital
- Kent County Memorial Hospital
- Landmark Medical Center
- Miriam Hospital
- Newport Hospital
- Rhode Island Hospital
- South County Hospital
- Westerly Hospital
- Women and Infants Hospital of Rhode Island

Through June 30, 2022, the nonprofit hospitals reported operating losses of \$107 million for FFY 2022 (October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022). The increased losses reflect pandemic-induced temporary contract staffing, the implementation of COVID-19 protocols, purchase of personal protective equipment, delay of elective surgeries, and other pandemic-related activities.

Project Overview: To alleviate the financial hardship of the pandemic, the Rhode Island Department of Administration (DOA) distributed grants to each nonprofit hospital in accordance with a formula provided by the Rhode Island General Assembly. Each nonprofit hospital received a base \$1 million payment in addition to a pro rata share of the remaining total appropriation of \$45 million based on the hospitals' operating costs from their 2021 Medicare cost reports relative to the aggregate operating costs of all hospitals – both nonprofit and for profit – from all 2021 Medicare cost reports.

Timeline: Grants were distributed to the 10 nonprofit hospitals in September 2022.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Hospital Association of Rhode Island (HARI) collected information on the nonprofit hospitals for U.S. Treasury reports. HARI reported monthly to the Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office (PRO) with the operating margins of each nonprofit hospital.

⁴⁴ The total appropriation for the State Fiscal Recovery Fund Health Care Facilities Hospital Assistance project was \$45 million. This figure is the amount of the \$45 million appropriation that was allocated to the state's 10 nonprofit hospitals.

Use of Evidence: While this intervention has not been identified as evidence based, the analysis of the key performance indicators evaluated its effectiveness.

Equity Impact: Hospitals are the provider of last resort and deliver care and services to historically underserved, marginalized, or adversely impacted populations. The project supported hospitals' capacity to continue to treat and care for all Rhode Islanders, including the most vulnerable individuals and families.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers enrolled in sectoral job training programs	0	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers completing sectoral job training programs	0	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of people participating in summer youth employment programs	0	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of nonprofits served	0	10	10
Total grant dollars distributed	0	\$40,472,743	\$40,472,743
Operating margin	January - March 2022: \$(70,953,000) April - June 2022: \$(31,640,776)	\$(10,000,000)	\$(3,586,679)

Health Care Facilities: For-Profit Hospital Assistance

Project Identification Number: 10042

Project Completion Date: September 30, 2023

Funded Amount: \$4,515,113⁴⁵

Final Expended Amount: \$4,515,113

Project Expenditure Category: 2.36 Negative Economic Impacts: Aid to Other Impacted Industries

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Since March 2021, Roger Williams Medical Center (RWMC) and Our Lady of Fatima Hospital (OLF) incurred \$3,006,884 in non-contracted labor-related COVID-19 expenses. This amount includes additional staff, personal protective equipment, test kits, cleaning supplies, etc. Unlike nonprofit hospitals, for-profit hospitals were not eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement for their COVID-19-related expenses.⁴⁶

Additionally, RWMC and OLF experienced higher contract labor costs from Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 to FFY 2022. In FFY 2019, contract labor costs were \$698,642, and in FFY 2022 they were \$9,461,545. The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services outlined the fiscal challenges for hospitals utilizing travel nurses in a May 2022 report. “Hospitals responding to the 2021 [Office of the Inspector General] OIG survey reported facing increased labor market competition from staffing agencies, particularly for nurses and that they were unable to compete with the salaries being provided through staffing agencies,” the report said.⁴⁷

Project Overview: To alleviate the financial hardship of the pandemic, the Rhode Island Department of Administration (DOA) distributed grants to both for-profit hospitals in accordance with a formula provided by the Rhode Island General Assembly. Each for-profit hospital received a base \$1 million payment in addition to a pro rata share of the remaining total appropriation of \$45 million based on the hospitals’ operating costs from their 2021 Medicare cost reports relative to the aggregate operating costs of all hospitals – both nonprofit and for profit – from all 2021 Medicare cost reports.

Timeline: Grants were distributed to the two for-profit hospitals in November 2022.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Hospital Association of Rhode Island (HARI) collected information on the for-profit hospitals for U.S. Treasury reports. HARI reported monthly to the Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office (PRO) with the operating margins of both for-profit hospitals.

Use of Evidence: While this intervention has not been identified as evidence based, the analysis of the key performance indicators evaluated its effectiveness.

Equity Impact: Hospitals are the provider of last resort and deliver care and services to historically underserved, marginalized, or adversely impacted populations. The project supported hospitals’ capacity to continue to treat and care for all Rhode Islanders, including the most vulnerable individuals and families.

⁴⁵ The total appropriation for the State Fiscal Recovery Fund Health Care Facilities Hospital Assistance project was \$45 million. This figure is the amount of the \$45 million appropriation that was allocated to the state’s two for-profit hospitals.

⁴⁶ [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Pandemic: Private Nonprofit Organizations](#)

⁴⁷ [Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Hospital and Outpatient Clinician Workforce](#)

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Number of for-profit hospitals served	0	2	2
Total dollars distributed	0	\$4,513,757	\$4,513,757
Operating margin	FFY 2019: \$19,382,376 FFY 2020: \$32,828,343 FFY 2021: \$(6,137,217)	\$(986,227)	\$(9,989,866)

Health Care Facilities: Nursing Home Assistance

Project Identification Number: 10046

Project Completion Date: November 15, 2023

Funded Amount: \$30,000,000

Final Expended Amount: \$30,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.36 Negative Economic Impacts: Aid to Other Impacted Industries

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), from January 3, 2021, through December 26, 2021, Rhode Island’s 79 nursing homes reported a shortage of nurses 883 times on a weekly basis, or 21.5% of the time.⁴⁸ During the same period, the nursing homes reported a shortage of aides 1,011 times, or 24.6% of the time. The nursing homes reported a staffing shortage of both nurses and aides 841 times, or 20.5% of the time. These data underscore the crisis in direct care staffing that Rhode Island’s nursing homes experienced due to the public health emergency. Since the CMS data was collected, four of the 79 nursing homes closed. Comparing December 2019 through February 2020 to September through November 2021, employment in Rhode Island’s nursing and residential care facilities sector declined by 18.4%.⁴⁹

Project Overview: The Rhode Island General Assembly appropriated \$30 million to be distributed to Rhode Island’s 75 nursing homes. The per-facility distribution was based on the number of Medicaid bed days a facility had out of the total number of Medicaid bed days for all nursing facilities as indicated in each nursing home’s 2020 cost report. Nursing homes that filed a 2020 cost report but were no longer in business in 2022 and nursing homes that do not accept Medicaid were excluded from the distribution. Eligible nursing homes were required to dedicate at least 80% of the monies received to direct care workers.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ [COVID-19 Nursing Home Data](#)

⁴⁹ [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

⁵⁰ “Direct care workers” was assumed to have the same meaning as the term “direct care staff” in R.I. Gen. Laws § 40- 8-19(a)(3)(i). Maintenance staff was also included under the category of “other similar employees” in R.I. Gen. Laws § 40-8-19(a)(3)(i) as these direct care workers are akin to laundry staff who are deemed to be direct care staff under the law

Timeline: Grants were distributed to the 75 nursing homes from December 2022 through April 2023.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Rhode Island Pandemic Recovery Office (PRO) worked with the 75 nursing homes to have them sign grant agreements and collect key performance indicator data.

Use of Evidence: While this intervention has not been identified as evidence based, the analysis of the key performance indicators evaluated its effectiveness.

Equity Impact: The project served nursing homes based on the number of Medicaid bed days each facility had in 2020. Nursing homes with more Medicaid bed days tend to have a patient and resident census with lower-income and racial minority individuals – two groups that generally received lower levels of medical care than the non-Medicaid population.⁵¹

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Number of nursing homes receiving grant payments	0	75	75
Percentage of grant award dedicated to direct care workers	0	80%	93%
Number of nursing homes still in operation six months after receipt of grant payment	0	75	74

Health Care Facilities: Health Center Assistance

Project Identification Number: 10047

Project Completion Date: February 9, 2024

Funded Amount: \$2,500,000

Final Expended Amount: \$2,500,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 Negative Economic Impacts: Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Community health centers provide care for approximately 200,000 Rhode Islanders, most of whom live below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL). While health center administrators, physicians, nurses, social workers, community health workers, and front-desk personnel

⁵¹ [Nursing Homes Incurring Significant Costs and Financial Hardship in Response to COVID-19](#)

persevered through this pandemic, a significant number of health center employees are leaving their jobs. Across Rhode Island community health centers, the monthly voluntary turnover rate increased from 14% in January 2020 to 16% in January 2022. The average employee tenure dropped 5.9% from January 2020 to June 2022.⁵² Several reasons contribute to these departures, including burnout and higher compensation offered by other healthcare providers.

According to a June 2022 report by the Kaiser Family Foundation, “Staff recruitment and retention remain common concerns at health centers nationally.”⁵³ Attrition and the struggle to recruit employees jeopardize community health centers’ ability to continue to effectively respond to their patients and communities.

Project Overview: The project provided grants to the eight federally qualified health centers in Rhode Island to restore and support community health center employment through worker retention incentives that were no more than 25% of an employee’s base pay.⁵⁴ The bonuses did not result in long-term base pay increases.

Timeline: Grants were distributed to the eight community health centers in December 2022.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Rhode Island General Assembly provided a direct award to the Rhode Island Health Center Association (RIHCA) to serve as a subrecipient for this project. As the subrecipient, RIHCA distributed the grants to the eight community health centers. The grant distribution formula was based on the percentage of patients served at each health center out of the total of patients served at all eight health centers using 2021 Uniform Data System data from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration.⁵⁵

Use of Evidence: While this intervention has not been identified as evidence based, the analysis of the key performance indicators evaluated its effectiveness.

Equity Impact: Community health centers serve all community members regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. The promotion of economic and racial equity is in their core mission and reflected in the enabling services they provide, including interpreter services and transportation, as well as their sliding fee scales. According to the National Association of Community Health Centers, the eight federally funded health center organizations in Rhode Island leverage approximately \$31 million in federal investments to serve their patients. In 2021, 9.6% of community health center patients were uninsured; 22.2% were best served in a language other than English; and of patients reporting race, 28% identified as a race other than white.⁵⁶

⁵² Data provided by the eight federally qualified health centers in response to a survey

⁵³ [How Community Health Centers Are Serving Low-Income Communities During the COVID-19 Pandemic Amid New and Continuing Challenges](#)

⁵⁴ Community health centers’ designation as “federally qualified health centers” require that they are in health professional shortage areas (HPSA), which have a shortage of primary, dental, or mental health care providers, as defined by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration.

⁵⁵ [Health Center Program Uniform Data System \(UDS\) Data Overview \(hrsa.gov\)](#)

⁵⁶ [2021 Rhode Island Health Center Program Uniform Data System Data](#)

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
U.S. Treasury Required Number of nonprofits served	0	8	8
Dollars distributed in health professional shortage areas	0	\$2,499,250	\$2,499,250
Employee retention rate	76%	December 2023: 85%	December 2023: 83%
Average employee tenure	5.2 years	December 2023: 5.7 years	December 2023: 5.2 years

COVID-19 Operational Support: Analytics

Project Identification Number: 10069

Funded Amount: \$19,346,136

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$11,593,036

Project Expenditure Category: 1.7 Public Health: Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Although the federal public health emergency ended in May 2023, COVID-19 remains an infectious disease of great concern and impact in Rhode Island. The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) is continuing appropriate response activities to protect the health of Rhode Island residents; prevent COVID-19 spread, morbidity, and mortality; and promote evidence-based COVID-19 vaccinations, treatments, and mitigation measures.

Project Overview: RIDOH's COVID-19-related activities are grouped by workstreams.

- The administrative assistance workstream provides support with logistics, operational readiness, and liability protection to ensure the continuity of operations by relieving administrative burden and reducing the risk of legal repercussions or cybersecurity breaches.
- The communications workstream delivers clear, timely, accurate, effective public health messaging about COVID-19 information, resources, and guidance. This includes resource preparation in multiple languages, media campaigns, and the maintenance of a website.
- The quant/data and analytics workstream maintains a sustainable COVID-19 surveillance program to support situational awareness, prevention, and planning efforts within and beyond RIDOH. Quant responds to changes in the data landscape, including the breadth and frequency of policy changes and resource constraints. Quant monitors and detects COVID-19 incidence, RIDOH interventions (e.g., vaccination and treatment programs), and severity of disease, outbreaks, and new variants, and provides data for risk communication to the public. These data are critically important to inform policy and any strategy changes as the disease evolves.

- The technology enablement workstream supports the implementation and maintenance of technology so that the workstreams can meet their operational goals.

Timeline: The funds are being spent from July 2023 through June 2025.

Mechanisms and Partners: The workstreams are integrated into RIDOH’s divisions and work cooperatively to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and mitigate the impacts of infection on Rhode Islanders.

Use of Evidence: RIDOH follows national COVID-19 guidelines, and its response evolved as national evidence changed and medical countermeasures were developed (e.g., vaccines and treatment). That is why RIDOH’s current focus is on the most vulnerable Rhode Islanders. The agency continues to evaluate data and tailor its response as a result. RIDOH is focused on data- and evidence-based strategies that will minimize disease burden on the population so that hospital systems are not overwhelmed with COVID-19 admissions.

Equity Impact: RIDOH delivers its programming through an equity lens and incorporates data and community feedback to ensure services are provided in ways that the community finds valuable. RIDOH’s data and communications teams have prioritized this throughout the COVID-19 response and across their daily work. Based on its data-driven approach, RIDOH identified several high-density communities and zip codes that seemed to be struggling most with disease burden. As a result, RIDOH prioritized making testing, vaccines, and treatment accessible for those residents. In the current landscape, RIDOH is prioritizing its work with residents over age 60 in all communities and those age 40 and older in high-density communities, as well as all those who live in congregate settings.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of COVID-19 data categories reported	9 89%	8
Percentage of reporting that was reported during the expected reporting cadence	89%	98%

COVID-19 Operational Support: Epidemiology

Project Identification Number: 10068

Funded Amount: \$10,080,721

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$4,909,932

Project Expenditure Category: 1.3 COVID-19 Contact Tracing

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Although the federal public health emergency ended in May 2023, COVID-19 remains an infectious disease of great concern and impact in Rhode Island. The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) is continuing appropriate response activities to protect the health of

Rhode Island residents; prevent COVID-19 spread, morbidity, and mortality; and promote evidence-based COVID-19 vaccinations, treatments, and mitigation measures.

Project Overview: RIDOH’s COVID-19-related activities are grouped by workstreams. The epidemiology and operations workstream oversees case investigation and outbreak response. Case investigation focuses on educating individuals at highest risk of severe outcomes on isolation recommendations and treatment options, and to identify any links to known outbreaks. Outbreak response focuses on congregate and educational settings. Upon outbreak identification, the workstream provides education and mitigation support to facilities.

Timeline: The funds are being spent from July 2023 through June 2025.

Mechanisms and Partners: The workstreams are integrated into RIDOH’s divisions and work cooperatively to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and mitigate the impacts of infection on Rhode Islanders.

Use of Evidence: RIDOH follows national COVID-19 guidelines, and its response evolved as national evidence changed and medical countermeasures were developed (e.g., vaccines and treatment). That is why RIDOH’s current focus is on the most vulnerable Rhode Islanders. The agency continues to evaluate data and tailor its response as a result. RIDOH is focused on data- and evidence-based strategies that will minimize disease burden on the population so that hospital systems are not overwhelmed with COVID-19 admissions.

Equity Impact: RIDOH delivers its programming through an equity lens and incorporates data and community feedback to ensure services are provided in ways that the community finds valuable. RIDOH’s data and communications teams have prioritized this throughout the COVID-19 response and across their daily work. Based on its data-driven approach, RIDOH identified several high-density communities and zip codes that seemed to be struggling most with disease burden. As a result, RIDOH prioritized making testing, vaccines, and treatment accessible for those residents. In the current landscape, RIDOH is prioritizing its work with residents over age 60 in all communities and those age 40 and older in high-density communities, as well as all those who live in congregate settings.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Percentage of priority COVID-19 cases attempted for outreach within 72 hours	86%	94%
Percentage of calls to the COVID-19 information line resolved on the first call	97%	93%

COVID-19 Operational Support: Testing

Project Identification Number: 10067

Funded Amount: \$2,770,226

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,495,436

Project Expenditure Category: 1.2 COVID-19 Testing

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Although the federal public health emergency ended in May 2023, COVID-19 remains an infectious disease of great concern and impact in Rhode Island. The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) is continuing appropriate response activities to protect the health of Rhode Island residents; prevent COVID-19 spread, morbidity, and mortality; and promote evidence-based COVID-19 vaccinations, treatments, and mitigation measures.

Project Overview: RIDOH’s COVID-19-related activities are grouped by workstreams. The testing workstream supports outbreak testing for congregate care settings and other key populations, genomic sequencing to identify circulating and new variants, and wastewater testing to provide alerts on increased COVID-19 prevalence.

Timeline: The funds are being spent from July 2023 through June 2025.

Mechanisms and Partners: The workstreams are integrated into RIDOH’s divisions and work cooperatively to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and mitigate the impacts of infection on Rhode Islanders.

Use of Evidence: RIDOH follows national COVID-19 guidelines, and its response evolved as national evidence changed and medical countermeasures were developed (e.g., vaccines and treatment). That is why RIDOH’s current focus is on the most vulnerable Rhode Islanders. The agency continues to evaluate data and tailor its response as a result. RIDOH is focused on data- and evidence-based strategies that will minimize disease burden on the population so that hospital systems are not overwhelmed with COVID-19 admissions.

Equity Impact: RIDOH delivers its programming through an equity lens and incorporates data and community feedback to ensure services are provided in ways that the community finds valuable. RIDOH’s data and communications teams have prioritized this throughout the COVID-19 response and across their daily work. Based on its data-driven approach, RIDOH identified several high-density communities and zip codes that seemed to be struggling most with disease burden. As a result, RIDOH prioritized making testing, vaccines, and treatment accessible for those residents. In the current landscape, RIDOH is prioritizing its work with residents over age 60 in all communities and those age 40 and older in high-density communities, as well as all those who live in congregate settings.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Percentage of COVID-19 positive samples that are successfully sequenced	87%	67%
Number of wastewater sampling sites	8	11

Public Health Response Warehouse Support

Project Identification Number: 10023

Funded Amount: \$3,400,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,988,748

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The funds are paying for the proper storage of personal protective equipment, other necessary COVID-19 response-related supplies, and other supplies at two State-operated warehouses. Costs include monthly lease payments, contracted labor, supplies, equipment, and utilities. This project was eligible for federal Stafford Act funding, with the State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) appropriation serving as the State’s 10% match, through May 11, 2023 (the end of the public health emergency), at which point the SFRF appropriation started covering 100% of the costs.

Timeline: The project is anticipated to pay for costs through March 2025.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Inventory	Monthly check of operational personal protective equipment	3 per quarter	20
Percentage of personal protective equipment with a shelf life beyond 120 days		60%	60%
Inventory accuracy	Determined by monthly inventory compared to information in the inventory management system	90%	100%

Auto-Enrollment Program

Project Identification Number: 10044

Funded Amount: \$1,614,068

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,447,947

Project Expenditure Category: 2.6 Negative Economic Impacts: Household Assistance: Health Insurance

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Throughout the public health emergency, many Rhode Islanders became eligible for Medicaid due to changing circumstances related to employment and income. In the same period, the federal government prohibited states from terminating Medicaid enrollment except in limited circumstances. As a result of this federal requirement for continuous coverage, Medicaid enrollment grew by over 76,000 enrollees in Rhode Island since the start of the pandemic – bringing the

total to 371,000 as of April 2023.⁵⁷ In December 2022, congressional action separated the end of the continuous coverage requirement from the end of the public health emergency. Annual recertification of Medicaid eligibility was required to resume in all states no later than April 1, 2023. When annual recertification of Medicaid eligibility resumed, members who are no longer eligible are having their Medicaid coverage terminated. The State's goal with this project is to transition as many individuals no longer eligible for Medicaid as possible into one of the many qualified health plans (QHP) available through the State's health insurance exchange operated by HealthSource RI (HSRI).

Before the public health emergency, Medicaid enrollees with fluctuating income transitioned back and forth between Medicaid and QHP coverage, potentially resulting in coverage gaps, as well as changes in their health plans and provider networks. According to HSRI's enrollment data, in 2019, 6,203 individuals moved from Medicaid to a QHP, and 4,404 individuals moved from a QHP to Medicaid. Historically, many individuals who leave Medicaid do not enroll in a QHP. For example, for one type of Medicaid termination suspended during the pandemic, over 75% did not select a QHP, and only 12% were enrolled in a QHP at the end of that year. Without health insurance coverage, many of these individuals may be required to pay an individual mandate tax penalty when filing their Rhode Island personal income tax return.

Project Overview: HSRI has created a pathway for individuals to retain health and dental insurance coverage once they are transitioned from Medicaid during the recertification process. The program provides two months of premium payments for two groups no longer eligible for Medicaid:

- Eligible individuals and families with household income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) are auto-enrolled into a QHP offered through HSRI. The project applies payment for two months of premium. This payment effectuates coverage on behalf of the customer. All auto-enrollees are eligible for a special enrollment period of 60 days from the date their Medicaid coverage ends and can change plans at that time. In this instance, the project's premium payments are applied to the customer's chosen plan. If auto-enrollees self-select a dental plan, the project also pays the premium for the first two months of dental coverage.
- For individuals and families with household income up to 250% FPL who actively select a medical and/or dental plan through HSRI, the project applies two months of premium payments for the medical and/or dental plan chosen by the applicant.

Timeline: The federal continuous coverage requirement ended April 1, 2023. The Medicaid redetermination process began on that date in Rhode Island, and the earliest auto-enrollments had June 2023 coverage start dates. HSRI is continuing the auto-enrollment program for 12 months, and the last group of auto-enrollees will generally have a coverage start date in May 2024; however, payments will continue for eligible individuals and households for a few months afterward if they enroll manually during a special enrollment period.

Mechanisms and Partners: Technological changes to HSRI's enrollment system were necessary to make auto-enrollment possible and create a pathway to cancel coverage for individuals who are auto-enrolled and want to cancel coverage. The program specifically covers costs for program extensions, such as modifying payment eligibility criteria to include customers who were not auto-enrolled, including dental premiums, and modifying systems to pay for two months of coverage. Several legal notices had to be updated to clearly communicate the program and the options available to the consumer.

Use of Evidence: The University of Wisconsin's Population Health Institute County Health Rankings and Roadmaps Program found that outreach and assistance programs increase health insurance coverage and

⁵⁷ [RTNO Data Dashboard | Stay Covered Rhode Island \(ri.gov\)](#).

awareness of health insurance availability. Additionally, and more specifically, auto-enrollment and auto-renewal have been shown to increase participation in areas, such as employer-sponsored health insurance. For example, the study showed a 4.5% increase in participation for employers that defaulted employees into a health plan versus employers that did not.⁵⁸

Equity Impact: According to the Rhode Island Health Insurance Survey, between 2018 and 2020, there was a 1-percentage point increase (1,038 individuals) in the uninsured rate among Black/African Americans and a 7-percentage point increase (2,189 individuals) in the uninsured rate among American Indian/Alaska Natives.⁵⁹ Moreover, in 2020, the uninsured rate among Rhode Islanders who are foreign born was 12.7%, compared to only 2.6% among those born in the United States. Finally, a significant portion of uninsured (16,268 or 38.5% uninsured) have incomes below 139% FPL. Similarly, 135,991 Medicaid recipients (54% of total Medicaid population) have incomes below 139% FPL.

Given the disparities in race and income among the uninsured and Medicaid populations, coupled with the ability to offer vulnerable Rhode Islanders low-cost QHP coverage, the State’s goals of producing meaningful, equitable, near-universal coverage are within reach.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households served	Households with a payment applied, both auto-enrolled and non-auto-enrolled	(~1.3 individuals per household)	14,833
Number of individuals auto-enrolled in a QHP	Number of individuals enrolled in a QHP after being terminated from Medicaid	0	10,426
Number of individuals served through premium assistance	Individuals with a payment applied, both auto-enrolled and non-auto-enrolled	0	19,406
Cumulative retention of program participants (QHP/Medicaid)	Customers who remain covered after the two-month subsidized period ends – either by paying for their QHP coverage or by re-qualifying for Medicaid coverage	0	79%

⁵⁸ [The Power of Suggestion: Automatic Enrollment and Employee Health Insurance Coverage Take-Up Rates](#)

⁵⁹ [Surveys and Reports - HealthSource RI](#)

Public Health Clinics: Free Clinic

Project Identification Number: 10057

Funded Amount: \$2,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,350,411

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 Negative Economic Impacts: Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Since it was founded in 1998, the Rhode Island Free Clinic (Free Clinic) has relied on volunteer healthcare professionals. During the pandemic, the shortage of medical professionals eroded the availability of volunteers. The Free Clinic has not returned to needed staffing levels and would like to move from a solely volunteer staffing model to one that adds direct hires to complement and augment the services provided by volunteers. From February 2019 to January 2020, the Free Clinic had 409 volunteers compared to 263 volunteers from February 2020 to January 2021, 278 from February 2021 to January 2022, and 210 from February 2022 to January 2023.

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) provided a grant to the Free Clinic to improve the access to and quality of primary care for uninsured adults and to increase access to dental care for uninsured adults. With the grant, the Free Clinic is satisfying operational needs and hiring 6.74 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. RIDOH is also providing quarterly grants for the implementation and maintenance of the Rhode Island Health Information Exchange's electronic medical records system, which consolidates healthcare information on Rhode Island patients across all providers to replace the Free Clinic's internal system.

Timeline: Hiring began in April 2023. The electronic medical records system was completed in December 2023.

Mechanisms and Partners: RIDOH provided the grant to the Free Clinic.

Use of Evidence: While this intervention has not been identified as evidence based, the analysis of the key performance indicators will evaluate its effectiveness.

Equity Impact: The Free Clinic is a nonprofit that operates in a qualified census tract (QCT). It provides free, high-quality healthcare and preventative services to uninsured, low-income adults in Rhode Island. To receive these services, patients must have no health insurance and earn below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL).

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of nonprofits served	0	1
New FTEs hired	0	4.46

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Add one paid, part-time dentist*	0	1
Build infrastructure for electronic medical records*	0	1
Number of patients served	2,400	1,877
Number of dental visits	1,300	1,761

*These are yes/no binary indicators: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.

Public Health Clinics: Open Door

Project Identification Number: 10049

Funded Amount: \$2,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,665,500

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: Open Door Health is a not-for-profit clinic that provides primary care and sexual health services to Rhode Island's diverse community, with a focus on the LGBTQ+ populations. Additionally, approximately 40% of Open Door Health's patients identify as Latina or Latino. In addition to a pervasive lack of access to healthcare, the LGBTQ+ populations were impacted medically and economically by the pandemic.

Since opening in March 2020, Open Door Health has outgrown its existing space and must increase its footprint to meet patient demand and expand the suite of services offered. The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) provided a grant to Open Door Health to acquire land to expand its physical capacity and therefore the number of people it serves.

Timeline: The initial grant to Open Door Health was made in December 2023, and the land for the facility was purchased in March 2024.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Dollars transferred to Open Door Health	0	\$1,165,000
Land purchased*	0	1

*This is a yes/no binary indicator: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.

Housing

Development of Affordable Housing

Project Identification Number: 10016

Funded Amount: \$15,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$14,946,125

Project Expenditure Category: 2.15 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Affordable Housing

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Only six of Rhode Island's 39 communities meet the State-mandated goal that 10% of every municipality's housing stock qualify as Low- and Moderate-Income Housing (LMIH). Rhode Island consistently ranks among the lowest nationally in per-capita building permit activity, ranking 51st on this measure in 2020.⁶⁰ The state has ranked far behind its New England neighbors in the investment of state resources for affordable housing. The result is that Rhode Island is experiencing a critical housing shortage at all price points, but particularly for lower-income households.

In recent years, sale and rent prices have increased significantly. As of 2021, rent for a market-rate, two-bedroom apartment was about \$1,700, up about 8.5% from 2019, when it was \$1,575. The rental vacancy rate and inventory of homes for sale were also at historically low levels. The rental vacancy rate, the number of unoccupied rental units, was 2.8%, down from 3.7% in May 2021, and 6.2% in 2019. A vacancy rate that would not be expected to have an impact on prices is between 6% and 7%.⁶¹

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHousing), a quasi-public agency, is deploying the funds as no-interest, long-term loans to complement other state and federal resources to finance the production and preservation of housing affordable to households earning less than 80% of the area median income (AMI). All projects financed through this project are income eligible for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) investment. Funds can be used for construction, architectural and consulting fees, legal fees, etc.

U.S. Treasury presumes that any housing project that is eligible to be funded under any of the following federal housing programs is an eligible use of State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) under the Negative Economic Impacts eligibility category:

- National Housing Trust Fund.
- Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME).
- LIHTC.
- Public Housing Capital Fund.
- Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Developmental Disabilities Program.
- Project-Based Rental Assistance.
- Multifamily Preservation & Revitalization Program.

The *Development of Affordable Housing* project aligns with HOME and LIHTC.

⁶⁰ U.S. Census Bureau Building Permits Survey

⁶¹ CoStar Market Analytics

Timeline: A RIHousing consolidated request for proposal (RFP) that was issued in fall 2022 included the *Development of Affordable Housing* funding. As of May 2024, two projects were completed, seven were under construction, and three were in the pipeline.

Mechanisms and Partners: RIHousing is administering this program as a subrecipient and made funding available through an RFP that was open to nonprofit and for-profit developers, public housing authorities, and municipalities. The RFP was coordinated with other programs to streamline the process for applicants, facilitate the underwriting of the projects by RIHousing staff, and allow RIHousing to calibrate the resource mix appropriate for each project to ensure compliance with each program's requirements and maximize the use of available resources.

Use of Evidence: The project is similar to programs, such as LIHTC, that have been rigorously evaluated and found to have a positive impact on the development of affordable housing based on high-quality evidence, according to the Pew Results First Clearinghouse. LIHTC programs not only improve access to affordable housing for low-income individuals, but also produce other benefits including, but not limited to:

- In distressed neighborhoods, LIHTC programs can increase property values and reduce crime rates.
- LIHTC use is associated with less racial segregation in low- and high-poverty neighborhoods at the metropolitan level. Segregation increases racial disparities in housing stability, homeownership, and property values.
- LIHTC developments can positively influence nearby property maintenance.⁶²

Equity Impact: According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Black, Native American, and Hispanic households are more likely than white households to be extremely low-income renters.⁶³ In Rhode Island, affordable rental units are primarily occupied by households of color. Across 2,651 units constructed with RIHousing-administered HOME Investment Partnerships Program dollars for which demographic information was available, 83.4% of occupants identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 46.2% of occupants identifying as Hispanic. Similarly, of the 7,001 households in LIHTC-financed developments for which demographic information was available, 94.1% identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 54.7% of occupants identifying as Black or African American, and 36.8% of occupants identifying as Hispanic.

By supporting the development of affordable housing, this project helps low-income renters from historically underserved and marginalized communities access housing. Further, this project addresses housing inequities in the state and closes gaps for communities that are disproportionately affected by homelessness and housing stability, including low-income Rhode Islanders and households of color.

Labor Requirements: RIHousing requires that all borrowers execute an agreement stating that they will provide a certification that a project includes a labor agreement or a workforce continuity plan detailing how RIHousing will ensure the project has access to skilled and unskilled labor; how the borrower will minimize risk disruptions and disputes; and how the borrower will provide a safe and healthy workplace.

⁶² [County Health Rankings – Low Income Housing Tax Credits \(LIHTCs\)](#)

⁶³ [The GAP | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](#)

Performance: In addition to the metrics shown below, RIHousing will collect information relating to minority and disproportionately impacted communities, such as the number of minority developers and projects in qualified census tracts (QCTs).

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of people or households receiving eviction prevention services	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed	0	44
Number of units built or preserved at 30% AMI or lower	0	9
Number of units built or preserved between 30% and 60% AMI	0	12

Development of Affordable Housing Phase II

Project Identification Number: 10036

Funded Amount: \$75,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$20,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.15 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Affordable Housing

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Only six of Rhode Island’s 39 municipalities meet the state-mandated goal that 10% of every municipality’s housing stock qualify as Low- and Moderate-Income Housing (LMIH). Rhode Island consistently ranks among the lowest in the nation in per-capita building permit activity, ranking 51st on this measure in 2020.⁶⁴ Additionally, Rhode Island has ranked far behind its New England neighbors in the investment of state resources for affordable housing. The result is that Rhode Island is experiencing a critical housing shortage at all price points, but particularly for lower-income households.

In recent years, sale and rent prices have increased significantly. As of 2021, rent for a market-rate, two-bedroom apartment was about \$1,700, up about 8.5% from 2019, when it was \$1,575. The rental vacancy

⁶⁴ U.S. Census Bureau Building Permits Survey

rate and inventory of homes for sale were also at historically low levels. The rental vacancy rate, the number of unoccupied rental units, was 2.8%, down from 3.7% in May 2021, and 6.2% in 2019. A vacancy rate that would not be expected to have an impact on prices is between 6% and 7%.⁶⁵

A vacancy rate that would not be expected to have an impact on prices is between 6% and 7%.⁶⁶

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHousing), a quasi-public agency, is deploying the funds as no-interest, long-term loans to complement other state and federal resources to finance the production and preservation of housing affordable to households earning less than 80% of the area median income (AMI). All projects financed through this project are income eligible for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) investment. Funds can be used for construction, architectural and consulting fees, legal fees, etc. Funding cannot be used for costs covered by a separate State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) project administered by RIHousing.

U.S. Treasury presumes that any housing project that is eligible to be funded under any of the following federal housing programs is an eligible use of State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) under the Negative Economic Impacts eligibility category:

- National Housing Trust Fund.
- Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME).
- LIHTC.
- Public Housing Capital Fund.
- Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Developmental Disabilities Program.
- Project-Based Rental Assistance.
- Multifamily Preservation & Revitalization Program.

The *Development of Affordable Housing Phase II* project aligns with HOME and LIHTC.

Timeline: Three RIHousing consolidated requests for proposals (RFPs) included the *Development of Affordable Housing Phase II* funding. The RIHousing Board of Commissioners awarded the last of the remaining funds at a meeting in May 2024. Projects funded before this meeting are either in construction or moving toward closing by September 2024. Awards made at the May 2024 meeting are expected to close by June 2025. RIHousing will be in contact with developers receiving these funds to ensure deadlines for beginning construction are met.

Mechanisms and Partners: RIHousing is administering this program as a subrecipient and making funding available through RFPs that are open to nonprofit and for-profit developers, public housing authorities, and municipalities. The RFPs are coordinated with other programs to streamline the process for applicants, facilitate the underwriting of the projects by RIHousing staff, and allow RIHousing to calibrate the resource mix appropriate for each project to ensure compliance with each program's requirements and maximize the use of available resources.

Use of Evidence: Affordable housing programs such as the LIHTC have been rigorously evaluated and found to have a positive impact based on high-quality evidence, according to the Pew Results First Clearinghouse. LIHTC programs not only improve access to affordable housing for low-income individuals, but also produce other benefits, including, but not limited to:

- In distressed neighborhoods, LIHTC programs can increase property values and reduce crime rates.

⁶⁵ CoStar Market Analytics

⁶⁶ CoStar Market Analytics

- LIHTC use is associated with less racial segregation in low- and high-poverty neighborhoods at the metropolitan level. Segregation increases racial disparities in housing stability, homeownership, and property value.
- LIHTC developments can positively influence nearby property maintenance.⁶⁷

Equity Impact: According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Black, Native American, and Hispanic households are more likely than white households to be extremely low-income renters.⁶⁸ In Rhode Island, affordable rental units are primarily occupied by households of color. Across 2,651 units constructed with RIHousing-administered HOME Investment Partnerships Program dollars for which demographic information was available, 83.4% of occupants identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 46.2% of occupants identifying as Hispanic. Similarly, of the 7,001 households in LIHTC-financed developments for which demographic information was available, 94.1% identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 54.7% of occupants identifying as Black or African American, and 36.8% of occupants identifying as Hispanic.

By supporting the development of affordable housing, this project helps low-income renters from historically underserved and marginalized communities access housing. Further, this project addresses housing inequities in the state and closes gaps for communities that are disproportionately affected by homelessness and housing stability, including low-income Rhode Islanders and households of color.

Labor Requirements: RIHousing requires that all borrowers execute an agreement stating that they will provide a certification that a project includes a labor agreement or a workforce continuity plan detailing how RIHousing will ensure the project has access to skilled and unskilled labor; how the borrower will minimize risk disruptions and disputes; and how the borrower will provide a safe and healthy workplace.

Performance: In addition to the metrics shown below, RIHousing will collect information relating to minority and disproportionately impacted communities, such as the number of minority developers and projects in qualified census tracts (QCTs).

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households receiving eviction prevention services	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed	0	0
Number of projects funded	0	18

⁶⁷ [County Health Rankings – Low Income Housing Tax Credits \(LIHTCs\)](#)

⁶⁸ [The GAP | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](#)

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of units built or preserved under 30% AMI (including permanent supportive housing)	0	0
Number of units built or preserved between 30% and 60% AMI	0	0
Number of units built or preserved between 60% and 80% AMI	0	0

Homelessness Infrastructure

Project Identification Number: 10037

Funded Amount: \$5,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$4,772,459

Project Expenditure Category: 2.16 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Services for Unhoused Persons

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Homelessness in Rhode Island increased significantly during the pandemic as documented by the Rhode Island Point in Time Count conducted by the Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness on January 26, 2021.⁶⁹ Findings included:

- 1,267 people experienced homelessness, a 14% increase from 2020.
- 869 people were in emergency shelter, a 17% increase from 2020.
- 181 people were living outdoors, a 67% increase from 2020.

The Point in Time Count conducted on January 26, 2022, indicated that Rhode Island continued to see significant increases in homelessness.⁷⁰ Findings included:

- 1,576 people experienced homelessness, a 24% increase from 2021.
- 1,151 people were in emergency shelter, a 32% increase from 2021.
- 248 people were living outdoors, a 37% increase from 2021.

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Department of Housing (Department) is expanding the capacity of the shelter system to better respond to homelessness. This is being accomplished by adding temporary and permanent shelter beds through contracts with providers and targeting key constituencies, including families, couples, individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, and victims of domestic violence. Providers are either reconfiguring or expanding their shelter space to serve additional people or renting hotel/motel rooms and other suitable accommodations to house people who would otherwise be

⁶⁹ [RI Point in Time Storybook | Tableau Public](#)

⁷⁰ [Ibid](#)

unhoused. Some of these shelter bed additions were only for the winter of 2022-2023, and others are permanent. The overarching goal is to expand the State’s capacity to provide temporary housing to individuals while they find more permanent housing arrangements.

Timeline: Winter shelter beds were available from November 2022 through March 2023, and permanent shelter beds were added from November 2022 through September 2023. The Charlesgate Family Shelter, which served up to 57 families, operated from June 2023 through June 2024.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Department issued a letter of interest in September 2022 and issued contracts in October 2022. The following is the list of partners and the services each is providing:

- *Amos House:* Operated the Charlesgate Family Center temporary shelter.
- *Blackstone Valley Advocacy Center:* Converted its administrative offices into shelter space with 12 beds, and purchased an office building for its new administrative offices.
- *Catholic Social Services of Rhode Island:* Paid increased food and staffing costs for increased capacity of 30 to 35 individuals at the Emmanuel House Shelter.
- *Community Care Alliance:* Provided emergency shelter and services at the Sure Stay Shelter.
- *Sojourner House:* Created five, new units of crisis housing and extended the availability of five, existing units.
- *Thrive Behavioral Health:* Rented 40 hotel rooms in Kent County for additional shelter capacity.
- *Westerly Area Rest Meals:* Secured 10 hotel rooms for additional shelter capacity and provided transportation seven days a week for meals, social service programs, and appointments.

Use of Evidence: According to The National Alliance to End Homelessness, the five keys to effective emergency shelter are: a Housing First approach, safe and appropriate diversion, immediate and low-barrier access, housing-focused rapid exit services, and data to measure performance.⁷¹ Shelters in Rhode Island are encouraged to adhere to Continuum of Care Standards and Guidelines, which emphasize these five keys as central to ensuring that homelessness “is a rare and brief event.” With training on Housing First and Best Practices and these five keys in place, Rhode Island shelters are using evidence-based interventions to address the homelessness crisis, including this project.

Equity Impact: The goal of this project is to ensure that individuals experiencing homelessness have access to a safe place to stay and appropriate services so that they can move toward finding a more permanent housing situation. As racial and ethnic minorities are disproportionately represented among the homeless population, this project addresses significant disparities experienced by these populations in accessing needed services. The 2022 Point in Time Count showed that Rhode Island saw drastic increases in homelessness among minority communities. While 9% of the state’s population identified as African American/Black, with 11% of this population falling below the poverty line, 28% of families and 22% of individuals experiencing homelessness were African American/Black. Similarly, while 16% of the state’s population identified as Hispanic/Latino, with 32% of this population falling below the poverty line, 15% of individuals and 36% of families experiencing homelessness were Hispanic/Latino.⁷²

⁷¹ [Emergency Shelter Learning Series - National Alliance to End Homelessness](#)

⁷² [RI Point in Time Storybook | Tableau Public](#)

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households receiving eviction prevention services	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed	0	0
Number of temporary shelter beds added for the winter of 2022-2023	0	296
Number of permanent shelter beds added to the system	0	62
Increased number of people provided with emergency shelter and essential services	1,551	175

Homelessness Infrastructure Phase II

Project Identification Number: 10062

Funded Amount: \$30,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$11,499,887

Project Expenditure Category: 2.16 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Services for Unhoused Persons

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Homelessness in Rhode Island increased significantly during the pandemic as documented by the Rhode Island Point in Time Count conducted by the Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness on January 26, 2021.⁷³ Findings included:

- 1,267 people experienced homelessness, a 14% increase from 2020.
- 869 people were in emergency shelter, a 17% increase from 2020.
- 181 people were living outdoors, a 67% increase from 2020.

⁷³ [RI Point in Time Storybook | Tableau Public](#)

The Point in Time Count conducted on January 26, 2022, indicated that Rhode Island continued to see significant increases in homelessness.⁷⁴ Findings included:

- 1,576 people experienced homelessness, a 24% increase from 2021.
- 1,151 people were in emergency shelter, a 32% increase from 2021.
- 248 people were living outdoors, a 37% increase from 2021.

Project Overview: The Department of Housing (Department) is expanding the capacity of the shelter system to better respond to homelessness. Providers are either reconfiguring or expanding their shelter space to serve additional people or renting hotel/motel rooms and other suitable accommodations to house people who would otherwise be unhoused. Some of these shelter bed additions were only for the winter, and others are permanent. The overarching goal is to expand the State’s capacity to provide temporary housing to individuals while they find more permanent housing arrangements.

Timeline: The Department anticipates committing all funds by September 2025 and spending them by December 2026.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Department is expanding the capacity of the shelter system to better respond to homelessness through contracts with providers and targeting key constituencies, including families, couples, individuals experiencing chronic homelessness, and victims of domestic violence.

Use of Evidence: According to The National Alliance to End Homelessness, the five keys to effective emergency shelter are: a Housing First approach, safe and appropriate diversion, immediate and low-barrier access, housing-focused rapid exit services, and data to measure performance.⁷⁵ Shelters in Rhode Island are encouraged to adhere to Continuum of Care Standards and Guidelines, which emphasize these five keys as central to ensuring that homelessness “is a rare and brief event.” With training on Housing First and Best Practices and these five keys in place, Rhode Island shelters are using evidence-based interventions to address the homelessness crisis, and this program, including this project.

Equity Impact: The goal of this project is to ensure that individuals experiencing homelessness have access to a safe place to stay and appropriate services so that they can move toward finding a more permanent housing situation. As racial and ethnic minorities are disproportionately represented among the homeless population, this project is addressing significant disparities experienced by these populations in accessing needed services. The 2022 Point in Time Count showed that Rhode Island saw drastic increases in homelessness among minority communities. While 9% of the state’s population identified as African American/Black, with 11% of this population falling below the poverty line, 28% of families and 22% of individuals experiencing homelessness were African American/Black. Similarly, while 16% of the state’s population identified as Hispanic/Latino, with 32% of this population falling below the poverty line, 15% of individuals and 36% of families experiencing homelessness were Hispanic/Latino.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ [RI Point in Time Storybook | Tableau Public](#)

⁷⁵ [Emergency Shelter Learning Series - National Alliance to End Homelessness](#)

⁷⁶ [RI Point in Time Storybook | Tableau Public](#)

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households receiving eviction prevention services	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed	0	0
Number of acquisitions to support people long term for permanent shelters and essential services	0	2
Number of permanent shelter beds added through acquisitions	0	52
Number of shelter beds for which funds have been obligated through the execution of contracts	0	806
Temporary shelter beds available for use	0	435

Down Payment Assistance

Project Identification Number: 10043

Funded Amount: \$30,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$30,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHousing), a quasi-public agency, is providing \$17,500 in down payment and closing cost assistance to help more first-time homebuyers amid rising housing costs. RIHousing is targeting homeownership for lower-income and higher minority concentrated areas with a marketing campaign.

Eligible properties are one-to-four-unit, owner-occupied properties and approved or warrantable condominiums. The income limits are \$112,555 for one- or two-person households and \$129,438 for households with at least three people. Grant recipients must complete a RIHousing-approved, first-time homebuyer course, qualify for a RIHousing-funded first mortgage, and have a 660 minimum representative credit score.

Timeline: RIHousing began distributing grants in January 2023 and expects to finish issuing grants by July 2024.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Grant contracts signed	0	1,672
Percentage of borrowers who are minorities	0	41%
Loans closed	0	1,672

Priority Projects Fund

Project Identification Number: 10077

Funded Amount: \$22,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$0

Project Expenditure Category: 2.15 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Affordable Housing

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Rhode Island consistently ranks among the lowest nationally in per-capita building permit activity.⁷⁷ The state has ranked far behind its New England neighbors in the investment of state resources for affordable housing. The result is that Rhode Island is experiencing a critical housing shortage at all price points, but particularly for lower-income households.

In recent years, sale and rent prices have increased significantly. Rent for a market-rate two-bedroom apartment increased by 7% from \$1,869 in 2017 to \$1,966 in 2022, according to the HousingWorksRI 2023 Housing Fact Book. Based on this average rent, a household earning the state’s median renter income could afford to rent in only one Rhode Island municipality.⁷⁸

The rental vacancy rate and inventory of homes for sale are also at historically low levels. The rental vacancy rate, the number of unoccupied rental units, was 4.6% in January 2022, up from 3.7% in May 2021. A vacancy rate that would not be expected to have an impact on prices is between 6% and 7%.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ U.S. Census Bureau Building Permits Survey

⁷⁸ [HousingWorksRI 2023 Housing Fact Book](#)

⁷⁹ CoStar Market Analytics

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHousing), a quasi-public agency, is using the funds to subsidize the development of affordable housing. Projects must create:

- New permanent supportive housing; or
- Affordable housing units designated for one or more of the following populations:
 - Extremely low-income Rhode Islanders,
 - Individuals transitioning out of state care, or
 - Vulnerable persons (i.e, people with disabilities, people fleeing dangerous living situations, and other populations are particular risk of homelessness or housing insecurity).

Funding is being deployed as zero-interest, long-term loans to complement other state and federal resources to finance the production and preservation of housing affordable to households earning less than 50% of the area median income (AMI). Funding can be used for construction, legal fees, architectural and consulting fees, etc. It cannot be used for costs previously paid for under a separate State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) project administered by RIHousing.

Timeline: An RIHousing consolidated request for proposals (RFP) was issued in November 2023, with eight developments being selected for funding. All eight are expected to close by June 2025. RIHousing will be in contact with developers receiving these funds to ensure deadlines for beginning construction are met.

Mechanisms and Partners: RIHousing is administering this program as a subrecipient and made funding available through an RFP that was open to nonprofit and for-profit developers, public housing authorities, and municipalities. The RFP was coordinated with other programs to streamline the process for applicants, facilitate the underwriting of the projects by RIHousing staff, and allow RIHousing to calibrate the resource mix appropriate for each project to ensure compliance with each program’s requirements and maximize the use of available resources.

The Rhode Island Department of Housing (Department) and RIHousing coordinated the application review process. Department staff conducted threshold determinations and scored the applications in accordance with the competitive scoring criteria for each program posted with the RFP. In May 2024, staff sent recommendations to a review committee. Staff also consulted with the Credit Committee of RIHousing before finalizing their recommendations.

Use of Evidence: Affordable housing programs such as the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program have been rigorously evaluated and found to have a positive impact based on high-quality evidence, according to the Pew Results First Clearinghouse. LIHTC programs not only improve access to affordable housing for low-income individuals, but also produce other benefits, including, but not limited to:

- In distressed neighborhoods, LIHTC programs can increase property values and reduce crime rates.
- LIHTC use is associated with less racial segregation in low- and high-poverty neighborhoods at the metropolitan level. Segregation increases racial disparities in housing stability, homeownership, and property value.
- LIHTC developments can positively influence nearby property maintenance.⁸⁰

Equity Impact: According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Black, Native American, and Hispanic households are more likely than white households to be extremely low-income renters.⁸¹ In

⁸⁰ [County Health Rankings – Low Income Housing Tax Credits \(LIHTCs\)](#)

⁸¹ [The GAP | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](#)

Rhode Island, affordable rental units are primarily occupied by households of color. Across 2,651 units constructed with RIHousing-administered HOME Investment Partnerships Program dollars for which demographic information was available, 83.4% of occupants identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 46.2% of occupants identifying as Hispanic. Similarly, of the 7,001 households in LIHTC-financed developments for which demographic information was available, 94.1% identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 54.7% of occupants identifying as Black or African American, and 36.8% of occupants identifying as Hispanic.

By supporting the development of affordable housing, this project helps low-income renters from historically underserved and marginalized communities access housing. Further, this project addresses housing inequities in the state and closes gaps for communities that are disproportionately affected by homelessness and housing stability, including low-income Rhode Islanders and households of color.

Labor Requirements: As of the current reporting period, no grants have been distributed by RIHousing, and no construction has begun. As the grants are distributed and the construction of the affordable housing or mixed-use developments begins, the State will report on the relevant labor requirements.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households receiving eviction prevention services	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed	0	0
Number of projects funded	0	8
Number of units built or preserved under 50% AMI (including permanent supportive housing)	0	0

Site Acquisition

Project Identification Number: 10012

Funded Amount: \$25,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$24,999,100

Project Expenditure Category: 2.15 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Affordable Housing

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Rhode Island consistently ranks among the lowest nationally in per-capita building permit activity.⁸² The state has ranked far behind its New England neighbors in the investment of state resources for affordable housing. The result is that Rhode Island is experiencing a critical housing shortage at all price points, but particularly for lower-income households.

In recent years, sale and rent prices have increased significantly. As of 2021, rent for a market-rate, two-bedroom apartment was about \$1,700, up about 8.5% from 2019, when it was \$1,575. The rental vacancy rate and inventory of homes for sale were also at historically low levels. The rental vacancy rate, the number of unoccupied rental units, was 2.8%, down from 3.7% in May 2021, and 6.2% in 2019. A vacancy rate that would not be expected to have an impact on prices is between 6% and 7%.⁸³

The housing shortage has created an extremely competitive real estate environment. Many sellers are inclined to accept cash offers instead of waiting for a purchaser to secure financing through a traditional financial institution. This puts affordable housing developers at a severe disadvantage because they are unlikely to have the necessary cash on hand. A solution is needed to help developers purchase suitable properties for affordable housing development.

Project Overview: The project is providing grants to developers to purchase properties for the development of affordable housing units. In all, 45 properties are being acquired. There is a nine-month closing requirement, and the maximum grant amount is \$1.5 million.⁸⁴ By supporting the development of affordable and supportive housing, this project is addressing inequities and closing gaps for populations that are disproportionately affected by homelessness and housing instability, including low-income Rhode Islanders and Rhode Islanders of color.

The project builds upon the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation's (RIHousing) Land Bank program, which provides financing for eligible applicants to acquire undeveloped real estate, vacant lots, developed properties, or a combination thereof for affordable housing.

U.S. Treasury presumes that any housing project that is eligible to be funded under any of the following federal housing programs is an eligible use of State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) under the Negative Economic Impacts eligibility category:

- National Housing Trust Fund.
- Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME).
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC).
- Public Housing Capital Fund.
- Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Developmental Disabilities Program.
- Project-Based Rental Assistance.
- Multifamily Preservation & Revitalization Program.

The *Site Acquisition* project aligns with HOME and LIHTC.

Timeline: RIHousing began marketing the project in February 2022 and began selecting recipients for grant awards in May 2022, with the last remaining awards in the process of being finalized as of May

⁸² U.S. Census Bureau Building Permits Survey

⁸³ CoStar Market Analytics

⁸⁴ RIHousing's definition of a closing requirement is when the appropriate loan documents are signed, and funds are provided to the developer.

2024. Forty projects have been awarded funds, of which 32 have closed and secured sites for development of affordable housing. The remaining projects are expected to close by September 2024.

Mechanisms and Partners: RIHousing is administering the project and collaborating with the Rhode Island Department of Housing (Department) to oversee the implementation.

Use of Evidence: Land banks across the country are helping to make equitable, inclusive neighborhoods and resilient communities possible. By acquiring unused properties, stewarding them on behalf of the public, and attracting new investment, land banks are generating significant positive impacts for the communities they serve. Specific outcomes achieved by land banks across the country include:

- The Houston Land Bank partnered with the City of Houston and the Houston Community Land Trust to provide over 500 (and counting) new affordable homes for low-income Houstonians since 2004.
- Over the last decade, RIHousing’s Land Bank program has provided nearly \$9 million in financing for the acquisition of properties upon which 572 affordable housing units were constructed.⁸⁵

Equity Impact: According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Black, Native American, and Hispanic households are more likely than white households to be extremely low-income renters.⁸⁶ In Rhode Island, affordable rental units are primarily occupied by households of color. Across the 2,651 RIHousing-administered HOME Investment Partnership Program units for which race and ethnicity information was available, 83.4% of occupants identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 46.2% of occupants identifying as Hispanic. Similarly, 94.1% of the 7,001 households residing in LIHTC developments for which demographic data was available identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 36.8% of occupants identifying as Hispanic. More than half of all households residing in LIHTC-financed housing units were Black or African American (54.7%).⁸⁷

RIHousing is working with developers and property managers to ensure that minority populations and other members of disadvantaged classes are made aware of and have access to the affordable housing created by this program. All participating developers are required to produce an Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan for assisted developments. RIHousing is collecting information relating to minority and disproportionately impacted communities, such as the number of minority developers and projects in qualified census tracts (QCTs).

Labor Requirements: This project does not include labor costs; the project is for the acquisition of properties to be repurposed as affordable housing.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households receiving eviction prevention services	0	0

⁸⁵ <https://communityprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Progress-Points-Land-Banks-Land-Bank-Impacts-2022.pdf>.

⁸⁶ [The GAP | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](https://www.nlihc.org/)

⁸⁷ RIHousing Program Data

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed	0	35
Number of properties acquired	0	59
Number of units created under 30% AMI	0	13
Number of units created between 30% and 60% AMI	0	8
Number of units created between 60% and 80% AMI	0	14

Community Revitalization

Project Identification Number: 10040

Funded Amount: \$20,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$6,997,899

Project Expenditure Category: 2.23 Negative Economic Impacts: Strong Healthy Communities: Demolition and Rehabilitation of Properties

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: There are scarce financial resources to redevelop properties into spaces for quality housing, commercial uses, and the provision of community services. Much of the funding for deployment in the poorest parts of Rhode Island is focused on housing, and necessarily so. However, this leaves a gap for communities that need critical services and more commercial development. It is simply too costly to build without support.

Project Overview: The project distributes grants to finance the acquisition and redevelopment of blighted properties in qualified census tracts (QCTs) to increase the development of affordable housing, including projects that include commercial or community spaces that are ancillary to the housing and serve the residents of the affordable housing.

Timeline: Two Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHousing), a quasi-public agency, consolidated requests for proposals (RFPs) included the *Community Revitalization* funding. The RIHousing Board of Commissioners awarded the last of the remaining funds at a meeting in May 2024. Projects funded before this meeting are either in construction or moving toward closing by September

2024. Awards made at the May 2024 meeting are expected to close by June 2025. RIHousing will be in contact with developers receiving these funds to ensure deadlines for beginning construction are met.

Mechanisms and Partners: The RFPs were coordinated with other programs, such as Building Homes Rhode Island (BHRI), the Housing Production Fund, etc., to streamline the process for applicants, facilitate the underwriting of the projects by RIHousing staff, and allow RIHousing to calibrate the resource mix appropriate for each project to ensure compliance with each program’s requirements and maximize the use of available resources.

Use of Evidence: There is a wide range of research demonstrating the positive impact that stable, affordable housing has on health, educational, and economic outcomes for families and individuals. Research also has shown a clear link between infrastructure investments and economic growth and development. A Brookings Institution report found that infrastructure investments provide demand stimulus to the economy in the short term and serve as a critical component of economic growth in the medium and long term.⁸⁸ The \$9 million American Revitalization Program run by RIHousing, which is like the *Community Revitalization* project, has funded the creation of 100 rental units, 15 commercial spaces, and 11 public facilities throughout Rhode Island.

Equity Impact: This project is providing resources to create housing and spaces to support communities disproportionately impacted by Rhode Island’s affordable housing crisis. Funded facilities are promoting economic opportunity, self-sufficiency, and positive physical and behavioral health outcomes for low-income Rhode Islanders. In Rhode Island, racial and ethnic minorities represent 22% of the population, but 30% of households earning less than 80% of the area median income (AMI).⁸⁹ The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) *2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report* found that people identifying as Black or African American comprise 12% of the U.S. population but account for 39% of people experiencing homelessness.⁹⁰ Funded community spaces are reducing instances of homelessness, building opportunity for low-income residents, and expanding the safety net that supports low-income communities.

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Black, Native American, and Hispanic households are more likely than white households to be extremely low-income renters.⁹¹ In Rhode Island, affordable rental units are primarily occupied by households of color. Across the 2,651 RIHousing-administered HOME Investment Partnership Program units for which race and ethnicity information was available, 83.4% of occupants identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 46.2% of occupants identifying as Hispanic. Similarly, 94.1% of the 7,001 households residing in Low-Income Housing Tax Credit-financed (LIHTC) developments for which demographic data was available identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 36.8% of occupants identifying as Hispanic. More than half of all households residing in LIHTC-financed housing units were Black or African American (54.7%).⁹²

RIHousing is working with developers and property managers to ensure that minority populations and other members of disadvantaged classes are made aware of and have access to the affordable housing created by this program. All participating developers are required to produce an Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan for assisted developments. RIHousing is collecting information relating to minority and

⁸⁸ [The start of America’s infrastructure decade: How macroeconomic factors may shape local strategies](#)

⁸⁹ US Census American Community Survey

⁹⁰ [The 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress](#)

⁹¹ [The GAP | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](#)

⁹² RIHousing Program Data

disproportionately impacted communities, such as the number of minority developers and projects in qualified census tracts (QCTs).

Labor Requirements: RIHousing requires that all borrowers execute an agreement stating that they will provide a certification that a project includes a labor agreement or a workforce continuity plan detailing how RIHousing will ensure the project has access to skilled and unskilled labor; how the borrower will minimize risk disruptions and disputes; and how the borrower will provide a safe and healthy workplace.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of housing units funded	0	13
Number of community revitalization projects completed	0	0
Number of housing units completed	0	0

Middle Income Housing

Project Identification Number: 10039

Funded Amount: \$20,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$3,672,503

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: Rhode Island is experiencing a critical housing shortage at all price points. Affordable housing, especially for low-income renters earning less than 80% of the area median income (AMI), is particularly limited because of rapidly rising housing costs and an extremely low inventory – resulting from an influx of out-of-state buyers and years of under-production.

Most state- and federally financed affordable housing programs are limited to renters earning no more than 80% AMI. This project is supporting the development of apartments affordable to middle-income households earning between 80% and 120% AMI. By constructing middle income housing, these renters will be able to move to rental units targeted to their income level, thereby freeing up the rental units targeted for lower-income renters that they currently occupy. This program is building on Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation’s (RIHousing), a quasi-public agency, \$9 million Workforce Housing Innovation Challenge (WHIC).

No-interest loans, which are being distributed through requests for proposals (RFPs) to for-profit and not-for-profit developers, are covering hard and soft development costs, including property acquisition, site remediation, construction, legal fees, architectural and consulting fees, etc. The maximum, per-project award is the lesser of \$2.5 million or the maximum allowable per housing rental unit. In no event can the award amount exceed 25% of the total development cost. At least 20% of the project’s units must be affordable to residents earning less than 120% AMI.

Timeline: Two RIHousing consolidated requests for proposals (RFPs) were issued for the *Middle Income Housing* funding. RIHousing is planning a mini-funding round in summer 2024 to commit the remaining funds.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of projects funded	0	13
Number of units between 80% and 120% AMI completed	0	0

Affordable Housing Predevelopment

Project Identification Number: 10021

Funded Amount: \$10,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$10,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.15 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Affordable Housing

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: In recent years, sale and rent prices have increased significantly. As of 2021, rent for a market-rate, two-bedroom apartment was about \$1,700, up about 8.5% from 2019, when it was \$1,575. The rental vacancy rate and inventory of homes for sale were also at historically low levels. The rental vacancy rate, the number of unoccupied rental units, was 2.8%, down from 3.7% in May 2021, and 6.2% in 2019. A vacancy rate that would not be expected to have an impact on prices is between 6% and 7%.⁹³

To increase housing production, Rhode Island must create a pipeline of sites ready for redevelopment. Building that pipeline requires developers to identify potential sites, determine if those sites are suitable for the development of affordable housing, and design a project. Many developers may have limited capacity to finance predevelopment costs, restricting the number of developments they can have in predevelopment at one time. With additional resources available to finance developments in the pipeline, it is important that Rhode Island also replenishes that pipeline with new projects.

Typical unreimbursed predevelopment costs for multifamily projects – such as architectural and engineering studies, permitting fees, and site control costs – can range from \$100,000 to \$750,000, and create delays and financial hardship particularly for nonprofit developers.

Project Overview: This project is making grants available to affordable housing developers for critical predevelopment tasks, such as soil testing and environmental assessment, site remediation, preliminary architectural and engineering planning, and municipal zoning and planning approval processes. Having access to predevelopment funding allows developers, particularly nonprofit entities, to complete these activities on an accelerated track, resulting in projects being ready for development activity sooner. This

⁹³ CoStar Market Analytics

will maintain a development pipeline for the next several years as the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHousing) implements other State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) affordable housing projects. RIHousing will fund at least 40 projects at a maximum cost of \$250,000 per project, and projects must include deed restrictions that specify that units must be at or below 80% area median income (AMI) for at least 30 years.

U.S. Treasury presumes that any housing project that is eligible to be funded under any of the following federal housing programs is an eligible use of State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) under the Negative Economic Impacts eligibility category:

- National Housing Trust Fund.
- Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME).
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC).
- Public Housing Capital Fund.
- Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Developmental Disabilities Program.
- Project-Based Rental Assistance.
- Multifamily Preservation & Revitalization Program.

The *Affordable Housing Predevelopment* project aligns with HOME and LIHTC.

Timeline: All project funds have been committed to 40 awards, of which 31 have closed. It is anticipated that all payments will be made by June 2025.

Mechanisms and Partners: RIHousing is considering responses to the RFPs for costs associated with predevelopment activities that include, but are not limited to:

- Architectural and engineering studies, environmental assessments, or costs associated with development professionals.
- Filing fees and other costs to obtain permits and approvals and apply for public or private grants.
- Site control costs.
- Other predevelopment activities approved by RIHousing.

Use of Evidence: While this intervention has not been identified as evidence based, the analysis of the key performance indicators will evaluate its effectiveness. Additionally, RIHousing maintains an existing predevelopment loan program that provides similar loans to developers. The program made 10 loans totaling about \$2.1 million that resulted in the development of 577 affordable units.

Equity Impact: By facilitating the rapid development of affordable housing for low-income people, RIHousing intends to make access to housing fair, equitable, and widespread. These funds will be used in conjunction with other federal and state dollars to create homes for all Rhode Islanders, but the population that needs extremely low-income housing is disproportionately comprised of households of color. Minority households have lower rates of homeownership, are rent cost burdened at higher rates, and face greater obstacles to being stably housed. This project is helping relieve those challenges and expanding opportunity to more Rhode Islanders.

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Black, Native American, and Hispanic households are more likely than white households to be extremely low-income renters.⁹⁴ In Rhode Island, affordable rental units are primarily occupied by households of color. Across the 2,651 RIHousing-administered HOME Investment Partnership Program units for which race and ethnicity information was

⁹⁴ [The GAP | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](https://www.nlihc.org/)

available, 83.4% of occupants identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 46.2% of occupants identifying as Hispanic. Similarly, 94.1% of the 7,001 households residing in LIHTC-financed developments for which demographic data was available identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 36.8% of occupants identifying as Hispanic. More than half of all households residing in LIHTC-financed housing units were Black or African American (54.7%).⁹⁵

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households receiving eviction prevention services	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed	0	0
Number of projects given predevelopment grants	0	42
Number of units created or preserved under 30% AMI (including permanent supportive housing)	0	0
Number of units created or preserved between 30% and 60% AMI	0	0
Number of units created or preserved between 60% and 80% AMI	0	0
Number of projects reaching development stage	0	35

⁹⁵ RIHousing Program Data

Permanent Supportive Housing: Crossroads

Project Identification Number: 10024

Funded Amount: \$10,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$9,920,198

Project Expenditure Category: 2.15 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Affordable Housing

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Crossroads Rhode Island (Crossroads) owns and operates The Tower – a 176-unit single-room occupancy building, with shared bathrooms and kitchens on each floor. These shared spaces present a high-risk environment for the spread of infections and viruses. The Tower houses individuals experiencing homelessness at or below 30% area median income (AMI) who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

Project Overview: Crossroads is launching the Summer Street project to replace The Tower with 176, one-bedroom units, with private bathrooms and kitchens, on a vacant parking lot adjacent to The Tower. The development decreases the potential of COVID-19 among an at-risk population, and it also allows for The Tower to be redeveloped in to 84 units (32 one-bedroom units and 52 efficiency units) in a future phase that is not part of the *Permanent Supportive Housing: Crossroads* project. All units will be reserved for individuals experiencing homelessness at or below 30% AMI.

Timeline: Construction began in August 2023 and is expected to be completed in 2025.

Mechanisms and Partners: Both phases of the project are a 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credit transaction. Additionally, the project is being funded with \$2.5 million from the *Development of Affordable Housing* project, \$4.0 million from the *Development of Affordable Housing Phase II* project, and \$1.9 million from the *Community Revitalization* project.

Use of Evidence: Permanent supportive housing has been shown to significantly reduce healthcare and other institutional costs while improving household outcomes. According to the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, dozens of studies demonstrate that the costs of delivering permanent supportive housing are offset in large part by reductions in the use of crisis services, including shelters, jails, ambulances, and hospitals. Even tenants with the longest histories of homelessness and most complex needs remain stably housed once connected with supportive housing. Evaluations of supportive housing programs using a Housing First approach generally show housing retention rates between 75% and 85% for single adults and between 80% and 90% for families.⁹⁶

Equity Impact: Crossroads' mission is to secure stable homes for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Through evidence-based Housing First, prioritizing services for households with the greatest needs, Crossroads provides services based on need, regardless of race, ethnicity, or economic standing.

Even with this mission, Crossroads knows that people experiencing homelessness in Rhode Island are disproportionately people of color, as compared to the population of the state. The 2022 Point in Time Count showed that Rhode Island had seen drastic increases in homelessness among minority communities. While 9% of the state's population identified as African American/Black, with 11% of this population falling below the poverty line, 28% of families and 22% of individuals experiencing homelessness were African American/Black. Similarly, while 16% of the state's population identified as

⁹⁶ [Supportive Housing: A Community Solution \(csh.org\)](https://www.csh.org/)

Hispanic/Latino, with 32% of this population falling below the poverty line, 15% of individuals and 36% of families experiencing homelessness were Hispanic/Latino.⁹⁷

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of people or households receiving eviction prevention services		0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable units preserved or developed		0	0
Number of affordable one-bedroom units preserved for households under 30% AMI		0	0
Number of affordable one-bedroom units preserved for households under 50% AMI		0	0
Occupancy rate	Percent of total number of units occupied	0	N/A at this time
Annual turnover rate	Turnover rate for one-bedroom apartments	18% for The Tower	N/A at this time

Public Housing Pilot Program

Project Identification Number: 10054

Funded Amount: \$10,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$4,997,999

Project Expenditure Category: 2.15 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Affordable Housing

⁹⁷ [2022 RI Point in Time Storybook | Tableau Public](#)

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: In recent years, sale and rent prices have increased significantly. As of 2021, rent for a market-rate, two-bedroom apartment was about \$1,700, up about 8.5% from 2019, when it was \$1,575. The rental vacancy rate and inventory of homes for sale were also at historically low levels. The rental vacancy rate, the number of unoccupied rental units, was 2.8%, down from 3.7% in May 2021, and 6.2% in 2019. A vacancy rate that would not be expected to have an impact on prices is between 6% and 7%.⁹⁸

In many communities, public housing authorities (PHAs) administer subsidized units to serve very low-income residents. Historic disinvestment in PHAs has resulted in deferred maintenance of the housing stock. Additionally, PHAs are restricted from putting debt on their properties, removing many forms of financing which could be used to improve the units and/or increase the number of PHA-administered units that can be developed. With proper funding, PHAs can improve their technical ability to redevelop or construct units, investigate how they can leverage their resources to serve more Rhode Islanders, and engage in predevelopment work to help ease the shortage of available units.

Project Overview: This project is providing grants to PHAs to increase the supply of affordable housing and stabilize existing affordable housing. The grants will build technical capacity, secure predevelopment services, and fund redevelopment and/or repositioning of existing units.

Of the \$10 million in project funding:

- \$8.1 million is providing three development awards to finance the demolition of obsolete housing in conjunction with the construction of net new housing units. Loans may also be used to rehabilitate or reposition existing units and/or create new, subsidized units.
- \$1.6 million is providing technical assistance/predevelopment awards to assess the feasibility of development projects.
- \$175,000 is financing a feasibility study on the public developer approach to develop affordable housing.
- \$100,000 is covering administrative costs.

U.S. Treasury presumes that any housing project that is eligible to be funded under any of the following federal housing programs is an eligible use of State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF) under Negative Economic Impacts eligibility category:

- National Housing Trust Fund.
- Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME).
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC).
- Public Housing Capital Fund.
- Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Developmental Disabilities Program.
- Project-Based Rental Assistance.
- Multifamily Preservation & Revitalization Program.

The *Public Housing Pilot Program* project aligns with HOME and the Public Housing Capital Fund.

Timeline: All technical assistance/predevelopment awards are expected to close by September 2024. All development awards are expected to close between June 2024 and March 2025.

⁹⁸ CoStar Market Analytics

Mechanisms and Partners: The Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (RIHousing), a quasi-public agency, is the subrecipient for this project. The maximum development grant is \$2.5 million per project/\$50,000 per unit.

Use of Evidence: Public housing has been a critical resource for low-income households for over 75 years, especially for extremely low-income households, which often include households experiencing homelessness. Through job loss and/or the inability of wage earners to work due to the pandemic, the demand for affordable rental housing has increased. Increasing the affordable housing stock, as well as preserving the existing stock, is vital to addressing this demand. This project supports the creation of new housing through PHAs by providing funds for technical assistance, pre-development and construction financing. It also provides the same resources to preserve existing stock by leveraging United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) sponsored programs that can transition PHA units to a different housing subsidy program that put the units on a more stable financial footing in the long term and result in capital improvements.

Equity Impact: By facilitating the rapid development of affordable housing for low-income people, RIHousing intends to make access to housing fair, equitable, and widespread. These funds will be used in conjunction with other federal and state dollars to create homes for all Rhode Islanders, but the population that needs extremely low-income housing is disproportionately comprised of households of color. Minority households have lower rates of homeownership, are rent cost burdened at higher rates, and face greater obstacles to being stably housed. This project is helping relieve those challenges and expanding opportunity to more Rhode Islanders.

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Black, Native American, and Hispanic households are more likely than white households to be extremely low-income renters. In Rhode Island, affordable rental units are primarily occupied by households of color. Across the 2,651 RIHousing-administered HOME Investment Partnership Program units for which race and ethnicity information was available, 83.4% of occupants identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 46.2% of occupants identifying as Hispanic. Similarly, 94.1% of the 7,001 households residing in LIHTC-financed developments for which demographic data was available identified as racial or ethnic minorities, with 36.8% of occupants identifying as Hispanic. More than half of all households residing in LIHTC-financed housing units were Black or African American (54.7%).⁹⁹

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households receiving eviction prevention services	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable units built or preserved	0	0

⁹⁹ RIHousing Program Data

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of technical assistance grants awarded	0	7
Number of predevelopment grants awarded	0	5
Number of PHA development grants awarded	0	3
Additional annual operating subsidy for PHAs	0	N/A at this time

Homelessness Assistance Warming Center and Shelter

Project Identification Number: 10045

Funded Amount: \$7,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$6,533,118

Project Expenditure Category: 2.16 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Services for Unhoused Persons

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Homelessness in Rhode Island increased significantly during the pandemic as documented by the Rhode Island Point in Time Count conducted by the Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness on January 26, 2021.¹⁰⁰ Findings included:

- 1,267 people experienced homelessness, a 14% increase from 2020.
- 869 people were in emergency shelter, a 17% increase from 2020.
- 181 people were living outdoors, a 67% increase from 2020.

The Point in Time Count conducted on January 26, 2022, indicated that Rhode Island continued to see significant increases in homelessness.¹⁰¹ Findings included:

- 1,576 people experienced homelessness, a 24% increase from 2021.
- 1,151 people were in emergency shelter, a 32% increase from 2021.
- 248 people were living outdoors, a 37% increase from 2021.

The Point in Time Count conducted on January 25, 2023, indicated that Rhode Island continued to see significant increases in homelessness.¹⁰² Findings included:

- 1,809 people experienced homelessness, a 15% increase from 2022.

¹⁰⁰ [RI Point in Time Storybook | Tableau Public](#)

¹⁰¹ [Ibid](#)

¹⁰² [Ibid](#)

- 1,288 people were in emergency shelter, a 12% increase from 2022.
- 334 people were living outdoors, a 35% increase from 2022.

Project Overview: The State used \$2 million of the \$7 million project budget to operate a warming center at the State-owned Cranston Street Armory from December 7, 2022, through May 15, 2023. In addition to providing shelter, the facility made it possible for individuals to receive housing-related services to improve their chances of securing stable housing. The remaining \$5 million supported homelessness providers to operate shelters and expand shelter capacity.

Timeline: All programs ran through June 30, 2023.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Rhode Island Department of Housing (Department) selected organizations, such as Amos House, Crossroads Rhode Island, Open Doors, and Thrive, to operate warming centers and shelters through a letter of interest process.

Use of Evidence: According to The National Alliance to End Homelessness, the five keys to effective emergency shelter are: a Housing First approach, safe and appropriate diversion, immediate and low-barrier access, housing-focused rapid exit services, and data to measure performance.¹⁰³ Shelters in Rhode Island are encouraged to adhere to Continuum of Care Standards and Guidelines, which emphasize these five keys as central to ensuring that homelessness “is a rare and brief event.” With training on Housing First and Best Practices and these five keys in place, Rhode Island shelters are using evidence-based interventions to address the homelessness crisis, and this program, which seeks to expand available shelter beds, was also evidence based.

Equity Impact: The intended outcome of this project was to ensure that individuals experiencing homelessness have access to a safe place to stay and appropriate services so that they can move toward finding a more permanent housing situation. As racial and ethnic minorities are disproportionately represented among the homeless population, this project addressed significant disparities experienced by these populations in accessing needed services.

The 2022 Point in Time Count showed that Rhode Island saw drastic increases in homelessness among minority communities. While 9% of the state’s population identified as African American/Black, with 11% of this population falling below the poverty line, 28% of families and 22% of individuals experiencing homelessness were African American/Black. Similarly, while 16% of the state’s population identified as Hispanic/Latino, with 32% of this population falling below the poverty line, 15% of individuals and 36% of families experiencing homelessness were Hispanic/Latino.¹⁰⁴

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households receiving eviction prevention services	0	0

¹⁰³ [Emergency Shelter Learning Series - National Alliance to End Homelessness](#)

¹⁰⁴ [2022 RI Point in Time Storybook | Tableau Public](#)

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable units built or preserved	0	0
Number of temporary shelter beds added	16 beds for every \$300,000	296
Number of people receiving emergency shelter and supportive services	3.75 people per bed	537
Number of people served by the warming center		606

Home Repair Program

Project Identification Number: 10060

Funded Amount: \$4,500,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$0

Project Expenditure Category: 2.18 Negative Economic Impacts: Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: The pandemic meant fewer households had the necessary resources to make home repairs and improvements. While small and cosmetic repairs can often wait, deferring major repairs, such as plumbing needs, can result in unsafe and unhealthy living environments and, eventually, the need for more expensive repairs.

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Department of Housing (Department) developed a residential, rehabilitation program to assist owners of properties in distressed areas meet their housing rehabilitation needs. The primary beneficiaries are households at or below 80% of area median income (AMI) in qualified census tracts (QCTs). QCTs are those where more than 50% of households are identified as at or below 65% AMI.

Applications are being accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. One- or two-unit properties are eligible for grants in the amount up to \$50,000, and three- or four-unit properties are eligible for grants in the amount of up to \$75,000. Eligible rehabilitation activities address health and safety issues or major deficiencies and include, but are not limited to, electrical, heating, energy improvements, accessibility improvements, roofing repair/replacement, lead hazard reduction, plumbing improvements.

Timeline: The program administrator was selected and contracted in March 2024. An information session with community stakeholders was held in April 2024, and the program was rolled out in June 2024. It is anticipated the program will operate through December 2025.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Department procured an administrator for the *Home Repair Program* through a competitive bidding process. The administrator assists homeowners in procuring the lowest, responsive contractor for rehabilitation projects. If the homeowner selects a contractor other than the lowest, responsive contractor, the homeowner must pay the difference between the lowest, responsive bid and the selected bid.

The administrator facilitates the execution of a contract between the contractor and homeowner. The administrator directly pays the contractor, with the homeowner’s involvement in the transaction limited to certifying that the project was completed. Five-year liens are placed on participating properties, with a term dependent on the grant amount. If the property is sold or transferred during the lien term, the grant must be repaid.

Use of Evidence: Research by the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard University shows that home repair programs are critical for lower-income and vulnerable homeowners.¹⁰⁵ There is evidence that these programs result in health benefits, especially when repairs address inside temperatures through insulation and energy efficiency measures.¹⁰⁶

Equity Impact: Participation in the *Home Repair Program* is limited to households in QCTs, which have higher rates of lower-income households and are primarily located in urban areas that have been historically occupied by a larger percentage of underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected populations. The program administrator is conducting outreach in areas targeted for this project to raise awareness.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households receiving eviction prevention services	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable units built or preserved	0	0
Number of units with obligated funds for the rehabilitation of residential units	0	0
Number of units rehabilitated	0	0

¹⁰⁵ [Housing Perspectives: Research, trends, and perspective from the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies](#)

¹⁰⁶ [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps: Housing rehabilitation loan & grant programs](#)

Housing Related Infrastructure

Project Identification Number: 10080

Funded Amount: \$3,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$0

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank (RIIB) is providing funding to municipalities and other public entities to improve public infrastructure necessary to develop additional housing units that meet the Rhode Island Department of Housing's (Department) affordability criteria. Funding is being targeted to projects in areas or districts that communities have determined are best suited and prepared to efficiently accommodate additional housing development.

Pursuant to the affordability criteria, RIIB is prioritizing projects that maximize the number of housing units affordable to Rhode Islanders earning up to 80% of the area median income (AMI) and that maximize the density of units to be built. To be eligible for funding, projects must be for infrastructure to support rental or homeownership developments that are affordable or mixed income with at least 10% of units reserved for those earning up to 120% AMI.

Timeline: Project funding was included in a request for proposals (RFP) issued by RIIB in January 2024 that closed the following month. Awards are expected to be made in June 2024 followed by the execution of contracts, at which point projects will begin spending the funds.

Applicants were instructed to include a timeline in their proposal for spending funds within a year of awards being made. These timelines were reviewed and evaluated as a part of the selection process. As the projects focus on construction activities, there might be delays. The Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank will remain in contact with grantee municipalities to ensure that hiring and contractors' work schedules allow for timely completion.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of awards or grants contracted	0	0
Number of projects for which infrastructure development began	0	0

Transit-Oriented Development Districts

Project Identification Number: 10084

Funded Amount: \$4,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$0

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Housing Mortgage and Finance Corporation (RIHousing) is subsidizing the development of affordable housing in Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) districts, where density is often permitted to be higher than in other areas. For the purposes of this project, a TOD district is a zoning district designated as such in the municipal zoning code because of its proximity to public transit. At least 10% of units must be deed restricted as affordable for at least 30 years for households earning less than 80% of the area median income (AMI). Developments must include at least 10 units per acre developed.

Funding is being deployed as no-interest, long-term loans to complement other state and federal resources to finance the production and preservation of housing affordable to households earning less than 80% AMI. All projects will become income eligible for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) investment. Funding can be used for construction, legal fees, architectural and consulting fees, etc. It cannot be used for costs previously paid for under a separate State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) project administered by RIHousing.

Timeline: Funding was included in a request for proposals (RFP) released by RIHousing in November 2023. One development was awarded funds, committing all project funds. The development is now working to satisfy the requirements to close on its financing to begin construction.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of projects funded	0	1
Number of units built or preserved under 80% AMI	0	0

Municipal Homelessness Support Initiative

Project Identification Number: 10078

Funded Amount: \$2,200,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$238,477

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Department of Housing (Department) is providing grants to municipalities where new overnight shelters have been opened or existing shelters have had their capacity expanded since May 1, 2023. Grants must directly or indirectly benefit individuals and/or families served by the new or expanded overnight shelters. These benefits may be facilitated through partnerships with organizations and other stakeholders. Potential services may include, but are not limited to:

- Emergency medical services and/or security.
- Waste management and/or sanitation services.
- Transportation for individuals staying at the shelter.
- Day programs, professional development, education services.
- Behavioral health services and substance use disorder services.
- Public facility improvements near the shelter.

- Meal programs.
- Housing resource counseling.
- Outreach services.
- Community and business outreach.
- Emergency warming/cooling center costs.

Awards are being made under two categories: (1) a formula providing \$2,000 per new shelter bed and (2) a competitive process:

Formula Grants: Municipalities where new overnight shelters open and/or existing shelters have their capacity expanded after May 1, 2023, and remain in service until at least April 15, 2024, are eligible to receive \$2,000 per new shelter bed.

Regional Emergency Hub/Competitive Grants: The Department providing competitive grants for emergency regional hubs during severe winter weather conditions.

Competitive Grants: The Department is assisting municipalities with additional costs that are not covered by the formula grants. These competitive grants ensure the success and longevity of shelter projects through municipal services, staffing, transportation, infrastructure, or programs that exceed the amount provided in the per-bed formula.

The following awards have been made:

Municipality	Grant Type	Amount
Burrillville	Formula	\$74,000
Newport	Emergency Hub	\$175,582
Pawtucket	Competitive	\$100,000
Providence	Formula	\$364,000
Smithfield	Competitive	\$150,000
Warwick	Formula	\$240,000
West Warwick	Emergency Hub	\$119,316
Woonsocket	Emergency Hub	\$119,316
	Formula	\$40,0000
Total		\$1,382,215

Timeline: Applications opened on October 31, 2023, and closed on March 1, 2024, resulting in the awards referenced in the section above. The Department plans to run a second round of applications to support the winter of 2024-2025.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of municipalities awarded a grant	0	9

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of regional emergency hub grants awarded	0	3
Number of shelter beds available	965 (April 2023)	1,500
Number of warming centers opened in winter of State Fiscal Year 2024	0	3

Statewide Housing Plan

Project Identification Number: 10032

Funded Amount: \$2,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$38,649

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: In December 2022, the Rhode Island Department of Housing (Department) issued a request for proposals to help develop the *Statewide Housing Plan*. It retained a consultant to create a plan that contains the following information:

- Evaluation of existing plans related to housing and homelessness.
- Assessment of current and future housing needs for each municipality and across the spectrum of age and income demographics and housing typologies, as well as recommendations for metrics to measure success.
- Identification of barriers to housing development, homeownership, affordability, and preservation of existing affordable housing, and recommendations to address same.
- Identification of the opportunities and means for increased investments toward disproportionately impacted individuals and communities.
- Identification of other jurisdictions' best practices to address Rhode Island's housing needs.
- Evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the state's current housing production and preservation delivery system, and provider developer network.
- Evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the state's housing stabilization/homelessness provider network.
- Two-year, five-year, and 10-year goals for housing production and preservation that align with the Rhode Island 2030 plan.¹⁰⁷

Funds are also being used to support focused research on school costs, housing sustainability, and vacant/underutilized state and municipal properties.

¹⁰⁷ [Rhode Island 2030](#)

Officials and/or the public often cite school costs as a burden and reason to oppose new housing developments, particularly family housing. The Department is hiring a consultant to quantify the net increase in municipal school costs associated with additional housing and develop a “school impact offset payments” formula related to such conclusions.¹⁰⁸

The State and municipalities have identified adaptive re-use as an attractive option to create housing. The Department will hire an architectural and engineering consulting firm to investigate the suitability of vacant/underutilized property for conversion to housing and/or shelter, and to provide cost estimates for such conversions to facilitate budgetary and feasibility determinations.

Timeline: It is anticipated that all components of the *Statewide Housing Plan* will be completed by December 2025.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Consultant team hired to produce the statewide housing plan*	0	1
Development of statewide housing plan*	0	0
Consultant teams hired for three additional research studies used to inform statewide housing plan*	0	0
Architectural and engineering assessments and cost estimates*	0	0
Final sustainability study*	0	0
Final school cost impact study and fiscal impact rebate formula*	0	0

*These are yes/no binary indicators: 0 meaning ‘no’, 1 meaning ‘yes’.

¹⁰⁸ “School cost offset payments” are authorized by [R.I.G.L. § 42-128.3-5](#)

Homelessness Assistance

Project Identification Number: 10017

Funded Amount: \$1,500,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,485,529

Project Expenditure Category: 2.16 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Services for Unhoused Persons

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Homelessness in Rhode Island increased significantly during the pandemic as documented by the Rhode Island Point in Time Count conducted by the Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness on January 26, 2021.¹⁰⁹ Findings included:

- 1,267 people experienced homelessness, a 14% increase from 2020.
- 869 people were in emergency shelter, a 17% increase from 2020.
- 181 people were living outdoors, a 67% increase from 2020.

The Point in Time Count conducted on January 26, 2022, indicated that Rhode Island continued to see significant increases in homelessness.¹¹⁰ Findings included:

- 1,576 people experienced homelessness, a 24% increase from 2021.
- 1,151 people were in emergency shelter, a 32% increase from 2021.
- 248 people were living outdoors, a 37% increase from 2021.

Project Overview: Through the Consolidated Homeless Fund Program, the Rhode Island Department of Housing (Department), Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) issued a request for proposals (RFP) for a range of new housing stabilization services, especially those targeting homeless populations that have traditionally had difficulty accessing services. These services included:

- Increased homelessness prevention, diversion, and rapid rehousing services to help prevent homelessness and secure safe, healthy, and affordable housing for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Emergency shelter and housing stabilization services for individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ and victims of domestic violence, with the goal of obtaining permanent housing.

OHCD also developed and implemented a best practices training program for social service, rapid rehousing, and administrative staff at Continuum of Care, Emergency Solutions Grant, and Consolidated Homeless Fund-funded programs to ensure the delivery of effective services and programming.

Timeline: In January 2022, OHCD issued an RFP in partnership with Consolidated Homeless Fund Program partners. Proposals were received in February 2022 and selected in April 2022. Projects began in July 2022 and were completed in April 2024.

Mechanisms and Partners: The following is the list of partners selected through the RFP and the services each provided:

- *Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness:* Organized and implemented a Housing First and best practices training program for organizations serving individuals experiencing homelessness.
- *Community Care Alliance:* Converted its Providence location into a shelter specifically for LGBTQ+ individuals.

¹⁰⁹ [RI Point in Time Storybook | Tableau Public](#)

¹¹⁰ [Ibid](#)

- *Blackstone Valley Advocacy Project*: Converted three residential units in Pawtucket into 14 shelter units to serve families as they secure permanent housing.
- *Sojourner House Inc.*: Operated Respect, Inclusion, Safety, and Empowerment (RISE) – a shelter for victims of abuse who are LGBTQ+ or who identify as male and left an abusive relationship or situation.
- *Community Action Partnership of Providence*: Expanded financial literacy/resiliency training so that clients can make better decisions involving household finances, including securing/retaining secure and affordable housing.
- *Amos House*: Provided resources to clients to prevent or exit homelessness, including connecting individuals with entitlement programs, emergency financial assistance, and other resources to retain or regain permanent housing.

Use of Evidence: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Family Options Study demonstrated that access to rapid rehousing and housing stability services resulted in key improvements for housing stability, family preservation, adult well-being, and self-sufficiency, as highlighted below:

- Families participating in rapid rehousing interventions were less likely to be separated from their children.
- Adults receiving rapid rehousing services demonstrated reduced psychological distress, reduced evidence of alcohol and drug problems, and halved intimate partner violence compared with usual care (i.e., shelter).
- Children whose families received rapid rehousing services had fewer school absences and reduced behavior problems reported by parents.
- Families served by rapid rehousing services reported improvements in food security.¹¹¹

From 2014 to 2018, Building Changes, a nonprofit in Washington state, used data from 1,898 families to test diversion as an approach to exiting homelessness. The results of this study, which were highlighted in *Homeless to Housed in a Hurry*, revealed that diversion costs less than shelter care, takes less time to get families successfully housed, and keeps families out of homelessness.¹¹²

Equity Impact: Homelessness prevention and housing stabilization programs provide an immediate benefit to low-income Rhode Islanders and Rhode Islanders of color. According to the RI Point in Time Count for 2021, while 6.6% of the state’s population identified as African American/Black, 53.3% of families living outside or in cars were African American/Black. Similarly, while 15% of the state’s population identified as Hispanic/Latino, 41.5% of families living in homeless shelters were Hispanic/Latino.¹¹³ As a result, programs reducing homelessness disproportionately benefit Rhode Islanders of color. HUD reports that LGBTQ+ young people are 2.2 times more likely to become homeless than their non-LGBTQ+ peers.¹¹⁴

The National Network to End Domestic Violence reports that domestic violence is the leading cause of homelessness for women and their children. In 2020, 333 adults and children stayed in domestic violence shelters in Rhode Island, according to the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence.¹¹⁵ In 2021,

¹¹¹ [The Family Options Study](#)

¹¹² [Resources Archive - Building Changes](#)

¹¹³ [Point In Time Count | End Homelessness RI](#)

¹¹⁴ [Missed opportunities: LGBTQ youth homelessness in America](#)

¹¹⁵ [RICADV 2020 Annual Report](#)

Rhode Island’s Victims of Crime Act helpline received 4,645 calls, of which 74% were related to domestic and sexual violence.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of people or households receiving eviction prevention services	0	175
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed	0	0
Number of households receiving financial literacy training/diversion assistance	0	194
Number of households receiving emergency housing and stabilization services	0	237
Number of provider staff receiving Housing First and other best practices training	0	1,004
Percentage of people or households avoiding the homelessness system because of diversion assistance	0	88%

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Percentage of exits to positive housing destinations ¹¹⁶	0	17%
Percentage of trainees able to display increased knowledge of Housing First and best practices training determined by pre/post tests	0	100%

Homelessness Assistance Phase II

Project Identification Number: 10061

Funded Amount: \$13,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$6,838,436

Project Expenditure Category: 2.16 Negative Economic Impacts: Long-term Housing Security: Services for Unhoused Persons

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Homelessness in Rhode Island increased significantly during the pandemic as documented by the Rhode Island Point in Time Count conducted by the Rhode Island Coalition to End Homelessness on January 26, 2021.¹¹⁷ Findings included:

- 1,267 people experienced homelessness, a 14% increase from 2020.
- 869 people were in emergency shelter, a 17% increase from 2020.
- 181 people were living outdoors, a 67% increase from 2020.

The Point in Time Count conducted on January 26, 2022, indicated that Rhode Island continued to see significant increases in homelessness.¹¹⁸ Findings included:

- 1,576 people experienced homelessness, a 24% increase from 2021.
- 1,151 people were in emergency shelter, a 32% increase from 2021.
- 248 people were living outdoors, a 37% increase from 2021.

The Point in Time Count conducted on January 25, 2023, indicated that Rhode Island continued to see significant increases in homelessness.¹¹⁹ Findings included:

- 1,809 people experienced homelessness, a 15% increase from 2022.
- 1,288 people were in emergency shelter, a 12% increase from 2022.
- 334 people were living outdoors, a 35% increase from 2022.

¹¹⁶ Positive housing destinations include exiting homelessness to a more stable housing situations, such as permanent housing or living with friends and family members.

¹¹⁷ [RI Point in Time Storybook | Tableau Public](#)

¹¹⁸ [RI Point in Time Storybook | Tableau Public](#)

¹¹⁹ [Ibid](#)

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Department of Housing (Department) is launching homelessness programs that:

- Increase homelessness prevention, diversion, and rapid rehousing services.
 - Housing problem solving (prevention, diversion, and rapid exit) is a person-centered, housing-focused approach that prevents housing loss and helps households who have lost their housing regain stability quickly without using longer-term homelessness assistance resources.
 - Rapid rehousing services help individuals experiencing homelessness to transition to permanent housing by addressing the barriers and challenges that cause individuals and families to experience homelessness.
- Provide emergency shelter through warming stations and temporary seasonal shelters, and housing stabilization services.
 - A warming center is a short-term facility that is open during inclement weather.
 - A temporary seasonal shelter is a facility offering overnight or 24/7 accommodation to individuals or families experiencing homelessness as they access other services or seek housing solutions.
- Develop and implement systemwide housing programs to provide innovative solutions to housing issues that meet one or more of the following goals:
 - Increase the supply of affordable permanent housing for very low-income households.
 - Retool the crisis response system to be more effective in preventing homelessness.
 - Increase economic security for people experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness.
 - Improve health and housing stability.
 - Increase leadership, collaboration, and civic engagement.

Timeline: The Department has committed almost all the funding available and is funding projects through September 30, 2024, to ensure that individuals experiencing homelessness are sheltered and receiving housing-related services that improve their chances of becoming stably housed.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Department, in partnership with the Rhode Island Housing Resources Commission and Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS), created the Consolidated Homeless Fund Partnership (CHFP), with the Emergency Solutions Grant Entitlement cities of Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket. Through the CHFP, the Department is soliciting proposals from eligible, qualified nonprofits and vendors to implement the programs,

Use of Evidence: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Family Options Study demonstrated that access to rapid rehousing and housing stability services resulted in key improvements for housing stability, family preservation, adult well-being, and self-sufficiency, as highlighted below:

- Families participating in rapid rehousing interventions were less likely to be separated from their children.
- Adults receiving rapid rehousing services demonstrated reduced psychological distress, reduced evidence of alcohol and drug problems, and halved intimate partner violence compared with usual care (i.e., shelter).
- Children whose families received rapid rehousing services had fewer school absences and reduced behavior problems reported by parents.

- Families served by rapid rehousing programs reported improvements in food security.¹²⁰

From 2014 to 2018, Building Changes, a nonprofit in Washington state, used data from 1,898 families to test diversion as an approach to help families exit homelessness. The results of this study, which were highlighted in *Homeless to Housed in a Hurry*, revealed that diversion costs less than shelter care, takes less time to get families successfully housed, and keeps families out of homelessness.¹²¹

Equity Impact: The project is serving Rhode Islanders experiencing homelessness, who are disproportionately Black, indigenous, and people of color. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, most minority groups experience homelessness at higher rates than whites, largely due to long-standing historical and structural racism.¹²² HUD’s 2022 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress stated, “People who identify as Black made up just 12 percent of the total U.S. population but comprised 37 percent of all people experiencing homelessness and 50 percent of people experiencing homelessness as members of families with children.”¹²³ As racial and ethnic minority populations are disproportionately represented, the program is addressing significant disparities of those populations in accessing services.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households receiving eviction prevention services	0	330
U.S. Treasury Required Number of affordable housing units preserved or developed	0	0
Number of people receiving housing stability services	0	1,574
Number of people receiving warming center services	0	60
Percentage of exits to positive destinations	0	26%

¹²⁰ [The Family Options Study](#)

¹²¹ [Resources Archive - Building Changes](#)

¹²² [Homelessness and Racial Disparities](#)

¹²³ [The 2022 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress](#)

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of rapid rehousing units secured	0	113

OHCD Support and Capacity

Project Identification Number: 10007

Funded Amount: \$1,500,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,229,383

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The programs administered by the Rhode Island Department of Housing (Department), Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) were severely understaffed. During the pandemic, additional initiatives were assigned to OHCD, adding functions to an already strained staff. This project allowed OHCD to onboard 13 staff or contract resources to expand and enhance the capacity of the Department and OHCD in the areas of housing/homelessness.

Timeline: As of May 2024, the Department hired seven contract staff to support its goals and initiatives. The Department intends to hire up to three additional contractors in the summer and early fall 2024, which will commit the remaining funds.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Contract services hired		0	7
Hiring of FTE roles		0	0
Number of subrecipient compliance reviews	Complete six CDBG and six homeless compliance review over six months	0	12
Assessment reports for potential acquisitions for new purchases and provider locations		0	13

Municipal Fellows

Project Identification Number: 10073

Funded Amount: \$1,300,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$0

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The project is supporting a housing development-focused municipal fellows program to assist municipalities with planning, zoning, and/or development capacity to increase the housing supply. Priority is given to municipalities that have fewer full-time planning staff, have outdated comprehensive plans, and are undertaking regional projects with similarly situated communities.

Timeline: The grant solicitation to municipalities was issued in March 2024 with applications being received on a rolling basis beginning in May 2024 until the program is fully subscribed. Fellows are anticipated to be placed in fall 2024.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Issue request for proposals for program manager*	0	1
Issue grant solicitation*	0	1
Municipal fellows hired	0	0
Municipal fellow reports submitted	0	0

* These are yes/no binary indicators: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.

Transit-Oriented Development Zoning Municipal Technical Assistance

Project Identification Number: 10081

Funded Amount: \$1,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$0

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: These funds are providing technical assistance grants to municipalities to support zoning changes that enable additional housing development in proximity to transit. Grants are covering a consultant's costs to determine the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) area boundary, draft the zoning by-law, and present/facilitate meetings leading to the adoption of the zoning revisions (e.g., Planning Board, City Council/Town Council meeting).

Timeline: A grant request for proposals (RFP) is being drafted, with awards made on a rolling basis until all funds are obligated.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Issue grant solicitation*	0	0
Tentative awards	0	0
Final awards	0	0
TOD zoning adopted by municipality	0	0

* This is a yes/no binary indicator: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.

Preservation of Affordable Housing

Project Identification Number: 10071

Funded Amount: \$500,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$0

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: This project is creating a fund that preserves affordable housing through foreclosure prevention. The revolving loan fund will allow monitoring agents the necessary capital to purchase homes with affordability covenants that would become market rate at the end of a foreclosure process, thus preserving the affordability.

The Rhode Island Department of Housing (Department) used a request for proposals (RFP) process to select a qualified entity to establish and operate the revolving loan fund.

Timeline: The Department expects to finalize the award and transfer the funds in June 2024.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Issue solicitation*	0	1
Award grant*	0	1

* These are yes/no binary indicators: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.

Climate

Port of Davisville

Project Identification Number: 10034

Funded Amount: \$65,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$19,364,009

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The Quonset Development Corporation (QDC), a quasi-public agency, is making the following infrastructure improvements at the Port of Davisville, which is one of the top auto and frozen seafood ports on the East Coast: reconstructing a portion of Pier 1, constructing the Terminal 5 Pier, including dredging to access the Pier, creating approximately 40 additional acres of cargo laydown space, and creating new access roads and a security gate in compliance with federal standards. The Terminal 5 Pier will increase the port's capacity to ship offshore wind turbine components, such as blades, towers, and foundations, while meeting existing users' needs.

Timeline: The Pier 1 reconstruction is scheduled to be completed by January 2025, and the construction of Terminal 5 Pier, dredging, access improvements, and completion of approximately 40 additional acres of cargo laydown space is scheduled to be completed by December 2026.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of berths with a service life of 30 years or greater	2	2
Number of ship arrivals per quarter	40	81
Acres available for cargo laydown	0	N/A at this time
Short tons of cargo delivered at the port per quarter	87,500	254,875

OER Heat Pumps

Project Identification Number: 10063

Funded Amount: \$25,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$10,222,776

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources' (OER) *Electric Heat Pump Grant Program* is providing financial incentives to make this efficient heating and cooling technology more

accessible and affordable. There are three categories of heat pump rebates: residential, residential income-eligible, and community/commercial. A third-party program administrator is managing and overseeing all aspects of funding deployment and reporting. It is using sub-vendors to execute various program functions, including rebate application and processing, data collection, and outreach strategies and customer communications.

An online portal streamlines application reviews and rebate approvals and allows for the rapid distribution of funds. The program administrator is operating a call center and quote comparison tool to assist customers in understanding and comparing heat pump quotes and to ensure that the equipment being recommended for installation meets the needs of their property.

Timeline: The project began in September 2023 and is anticipated to end in March 2026.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of residential financial incentives	0	1,751
Estimated lifetime emissions reductions from residential financial incentives	0	71,470 tons of carbon dioxide
Number of residential, income-eligible financial incentives	0	48
Estimated lifetime emissions reductions from residential, income-eligible financial incentives	0	2,561 tons of carbon dioxide
Number of community/commercial financial incentives	0	65
Estimated lifetime emissions from community/commercial financial incentives	0	13,826 tons of carbon dioxide

Children, Families, and Education

Child Care Retention Bonuses

Project Identification Number: 10001

Funded Amount: \$37,400,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$36,805,830

Project Expenditure Category: 2.36 Negative Economic Impacts: Aid to Other Impacted Industries

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, the child day care services industry in Rhode Island experienced a 21.6% employment loss from 2019 to 2020.¹²⁴ Nationally, the industry had an average employment loss of 9.8% from early 2020 to the fall of 2021.¹²⁵

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages					
Child Day Care Services in Rhode Island					
January 2020	February 2020	March 2020	April 2021	May 2021	June 2021
3,831	3,838	3,812	3,224	3,233	3,338
2020 Q1 Average			2021 Q2 Average		
3,838			3,265		

A National Association for the Education of Young Children survey found that 78% of respondents identified low wages as the main obstacle to recruiting educators, while 81% cited low wages as a key obstacle to retaining educators. In Rhode Island’s Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act Child Care Stabilization Grant program, 95% of grant recipients used at least 20% of their grant for wage bonuses, demonstrating the need to financially recognize staff and promote retention. The retention of these essential workers impacts nearly every single child care provider in the state by ensuring that centers remain open and serve families at their licensed capacity. Families cannot return to work if there are not enough quality child care options, and child care providers cannot operate at capacity because of employee shortages.

Project Overview: To address these challenges, Rhode Island initially paid \$1,500 semiannual retention bonuses (up to \$3,000 per person) during State Fiscal Year 2022 to all child care staff who had been employed with a provider for at least six consecutive months. The State extended the project for State Fiscal Year 2023 and State Fiscal Year 2024, as well as a portion of State Fiscal Year 2025, replacing the \$1,500 semiannual bonuses with \$750 quarterly bonuses.

Timeline: The Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS) drafted the application and established the application portal in March 2022. The following table shows the application periods for each retention bonus period:

¹²⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2019 – 2020)

¹²⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (Jan. 2020 – March 2020, April 2021 – June 2021)

Application Window	Application Period	Eligibility
1	March 18, 2022 – April 22, 2022	Employed for six consecutive months as of December 1, 2021
2	June 1, 2022 – June 30, 2022	Employed for six consecutive months as of June 1, 2022
3	October 1, 2022 – October 31, 2022	Employed for three consecutive months as of September 1, 2022
4	January 1, 2023 – January 31, 2023	Employed for three consecutive months as of December 1, 2022
5	April 1, 2023 – April 30, 2023	Employed for three consecutive months as of March 1, 2023
6	July 1, 2023 – July 31, 2023	Employed for three consecutive months as of June 1, 2023
7	October 1, 2023 – October 31, 2023	Employed for three consecutive months as of September 1, 2023
8	January 1, 2024 – January 31, 2024	Employed for three consecutive months as of December 1, 2023
9	April 1, 2024 – April 30, 2024	Employed for three consecutive months as of March 1, 2024
10	July 1, 2024 – July 31, 2024	Employed for three consecutive months as of July 1, 2024

Mechanisms and Partners: DHS engaged with a fiscal intermediary, Public Consulting Group (PCG), to set up the application portal for child care educators, distribute the funds, and assist with data collection and analysis. The review of applications and payment of bonuses occur on an ongoing basis during the application windows.

Use of Evidence: This project is modeled, in part, on the evidence-informed WAGE\$ Model, which provides pay supplements every six months to early childhood educators as attraction and retention incentives.¹²⁶ Fifteen states have implemented a model like WAGE\$. To address the unique and pressing needs of the pandemic, the *Child Care Retention Bonuses* project provides the same bonus to all eligible educators to expedite payments and simplify the message to the workforce to increase engagement.

Equity Impact: The early childhood workforce is made up primarily of women. By increasing compensation for child care employees, this project is addressing the persistent gender pay equity gap. Additionally, this workforce shortage impacts women, who are often the primary caretakers of young

¹²⁶ <http://www.teachecnationalcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/WAGE-Overview-2015.pdf>

children and struggle to re-enter the workforce without access to child care. By stabilizing and growing the supply of child care, more women have the opportunity to return to work.

DHS allocated resources for outreach to eligible educators regarding the program. Making the retention bonus amount the same for all workers not only simplified the application process by reducing the amount of paperwork or attestations needed, but also provided a higher pay increase rate for lower-wage earners.

To ensure underserved populations are being reached by the program, all outreach materials, applications, program materials, and the [Funding Opportunities](#) webpage are available in English and Spanish. All application materials are accessible via cellphone or desktop, require no more than 15 minutes, and are free of jargon or technical language. Ninety-seven percent of applicants for the second round of the semiannual retention bonuses responded neutrally or positively to a question regarding the ease of the application process.

DHS works closely with vendors and community partners who have trusted relationships in the field and act as its liaison on all programming. Intensive outreach for the child care worker retention bonus program included:

- Emails to child care programs, potential applicants, vendors, etc.
- All employers and previous grant recipients received direct outreach with updates on the program.
- For the first round of the retention bonus program, the team conducted 1,837 direct contacts.
- When an applicant required additional support, DHS, a vendor, and community partners worked together to provide direct outreach via phone or email, often multiple times, to resolve the issue and provide technical assistance where necessary.

As a result, in the first round of the *Child Care Retention Bonuses* project, most licensed programs had at least one employee apply.

As of June 30, 2024, the distribution of bonuses by race was:

- White: 69.2%
- Black or African American: 9.7%
- Other: 8.8%
- Preferred not to answer: 6.2%
- Two or more races: 3.1%
- Asian: 1.8%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 0.8%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0.5%

In terms of ethnicity, of the 69.2% of recipients who identified as white, 86.2% identified as Not Hispanic or Latino; 25.2% of recipients across all races identified as Hispanic or Latino and 4.3% preferred not to answer.

In terms of gender, 91.1% of recipients identified as female, 7.8% as male, and 0.5% as non-binary. Additionally, 0.6% preferred not to answer.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers enrolled in sectoral job training programs	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers completing sectoral job training programs	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of people participating in summer youth employment programs	0	0
Number of unique educators submitting a complete application during the first and second application windows	0	4,463
Number of semi-annual bonuses distributed during the first and second windows	0	6,998
Retention rate for the first and second windows	0	91%
Number of unique educators submitting a complete application for the third through the tenth windows	0	6,378

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of quarterly bonuses distributed during the third through tenth application windows	0	29,697
Retention rate for the third through tenth windows	0	74%

DCYF Workforce Stabilization

Project Identification Number: 10005

Funded Amount: \$22,109,918

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$21,239,890

Project Expenditure Category: 2.36 Negative Economic Impacts: Aid to Other Impacted Industries

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: The Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) works with approximately 34 contractors, many of which are nonprofit agencies, that provide congregate care, foster care, and home- and community-based support for the state’s most vulnerable children and families. The contractors were experiencing crisis-level staffing shortages that severely compromised the availability and quality of care for abused and traumatized children.

DCYF administered a survey in October 2021 that demonstrated the staffing crisis relative to pre-pandemic levels. In March 2020, providers reported 183 vacancies compared to 350 vacancies in October 2021, an increase of 91% and making up over 25% of the total full-time equivalent employees reported. A comparison of DCYF placement capacity from March 2020 to October 2021 showed a reduction in available beds from 343 to 240, a 30% reduction, which was often attributed to the critical staffing shortage among providers.

The consequences of the workforce shortage included children remaining in psychiatric hospitals past medical necessity and children being placed at out-of-state facilities at a greater cost, which made maintaining family connections and achieving reunification significantly more difficult. Additionally, DCYF’s three residential treatment centers limited admissions below their capacity.

Project Overview: The project provides foster care, congregate care, and home- and community care-based provider staff who earn less than \$75,000 annually with retention payments of up to \$694.50 per full-time equivalent position per month for work done beginning July 1, 2021.

Timeline: DCYF distributed and collected current staffing data from the provider agencies. All individuals within the income requirements and employed at a provider agency as of July 1, 2021, were eligible for retention payments assuming that they were still employed on January 4, 2022. Retroactive payments for work done from July 2021 through December 2021 were made to eligible individuals. Monthly retention payments are being distributed to all staff employed starting in January 2022.

Mechanisms and Partners: DCYF maintains a close relationship with the foster care, congregate care, and home- and community-based service providers taking part in this program. As a result, DCYF is

administering this project, with the providers distributing the retention payments in accordance with an agreement with DCYF. DCYF requires providers to provide demographic, expenditure, and performance data.

Use of Evidence: While this intervention has not been identified as evidence based, the analysis of the key performance indicators will evaluate its effectiveness.

Equity Impact: The staff supporting DCYF’s most vulnerable children and youth tend to be women and on the lower end of the economic spectrum. The staff who were targeted with the intervention provide care to some of the most vulnerable children in the state who are historically underserved and marginalized, and the crisis-level staffing shortages severely compromise the availability and quality of care provided.

As of June 30, 2024, the project served 2,166 eligible workers. The following is the racial breakdown of the eligible workers:

- White: 57.9%
- Black or African American: 25.2%
- Preferred not to answer: 10.6%
- Two or more races: 4.0%
- Asian: 1.7%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 0.5%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0.1%

In terms of ethnicity, of the 57.9% of eligible workers who identified as white, 63.8% identified as Not Hispanic or Latino; 15.4% of eligible workers across all races identified as Hispanic or Latino.

In terms of gender, 68.8% of the eligible workers identified as female, 29.4% as male, and 0.4% as non-binary. Additionally, 1.4% preferred not to answer.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Placement availability to support children and youth	Increase in number of placements available in the foster care, congregate care, and home- and community-based services provider agencies	0	248
Retention rate of existing provider staff	Percentage of current provider agency staff retained	0%	98%
Net increase in provider staff	Number of new hires and departures per month	0	186

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of workers served	Cumulative number of staff receiving some level of wage stabilization payment	0	2,166

Nonprofit Assistance

Project Identification Number: 10026

Funded Amount: \$20,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$20,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.34 Negative Economic Impacts: Assistance to Impacted Nonprofit Organizations

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: A survey administered to nonprofit organizations by the Rhode Island Foundation (RI Foundation) in March 2020 found that most nonprofits lost direct revenue due to cuts in direct programming or payment by clients, or through the loss of reimbursement for services provided through contracts. In September 2021, the Grantmakers Council of Rhode Island conducted a survey to understand the challenges facing nonprofit organizations and the communities they serve. Key findings included:

- 75% of respondents started new programs in response to the pandemic, yet 73% did not reduce pre-pandemic programming.
- 59% of respondents believed that demand for their services would continue increasing as government relief programs ended.
- The most pressing challenges were financial, 64%, staffing, 55%, and organizational capacity, 53%.¹²⁷

Project Overview: RI Foundation provided general operating grants to nonprofit organizations that address food insecurity, housing instability and homelessness prevention, and behavioral health needs. Applicants had to be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in Rhode Island or have a fiscal sponsor/agent. Nonprofit hospitals, educational institutions, and foundations were ineligible.

Timeline: Applications were accepted in November 2022. Eligible nonprofits received one grant.

Mechanisms and Partners: Applications were submitted to RI Foundation through an online portal. Applicants had to attest that they were negatively impacted by the pandemic through revenue loss, staffing shortages, increased costs, etc. RI Foundation staff reviewed the applications and made funding recommendations to be reviewed and approved by RI Foundation leadership.

Use of Evidence: The project provided operating grants to nonprofits, which are shown to be a best practice. Unrestricted funding, also referred to as general operating support or flexible funding, is funding that a nonprofit can use to support their mission any way they see fit. The Trust Based Philanthropy project identifies the following benefits of unrestricted funding: it supports the stability of grantee organizations; it encourages emergent action, innovation, and creativity instead of sticking to proposal

¹²⁷ [Survey Highlights with Additional Info.pdf - Google Drive](#)

outcomes that may become outdated; and it supports grantees’ long-term planning by allowing them to project resources and make strategic investments to meet emerging needs.¹²⁸

Equity Impact: The project prioritized support for nonprofits operating in qualified census tracts (QCTs), which are locations where at least 50% of households have an income below 60% of the area median income (AMI). In Rhode Island, there are 51 QCTs primarily located in urban areas and are home to approximately 218,000 individuals.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers enrolled in sectoral job training programs	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers completing sectoral job training programs	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of people participating in summer youth employment programs	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of nonprofits served	0	240
Percentage of nonprofits given grants to address behavioral health needs	0	21%
Percentage of nonprofits given grants to address food insecurity	0	22%

¹²⁸ <http://trustbasedphilanthropy.org>

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Percentage of nonprofits given grants to address housing instability and homelessness prevention	0	10%
Percentage of nonprofits given grants that address more than one of the three areas of need	0	47%
Percentage of dollars awarded to nonprofits operating in QCTs	0	48%
Percentage of nonprofits awarded grants that end their fiscal year with a budget surplus	0	N/A at this time
Number of grant recipients who report decreased challenges in covering payroll, rent or mortgage, and other operating costs	0	N/A at this time
Percentage of grant recipients that continue operations for the full duration of the award period	0	N/A at this time

Early Intervention Provider Relief and Recovery

Project Identification Number: 10003

Project Completion Date: March 31, 2024

Funded Amount: \$11,000,000

Final Expended Amount: \$11,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.12 Public Health: Mental Health Services

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: The Early Intervention (EI) Part C program of the Individuals with Disabilities Act provides crucial services to Rhode Island families with children experiencing developmental delays or medical conditions associated with developmental delays. During the pandemic,

all nine EI providers in Rhode Island struggled to accept direct referrals due to significant staffing shortages.

The families enrolled in EI services before this project received fewer service hours per month (an average of 2.87 hours) than in State Fiscal Year 2019 (when service hours per month averaged 3.31 hours) and disengaged in EI services at a higher rate (31% as compared to 25% in State Fiscal Year 2019). This resulted in reduced program billings, creating financial solvency concerns in addition to the decrease in critical services for Rhode Island children. The EI system needed 54 additional workers to reach typical capacity to serve the number of families in Rhode Island in need of EI services.

An October 2020 *Pediatrics* article cited a national survey of parents with children under the age of 18 and found that since March 2020, 27% of parents reported worsening mental health for themselves, and 14% reported worsening behavioral health for their children.¹²⁹

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) provided stabilization grants totaling \$5.2 million to all nine EI providers. The grant amount was calculated based on the population size served by each provider. Eligible uses for the stabilization grant included, but were not limited to, enhanced outreach activities to ensure equitable access and family engagement in EI services; staff retention bonuses; workforce costs due to labor market conditions; professional development activities; and costs required to increase in-person visits.

EOHHS developed a pay-for-performance model to incentivize providers to increase service activity. EOHHS provided bonus payments totaling \$5.8 million based on EI providers meeting targets, such as recovering referral and staffing figures to 2019 levels, increasing the percentage of children referred to EI who completed the eligibility process and engaged in services, and reducing disproportionality for families with Medicaid coverage and families of color. Providers reported using these funds for recruitment and retention efforts, technology improvements, outreach to families, and improvements to the referral process, among other activities.

Timeline: EOHHS developed, distributed, and approved the applications for EI providers in mid-March 2022. Stabilization grants were distributed once applications were approved, with the last grants distributed by the end of March 2022. Once they received their grants, EI providers developed a performance plan with EOHHS, through which performance was tracked monthly. Providers received a performance grant at the end of each quarter (June 2022, September 2022, and December 2022) if they met certain identified targets.

EOHHS provided an additional stabilization grant to all nine EI providers in April 2023. The grant amount was calculated based on the size of the population served by each provider. Additional pay-for-performance bonuses were provided in June 2023, September 2023, and December 2023.

Mechanisms and Partners: The project was overseen by EOHHS, which partnered with the State's nine EI providers.

Use of Evidence: EI is federally required as part of the Individuals with Disabilities Act to address the developmental and behavioral needs of children.

- The National Early Intervention Longitudinal Study Special Education and Part C programs tracked children with a developmental delay and found 46% did not need special education by the time they reached kindergarten due to EI services.

¹²⁹ <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/146/4/e2020016824>

- Studies found that children who participate in high-quality EI/early childhood development programs tend to have less need for special education and other remedial work, greater language abilities, improved nutrition and health, and experienced less child abuse and neglect.

Rhode Island is nationally recognized for implementing a high-quality EI model that delivers services through a caregiver coaching model in natural settings for children (i.e., the home or a care setting), which is the best practice.

Equity Impact: Medicaid-enrolled children represent 57% of the EI referral population, yet they represent 72% of the children referred but never enrolled. Similarly, Hispanic children represent 33% of the EI referral population, yet they represent over 41% of the children referred but never enrolled as of State Fiscal Year 2021.

Medicaid-enrolled children represent 57% of the discharge population, yet they represent 76% of the children who started services and disengage due to either lost contact or family withdrawal. Similarly, Hispanic children represent 33% of the discharge population, yet they represent 42% of the children who started services and disengaged due to either lost contact or family withdrawal as of State Fiscal Year 2021.

Additionally, programmatic data show that among children enrolled in EI, Hispanic and Black children are disproportionately exiting the program without meeting outcomes relative to the distribution by race/ethnicity of children enrolled in the program.

To address these disparities, the pay-for-performance portion of this plan was designed to promote engagement in and retainment of services. While this goal applied to the overall EI population, the project set a goal that the disproportionalities mentioned above are brought within 3% of the overall population; this is the standard of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. This standard is used when analyzing state EI data regarding representativeness and disproportionalities.

Performance: As part of the pay-for-performance bonus agreement, EI providers submitted individualized performance plans with specific benchmarks.

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Referrals	Increase referrals to 100% of calendar year 2019 numbers	62%	March 2024: 100%	March 2024: 98%
Staffing capacity	Increase staffing capacity to calendar year 2019 numbers	242	296	281
Eligibility process completion	Increase the percentage of children referred to EI who complete the eligibility process	State Fiscal Year 2021: 67%	March 2024: 80%	March 2024: 83%

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Disengagement in services	Of the children who fully enroll in EI services, decrease the percentage of children who disengage with EI services before program completion	State Fiscal Year 2021: 31%	March 2024: 19%	March 2024: 19%

Support for Survivors of Domestic Violence

Project Identification Number: 10033

Funded Amount: \$10,500,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$22,927

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: The pandemic impacted nonprofits' capacity to provide services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault because of reduced fundraising opportunities, higher costs, reduced staffing, and increased demand. Annual reports by the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence showed a 9% decline in services provided by its member agencies from 2019 to 2020, with 10,134 victims served in 2019 and 9,259 in 2020. This decrease coincided with an increase in demand, as domestic violence calls to the Rhode Island Victims of Crime Helpline in July 2020 and August 2020 increased year over year by 93.7% and 69.5%, respectively.

On September 9, 2021, 80% of identified Rhode Island domestic violence programs participated in a national count of services conducted by the National Network to End Domestic Violence. In all, 493 victims received services, including emergency shelter, transitional housing, other housing services, counseling, legal advocacy, and support groups. Victims made 61 service requests that the programs could not provide because they lacked the resources, of which 93% were for housing and emergency shelter.¹³⁰

Project Overview: The funding is being distributed to nonprofits whose primary mission is providing services to adult and youth survivors of domestic violence and sexual abuse. The Rhode Island Department of Public Safety (DPS) issued a request for proposals (RFP) for providers to apply for funding by describing their specialized skills, experience, and plans to use the funding to expand clinical and mental health services and/or access to temporary and long-term housing.

Timeline: DPS' Public Safety Grant Administration Office (PSGAO) issued a memo in January 2024 outlining award recommendations from the RFP process, totaling \$10.2 million of the total \$10.5 million appropriation. All awards have been issued, and spending is being conducted on a reimbursement basis, meaning that funding will typically be disbursed after programmatic activity has been conducted and invoiced.

Mechanisms and Partners: DPS published the RFP, evaluated program submissions, and awarded funding based on the strength of the proposals and program needs.

¹³⁰ [16th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Rhode Island Summary](#)

Use of Evidence: Studies have shown that government-directed funding to community nonprofit organizations can contribute to improved delivery of services.¹³¹

Equity Impact: According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, between 2003 and 2012, individuals who identified as Black/African/African American had the highest rate of intimate partner violence (4.7 per 1,000) compared to whites (3.9 per 1,000) and Hispanics (2.3 per 1,000). Additionally, women are disproportionately the victims of domestic violence, according to data from the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.¹³²

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of victims receiving services		13,699 in calendar year 2021	824
Number of victims receiving housing assistance	Individuals placed in temporary shelters and/or transitional housing units	884	345
Number of victims receiving clinical/mental health services		1,571	42
Percentage increase in victims receiving housing assistance		0	N/A at this time
Percentage increase in victims receiving clinical/mental health services		0	N/A at this time

Rhode Island Reconnect

Project Identification Number: 10079

Funded Amount: \$8,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$788,439

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: *Rhode Island Reconnect* provides free supports to individuals in their pursuit of educational and workforce training advancement. Students are paired with a dedicated navigator who addresses barriers to completion and provides personalized academic coaching and mentoring. The

¹³¹ [Best Practices – Fact or Myth? New Research Challenges Conventions in Nonprofit Management](#)

¹³² [National Statistics Domestic Violence Fact Sheet](#)

navigators complete a comprehensive needs assessment with each participant to determine if there are any barriers to education, such as food insecurity, lack of reliable child care, transportation, and mental health challenges. Navigators can address these barriers through the provision of wraparound supports for items that are not eligible for traditional financial aid, such as the purchase of a laptop, providing Wi-Fi, or the purchase of a bus pass for students to get to class.

The Rhode Island Office of the Postsecondary Commissioner (OPC) is targeting the following populations: individuals with some college experience but no degree, individuals interested in workforce credentials, students who are 15 to 30 credits away from graduation, and multi-language learners.

Timeline: Between January 2020 and January 2023, the program served over 2,300 participants. With the State Fiscal Recovery Funds, OPC plans to serve an additional 1,600 participants through September 2026.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of students served	0	471
Number of student barriers addressed	0	828
Percentage of students served persisting from one semester to the next	0	N/A at this time

Pediatric Provider Relief and Recovery

Project Identification Number: 10004

Project Completion Date: March 29, 2023

Funded Amount: \$7,500,000

Final Expended Amount: \$7,500,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.14 Public Health: Other Public Health Services

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Healthy child development and infant/child mental health are essential to positive academic and health outcomes. Throughout the public health emergency, many children and their families with behavioral health conditions and related developmental delays were unable to access services and family supports. Early data demonstrated the significant negative impacts on child development and early childhood mental health.

According to a *Journal of the American Medical Association* article, “The COVID-19 pandemic may worsen existing mental health problems and lead to more cases among children and adolescents because of the unique combination of the public health crisis, social isolation, and economic recession.”¹³³

¹³³ <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2764730>

Furthermore, COVID-19 threatened the healthcare system's ability to effectively screen for and identify behavioral health needs that cause and/or co-occur with developmental delays to initiate referrals for critical services, such as Early Intervention (EI), Family Home Visiting, and Early Childhood Special Education.

Children in Rhode Island experienced delayed healthcare and developmental supports and were exposed to trauma due to the public health emergency, which could have a devastating long-term impact on development. Addressing the delayed access to supports and services is critical so that children enter the education system ready to learn.

Project Overview: The project, which provided payments to pediatric and family practice primary care providers who serve Medicaid-covered children, had two components:

1. The *Stabilization Grants* (\$6,000,000) created an incentive for pediatric primary care providers to improve access to care and drive investment into their practices. Support was necessary for staffing and infrastructure to rebound from COVID-19-related delays in care. Payments were contingent on practices reporting baseline data and either meeting targets or demonstrating measurable improvement in the Child and Adolescent Well Care Visit measure. The Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) tracked additional measures related to immunizations, including COVID-19 immunizations, and lead screening rates, which are expected to be closely tied to performance on the Child and Adolescent Well Care Visit measure.
2. The *Performance Bonus Grants* (\$1,266,993) provided an additional round of grants to pediatric and family practice primary care providers who participated in a technical assistance program. The grants were distributed to providers who engaged with the technical assistance vendor, the Care Transformation Collaborative of Rhode Island (CTC). CTC provided *Technical Assistance* (\$233,008) to support training and workflow redesign, data collection and reporting, and best practice sharing to aid providers in improving performance. CTC assisted in evaluating practices' performance.

As of June 30, 2022, 100% of providers engaged with CTC. According to the evaluation results as of June 7, 2022, 98.1% of respondents reported that the sessions were good, 17.5%, or excellent, 80.6%, and 46.9%, 75 providers, suggested that they were interested in customized psychosocial/behavioral health technical assistance.

Timeline: EOHHS engaged CTC in early March 2022. Applications were posted in mid-March 2022, with the first round of stabilization grants provided at the end of March 2022. Grant payments based on reporting and performance on the Child and Adolescent Well Care Visit measure were made on the following schedule: one in March 2022, one in April 2022, and one in July 2022. CTC began to engage providers in March 2022. The bonuses paid to providers who engaged with CTC were issued at the end of June 2022.

Mechanisms and Partners: EOHHS engaged CTC for the technical assistance portion of the project. EOHHS engaged with the pediatric and family practice primary care providers to manage and disburse funds.

Use of Evidence: The program built on Rhode Island's decade-plus investment in Person-Centered Medical Homes for Children (PCMH Kids). PCMH Kids is a national practice model supported by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the National Committee on Quality Assurance to ensure that

children have comprehensive primary care.¹³⁴ Through investments by EOHHS and the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), about 80% of practices in the state are PCMH Kids practices. Additionally, pediatric screening is an established evidence-based practice. The AAP supports screening tools and practices that EOHHS used in this program.

Equity Impact: Equity is at the heart of the program by placing children on a path toward healthy development, mental health, and school readiness. There are racial and ethnic disparities in rates of children who receive screening and childhood immunizations in Rhode Island. This is likely driven by disparate use of pediatric primary care services more broadly, which threatens to widen disparities in identification of early developmental/mental health risks and referral to follow-up services. EOHHS is stratifying measures by race and ethnicity (where applicable) to understand the project’s impact on closing disparities and tracking progress on the metrics across all races and ethnicities.

EOHHS maintains a list of every pediatric provider that provides services to Medicaid-covered children, along with contact information. EOHHS notified all providers that they were eligible. EOHHS also worked with the AAP and other local pediatric community stakeholders to publicize the project.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Child and adolescent well visit	Practice performance on the HEDIS Child and Adolescent (ages 3-17) Well Care Visit measure	CY 2019: 73.2% of children ages 3-17 in these practices received at least one well-care visit	June 2022: 78%	June 2022: 79%
Childhood vaccinations	Percentage of children eligible to enter kindergarten on August 31, 2022 meeting kindergarten immunization requirements (KidsNet Data)	December 2021: 73.6%	August 2022: 87%	August 2022: 81%
COVID-19 vaccinations	Percentage of Medicaid-covered children ages 5-11 vaccinated against COVID-19	January 2022: 14.8%	August 2022: 25%	August 2022: 27%
Technical assistance participation	Percentage of providers participating in technical assistance to stand up developmental,	0%	August 2022: 70%	August 2022: 100%

¹³⁴ <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/145/1/e20193449/36971/Promoting-Optimal-Development-Identifying-Infants>

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
	psychosocial, and behavioral health screenings			
Lead screenings administered	Percentage of children between 12 and 24 months, with at least one lead screening (KidsNet data)	December 2021: 72.7%	August 2022: 83%	August 2022: 79%

Pediatric Provider Relief and Recovery Phase II

Project Identification Number: 10031

Project Completion Date: April 18, 2024

Funding Amount: \$7,500,000

Final Expended Amount: \$7,499,871

Project Expenditure Category: 1.14 Public Health: Other Public Health Services

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Healthy child development and infant/child mental health are essential to positive academic and health outcomes. Throughout the public health emergency, many children and their families with behavioral health conditions and related developmental delays were unable to access services and family supports. Early data demonstrated the significant negative impacts on child development and early childhood mental health.

According to a *Journal of the American Medical Association* article, “The COVID-19 pandemic may worsen existing mental health problems and lead to more cases among children and adolescents because of the unique combination of the public health crisis, social isolation, and economic recession.”¹³⁵ Furthermore, COVID-19 threatened the healthcare system’s ability to effectively screen for and identify behavioral health needs that cause and/or co-occur with developmental delays to initiate referrals for critical services, such as Early Intervention (EI), Family Home Visiting, and Early Childhood Special Education.

Children in Rhode Island experienced delayed healthcare and developmental supports and were exposed to trauma due to the public health emergency, which could have a devastating long-term impact on development. Addressing the delayed access to supports and services is critical so that children enter the education system ready to learn.

Project Overview: The project built upon *Pediatric Provider Relief and Recovery* to incentivize pediatric primary care providers to improve access to care, immunizations, and screenings, and invest in the staffing and infrastructure necessary to rebound from pandemic-related delays in care. The Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) made six payments to participating practices:

- The first payment was based on practices submitting a program application, including a practice improvement plan and a commitment to participate in the technical assistance program.

¹³⁵ [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) and Mental Health for Children and Adolescents](#)

- Four quarterly payments were contingent on practices' performance on several vaccine and screening measures.
- One payment was based on participation in at least four sessions of a six-session Behavioral Health Learning Initiative that took place from January 2023 through June 2023.

Funds also supported a technical assistance contractor tasked with training and workflow redesign, data collection and reporting, and best practice sharing to aid providers in improving performance and evaluating practice performance. The contractor provided the quality improvement practice facilitation and implementation of the Behavioral Health Learning Initiative. Practices accessed a customized behavioral health practice facilitator as an optional service to assist with the development of responses to behavioral health needs.

Timeline: The first payment for applying to the program and committing to participate in the technical assistance program was made in October 2022. Quarterly payments were made in January 2023, April 2023, July 2023, and October 2023. The payment contingent on participating in the Behavioral Health Learning Initiative was made in July 2023.

Mechanisms and Partners: EOHHS engaged Care Transformation Collaborative of Rhode Island (CTC) for the technical assistance portion of the project. EOHHS engaged with the pediatric and family practice primary care providers to manage and disburse funds.

Use of Evidence: The program built on Rhode Island's decade-plus investment in Person-Centered Medical Homes for Children (PCMH Kids). PCMH Kids is a national practice model supported by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the National Committee on Quality Assurance to ensure that children have comprehensive primary care.¹³⁶ Through investments by EOHHS and the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), about 80% of practices in the state are PCMH Kids practices. Additionally, pediatric screening is an established evidence-based practice. The AAP supports screening tools and practices that EOHHS is proposing in this program.

In 2022, the *Pediatric Provider Relief and Recovery* project provided another round of payments to pediatric and family medicine practices to catch up Rhode Island children on critical preventative care, including vaccinations and crucial developmental screenings. Payments were contingent on practices meeting well-child visit targets or demonstrating improvement. Each of the 44 practices enrolled in the program met the April 2022 and July 2022 targets or improvement targets, resulting in 38,000 Medicaid-covered children receiving well-child visits from July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022. In addition, each of the 44 practices participated in learning sessions related to developmental, psychosocial, and behavioral health screening.

Equity Impact: Equity is at the heart of the program by placing children on a path toward healthy development, mental health, and school readiness. There are racial and ethnic disparities in rates of children who receive screening and childhood immunizations in Rhode Island. This is likely driven by disparate use of pediatric primary care services more broadly, which threatens to widen disparities in identification of early developmental/mental health risks and referral to follow-up services. EOHHS is stratifying measures by race and ethnicity (where applicable) to understand the project's impact on closing disparities and tracking progress on the metrics across all races and ethnicities.

¹³⁶ [Promoting-Optimal-Development-Identifying-Infants Promoting Optimal Development: Identifying Infants and Young Children with Developmental Disorders through Developmental Surveillance and Screening](#)

EOHHS maintains a list of every pediatric provider that provides services to Medicaid-covered children, along with contact information. EOHHS notified all providers that they were eligible. EOHHS also worked with the AAP and other local pediatric community stakeholders to publicize the project.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Share of practices enrolled in ECHO	Practices are incentivized to increase psychosocial behavioral screenings through participation in this program	0	December 2022: 100%	April 2023: 100%
Share of practices participating in four of six ECHO sessions	Practices are incentivized to increase psychosocial behavioral screenings through participation in this program	0	June 2023: 100%	June 2023: 100%
Kindergarten vaccine readiness	Percentage of children eligible to enter kindergarten on August 31, 2023, who meet immunization requirements	August 2021: 81.2%	September 2023: 93%	September 2023: 94%
7 th grade vaccine readiness	Percentage of children eligible to enter 7 th grade on August 31, 2023, who meet immunization requirements	August 2021: 59.6%	September 2023: 76%	September 2023: 78%
One lead screening by 24 months of age		September 2021: 79.5%	September 2023: 90%	September 2023: 91%
Two lead screenings by 36 months of age		September 2021: 59.6%	September 2023: 65%	September 2023: 70%

Adult Education Investment

Project Identification Number: 10058

Funded Amount: \$5,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,098,443

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: Rhode Island’s publicly funded network of 19 Adult Education providers delivers high-quality services that support adults in reaching their diverse college and career goals, including high school equivalency preparation, English for Speakers of Other Languages, digital literacy skills development, and workforce preparation and training, including Integrated Education and Training, which is a nationally recognized workforce development model shown to accelerate successful completion of sectoral job training by adults with foundational skill gaps. Specifically, the project is funding:

- Direct grants to create regional hubs to streamline access to services statewide and facilitate knowledge transfer.
- Direct grants to purchase devices and software to support the integration of digital literacy and use of eTests statewide.
- Direct grants for the expansion of Adult Education services statewide.
- Temporary increased capacity of the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) to oversee implementation, ongoing evaluation, and strategic planning of the project.
- Third-party evaluation to identify service gaps and ensure regional equity.
- Third-party marketing and outreach campaign in multiple languages.

The Adult Education providers applied for these direct grants, and RIDE reviewed proposals and awarded grants.

Timeline: RIDE hired a full-time employee in September 2023, with outreach campaigns beginning that same time. Using a reimbursement model, the three direct grant programs began in State Fiscal Year 2024. The Digital Literacy Grants will end in State Fiscal Year 2025, and Regional Referral Hub Grants and Expansion of Core Services Grants will end in State Fiscal Year 2026.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of participants who receive orientation, assessment, and referral services	5,000 annually	8,754
Number of participants who enroll with 12 or more hours	3,900 annually	6,278
Number of enrolled participants who demonstrate a measurable skill gain	1,350 annually	2,956

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of enrolled participants who demonstrate a digital literacy skill gain	650 annually	1,188
Number of exited participants who are employed in the second quarter after exit	1,200 annually	899

Fresh Start Scholarship

Project Identification Number: 10066

Funded Amount: \$5,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,996,912

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The *Fresh Start Scholarship* provides working adults with tuition, fees, and books allowance support for up to one year at the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI). Specifically, the program supports individuals who previously attended CCRI but did not earn a degree. Fresh Start also targets adult Rhode Islanders that have disenrolled from CCRI and did not meet federal Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements, which makes them ineligible for federal financial assistance. Fresh Start also supports any incidental basic needs and outstanding balances through a partnership with *Rhode Island Reconnect*.

The combined effort provides adults with the direct wraparound supports needed for a “fresh start” to complete their degree. CCRI estimates that 1,350 students will participate in the Fresh Start program. Some participants will not receive Fresh Start scholarships because they will be eligible for Pell Grants and other financial aid that will be awarded before these funds.

Timeline: The project funds two years of the Fresh Start program, starting in fall 2024 and continuing through summer 2025.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of first semester scholarships awarded by academic year	0	806

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Average dollar amount of first semester scholarship awarded by academic year		\$1,651
First semester course success rate		74%
Term-to-term persistence rate		69%

Out of School Time Education Providers

Project Identification Number: 10072

Funded Amount: \$4,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$0

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: Afterschool and out-of-school programs provide critical support to students and families. In the 2020 *America After 3PM* report by the Afterschool Alliance, for every Rhode Island student in an out-of-school program, there are three more waiting for a spot.¹³⁷ The pandemic widened the need for quality out-of-school programming that supports learning and engagement during the school day and provides economic relief for families who rely on consistent care for their children when school is not in session.

The project is building upon an investment in the Advancing Learning Beyond the 180-Day School Year program in support of the Learn365RI initiative, with the long-term goals of improving student learning outcomes and increasing three key metrics: Rhode Island Comprehensive Assessment System (RICAS) math and English language arts scores; school attendance rates; and Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion rates.

The funding is supporting:

- Direct grants to Learn365RI compact municipalities, including
 - Standard grants in the amount of \$40,000 and
 - Expanded grants up to \$400,000
- Temporary increased capacity for the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) to oversee implementation, evaluation, and strategic planning
- Third-party professional development for high-quality program delivery and management to municipalities and their out-of-school time providers and/or partners.

Timeline: Grants are expected to be awarded through September 2024, with student data tracked through June 2026.

¹³⁷ [America After 3PM National Report](#)

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of standard grants	0	0
Number of expanded grants	0	0
Participants enrolled in programs	0	0
Number of hours of student programming	0	0

Rhode Island Community Food Bank

Project Identification Number: 10070

Funded Amount: \$3,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$3,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 2.1 Negative Economic Impacts: Household Assistance: Food Programs

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: The pandemic has had a lasting effect on low-income households' access to food. The 2022 RI Life Index Survey showed that food insecurity for Rhode Island households rose from 18% in 2021 to 31% in 2022.¹³⁸ The rates were even higher for households with children, 41%, and people of color. Among communities of color, 43% of Black households, 47% of Latino households, and 43% of other non-white households reported being food insecure compared to 26% of white households.

In February 2023, the pandemic-era emergency Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) allotment ended, and families saw an average monthly reduction of \$153 to their benefits. From March to June 2023, the number of people served at Rhode Island Community Food Bank (Food Bank) food pantries climbed to 80,000 people served per month – a 25% increase from the same period in 2022 and more than the number served at the height of the pandemic.

The Food Bank's costs for nearly all categories of food were higher in State Fiscal Year 2023 than in State Fiscal Year 2022 (e.g., ground beef was 90¢ more per pound; eggs were 80¢ more per pound; and rice was 33¢ more per pound). These increases represented significant costs as the Food Bank purchases truckloads of products at wholesale prices. On average, the per-pound cost of food was \$1.01 in State Fiscal Year 2023, up from 40¢ to 50¢ per pound prior to the pandemic. The Food Bank budgeted \$7.8 million for food costs in State Fiscal Year 2024, which is significantly higher than before the pandemic.

Project Overview: The Food Bank is using the funds to provide food to its 143 member agencies, including food pantries and meal sites, which distributes food to those experiencing food insecurity. The member agencies are in 32 of the state's 39 cities and towns, and the food purchased through this project

¹³⁸ [2022 RI Life Index Survey](#)

is being made available to an average of 24,000 households comprised of about 80,000 individuals each month.

Timeline: The Food Bank is distributing food purchased through this project to its member agencies from October 2023 through September 2024.

Mechanisms and Partners: The Food Bank operates as a member organization with 143 agencies, including food pantries and meal sites.

Use of Evidence: A United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) study links food insecurity in adults to increased risk of chronic disease.¹³⁹ Another study shows that food insecurity hurts children’s academic achievement and behavior in school.¹⁴⁰

Equity Impact: One of the Food Bank’s goals is achieving equitable access to emergency food for all populations in the state. People experiencing poverty, and in particular people of color experiencing poverty, are at a greater risk of food insecurity. To improve access to emergency food, the Food Bank prioritizes distributions to member organizations in the state’s highest poverty communities of Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls, Newport, and Woonsocket. In calendar year 2022, it distributed 48% more food into these communities than calendar year 2019. The Food Bank also expanded product offerings at pantries to include more fresh and culturally relevant food. These items are now part of the regular distribution and include avocados, plantains, taro root, masa corn flour, sofrito (tomato cooking base), spices, yellow rice, Bok choy, and collard greens.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of households served	4,000 families	24,000
Number of pounds of food purchased	0	3,360,366
Number of pounds of food distributed	0	3,293,445
Number of programs served	0	116

Child Care Enhanced TEACH Program

Project Identification Number: 10053

Funded Amount: \$2,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$301,601

¹³⁹ Food Insecurity, Chronic Disease, and Health Among Working-Age Adults Summary

¹⁴⁰ [Food Insufficiency and American School-Aged Children’s Cognitive, Academic, and Psychosocial Development](#)

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The funds are supporting the TEACH Early Childhood RI (TEACH) program that helps child care businesses implement best practices, reduce staff turnover, onboard staff, and continue to provide high-quality early child care and education. TEACH provides access to a higher-education curriculum on the academic, social, and cognitive skills that develop from birth through school age. It has a track record of supporting the incumbent workforce by funding their credential attainment and, in turn, increasing earnings and reducing turnover. The funds are supporting the research and development of new TEACH models tailored to meet the needs of the provider and scholar and allowing the program to expand options and incentives to increase enrollment.

Timeline: The program started in April 2023 and will end in March 2026.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of new scholars in the TEACH program	107	127
Number of new sponsoring programs	62	135
Additional training and/or degree pathways	5	8

Rhode Island College Cybersecurity Institute

Project Identification Number: 10074

Funded Amount: \$2,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$0

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The funds provide the resources needed to establish and launch the Rhode Island College (RIC) Institute for Cybersecurity and Emerging Technologies (Institute), which will engage with the cybersecurity community and expand RIC's ability to deliver education and workforce training. The expectation is that the Institute will position Rhode Island to lead the region in developing highly skilled cybersecurity professionals and programming while attracting leading researchers and education professionals to develop practical and policy approaches to cybersecurity challenges. The Institute is providing students with the knowledge, skills, and tools to protect and secure sensitive information from cyberthreats or attacks. It is creating paths of opportunity for Rhode Island students while putting the State at the forefront of advancing workforce development and research in cybersecurity.

Timeline: The official launch of the Institute was November 6, 2023. With the help of the State Fiscal Recovery Fund allocation, the Institute plans to expand its course offerings and majors in the coming years.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Establishment of the Institute for Cybersecurity and Emerging Technologies*	0	1
Number of students enrolled in a cybersecurity major	27	0
Number of students enrolled in a cybersecurity minor	36	0
Number of students enrolled in an artificial intelligence major	0	0
Number of cybersecurity courses offered	5	0
Number of artificial intelligence courses offered	0	0

* This is a yes/no binary indicator: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.

Child Care Workforce Registry

Project Identification Number: 10038

Funded Amount: \$1,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$989,271

Project Expenditure Category: 2.11 Negative Economic Impacts: Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: The pandemic has had a devastating effect on the child care industry, resulting in a significant reduction in available child care seats. The child day care services industry in Rhode Island experienced a 14.9% employment loss, vs. a 9.8% loss nationally, from the first quarter of 2020 to the second quarter of 2021. This affects families who face immense pressure to re-

evaluate how to meet their child care needs. Faced with this burden, families are having to make tough decisions regarding employment.

Without a child care workforce registry, the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS) is unable to regularly assess the state of the early learning workforce in terms of credentialing, turnover, retention, and compensation, or capture aggregate information about gaps and opportunities for workforce development. DHS is unable to regularly communicate with the early learning workforce about workforce development opportunities, compensation programs, etc. Much of DHS' staff time has been devoted to the manual collection of data rather than monitoring and structuring policies targeted at improving the sector.

Project Overview: DHS is creating a workforce registry to better serve providers by targeting interventions to the workforce's needs. Child care employees will be required to use the registry within six months of its launch. Having an accurate list of past and present educators will allow the State to survey educators on the working conditions in child care facilities and tailor policies to address these conditions and reduce staff turnover. The improvements that will be made in the child care workforce will benefit children and families.

Timeline: Through a request for proposals (RFP) process, the State contracted with a vendor in July 2023 to help create the registry that launched in January 2024.

Mechanisms and Partners: The State is working with a contracted vendor to design the child care workforce registry and develop a cloud-based platform to house it. Promoting workforce participation among early educators requires significant and ongoing outreach to licensed programs who act as the liaisons to their educators. DHS is using the personal data gathered from the *Child Care Retention Bonuses* project to input current educator profile data.

Use of Evidence: A 2016 study found that Early Childhood Education registry data can inform training needs and opportunities for the child care sector.¹⁴¹ Further, many large states have implemented workforce registries to collect large-scale data, communicate with the workforce, and directly disburse workforce stipends, especially during the pandemic.

Equity Impact: The early child care workforce is comprised of 92% women. As of June 30, 2023, educators who identified as Black or African American made up 9.4% of those who received *Child Care Retention Bonuses*, and 10.8% identify as Hispanic or Latino.¹⁴² This program will increase communication to this workforce about opportunities to increase professional development, credentials, and any ongoing and future compensation benefits.

¹⁴¹ [Using State Early Care and Education Workforce Registry Data to Inform Training-Related Questions: Issues to Consider](#)

¹⁴² [Rhode Island PDG B-5 Workforce Needs Assessment Final Report](#)

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers enrolled in sectoral job training programs	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers completing sectoral job training programs	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of people participating in summer youth employment programs	0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of children served by child care and early learning (pre-school/pre-K/ages 3-5)	20,240	27,236
U.S. Treasury Required Number of families served by home visiting	0	0
Launch of workforce registry*	0	1
Number of educators with complete profiles	0	3,406
Percentage of licensed programs with employee participation	0	70%

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Percentage of licensed programs reporting 80% employee participation	0	7%

* This is a yes/no binary indicator: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.

Child Care Quality Improvements

Project Identification Number: 10055

Funded Amount: \$1,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$498,478

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The project will increase the Rhode Island Association for Education of Young Children's (RIAEYC) capacity to focus on improving the environmental rating scale (ERS) scores for child care providers. ERS scores are tied to improved quality interactions and environments for children, while also increasing reimbursement rates for participating programs. The project is adding three contracted positions (two navigators and one assessment staff) within RIAEYC to be able to enroll 150 new participants into the LearnERS cohort. LearnERS is a series of modules and professional development for educators to address quality improvement.

The project is also providing additional operating support to RIAEYC, including additional licenses for LearnERS software, stipends to enrolled child care staff to incentivize participation, materials early learning educators need to meet ERS evaluations, travel costs for the navigators, and consultants to administer ERS assessments. Using the LearnERS model and a similar model developed by BrightStars for school-age programs, participating providers are being selected to join cohorts of 10 to 12 participants who have identified the same areas of improvement through an ERS pre-assessment.

This project is working in concert with the other child care investments, such as tailored technical assistance for early learning programs to increase BrightStars ratings and data system and workforce development initiatives, to maximize the targeted technical assistance and financial support available to providers.

Timeline: The project started in April 2023 and will end in June 2025.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of participants enrolled in professional development cohorts	43	120

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Percentage of participants who have improved their ERS score	0%	43%

DCYF Sign-On Bonuses

Project Identification Number: 10006

Funded Amount: \$810,848

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$717,944

Project Expenditure Category: 2.36 Negative Economic Impacts: Aid to Other Impacted Industries

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: According to an August 2021 report from the Rhode Island Coalition for Children and Families, organizations were experiencing a 31% job vacancy rate overall, with a 36% vacancy rate in direct care positions and 25% vacancy rate in supervisory and clinical positions. These vacancy rates far exceeded the national best practice rate of 10% and are considered unsustainable. A total of 75% of responding residential agencies and 38% of community-based agencies indicated that they had capped or reduced the census of youth that they were able to serve because of staffing.

Capped or reduced capacity threatened the youth in the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Family (DCYF) custody and DCYF's ability to fulfill its legislative mandate. Respondents indicated that residential programs were operating at 55% of contracted capacity, while community-based programs were operating at 64% capacity. Budgeting is based on 80% to 90% capacity, with variation among programs. Data showed that community-based agencies had vacancies on average for 11.3 weeks, indicating that there were not enough viable candidates for the pay community-based agencies can offer.

DCYF administered a survey in October 2021 that demonstrated the staffing crisis relative to pre-pandemic levels. In March 2020, providers reported 183 vacancies in comparison to 350 vacancies in October 2021, an increase of 91% and comprised over 25% of the total full-time equivalents reported.

Project Overview: DCYF worked with providers to offer a \$750 sign-on bonus contingent upon completion of 90 days of employment. The goal was to incentivize individuals to apply for employment so that providers were able to overcome the staffing shortages.

Timeline: The sign-on bonuses are offered to all new hires with a start date as of January 4, 2022.

Mechanisms and Partners: DCYF maintains a close relationship with the foster care, congregate care, and home- and community-based service providers who are taking part in this program. DCYF provides funds to the providers who then distribute the sign-on bonuses according to the agreement with DCYF. DCYF requires providers to provide demographic, expenditure, and performance data.

Use of Evidence: While this intervention has not been identified as evidence based, the analysis of the key performance indicators will evaluate its effectiveness.

Equity Impact: The staff supporting DCYF's most vulnerable children and youth tend to be women and on the lower end of the economic spectrum. The staff targeted for the intervention provide care to some of

the most vulnerable children in the state who are historically underserved and marginalized, and the crisis-level staffing shortages severely compromised the availability and quality of care provided.

As of June 30, 2024, the project has served 921 eligible workers. The following is the racial breakdown of the eligible workers:

- White: 61.1%
- Black or African American: 24.2%
- Preferred not to answer: 9.1%
- Two or more races: 3.6%
- Asian: 1.5%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 0.5%
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 0.1%

In terms of ethnicity, of the 65.2% of eligible workers who identified as white, 61.8% identified as Not Hispanic or Latino; 14.8% of eligible workers across all races identified as Hispanic or Latino.

In terms of gender, 69.1% of the eligible workers identified as female and 29.8% as male, 0.5% as non-binary, and 0.6% preferred not to answer.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of bonuses offered	0	1,119
Number of bonuses collected	0	921

Child Care Family Provider Support

Project Identification Number: 10002

Funded Amount: \$600,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$455,957

Project Expenditure Category: 2.32 Negative Economic Impacts: Business Incubators and Start-Up or Expansion Assistance

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Families cannot return to work if there are not enough quality child care options. Demand for family child care (FCC) increased throughout the pandemic while the supply of FCC providers decreased. According to the licensing data gathered by the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS), the state experienced a net loss of 113 providers, or over 25% of total FCC capacity, during the pandemic.

FCC providers typically care for a small group of children in a home and meet specific health and safety licensing requirements. Families may choose this care setting for a variety of reasons, including a smaller environment, a more culturally responsive setting (more than half of Rhode Island’s FCC provider community are native Spanish speakers), and/or more flexibility in terms of hours of care. The FCC

workforce is, on average, an older workforce. During the pandemic, many FCC providers chose to retire or permanently close, even after child care was allowed to reopen, due to safety concerns.

Project Overview: This project is providing \$2,000 grants to 200 new FCC providers to cover the startup costs associated with opening an FCC setting and technical assistance to facilitate the startup process. For this program, new FCC providers are those without an active license with DHS. By covering startup costs, such as health and safety materials, inspections, and liability insurance, the State is removing a potential barrier to entry and encouraging more of these primarily women-owned small businesses to open and replenish the lost supply.

Timeline: Applicant submissions were opened at the end of March 2022, and grants began being distributed in April 2022. A follow-up survey to gather spending and quality data was conducted in September 2022 with another planned for September 2023.

Mechanisms and Partners: DHS engaged with a fiscal intermediary, Public Consulting Group (PCG), to assist in program implementation and stakeholder outreach. DHS and PCG provided technical assistance to new FCC providers to ensure they serve Child Care Assistance Program families and participate in the State's Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Use of Evidence: A review of literature on the efficacy of home-based child care finds that most FCC settings are safe, and caregivers are generally nurturing.¹⁴³ Additional research finds that coaching and professional development efforts promote improved quality.¹⁴⁴

Equity Impact: The project is investing in women- and minority-owned businesses, as FCCs are disproportionately owned and operated by women of color, particularly Hispanic women. FCCs are often a preferred care option for families of color and families who speak a language other than English. It is vital for Rhode Island to ensure an adequate supply of this child care model that meets the needs of communities of color and immigrant communities. Additionally, the workforce shortage in the child care sector impacts women, who are often the primary caretakers of young children and struggle to re-enter the workforce without access to child care. By stabilizing and growing the supply of child care, more women will have the opportunity to return to work.

To ensure underserved populations are reached by the program, all outreach materials, applications, program materials and the funding opportunities webpage are available in English and Spanish.¹⁴⁵ All application materials are accessible via cellphone or desktop, require no more than 15 minutes to complete and are free of jargon or technical language. All FCC provider startup grant applicants responded neutrally or positively to a question regarding the ease of the application process.

DHS works closely with vendors and community partners who have trusted relationships in the field and act as its liaison on all programming. Intensive outreach for the FCC program included:

- All current providers received emails, encouraging them to share the opportunity with their networks. Any recent participants in the FCC provider orientation received repeated outreach.
- DHS worked with community partners to share social media posts advertising the opportunities, and a promotional video about the FCC grants program which resulted in an increase in applications.
- When an applicant requires additional support, DHS, a vendor, and community partners contact the applicant via phone or email to resolve the issue and provide any necessary technical assistance.

¹⁴³ https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/opre/lit_review.pdf

¹⁴⁴ https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/occ/occ_fcc_brief.pdf

¹⁴⁵ www.kids.ri.gov/cabinet/funding-opportunities/

As of June 30, 2024, the distribution of grants by race was:

- White: 40.9%
- Black or African American: 18.9%
- Other: 15.9%
- Preferred not to answer: 15.2%
- Two or more races: 3%
- Asian: 2.3%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 2.3%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 2.3%

In terms of ethnicity, of the 40.9% of recipients who identified as white, 20.4% identified as Not Hispanic or Latino; 76.5% of recipients across all races identified as Hispanic or Latino.

In terms of gender, 97% of recipients identified as female and 3% as male.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers enrolled in sectoral job training programs		0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of workers completing sectoral job training programs		0	0
U.S. Treasury Required Number of people participating in summer youth employment programs		0	0
Number of grants distributed	The number of pre-licensed applicants receiving a grant. DHS distributes grants during pre-licensure to help applicants cover startup costs and ensure the applicants become licensed.	0	128

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of newly licensed FCC providers		0	83
Number of new child care seats available		0	498
Number of newly-licensed providers ranking 2-stars or higher on the BrightStars quality continuum		0	7
Number of seats in child care deserts* (among newly-licensed providers)		0	19

* Burrillville, Hopkinton, Little Compton, Narragansett, Newport, Richmond, Scituate, Tiverton, Woonsocket

Behavioral Health

Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics

Project Identification Number: 10020

Funded Amount: \$30,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$20,296,795

Project Expenditure Category: 1.12 Public Health: Mental Health Services

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Challenges facing behavioral health providers in 2019 and early 2020, particularly low reimbursement rates, were exacerbated when the need for their services increased during the pandemic. Online surveys conducted during that time found that two-in-five Americans reported mental illnesses – double the usual prevalence. Rates of anxiety, depression, trauma-related disorders, and suicidal thinking were elevated, especially among youth, young adults, and racial/ethnic minority groups.¹⁴⁶ This spike in demand confronted a provider community that was struggling financially because of years of underinvestment and pandemic-related economic harm, evidenced by the following data.¹⁴⁷

- 92.6% of behavioral health providers reduced operations.
- 31% of patients were turned away, cancelled, or rescheduled.
- 61.8% of providers closed at least one program.
- 46.7% laid off or planned to lay off staff.
- 82.9% did not have personal protective equipment (PPE) to last two months.
- 62.1% could survive financially for fewer than three months.

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) is providing infrastructure development grants to community-based behavioral health and social services providers to recover from the pandemic and comply with federal Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) standards. These grants are supporting CCBHC providers and organizations seeking to become designated collaborating organizations (DCO). Specifically, this funding is being used to:

- Provide infrastructure grants to community-based behavioral health and social services providers to build capacity to operate as CCBHCs (e.g., electronic health records, data and payment/claims systems, staffing and training, capital needs, and related infrastructure).
- Equip DCOs focused on substance use, cultural competency, and related specialties to participate in service delivery and collaboration with CCBHCs.
- Support the State's implementation of this initiative through project management, evaluation, technical assistance, and administration.

EOHHS will provide up to \$25.5 million to be split among organizations as follows:

¹⁴⁶ CDC MMWR, August 2020

¹⁴⁷ Interdepartmental Serious Mental Illness Coordinating Committee (ISMICC) SAMHSA Update: Behavioral Health Issues and COVID 19. Elinore F. McCance Katz MD, PhD, Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. September 29, 2020

CCBHCs

Phase 1: Readiness Assessment – \$300,000 per grantee clinic site was provided upon award. This was spent on initial planning, including actuarial assistance for grantees seeking to become CCBHCs. Funds were spent in Year 1 of the grant program.

Phase 2: Capacity Development/Planning Collaboration Participation – \$760,000 per grantee clinic site, based on funding request developed and submitted in Phase 1. Funds were distributed upon completion of specified projects and milestones, contingent on documented participation in the Rhode Island Executive Behavioral Health Interagency Collaborative planning collaborative. Funds were spent on a range of activities, including staffing, technology and physical plant upgrades, staff training, and other activities specific to readying the grantees to become CCBHCs. Funds were spent in Year 2 of the program by the majority of CCBHC grantees, with a small number needing a No Cost Extension to complete their projects in State Fiscal Year 2025.

Phase 3: \$650,000 per grantee site has been encumbered to support primarily staff recruitment and retention, as well as other start-up operational costs and the development of relevant memoranda of understanding (MOUs), contracts, and partnership agreements. EOHHS was able to allocate braided funding in the amount of \$1.65 million from Home and Community-Based Services E-FMAP funds to extend beyond the originally budgeted amount for the grants. Payments for Cohorts 1 and 2 (90% of \$650,000) are in process, with the final 10% due at the end of their deliverables. Payment for Cohort 3 will happen in State Fiscal Year 2025.

DCOs Providing Other CCBHC Services

Phase 1: Readiness Assessment – \$30,000 per grantee was provided upon award. This was used for initial planning and an equity review.

Phase 2: Capacity Development/Planning Collaboration Participation – \$370,000 per grantee site was provided, based on funding request developed and submitted in Phase 1. Funds were distributed upon completion of milestones. Most DCOs have spent their entire allocation, with just a few receiving No Cost Extensions to complete the spending in State Fiscal Year 2025.

Phase 3: \$45,000 per DCO grantee site has been encumbered for final preparation for go live. Activities include start-up operational costs and the development of relevant MOUs, contracts, and partnership agreements. Payments will go out in early State Fiscal Year 2025. The total amount and number of awards distributed will be determined by the number of qualified applicants. EOHHS projects the following number of awards by entity type for Phase 1: up to 10 CCBHCs and up to 22 DCOs offering other CCBHC services.

Timeline: All Phase 1 deliverables were submitted in February 2023. EOHHS reviewed all submitted deliverables and reviewed contract renewal requests and notified participants who were selected for Phase 2. Twenty-five percent of Phase 2 funds will be distributed upon selection; 65% was distributed as participants met the milestones outlined in their Phase 1 workplan. Participants had 12 months to achieve their milestones and submit all Phase 2 deliverables to EOHHS. Participants who achieve a minimum of two milestones will be eligible for Phase 3 funding. Eighty percent of Phase 3 funding will be disbursed upon grant award, and the remaining 20% toward the end of Phase 3. The CCBHC Interagency Team has contingently certified eight CCBHC sites as eligible to go live on October 1, 2024.

Mechanisms and Partners: Community organizations interested in participating in this grant program must submit a proposal detailing their existing capacity and ability to participate in these infrastructure development activities, including proven engagement with diverse populations and experience delivering

relevant services. Successful applicants will need to demonstrate organizational and leadership readiness, a history of, or capacity for, community engagement, and a commitment to build capacity to become either a lead CCBHC or DCO within their community.

The CCBHC interagency team is committed to using a fair means of allocating funds to qualified community organizations that demonstrate the ability and intention to establish capacity related to the CCBHC model. The final allocation of grant funding will depend upon the number and quality of applications received.

Use of Evidence: The federal CCBHC model has been widely studied. As a demonstration program, there are requirements for rigorous evaluation that have begun to produce a compelling and deep evidence base. Continued assessment of the CCBHC model is underway across the country in a variety of settings. The U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) offers CCBHC Expansion Grants to selected states and clinics, including five recipients in Rhode Island. In addition to the evaluation completed by SAMHSA, other parties are analyzing CCBHCs' impact, including the National Council for Behavioral Health and Mathematica.

The EOHHS-led interagency team with representation from the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Development Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH); the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF); the Rhode Island Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner (OHIC); and Medicaid conducted a mixed methods assessment of Rhode Island's behavioral health system from September 2020 through December 2020. This study included qualitative work engaging stakeholders from both state agencies and the community, as well as a quantitative assessment of Rhode Island's behavioral health system. The study culminated in a public report published in July 2021 – the Behavioral Health System Review Technical Assistance: Final Report (2021 BH Report).¹⁴⁸ The CCBHC project seeks to address gaps in the Rhode Island behavioral health system that were identified by the 2021 BH Report.

Equity Impact: Investments in community behavioral health are equity investments. The population served by Rhode Island's behavioral health system is disproportionately Black, 11.8% compared to 8.5% of the population, and Latino, 22.2% compared to 16.3%.¹⁴⁹ In addition, a health equity lens has been applied to this initiative in multiple ways.

- **Eligibility:** Organizations serving and operated by historically underserved communities are being encouraged to apply to be health equity partners for CCBHCs, enabling them to engage with diverse communities.
- **Deliverables:** Providers receiving these funds are required to complete an organizational health equity assessment based on the Cultural and Linguistic Access Standards (CLAS).
- **Reporting:** Providers are required to report their services and outcomes by race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and veteran status.
- **Governance:** Providers receiving these funds are required to document feedback from a community that is representative of the community they serve.
- **Provider technical assistance:** Providers are being provided technical assistance to enable them to develop a plan to come into compliance with CLAS.

The policy outcomes are focused on closing gaps in the behavioral healthcare delivery system that impact all Rhode Islanders so that all Rhode Islanders have access to high-quality, affordable behavioral

¹⁴⁸ [Rhode Island Behavioral Health System Review Technical Assistance Final Report](#)

¹⁴⁹ [Rhode Island 2020 Mental Health National Outcomes Measures \(NOMS\): SAMHSA Uniform Reporting System](#)

healthcare whenever they need it. The data show that the gaps in access are worse for Black and Latino Rhode Islanders, so one of the objectives of this initiative is to collect data that are refined, specific, and consistent enough that EOHHS can track access and outcomes by race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and veteran status.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of CCBHC infrastructure grantees that submit a qualified cost report and equity checklist	Grantees will use grant funding to begin infrastructure and capacity development activities for eligibility to be a CCBHC in year one of the program	0	8
Number of DCO infrastructure grantees that submit a continuation application and qualified workplan toward CCBHC partnership	Entities interested in becoming a DCO must submit a workplan for capacity and infrastructure development based on identified gaps in readiness and health equity	0	14
Number of potential CCBHC providers with electronic medical records (EMR) that complete a CCBHC certification application	Entities interested in becoming a CCBHC must have an EMR that meets minimum CCBHC standards	0	8

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of CCBHC providers that are contingently or fully certified	Entities interested in becoming a CCBHC must complete a qualifying CCBHC certification application for certification determination	0	8
Number of DCO infrastructure grantees that complete the readiness assessment and equity checklist, and execute an MOU or contract with at least one potential CCBHC	The goal of the grant funding is to expand the network of community providers who have the capacity to become a CCBHC and/or partner with a CCBHC as a DCO	0	12
Number of individuals accessing behavioral healthcare services through a CCBHC	CCBHCs have demonstrated success in addressing gaps in the behavioral healthcare delivery system, including closing treatment gaps that result in unmet mental health and substance use treatment needs	26,282 individuals served by behavioral health system in State Fiscal Year 2019	0
Number of emergency department visits for individuals served by CCBHCs	The CCBHC model has demonstrated significant success in reducing ED utilization among enrolled members	6.6 ED visits per member over two years	0

Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility

Project Identification Number: 10052

Funded Amount: \$11,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$2,318,195

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: Rhode Island needs expanded residential treatment capacity to care for and treat adolescent females who face some of the most severe and complex behavioral health challenges of any youth in the state. Because of a long-standing shortage of intensive residential treatment options for this population, some youths have been treated in psychiatric hospitals for prolonged periods at enormous cost to the State and harm to the youth. Additionally, due to a lack of appropriate, in-state options, the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) must identify out-of-state placements where it can be difficult for family to visit a youth and where crucial work to help youths transition back to living with their families cannot be done.

The State is adding 12 psychiatric residential treatment facility (PRTF) beds for adolescent females, with the construction of a new facility on the campus of the state’s only existing PRTF provider. The provider will manage, plan, design, build, furnish, and own the new facility. Throughout the project, the provider and DCYF will maintain communication, so the State remains apprised of progress. The new residences will include all spaces necessary to support the PRTF, including bedrooms, bathrooms, offices, therapy spaces, sensory rooms, common areas, a kitchen, a dining area, laundry services, and janitorial and mechanical/electrical functions. Renovations to the school will provide classroom, office, and administrative capacity for the 12 additional youths.

Timeline: On January 13, 2023, DCYF executed a contract with the only existing PRTF provider in the state, through which the provider agreed to design and construct its new facility and renovate common spaces by October 2024. The provider has also agreed to operate the new facility as a PRTF for 10 years following securing of its PRTF certification, a period which DCYF anticipates will be from November 2024 through November 2034.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Certificate of occupancy issued*	0	0
Additional psychiatric beds for adolescent females	14	0

** This is a yes/no binary indicator: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.*

Butler Hospital Short Term Stay Unit

Project Identification Number: 10050

Funded Amount: \$8,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$8,000,000

Project Expenditure Category: 1.12 Public Health: Mental Health Services

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: Across Rhode Island patients are seeking medical help for mental and behavioral health issues at hospital emergency departments (EDs) in numbers that the system cannot manage. The unprecedented demand for these services, driven in part by the COVID-19 pandemic, is

resulting in delayed treatment for those with mental health and substance abuse issues, as well as overcrowding in EDs.

As reported during the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals' (BHDDH) behavioral health weekly "huddle call," there are upwards of 30 patients who are waiting for a psychiatric hospital bed so that clinicians can begin to address their mental health needs. Between August 1, 2022, and October 21, 2022, the average daily number of behavioral health patients awaiting placement was 73. The time that patients are boarded in an ED can range from several hours to several days, resulting in patients leaving hospitals without treatment.

The pandemic added a new at-risk population for mental health problems – adolescents and young adults. Each cohort faced a myriad of challenges, with the social and academic changes during the pandemic. Children ages 13-18 have had a staggering increase in the demand for treatment. According to Rhode Island Kids Count, in federal Fiscal Year 2021 (FFY), "there were 837 children and youth awaiting psychiatric inpatient admission (psychiatric boarding), almost double (a 92% increase) the number in FFY 2019 when there were 437 boarders."¹⁵⁰

Project Overview: The project is supporting the construction of a 25-bed short-term stay unit at Butler Hospital to provide behavioral healthcare services, crisis intervention, and other related services. The unit will care for patients with mental health needs and alleviate the overcrowding at EDs. It is being designed to accommodate distinct patient populations through flexible pod systems to ensure that access to care is not impacted by space limitations. Butler Hospital will have the capability of increasing or decreasing the number of adolescent beds, isolation rooms, and beds for varied adult populations.

Timeline: The short term stay unit opened in June 2024.

Mechanisms and Partners: Butler Hospital is the subrecipient of these funds and is engaging with a construction manager to provide timely feedback to the design team to keep the project on track and on budget. The construction manager engaged multiple subcontractors for each scope of work and received at least three bids for each scope of work to ensure fair and competitive pricing.

Use of Evidence: This project is based on the success of a similar model of care at Butler Hospital, the 24-bed Brief Stay Unit. The unit opened in January 2022 to address the overwhelming number of patients experiencing a mental health crisis that were boarding in EDs. Within three weeks of opening, the average daily census at Butler Hospital rose from 147.5 to 169.3. Patients were taken from EDs across the State. The census did not reach full capacity due to limitations imposed by the physical space (converted conference center), preventing high-acuity patients from being admitted despite referrals from EDs.

Equity Impact: The 25-bed short-term stay unit will initiate treatment for patients of all economic and racial backgrounds, and serve other vulnerable populations. At Butler Hospital, for Fiscal Year 2021, patients identifying as Black/African American constituted 6.5% of all in-patient admissions, and patients identifying as ethnically Hispanic constituted 13% of all in-patient admissions (excludes 3.7% of patients who did not disclose ethnicity). Data from the Mental Health Association of Rhode Island show that for 2021 Black/African Americans constituted 5.5% of Rhode Island's population, and 14.3% of Rhode Islanders identified as Hispanic. Butler Hospital will continue to track this data to identify any significant variances between the patient population and the general population of Rhode Island.¹⁵¹

Individuals seeking behavioral health treatment are historically underserved due to differences in insurance coverage and availability of services. Additionally, Hispanic and Black/African Americans are

¹⁵⁰ [RIKCFactbook2022 \(rikidscount.org\)](https://www.rikidscount.org/factbook/2022)

¹⁵¹ [The State of Behavioral Healthcare in Rhode Island – 2020 Report](#)

significantly more likely than white patients to use an ED for ongoing health conditions.¹⁵² The short-term stay unit will ensure that behavioral health patients are quickly moved out of EDs to start treatment and be dispositioned to the most appropriate level of care/provided with appropriate aftercare.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Status of construction completion	Unit construction will be completed	0	95%
Statewide average daily behavioral health beds holding for placement	The project is tracking the rate reduction of daily weekday behavioral health beds holding across the state	72.9 beds	47%

9-8-8 Hotline

Project Identification Number: 10025

Funded Amount: \$3,475,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,608,713

Project Expenditure Category: 1.12 Public Health: Mental Health Services

Pandemic-related Problem Statement: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Monthly Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report showed that in June 2020 the U.S. adult population reported experiencing increased levels of mental health symptoms including anxiety, depression, trauma-related symptoms, substance use, and serious suicidal ideation compared to pre-pandemic data. These findings were heightened for specific populations, including Black and Hispanic populations, essential workers, and younger respondents.¹⁵³

Surveillance data has shown increased emergency department visits for individuals between the ages of 12 and 17, especially girls, presenting with suspected suicide attempts. According to the Rhode Island Student Survey, there was a slight increase in suicidal ideation among adolescents and significant increases in feeling very hopeless and depressed.¹⁵⁴

Project Overview: To address the increased demand for mental health services related to the pandemic, Congress designated 9-8-8 as the new, easy-to-remember dialing code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Launched on July 16, 2022, 9-8-8 is a mental health safety net that is intended to reduce suicides, address mental health and substance-use crises, and provide a pathway to well-being. Individuals who call, text, or chat the suicide and crisis lifeline have immediate access to effective suicide prevention,

¹⁵² Parast L, Mathews M, Martino S, Lehrman WG, Stark D, Elliott MN. Racial/Ethnic Differences in Emergency Department Utilization and Experience. J Gen Intern Med. 2022 Jan.

¹⁵³ [Ready to Respond: Mental Health Beyond Crisis and COVID-19](#)

¹⁵⁴ [2020 Rhode Island Student Survey](#)

crisis services, and behavioral healthcare. Importantly, calls and texts are routed by area code to ensure crisis counselors have knowledge of available local resources.

Through Rhode Island’s 9-8-8 call center, which is called BH Link, residents have convenient access to a high-quality, personalized experience that includes connection to appropriate resources, localized community response, and follow-up. The 9-8-8 mental health lifeline aims to reduce the dispatch of law enforcement to persons in non-emergency mental health crises, resulting in more appropriate care.

Timeline: The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 9-8-8 launched on July 16, 2022, with SFRF funding starting on December 28, 2022.

Mechanisms and Partners: BH Link is subcontracted to Community Care Alliance (CCA) through Horizon Healthcare Partners (HHP), which has administrative oversight of CCA’s operation of the call center. CCA hires, trains, and employs the staff that work at the call center, including crisis counselors, supervisors, and managers. Program expenses represent items necessary to operate the 9-8-8 mental health lifeline, such as language line/translation services, printing costs, background checks for new employees, emergency on-call backup, and training.

Use of Evidence: Building out a behavioral health crisis service continuum anchored by the National Suicide Prevention 9-8-8 Lifeline is the first step in establishing the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) vision for post-pandemic crisis services. This vision provides national guidelines focusing on a three-pronged system of someone to call, someone to respond, and somewhere to go.¹⁵⁵ Crisis lines are effective suicide prevention tools. According to Gould and Lake, “Suicidal crisis callers report significant reductions in intent to die, hopelessness, and psychological pain over the course of their crisis call.”¹⁵⁶

Equity Impact: In the same way that 9-1-1 is available to all, the target population for the 9-8-8 mental health lifeline is all Rhode Islanders. As suicidal intention and mental health and substance use crises continue to rise, the need to connect people to appropriate local resources and support is more important than ever. Connecting those in crisis to trained behavioral health staff rather than law enforcement can help ensure better transition of care and outcomes.

Special attention in planning also considers historically marginalized populations, as well as those more frequently impacted by behavioral health crises. The Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH) is working with HHP and BH Link, as well as state and community partners, to develop a standardized 9-8-8 mental health lifeline staff training curriculum that includes a focus on populations such as LBGTQ+, children and families, older Rhode Islanders, the deaf/hard of hearing community, veterans, victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or trafficking, and people of color.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Percentage of calls answered in state	198 calls per month – 98%	97%

¹⁵⁵ [Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis Care: Best Practice Toolkit](#)

¹⁵⁶ Madelyn S., Gould, Ph.D., M.P.H., and Alison M. Lake, M.A. “[Suicide Prevention and 988: Beyond Beds Before, During and After COVID-19.](#)”

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Percentage of texts answered in state	0	34%
Percentage of chats answered in state	0	32%
Percentage of follow-up calls made within 24 to 72 hours of initial 9-8-8 call	0	71%

Crisis Intervention Trainings

Project Identification Number: 10059

Funded Amount: \$2,200,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$550,070

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals (BHDDH) is transferring funds to Thundermist Health Center (Thundermist) to expand the Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) program. CIT is an evidence-based program aimed at training, educating, and building networks for law enforcement, mental health providers, hospitals, etc., to better respond to communities' behavioral health needs. The expansion includes:

- 24 CIT training academies and several specialized training academies to train at least 700 police officers, first responders, behavioral health providers, and advocacy/peers.
- Monthly technical assistance to all four regional CIT programs including policy development, data specifications, dispatch workflows, and protocols.
- A quarterly statewide community of practice for new and emerging CIT programs.

Thundermist is hiring regional coordinators and collaborating with institutions of higher education in the state to research the following outcomes: behavioral and culture changes among police and police departments; diversion of consumers from criminal justice to treatment; reductions in consumer and officer injury; and decreases in officer use of force. Data and program evaluation will be used to improve curriculum and to inform program development in regions and municipalities.

Timeline: The program started January 1, 2023, and is anticipated to end in June 2026.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of eligible sworn officers trained	205	365

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Percentage of Rhode Island police departments certified	0%	0%

Female Youth Residential Facility Design

Project Identification Number: 10027

Funding Amount: \$1,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$999,850

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The funds are covering some design and architectural planning costs needed for a new youth residential facility to care for female clients, ranging in age from 13 to 18. The size of the new facility will be approximately 30,000 square feet and located on State-owned property. The State's goal is to create a facility with a residential-style atmosphere that has 16 residential beds, classrooms, treatment rooms, recreation areas, and support spaces for youth, staff, and families.

It is anticipated that total project costs will be approximately \$36.5 million, which will be funded through the Rhode Island Capital Plan Fund. The \$1.0 million State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) appropriation is supporting the preliminary technical assistance to start creating programming, design, and cost-estimate documents.

Timeline: In January 2023, the Rhode Island Department of Administration, Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) executed a contract with DBVW Architects Inc. to serve as the State's design agent. In March 2023, DCAMM executed a contract with Peregrine Group LLC to serve as the owner's program manager. Programming, schematic, and preliminary design documents were completed in February 2024, and construction is scheduled to begin in July 2024.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Design documents*	Completion of the programming, schematic, and preliminary design documents	0	1
Construction begins*		0	0

* These are yes/no binary indicators: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.

Public Infrastructure, Technology, and Administration

Municipal Roads Grant Program

Project Identification Number: 10065

Funded Amount: \$20,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$1,685,751

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The program provides funding to municipalities for the construction or maintenance of roads, sidewalks, and bridges. To be eligible for funding, bridges must be on a local public way and on the State Bridge Inventory. The funding is being distributed in the following way:

- \$5 million is being equally divided among the 39 municipalities (\$128,205 each).
- \$15 million is being divided proportionately based on municipalities' share of non-federal lane miles.

Municipalities must provide a 67% match to use the funds provided with the *Municipal Roads Grant Program*. Funds awarded under this program cannot cover more than 33% of the total project cost. For example, if a municipality received \$500,000, adjusted total project costs would be \$1.5 million. Multiplying the \$1.5 million by the 67% match yields a local match of \$1.0 million.

Timeline: Cities and towns were required to apply to the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) by October 15, 2023. RIDOT made total awards available to cities and towns by December 15, 2023. Any funds not obligated by July 31, 2024, will be allocated to RIDOT for statewide paving projects.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Amount of funding obligated by municipalities	0	\$16,871,794
Number of projects funded	0	647
Lane miles of roads rehabilitated	0	170
Number of bridges repaired	0	2
Linear feet of sidewalks rehabilitated	0	9,119

Pandemic Recovery Office

Project Identification Number: 10022

Funded Amount: \$15,378,934

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$11,979,250

Project Expenditure Category: 7.1 Administrative Expenses

Project Overview: The Pandemic Recovery (PRO) is within the Rhode Island Department of Administration (DOA) and serves as the central office for policy coordination and compliance for federal COVID-19 stimulus funds, including but not limited to those provided under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

The funds are supporting state employees and contractors to administer and oversee State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) projects. PRO creates and publishes reports required by U.S. Treasury and the Rhode Island General Assembly, and it posts monthly transaction data and final reports for all SFRF projects once all the funds are spent and key performance indicator data is collected.

Timeline: PRO will function through the end of the SFRF program, with a likely end date in the fourth quarter of State Fiscal Year 2027.

Municipal Public Safety Infrastructure

Project Identification Number: 10075

Funded Amount: \$11,000,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$3,665,132

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: The Rhode Island Department of Administration is awarding grants for matching support to municipalities with an ongoing or immediate public safety infrastructure need through a competitive grant process. Eligible activities include design, predevelopment, construction, and direct administrative costs related to a public safety infrastructure project. Grant amounts are limited to \$5 million for projects that serve a regional purpose and \$1 million for all others.

Timeline: Cities and towns were required to apply to the program by February 2024. An evaluation committee scored the proposals using a scoring rubric, and award decisions were communicated to the cities and towns in March 2024.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Number of grants awarded	0	9
Percentage of projects completed	0	0%

R-Line Free Service Pilot

Project Identification Number: 10028

Project Completion Date: January 2, 2024

Funded Amount: \$3,250,000

Final Expended Amount: \$3,250,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: From September 2018 through August 2019, the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) provided 2,489,179 rides on the R-Line – a bus route from Pawtucket through Providence with RIPTA’s heaviest ridership. The pandemic significantly reduced ridership on the R-Line, with 1,227,744 rides from September 2020 through August 2021.

RIPTA implemented a free fare pilot on the R-Line. The funds paid for the installation of passenger counters on the buses, offset lost revenue at a rate of \$2 per ride, and paid for a consultant to complete studies required by the Federal Transit Administration and the Rhode Island General Assembly, the latter of which was due by March 1, 2024. The funding also supported lost revenue for paratransit services that operate within three-quarters of a mile of the R-Line.

RIPTA exhausted the initial SFRF appropriation of \$2.5 million provided in the State Fiscal Year 2023 budget in March 2023. The State Fiscal Year 2024 budget provided an additional \$750,000 from SFRF that was used for costs incurred in July and August 2023.

Timeline: The pilot took place from September 1, 2022, through August 31, 2023.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Ridership	Return to pre-pandemic ridership levels on the R-Line	2,489,179	2,489,179	2,592,553
Increase in ridership because of fare-free service	Studies show that fare-free transit can increase ridership by 48%	1,227,744	1,817,060	2,592,553

Safety Barriers Study

Project Identification Number: 10019

Funded Amount: \$1,750,000

Expended Amount as of June 30, 2024: \$986,233

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: Between January 2018 and June 2022, there were 17 known suicides from the four bridges maintained by the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority (RITBA) – the Jamestown Verrazzano Bridge, Mount Hope Bridge, Newport Pell Bridge, and Sakonnet River Bridge. Existing suicide-prevention tools include cameras and signs with contact information for the Samaritans and the Bristol Health Equity Zone in times of crisis.

RITBA retained a consulting firm to develop a detailed report on what, if any, safety barrier measures are possible on the Jamestown Verrazzano and Mount Hope bridges. The study, which will include high-level cost estimates for each measure and the potential impact of ongoing maintenance and inspections, will provide RITBA a basis for informed decision-making. An additional appropriation in State Fiscal Year 2024 funded an additional study on the Newport Pell and Sakonnet River bridges.

Timeline: In July 2021, RITBA issued a request for proposals (RFP) for conceptual study services for safety barrier measures. Proposals were evaluated, and a task order was executed with Atkins North America, Inc. in November 2022 to study possible measures on the Jamestown Verrazzano and Mount Hope bridges. The firm issued the final study on the Jamestown Verrazzano and Mount Hope bridges in June 2024. The study on the Newport Pell and Sakonnet River bridges is expected to be completed in early calendar year 2025.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Performance-to-date
Engineering study*	Issuance of two studies by an external engineering firm on possible suicide deterrents	0	1
Action plan*	Development of two action plans to be implemented contingent upon available funding	0	0

* These are yes/no binary indicators: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.

Broadband Mapping and Planning

Project Identification Number: 10011

Project Completion Date: April 30, 2023

Funded Amount: \$500,000

Final Expended Amount: \$500,000

Project Expenditure Category: 6.1 Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services

Project Overview: Rhode Island has one of the nation's strongest middle-mile fiber broadband networks, with over 90% of its residents living within one mile of high-speed fiber-optic broadband.¹⁵⁷ The state, however, still has issues with the uptake of broadband, broadband access, and broadband reliability, especially in rural, lower-income, and island communities, often due to cost. About one in five Rhode Islanders lack in-home wireline broadband,¹⁵⁸ and the state has the highest-percentage reliance on cellular

¹⁵⁷ <https://broadbandnow.com/Rhode-Island>

¹⁵⁸ Source: 2019 American Community Survey Estimated Data (Table S2801-Types of Computers and Internet Subscriptions)

data for internet access in New England. Additionally, close to half of the state does not reliably access internet download and upload speeds above the new federal minimum of 100mbps/20mbps.¹⁵⁹

The project allowed for the hiring of a statewide broadband coordinator, building the broadband maps needed to complete the necessary strategic planning, and completing a statewide broadband strategic plan to guide work in upcoming fiscal years. These three foundational elements were necessary to unlock and utilize additional federal funding being designated for broadband. The State needed a clearly articulated strategic plan and a five-year implementation plan that is developed in partnership with and in consultation of other state and local stakeholders. These plans must be grounded in data and built from strong broadband access and planning maps. Rhode Island also needed an office and director who will oversee the effort, ensure compliance with various federal programs, and ensure the program meets the State’s targeted goals and engages all relevant stakeholder groups.

Timeline: The State submitted its strategic plan to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) in May 2022. Additional work on the broadband plan was completed from July through September 2022 to align with General Assembly requirements and based on feedback from NTIA. While mapping must be done at a high level prior to plan finalization, it will remain ongoing.

Performance:

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
Director of broadband*	Hire a director of broadband	0	1	1
Strategic plan*	State strategic plan finalized and released	0	1	1
Broadband map phase 1*	State broadband map created with, at minimum, the following layers: known fiberoptic cable in state, household and business locations, low-income housing locations, and median internet speeds experienced by census tract, as well as the following functionality: ArcGIS Survey 123 to be used for crowd-sourcing data; capacity to accept FCC data; and structured mapping framework, data	0	1	1

¹⁵⁹ [Rhode Island Broadband Analysis](#)

Key Performance Indicator	Description	Baseline	Goal	Final Performance
	standards, and data models to allow additional layers/expansion			
Broadband map phase 2*		0	1	1

* These are yes/no binary indicators: 0 meaning 'no', 1 meaning 'yes'.