
Olmsted County Public Assistance Programs

2014 Report to CSAB

September, 2014

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an annual overview of program outcomes and challenges to the Olmsted County Community Services Advisory Board (CSAB). The CSAB is appointed body that provides community input and makes recommendations to the Olmsted County Board of Commissioners in regards to programs, services, and community needs.

Introduction and Background

Olmsted County, with a population of about 150,000¹, delivers poverty programs to more than 20,000 people on an annual basis.

Poverty Definitions

‘Poverty’ is defined by Merriam-Webster as the ‘state of one who lacks a usual or socially acceptable amount of money or material possessions’. In the United States, the state of poverty is official measured for every household according to a formula based on income, household size, and number of children per household. The measure is commonly referred to as the ‘Federal Poverty Threshold’ (FPT) and is calculated by federal Office of Management and Budget on an annual basis.

A simplified version of the Thresholds, the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) is calculated and published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for use in a wide variety of government means-tested programs. Federal Poverty Guidelines for 2014 are listed in Table 1. For a family of 4, income below \$23,850 is considered ‘below the poverty line’.

Table 1: 2014 Poverty Guidelines	
Persons in household	Poverty guideline
1	\$11,670
2	\$15,730
3	\$19,790
4	\$23,850
5	\$27,910
6	\$31,970
7	\$36,030
8	\$40,090
For households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,670 for each additional person.	
Source: U.S. Health and Human Services, http://aspe.hhs.gov/POVERTY/14poverty.cfm	

The methodology for calculating the federal poverty measures was developed in the 1960s and has not been modified since that time. As such, many changes in the economy such as the relative cost of housing and the childcare are not easily accounted for with the formula. Therefore, many government programs use a multiplier of the FPG to determine means tested eligibility. (For example, children in households with income up to 200% of FPG are eligible for Medical Assistance.)

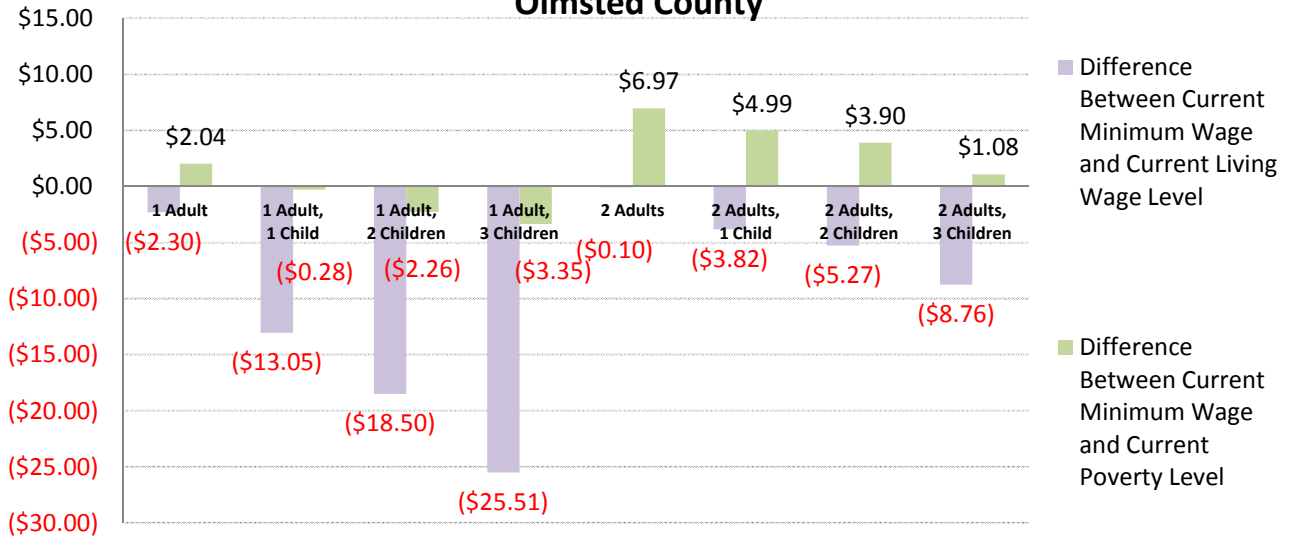
Because the official methodology for measuring poverty neglects many issues, researchers and organizations have developed a variety of alternatives to measure a

‘living wage’, in an attempt to capture the gap between income that is officially defined as below poverty and a basic standard of living (“living wage”) that American society would broadly accept. Charts 1 illustrates that working and earning minimum wage in Rochester (currently \$8.00/hour) means that the household stays in poverty, regardless of the household composition. Even a household of 2 working adults and no children would have an income of \$0.10/hour less than the poverty line at \$8.00 / hour.

¹ U.S. Census Estimates for 2013, accessed at: <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/27/27109.html>

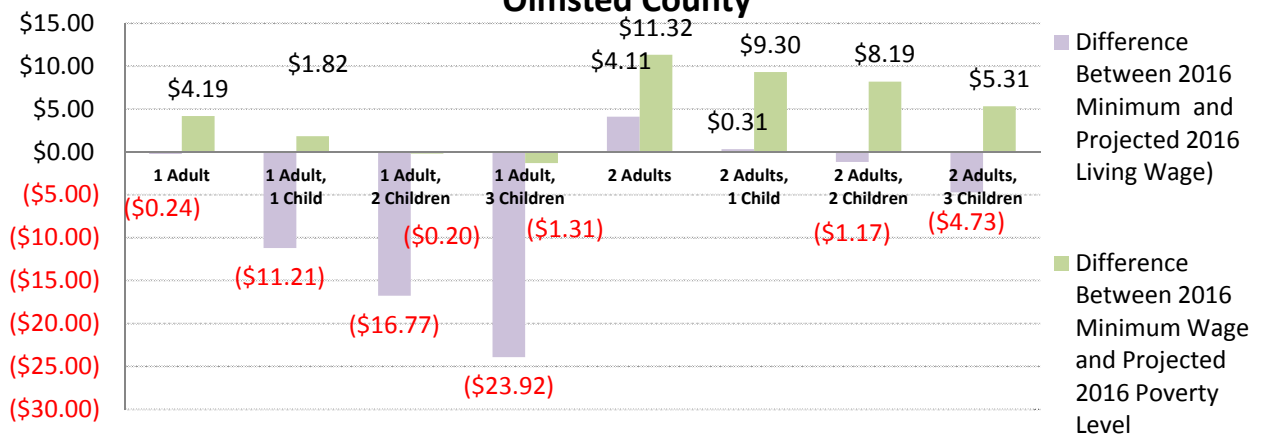
Legislation passed in 2014 in Minnesota will increase the minimum wage over a 3 year period to \$9.50 / hour in 2016. Chart 2 illustrates that this increase will help move some households (particularly households with 2 adult earners) out of poverty; however, most households will remain below a 'living wage'. For example, a single parent with one child earning \$9.50 per hour will have income of \$1.82/hour above the poverty line, but \$11.21/hour below the living wage line.

Chart 1: 2014 Income Insufficiency by Household Types, Olmsted County



Source for Living Wage: Dr. Amy Glasmeier, MIT; accessed at: <http://livingwage.mit.edu/places/2710954880>

Chart 2: 2016 Income Insufficiency by Household Types, Olmsted County

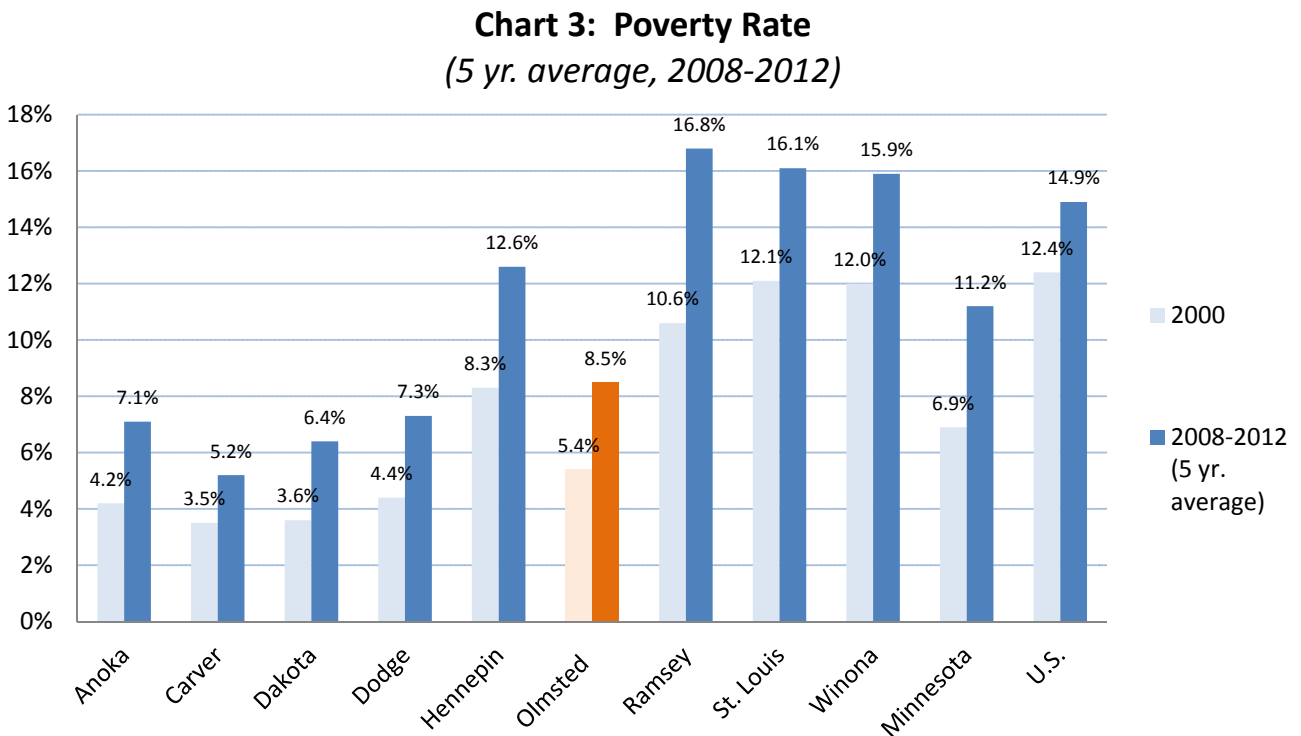


Source for Living Wage: Dr. Amy Glasmeier, MIT; accessed at: <http://livingwage.mit.edu/places/2710954880>

Poverty in Olmsted County

In Olmsted County, the poverty rate is about 8.5% (or approximately 12,700 people). (See Chart 3.) This is lower than the State of Minnesota rate of 11.2% and the U.S. rate of 14.9% during the same timeframe (2008-2012, average). Olmsted County's poverty rate is also lower than other urban counties (Hennepin, Ramsey, St. Louis, Stearns), but higher than suburban counties of similar size (Anoka, Washington, Carver, Scott, Dakota).

Poverty has increased over time. The current rate of 8.5% households in poverty has consistently increased since 2000, when the rate was 6.4%. This increase is similar to the statewide increase from 12.4% in 2000 to 14.9% in 2008-2012.

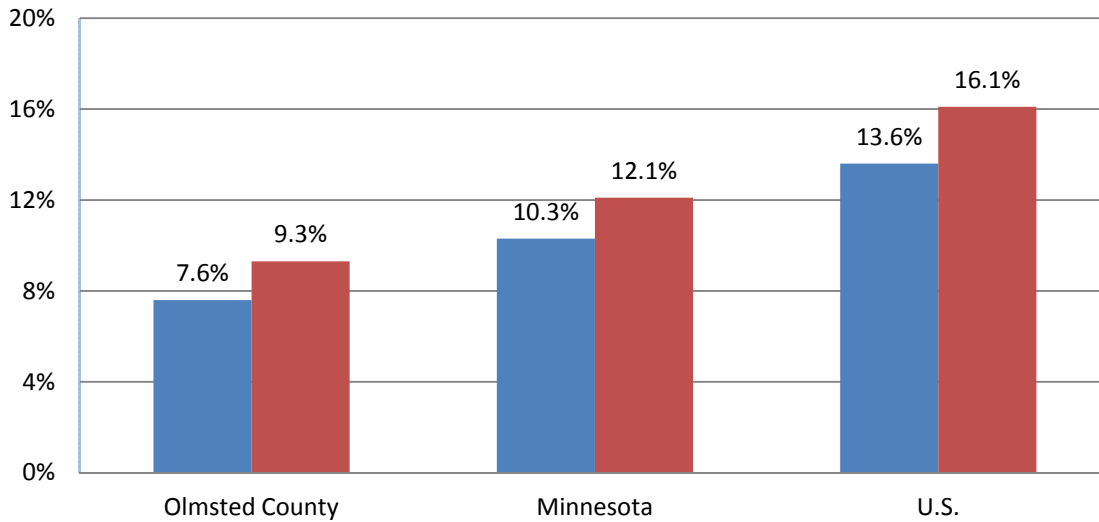


Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; 2000 Census Summary File 3
Extracted from: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>

Poverty does not affect all populations equally. In particular, women, persons of color, people of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, immigrants, people with disabilities, and children are more likely to experience poverty.

In Olmsted County, 9.3% of women live below the poverty line, as compared to 7.6% of men. (See Chart 4.) The difference between men and women in Olmsted County is comparable to the difference at a state and national level. Chart 5 illustrates the difference in poverty rates by age group. In Olmsted County, 9.8% of children under 18 are in households with income below the poverty line, as compared to 8.2% for population between ages of 18 and 64. This 1.6 percentage point difference is less of a disparity than the difference between these age groups at a statewide (3.6 percentage points) or national (7.1 percentage points) level.

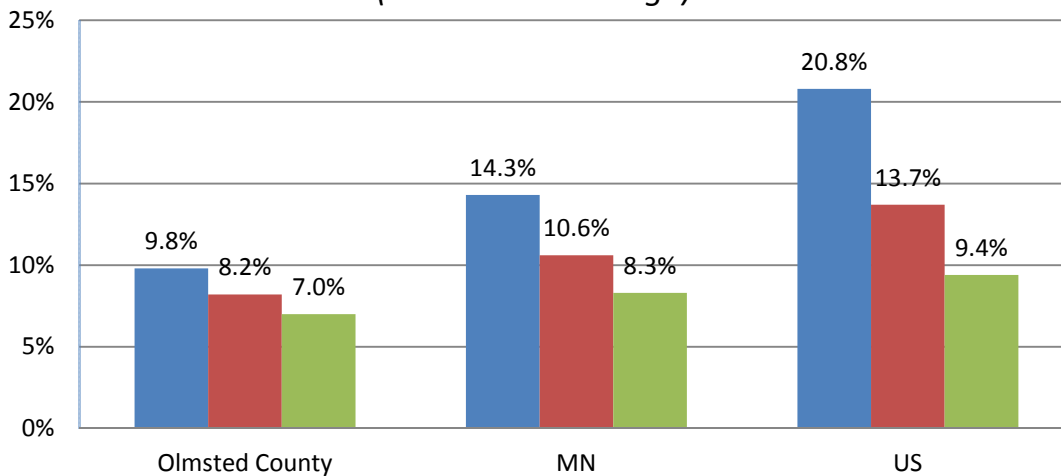
Chart 4: % Poverty Population, by Gender
(2008-2012 average)



Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates;
Extracted from: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>

■ Men ■ Women

Chart 5: % Poverty Population, by age
(2008-2012 average)

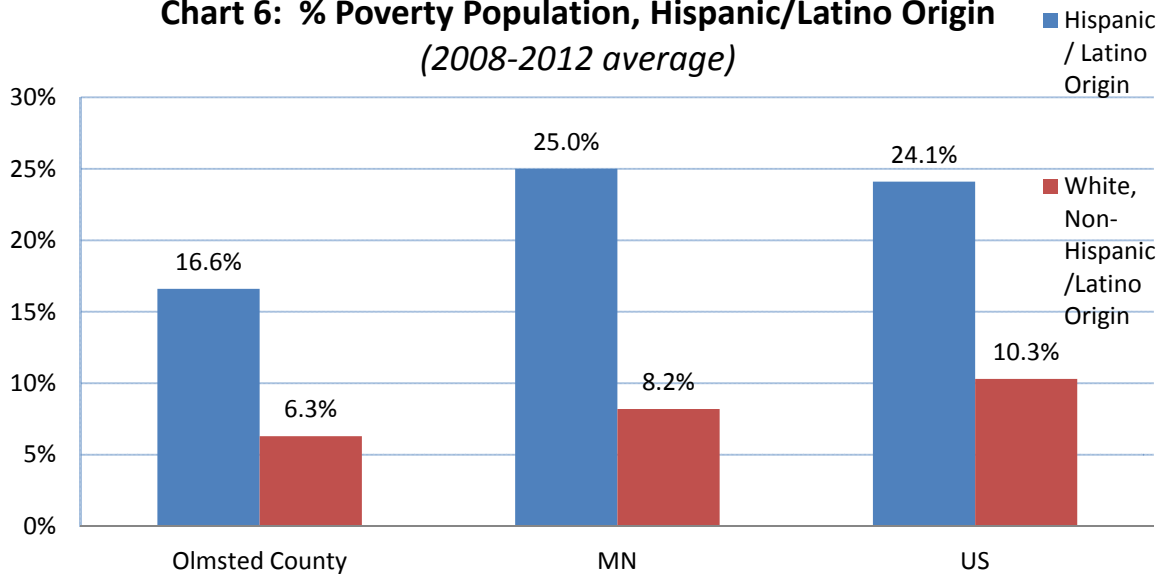


Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates;
Extracted from: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>

■ Under 18 ■ 18-64 ■ 65+

Similarly, a higher proportion of people with a Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race) have a household income below the poverty line. In Olmsted County, 16.6% of Hispanic/Latino people are below the poverty line. (It is important to note there is a non-trivial margin of error around data at the county level and further research is needed to make strong conclusions about these data.) The disparity in Olmsted County follows a similar pattern to the disparity level at a state and national level. (See Chart 6.)

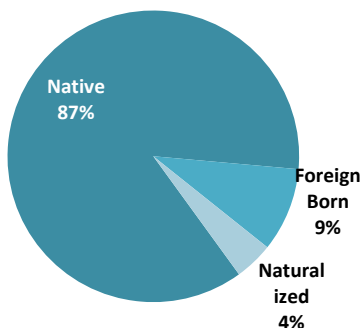
Chart 6: % Poverty Population, Hispanic/Latino Origin
(2008-2012 average)



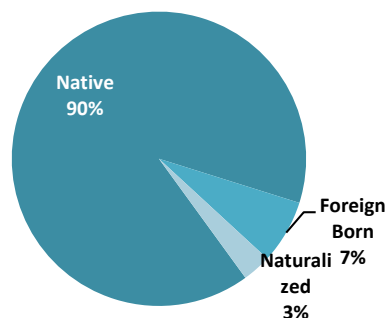
Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates;
Extracted from: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>

Almost 20,000 people in Olmsted County were foreign-born or have a naturalized citizenship. This is about 13% of the total population in the County, somewhat higher than the statewide proportion (10%), but lower than the national proportion (18%). Chart 7 shows that a much higher proportion of foreign-born populations live in households with income below the poverty line (16.7% in Olmsted, 20.6% statewide). (It is important to note there is a non-trivial margin of error around data at the county level and further research is needed to make strong conclusions about these data.) The disparity in poverty between native populations and foreign-born populations is higher in Olmsted County and the State of Minnesota than that nationally. Naturalized citizens also experience poverty at a higher rate than native born, however at rates much lower than foreign born populations.

Olmsted County, Nativity



Minnesota, Nativity



United States, Nativity

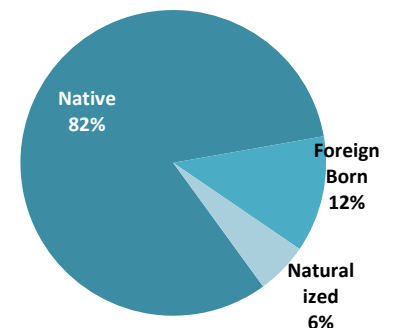
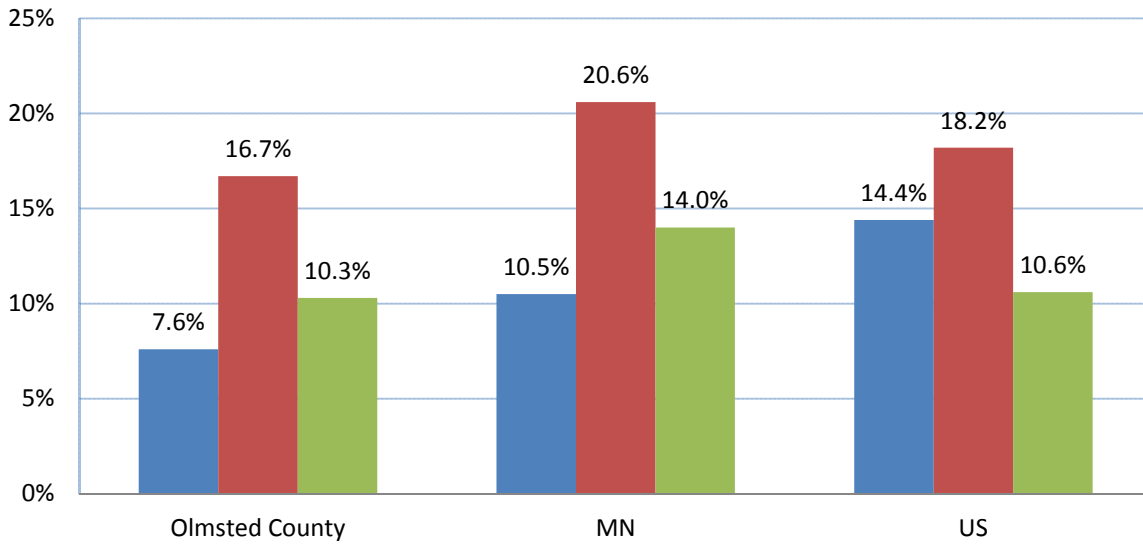


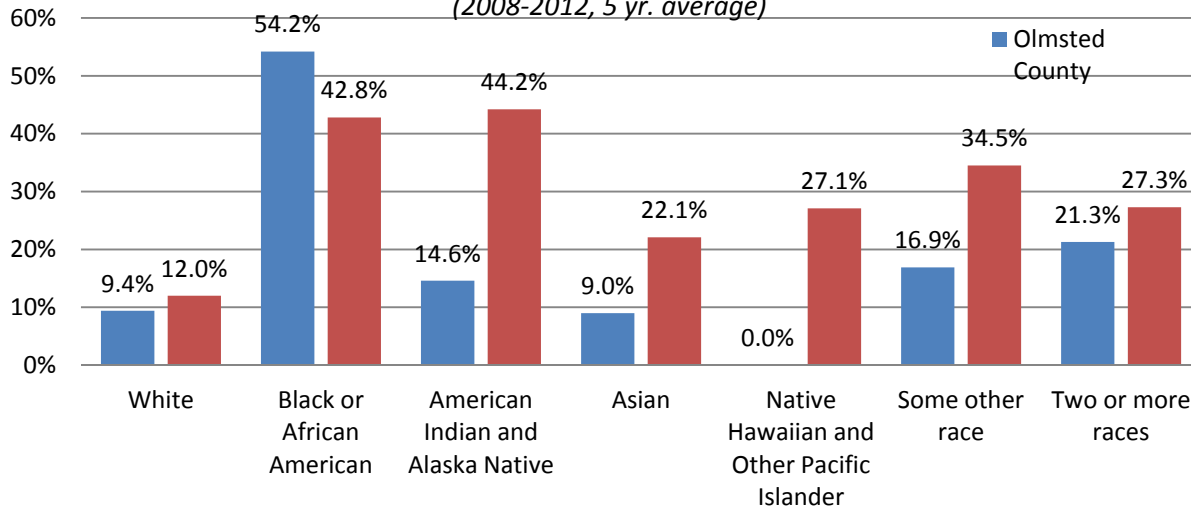
Chart 7: % Poverty Population, by Nativity
(2008-2012 average)



Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Extracted from: <http://factfinder2.census.gov> ■ Native ■ Foreign Born ■ Naturalized

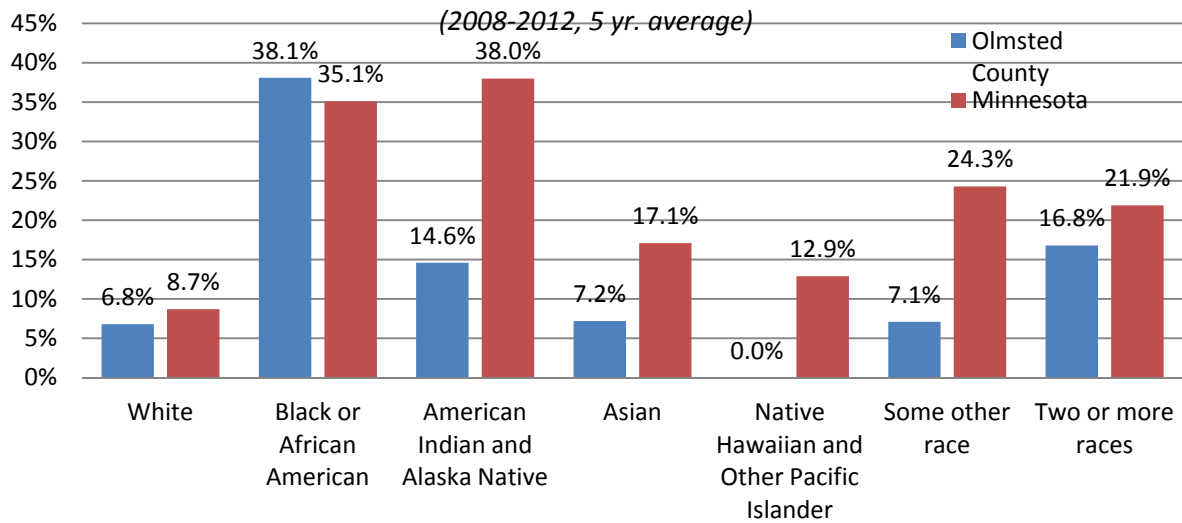
In Olmsted County a higher proportion of people identifying as African American or Black are poor than a populations of any other race. More than 54% of Black or African Americans in Olmsted County live in a household with income of less than 125% of the poverty line. While Olmsted County compares favorably to the State of Minnesota on most poverty measures, it does not compare favorably for Black or African American population. This is true for all levels of poverty (125%, 100% and 50%). (See Charts 8, 9, and 10.) (Again, It is important to note there is a non-trivial margin of error around data at the county level and further research is needed to make strong conclusions about these data.)

Chart 8: Population Under 125% of Poverty, by Race
(2008-2012, 5 yr. average)



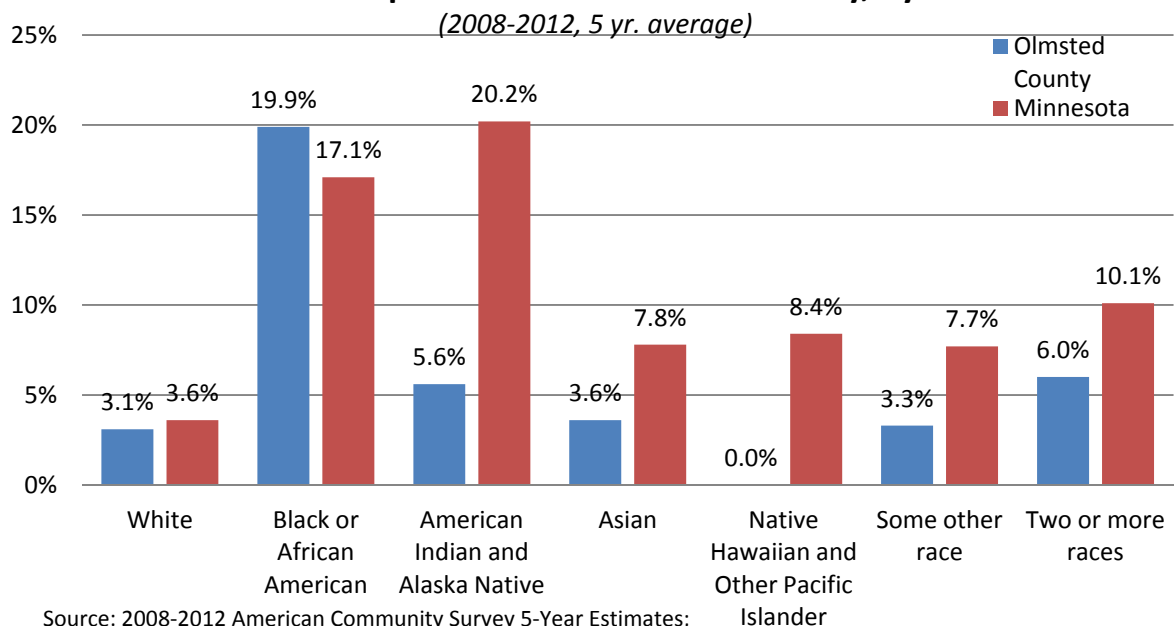
Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Extracted from: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>

Chart 9: Population Under 100% of Poverty, by Race



Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates;
 Extracted from: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>

Chart 10: Population Under 50% of Poverty, by Race



Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates;
 Extracted from: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>

Addressing Poverty

As hinted through the data review above, understanding and addressing poverty is an enormous task, complicated by a myriad of historic policies at all levels of government. Programs intended to combat poverty range from broad, high level tax policies (e.g., Earned Income Tax Credits or Minnesota Working Families) to small programs aimed at specific, small populations.

While the goal of Olmsted County Family Support and Assistance is to help people out of poverty and improve self-sufficiency, the programs administered at the County level function as a large part of the ‘safety net’ for the impoverished in our society. As such, outcomes are measured not just at the broadest level (e.g., Have we reduced poverty in our community?), but also at a more hands-on level (e.g., Did the safety net provided through the County function as intended by policy makers to help impoverished populations?)

Public Assistance Programs

The Department of Community Services’ *Family Support and Assistance Division (FSA)* is responsible for implementation and administration of state and federal programs to poverty populations, broadly known as ‘Public Assistance’. The Public Assistance staff includes 5 units of eligibility workers and case aides, totaling approximately 66 staff and 5 supervisors.

The mission of the FSA division is to improve well-being, self-sufficiency, and stability for people experiencing poverty in Olmsted County. Table 2 describes the Public Assistance programs that are delivered through FSA and the legal authority delineating each program.

Table 2: Public Assistance Programs Delivered through Family Support and Assistance		
Program Type	Program Name	Legal Authority
Cash relief to families.	Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)	MFIP is Minnesota’s program for families in poverty. The program is funded through a federal block grant called ‘Temporary Assistance to Needy Families’ (TANF), which is part of the Social Security Act, Title IV, Part A. http://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title04/0400.htm
	Diversionary Work Program (DWP)	DWP is a 4 month program designed by the State of Minnesota to rapidly move parents to work, thereby avoiding enrollment in MFIP. Funding for this program also comes through Federal TANF block grants. MN Legislative definitions found here: MN 256J.88 .
	Emergency Assistance	Funding flows through the TANF block grant and is defined in statute here: MN 9500.1261
Cash relief to adults without children.	General Assistance	State funded and defined here: MN 256D.
	Minnesota Supplemental Aid	State funding and defined here: MN 256D.33
	Emergency General Assistance	Funding flows through GA funds and is defined under the same statute.
	Group Residential Housing (GRH)	State funded and defined here: MN 256I.
Food relief to families or single adults	Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP)	The SNAP program is funded by Congress as part of the Agricultural Act (Food, Farm and Jobs Bill), implemented by the USDA.
Health care assistance	Medical Assistance	Medical Assistance is primarily funded federally through the Social Security Act, 42 C.S. Code Chapter 7, Sub. XIX. Additional state definitions are in MN 256B

Caseload and Efficiency Measures

Olmsted County manages an average of 13,300 cases per month in 2014. (See Chart 11.) On an average month, approximately 24,000 people are clients of Public Assistance in Olmsted County. In other words, about 14 people out of every 100 Olmsted County residents are clients of Public Assistance in any given month. (See Chart 12.) Many people are enrolled in more than one program. (For example, a household may have an open case in Medical Assistance, Cash Assistance, and Food Assistance simultaneously.) Caseloads have continuously grown steadily over the past decade, with a large increase in 2014 as a result of policy changes stemming from the Affordable Care Act and MNsure.

**Chart 11: Olmsted County Public Assistance
Average Monthly Caseloads,
2010-2014**

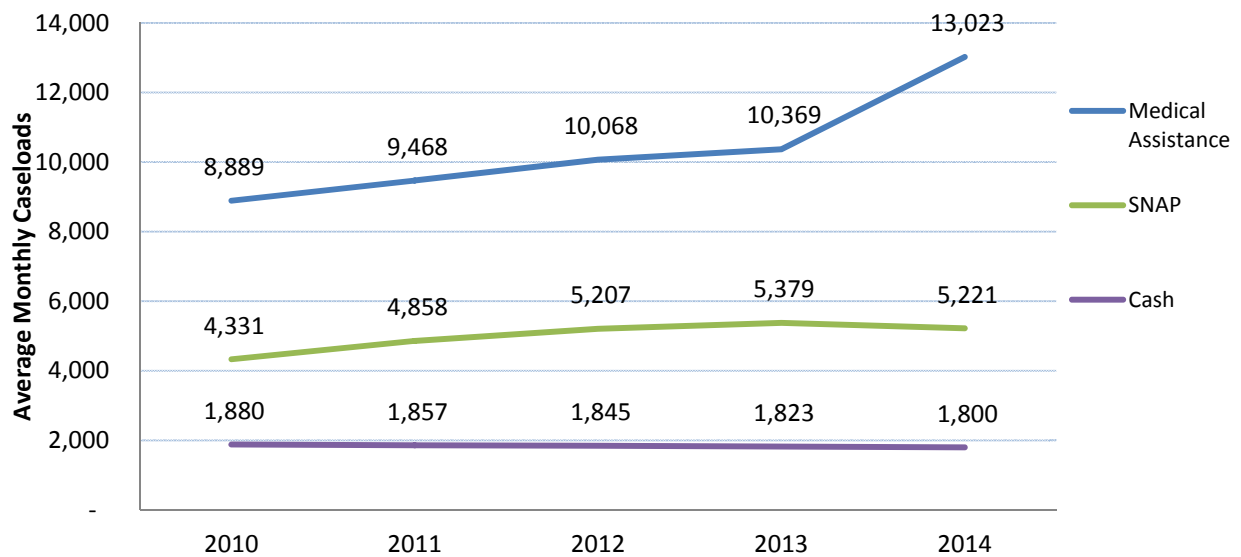
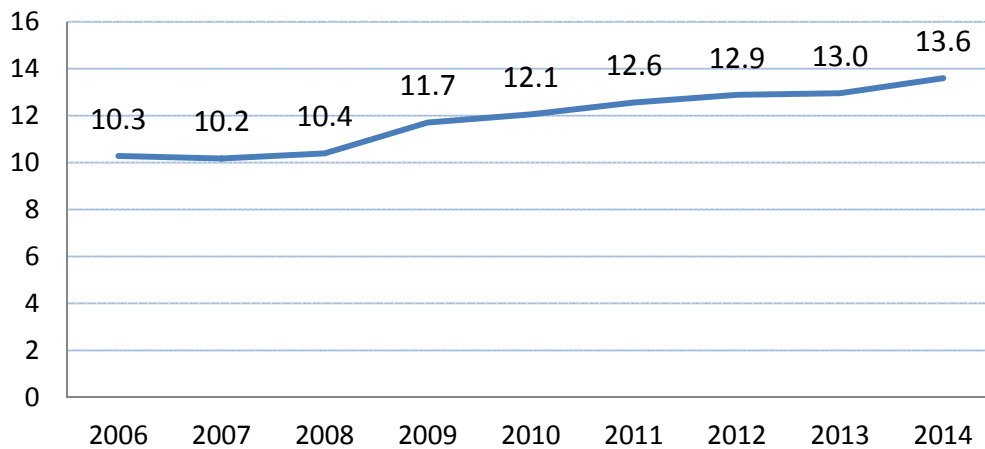


Chart 12: Public Assistance Clients / 100 Residents



Efficiency Measures

Olmsted County Public Assistance distributed benefits in the amount of approximately \$235,484,000 to public assistance clients in 2013. (See Table 3.) With a total budget (including all overhead and administration) of \$10,200,000, this approximately \$23 distributed for every \$1 of administrative cost. The percentage of dollars spent on admin (4.4%) compares favorably with industry standards of 10% - 25% for non-profit operations.

Table 3: 2013 Public Assistance Distributed in Olmsted County

Program	2013 Average Monthly Clients	2013 Annual Benefits Delivered to Clients	2013 Average Benefits/ Person
Family Cash	2,289 (MFIP & DWP)	\$7,276,400 ¹	\$268 MFIP (monthly) \$129 DWP (monthly)
Singles Cash (GA/MSA)	640 MSA 577 GRH 385 GA	\$5,488,400 ²	\$567 GRH (monthly) \$144 GA (monthly) \$90 MSA (monthly)
Food Support (SNAP)	11,065	\$14,718,300	\$111 (monthly)
Child Care Assistance	2,016 children	BSF: \$3,725,300 MFIP, TY: \$3,135,400	\$3,403 (annual per child)
Medical Assistance	17,677 ³	\$201,140,000 ⁴	\$11,400 (annual) (median likely much lower)
2013 Total Payments		\$235,484,000	

¹MN Family Investment Program (MFIP), Diversionary Work Program (DWP), Work Benefit Program (WB), Emergency Assistance (EA)

²General Assistance (GA), MN Supplemental Aid (MSA), Emergency General Assistance (EGA), Group Residential Housing (GRH), Refugee Assistance (RPRC)

³Does not include MNSure cases

⁴Estimate based on 2.5% of total statewide annual payment for MA from all sources.

In terms of county levy expense, public assistance clients receive \$54 for every \$1 of county levy spent on administering the programs. In total, \$4,547,000 in levy funds were used to run the operations by Olmsted County Public Assistance in 2013. (See Table X.) This equates to \$30.61 per resident.

Table 4: Olmsted County Public Assistance Costs, 2013		
Expenses:		
Program Expenses:		
Salaries/Benefits		4,617,425
Indirect Costs		979,272
Direct Client Costs		1,797,391
Contracted Services		1,900,554
	Total Program Expenses	9,294,642
Administrative Expenses		902,293
	Total Program and Administrative Expenses	\$ 10,196,935
Revenues:		
Service Revenues		1,810,555
Grants		3,839,688
		5,650,243
Tax Levy/Reserves		4,546,692
	Total Revenues and Tax Levy/Reserves	\$ 10,196,935
Per Capita		
	Population for 2013	148,560
	Expenses Per Capita	\$ 68.64
	Tax Levy Per Capita	\$ 30.61

Specific Public Assistance Programs

The rest of this report describes each set of programs, including:

- Legislative purpose of the programs
- Eligibility requirements for the programs
- Population of Olmsted County residents served by the program
- Outcome measures or results for the program
- Process measures for the programs
- Issues and concerns for the coming year for the programs

Family Cash Assistance Programs

Olmsted County Family Support and Assistance administers 5 cash relief programs available to assist families with children under 18, as follows

- ✓ Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)
- ✓ Diversionary Work Program (DWP)
- ✓ Work Benefit Program (WB)
- ✓ Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)
- ✓ Emergency Assistance (EA)

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)

Description and legislative purpose of the program:

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Public Law 104-193, eliminated the entitlement program of aid to families with dependent children (AFDC) and replaced it with block grants to states for temporary assistance for needy families (TANF). TANF provides cash assistance for a limited time to families with children and to pregnant women. Minnesota's TANF assistance is provided through a statewide expansion of MFIP. The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) helps families with children meet their basic needs, while helping parents move to financial stability through work. Parents are expected to work, and are supported to work with both cash, food, and child care assistance. Employment counselors work with families to achieve employment at a wage that is above poverty. Most families have a lifetime limit of 60 months on MFIP.

Eligibility:

MFIP is for families with children and pregnant women. To qualify, your family must:

- Meet an initial income test
- Meet an initial asset limit of \$2,000
- Provide needed verifications.

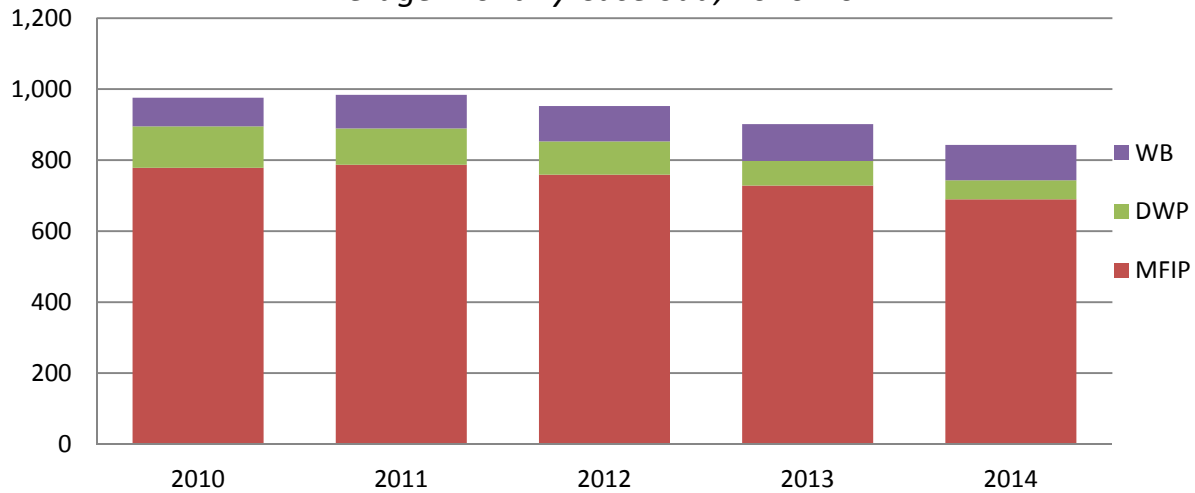
Asset and vehicle limits

- You may own up to \$2,000 in assets and qualify for MFIP. Your worker can tell you what property is counted toward the limit.
- You also may own a licensed vehicle with a loan value up to \$10,000. Any loan value above \$10,000 will count toward the asset limit. If you own more than one vehicle, the combined value over \$7,500 of all other vehicles will count toward the asset limit.

Population:

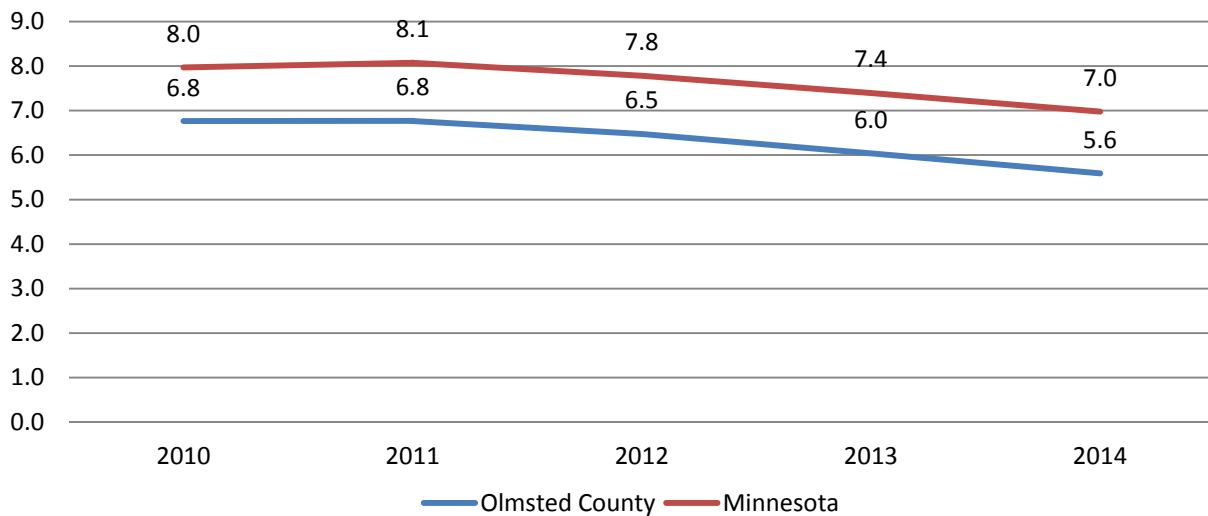
For the first half of 2014, there have been an average of 843 cases of family cash (MFIP, DWP, and WB), representing a 14% decrease since 2010. (See Chart 13.) During the same time period, cases statewide have declined by about 10%. Chart 14 shows that the decline in cases / capita has been similar at the county and the state level, falling to a level of 5.6 cases/1,000 capita in the County and 7.0 cases / 1,000 capita statewide.

**Chart 13: Olmsted County Family Cash Public Assistance,
Average Monthly Caseload, 2010-2014**



Source: DHS, MAXIS; Extracted by Olmsted County FSA , August 2014.

**Chart 14: Family Cash Cases / 1,000 Population
Olmsted County & Minnesota**



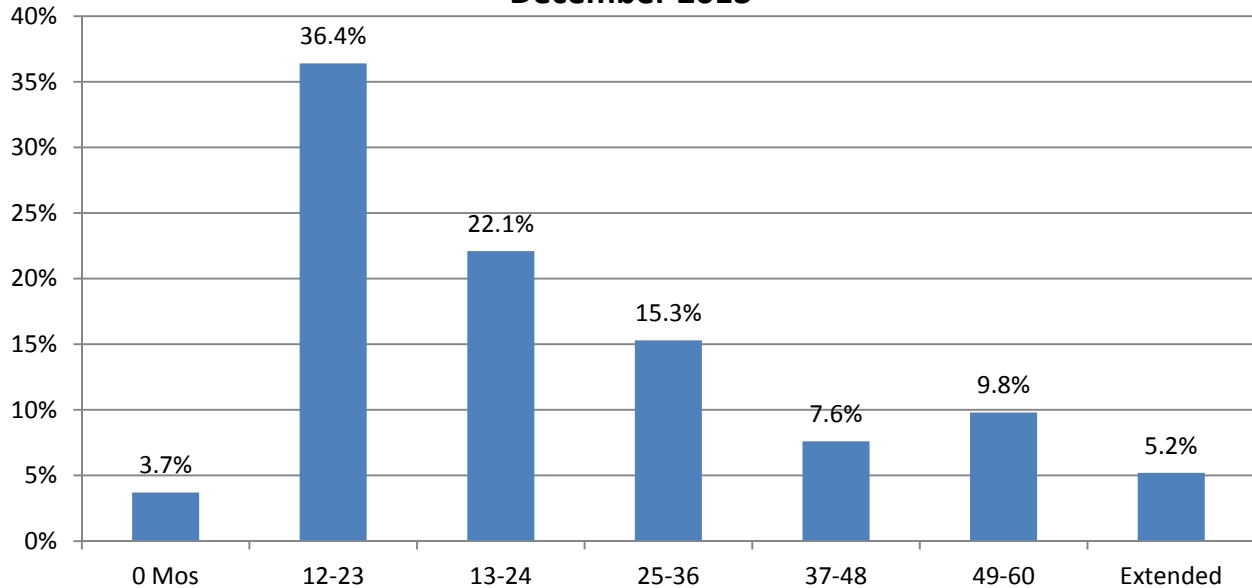
Sources: DHS MAXIS,
MN State Demographic Center Population Estimates

Average length of time on programs:

Within the primary family cash program, MFIP, about 40% of clients remain on the program for less than 24 months. Around 17% of cases remain open for 3-5 years. A small proportion (5%) of MFIP cases are allowed to remain on the caseload longer than 60 months. In order to be allowed to remain on the program for more than 60 months, clients must document disabilities that do not allow work. Additionally, cases that involve

only children (e.g., emancipated children or children in foster care) are allowed to remain on MFIP longer than 60 months.

Chart 15: % Of County MFIP Cases by Countable Months, December 2013



Source: DHS MAXIS, Compiled by Olmsted County FSA, August 2014

Results (Outcome Measurement):

The Annualized Three-year Self-support Index (S-SI) - Percentage of caregivers eligible for MFIP or DWP in a baseline quarter that are a “success” in the measurement quarter three years later. Success is defined as either working an average of 30 or more hours per week in paid employment OR being off the cash portion of MFIP in each month of the measurement quarter. Those leaving MFIP due to the time limit or sanctioned off are only counted as a success if they either had 30 hours per week paid work in one of the last three months before leaving cash or started receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Annualized Three Year Self-support Index and Range of Expected Performance for Determination of 2014 Performance-based Funds (Annualized April 2012 through March 2013)					
County	Average Quarterly Number of Adults	Actual Three Year Self-support Index	Range of Expected Performance		Above, Within, or Below, Expected Performance
			Lower Limit	Upper Limit	
Olmsted	979	0.757	0.748	0.796	Within
Annualized Three Year Self-support Index and Range of Expected Performance for Determination of 2015 Performance-based Funds (Annualized April 2013 through March 2014)					
County	Average Quarterly Number of Adults	Actual Three Year Self-support Index	Range of Expected Performance		Above, Within, or Below, Expected Performance
			Lower Limit	Upper Limit	
Olmsted	1004	0.776	0.781	0.814	Below

TANF Work Participation Rate (WPR) - The federal measure for the state is the average monthly percentage of MFIP cases funded by the federal TANF program – and therefore required to meet work participation requirements – that successfully complete and document the required number of hours in approved work or work-related activities in the given month. The average is computed for a federal fiscal year. The measure includes about one quarter of MFIP cases in a given month. It excludes two-parent cases, Family Stabilization Services (FSS) cases, active cases that received no cash benefit in the month, and some others.

TANF Work Participation Rate for Determination of 2014 Performance-based Funds (Annualized April 2012 through March 2013)				
County	Average Monthly Number of Adults	Last Year's Annual Rate April 2012 - March 2013	Annual Rate April 2013 - March 2014	Eligible for 2015 Performance-based Funds
Olmsted	269	45.60%	48.00%	No
TANF Work Participation Rate for Determination of 2015 Performance-based Funds (Annualized April 2013 through March 2014)				
County	Average Monthly Number of Adults	Last Year's Annual Rate April 2012 - March 2013	Annual Rate April 2013 - March 2014	Eligible for 2015 Performance-based Funds
Olmsted	247	48.00%	44.30%	No

Source: DHS/DEED reports, Compiled by Olmsted County FSA

Process measures:

The most recent available data show that only 21 of 2,042 cash cases in the current month have not received an eligibility determination in less than the state requirements of 30 days. These data are imperfect and more focus on development of better measures is underway for 2014 and 2015.

Case & Program Status Accumulations (ARST)							
Worker: _____ Supervisor: _____ Sv: 55							
Total Program	Active	REIN	Pending	Pending < 31	Pending 31-45	Pending 46-60	Pending > 60
Total:	6901	6666	26	209	169	25	8
Cash:	2042	1919	7	116	95	12	5
CA AP:	74	0	0	74	64	6	1
MFIP:	552	541	3	8	6	1	0
CH:	229	228	0	1	1	0	0
DWP:	139	115	0	24	18	5	0
WB:	38	34	0	4	1	0	3
MSA:	575	572	1	2	1	1	0
GA:	429	422	2	5	3	0	2
RCA:	5	5	0	0	0	0	0

Source: DHS MAXIS

Issues for coming year:

- Concerns/changes
 - Timely access to relevant program data
 - Proposed changes to the WPR as a program success measure
 - Proposed elimination of WB program

- Changes in healthcare – split between food & cash and healthcare
- Plans/opportunities
 - Work on development of customer driven organizational culture across the department
 - Work on performance measurement dashboard
 - Integration of food an cash intake team – streamlining intake process
 - Increased access to eligibility workers – visiting eligibility workers

Diversionsary Work Program (DWP):

Description and Legislative purpose of the program:

Implemented in July 2004, the Diversionsary Work Program (DWP) was designed to provide intensive employment services to family cash assistance applicants with the intention of helping them move into jobs rather than directly onto the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP). DWP cash assistance and employment services cease after four months, at which time, participants may be assessed for MFIP eligibility.

Eligibility:

This program is for families with children or pregnant women. Most people are on this program for four months. To qualify, you must meet the:

- Income limit
- Asset limit of \$2,000.

Ask a county worker for more details about income and asset limits.

All parents, including both parents in a two-parent family, must develop and sign an employment plan before your family is approved for the program. Your employment plan will consider the type of work you can do and what best meets your family situation.

You must cooperate with your employment plan and the child support office to stay on the program.

Results (Outcome Measurement):

The Minnesota Department of Human Services monitors the receipt of Diversionsary Work Program benefits in Minnesota counties.

- Approximately 854 cases were opened each month in 2013.
- In 2013, there was an average of 2,622 monthly Diversionsary Work Program cases involving more than 7,800 people.
- On average, approximately 60 percent of Diversionsary Work Program participants were not receiving cash assistance after five months of leaving the Diversionsary Work Program. Nearly 66 percent were no longer receiving cash assistance in the 12th month after exiting the Diversionsary Work Program.

Process Measures:

See discussion under MFIP.

Issues for coming year:

See discussion under MFIP.

Work Benefit Program (WB):

Description and Legislative purpose of the program:

The Work Benefit Program (WB) is funded by the state of Minnesota and it provides a cash stipend to those who transitioned off MFIP or DWP into a work setting. If a recipient transitioned off MFIP or DWP and works, then she is eligible for a monthly issuance of WB, up to 24 months. This program was first implemented in October of 2009.

Eligibility

Clients must be transitioning from MFIP or DWP into a work setting.

Issues for 2014

Work Benefit program is slated to end in December 2014.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP):

Description and Legislative purpose of the program:

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) provides financial assistance to help families with low incomes pay for child care so that parents may pursue employment or education leading to employment, and that children are well cared for and prepared to enter school ready to learn.

Eligibility:

General eligibility requirements for all applicants for child care assistance:

Child care services must be available to families who need child care to find or keep employment or to obtain the training or education necessary to find employment and who:

(1) have household income less than or equal to 67 percent of the state median income, adjusted for family size, and meet the requirements of section 119B.05; receive MFIP assistance; and are participating in employment and training services under chapter 256J; or

(2) have household income less than or equal to 47 percent of the state median income, adjusted for family size, at program entry and less than or equal to 67 percent of the state median income, adjusted for family size, at program exit.

(b) Child care services must be made available as in-kind services.

(c) All applicants for child care assistance and families currently receiving child care assistance must be assisted and required to cooperate in establishment of paternity and enforcement of child support obligations for all children in the family as a condition of program eligibility. For purposes of this section, a family is considered to meet the requirement for cooperation when the family complies with the requirements of section 256.741.

Population:

1/1-12/31/13 families served:

BSF

Family: 653

Child: 1,316

MFIP/DWP

Family: 405

Child: 817

Transition Year

Family: 360

Child: 747

Transition Year Extension

Family: 12

Child: 23

Totals

Family: 1,013

Child: 2,016

Waitlist Nov-Dec 2013: 28 families**Waitlist as of July 2014:** 307 families**Results (Outcome Measurement):**

Under development at this time.

Issues:*Rate Changes in 2014*

The State Legislature created new [maximum allowable child care rates](#) for CCAP in the 2013 Session. State DHS [Bulletin 14-68-03](#) detailing the [rate changes](#) was released on January 31, 2014 and was effective February 3, 2014. The rate changes in Olmsted County in 2014 are substantially larger than comparable counties. For example, the hourly rate for an infant in Child Care Center in Olmsted County more than doubled, from \$4.63 per hour to \$10.00 per hour. This was a larger increase than any other metro county in the state. Rates assigned to Olmsted County also increased for all other age groups in child care center settings, including a 65% increase for toddlers, 69% increase for preschool, and a 48% increase for school age children.

Other rate changes included in the 2013 legislation include a new set of quality differential rates that increase the maximum allowable rate by 15-20% for certain child care providers who achieve a high [Parent Aware](#) rating.

Single Adult Cash Assistance Programs

Olmsted County Family Support and Assistance administers 5 cash relief programs available to single adults without children, as follows

- ✓ General Assistance
- ✓ Minnesota Supplemental Aid
- ✓ Emergency General Assistance
- ✓ Group Residential Housing

General Assistance (GA):

Description and Legislative purpose of the program:

The General Assistance Program is a state-funded program that provides monthly cash grants to adults without children and some children under age 18 who are not living with their parents.

Eligibility:

To be eligible for GA people must meet one of 14 eligibility categories related to illness, disability, or injury that prevent them from working.

- Are ill or have a disability (permanent or temporary)
- Are taking care of someone with a disability or illness
- Are in a mental, physical, or drug rehabilitation facility
- Are determined unemployable by a vocational specialist and the county
- Are applying for Social Security Disability Insurance ([SSDI](#)) or Supplemental Security Income ([SSI](#)) or waiting on an SSDI or SSI appeal
- Are over 55 and can't get a job because of your age
- Have a learning disability
- Have a drug or alcohol dependency
- Are in a domestic violence shelter for women
- Are a displaced homemaker who is a full-time student
- Are doing court-ordered services that prevent you from working at least four hours a day
- Are over age 18, attending high school, and English isn't your first language, or
- Are under age 18 and not living with your family.

The monthly income limits, after subtracting allowed expenses, are:

- \$203 for one person
- \$250 for a child under 18 not living with his or her family
- \$260 for a couple.

Benefits

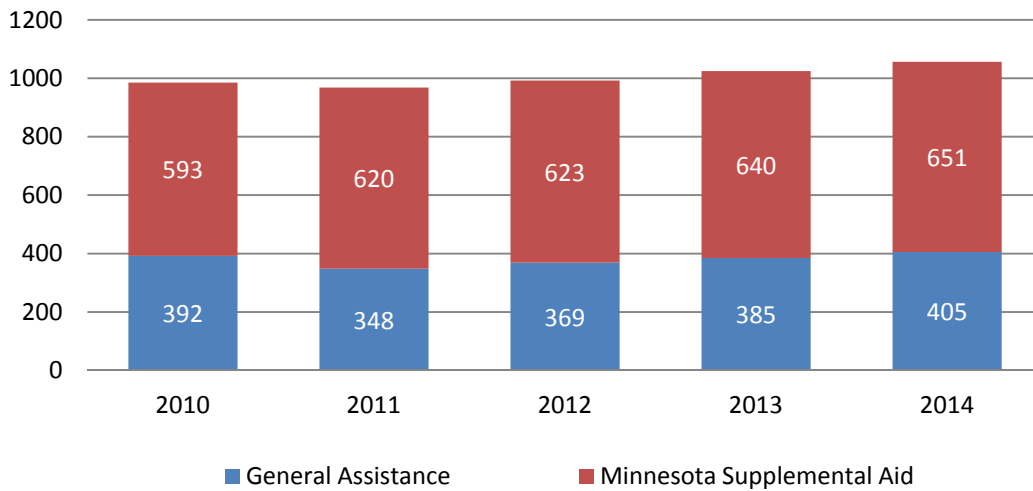
The maximum monthly benefit is:

- \$203 for a single adult
- \$250 for a child under 18 not living with his or her family
- \$260 for a couple.

Population:

Olmsted County serves about 1,100 people per month through the primary singles cash programs, General Assistance and Minnesota Supplemental Aid in 2014.

Chart 16: Olmsted County Single Adult Cash Assistance, Average Monthly Caseload

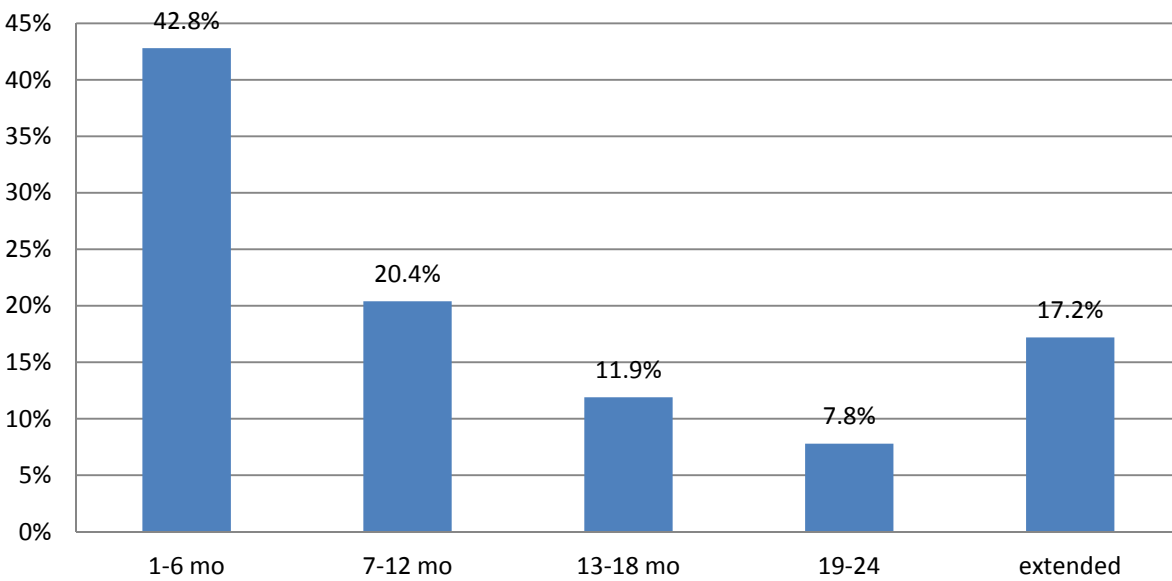


Source: DHS Maxis, Extracted 9/2014

Average length of time on programs:

As shown in the chart below, more than 40% of GA cases remain active for 6 months or less. About 17% of cases remain active for more than 2 years.

Chart 17: Percent GA Cases by Countable Months, December 2013



Issues for coming year:

- Concerns/changes
 - Timely access to relevant program data
 - Changes in healthcare – split between food & cash and healthcare
- Plans/opportunities
 - Work on development of customer driven organizational culture across the department
 - Work on performance measurement dashboard
 - Integration of food an cash intake team – streamlining intake process
 - Increased access to eligibility workers – visiting eligibility workers

Minnesota Supplemental Aid (MSA):

Description and legislative purpose of the program:

When Congress established the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, it mandated that states supplement the payments of SSI recipients who had previously received higher benefits under the former Old Age Assistance (OAA), Aid to the Blind (AB), and Aid to the Disabled (AD) programs. The MSA program delivers this mandated supplement to Minnesota recipients of SSI. Congress also offered states the option of supplementing the income of two other groups: (1) SSI recipients who had not received OAA, AB, or AD and (2) those who would have qualified for the former programs but are ineligible for SSI due to excess income or resources. Minnesota offers both optional supplements to Minnesota residents through the MSA program.

Eligibility:

To qualify, you must be:

- Age 18 or older
- Receiving SSI, or eligible to get it except that your income is too high. If your income is too high for SSI, you may qualify for MSA if you meet one of these criteria:
 - Are age 65 or older
 - Are blind
 - Have a disability under SSI criteria.
- You must also meet the asset limit of:
 - \$2,000 for an individual
 - \$3,000 for a couple.

Time Receiving MSA

The average length of time that cases had been eligible for MSA was 92 months (about 7.5 years). Twenty percent had received MSA for less than 3 years and 31 percent had received MSA for more than 10 years. Those eligible in the SSI Aged and SSI Blind categories had been on the longest.

Population:

See Discussion of Population in General Assistance.

Results (Outcome Measures):

Process measures:

Not available at this time.

Issues for coming year:

See Discussion of Population in General Assistance.

Emergency General Assistance (EGA):

Description and legislative purpose of the program:

Emergency General Assistance (EGA) meets the emergency needs of eligible individuals, married couples, or families who are in an emergency. Applicants must have a net annual income less than 200% of the federal poverty guidelines (FPG) and must be residents of the state. Families must not be eligible for MFIP or emergency aid from other programs such as consolidated fund. Applicants must not have received any emergency aid within 12 months of the application date for EGA and must meet any additional criteria adopted by the county agency. EGA is available for a period of up to 30 days and is limited to once in a 12-month time period depending on the availability of state and/or county funds.

Eligibility:

To receive Emergency General Assistance (EGA) a unit must meet ALL the following conditions:

- Have not used EGA within 12 months following each use after 7-1-03. Anyone in the unit receiving EGA makes the entire unit ineligible for the 12-month period.
- Be in an emergency situation in which it is without, or will lose within 30 days after application, a BASIC NEED item. An emergency situation must require immediate financial assistance. The financial assistance required by the emergency must be temporary and must not exceed 30 days.
- Have an emergency that threatens the unit members' health or safety and meet the written criteria adopted by the county agency.
- The applicant and family, if any, must have a net income under 200% of the federal poverty guidelines for the previous year.
- At least 1 person in the EGA unit must meet GA or GRH citizenship or immigration status requirements.
- For a single person, a childless married couple, or a family, at least 1 person must have lived in Minnesota for at least 30 days.
- The unit must not currently be eligible for or receiving MFIP.

Population:				
<i>Approved EGA Cases, by Year</i>				
<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>
228	230	281	237	78
<i>Source: DHS MAXIS</i>				

Issues:

- Our annual allotment is expended before the end of the state fiscal year. This means that many eligible persons are not able to access the program during certain times of the year.
- In some cases, the aid does not solve the emergency for the client. Rather the emergency is delayed a month or two.

Group Residential Housing

Description and Legislative purpose of the program:

Group Residential Housing Act - M.S. Chapter 256I:

In 1992, the Negotiated Rate Act was amended and became the Group Residential Housing Act. The Group Residential Housing fund (GRH) was established, separate from GA and MSA. Rate limits and rate freezes were expanded and a moratorium on counties negotiating GRH rates with some types of residential settings was passed. These rate limits, freezes, and the moratorium continue today to some degree, even though they have been modified and exceptions made through legislation.

Eligibility:

Participants must meet eligibility for either Supplemental Security Income or General Assistance to receive GRH service funding.

County financial workers determine people's eligibility for GRH. GRH is considered a cash assistance program, but all GRH payments are vendor paid to the GRH provider. A person applies for GRH by completing and submitting a State of Minnesota Combined Application Form to the County of financial service agency.

There are two basic "categories" of eligibility and each category has its own financial eligibility criteria.

- 1) Elderly (65 or older); Blind or Disabled according to the disability criteria used by the Social Security Administration.
 - Financial: Must be within the limits and restrictions of the federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Program (\$2,000 cash resources), and
 - Monthly income - after deducting all the exclusions and disregards allowed by the SSI Program, and the allowable personal needs allowance, the person's income is less than the establishment's monthly GRH rate. If a person receives SSI, the SSI federal benefit rate (FBR) is budgeted as the person's income. GENERAL ASSISTANCE -BASED:
- 2) General Assistance: the person meets a GA category of eligibility under MS 256D.05, subdivision 1, paragraph (a)
 - Financial: Must be within the limits of the GA program (assets under \$1000);
 - Monthly income: after deducting the exclusions and disregards and the personal needs allowance allowed by the GA program, the person's income is less than the establishment's monthly GRH rate.

Populations Served:

- People 65 or older
- People younger than 65 who have a condition that limits their self-sufficiency (physical or mental health disability, visual impairment or chemical dependency)

- Group Residential Housing is a state-funded program that pays for room and board costs for low-income elderly and adults with disabilities living in some licensed or registered community-based settings. The program aims to reduce and prevent institutional residence or homelessness.
- Housing providers receive payments on behalf of eligible recipients. Funds are used to pay for rent, utilities, food, household supplies and other necessities to provide room and board to participants. Recipients may be required to pay a portion of their income directly to the housing provider.

Chart 18: Average Monthly GRH Cases, Olmsted County

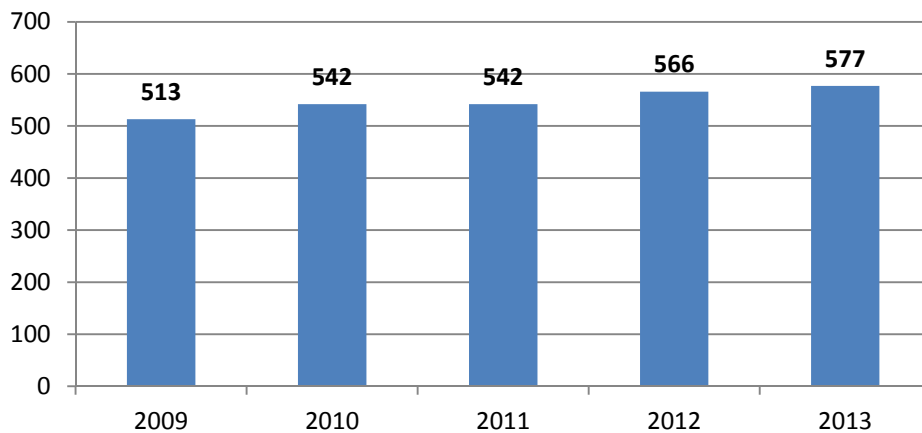
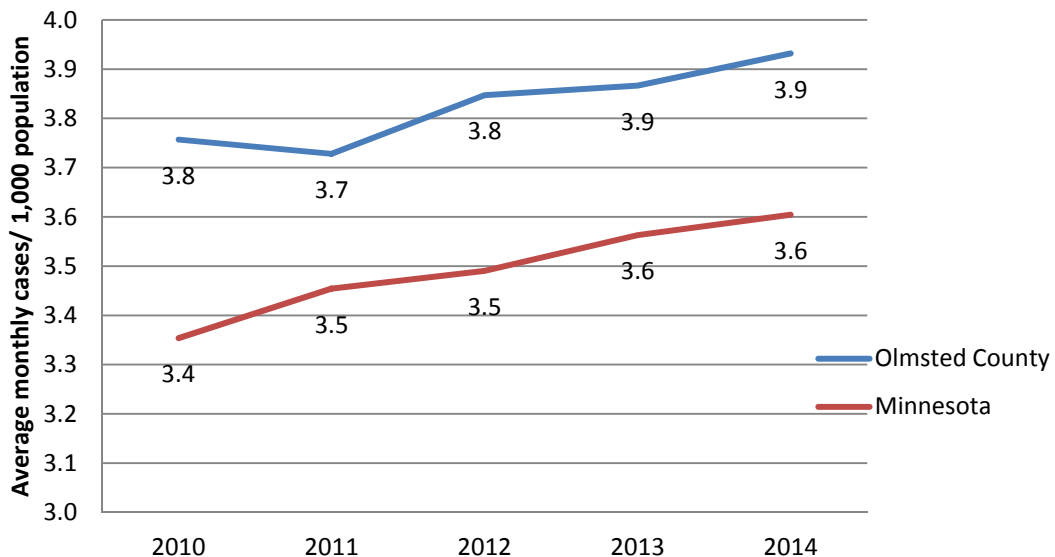


Chart 19: Group Residential Housing (GRH) Cases / 1,000 Population



Average length of time on programs: As long as person remains eligible they can be on forever.

Upcoming Year: (Program Improvement)

- The 2013 Minnesota Legislature directed the Minnesota Department of Human Services to study how Group Residential Housing (GRH) supplemental services are delivered, to review the performance of programs that deliver supplemental services, to make recommendations for rate setting and the efficient use of beds that receive the GRH supplemental service rate, and to develop requirements that ensure quality service delivery.

Outcome Measures

Data on true outcome measures (such as the percentage of all people needing this type of house who have been served effectively through the program) are not easy to calculate. Output measures regarding the amount of money spent on the program can serve as a proxy. Charts 20 and 21 show that in Olmsted County the resources distributed for GRH has increased over the past 5 years. In 2013, about \$4 million were spent for GRH clients, with an average monthly payment of \$566.

Chart 20: GRH Average Case Payment, Olmsted County

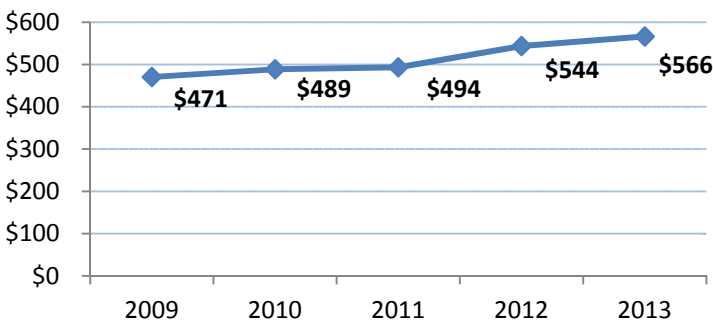
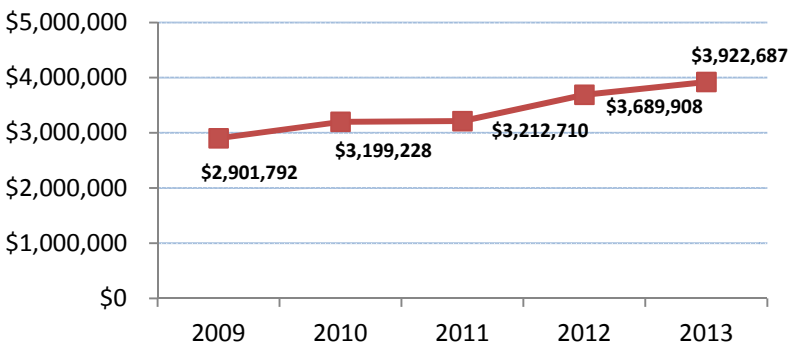


Chart 21: GRH Annual Payment for Olmsted Cases



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):

Description and Legislative purpose of the program:

SNAP is a county-run federal program that helps Minnesotans with low incomes get the food they need for sound nutrition and well-balanced meals. The program issues electronic SNAP benefits that can help stretch your household food budget.

Eligibility:

You may get benefits if you meet the following guidelines:

- Your monthly income is within the gross and net income limits; most types of income are counted; there are many deductions from income that are allowed under the SNAP program; your worker can give you more information on income limits and deductions
- You register for work if you are asked to
- You provide a Social Security number for each person in your home applying for benefits; your worker can help you with this process
- You are a citizen of the United States or an eligible non-citizen
- You do not take part in the Tribal Food Distribution Program in the same month.

Population:

There are about 5,200 SNAP cases in Olmsted County on any given month. This accounts for 11,200 people. As an rate, there are approximately 35 SNAP cases per 1,000 capita in Olmsted County. This compares to the statewide rate of 40 cases per 1,000 capita. (See Chart 22 and 23.) Chart 24 shows that while the proportion of children enrolled in SNAP has increased more rapidly than the proportion of adults enrolled in SNAP over the past 5 years.

Chart 22: Average Monthly SNAP Cases, Olmsted County

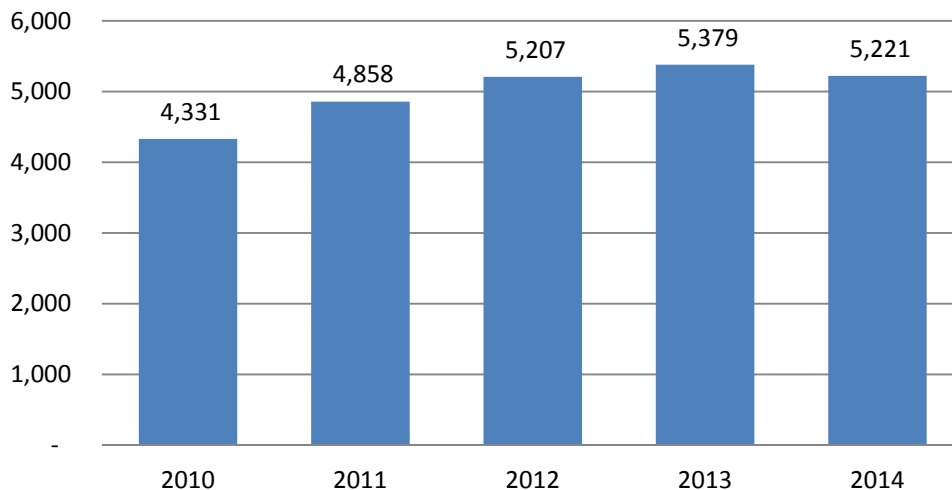
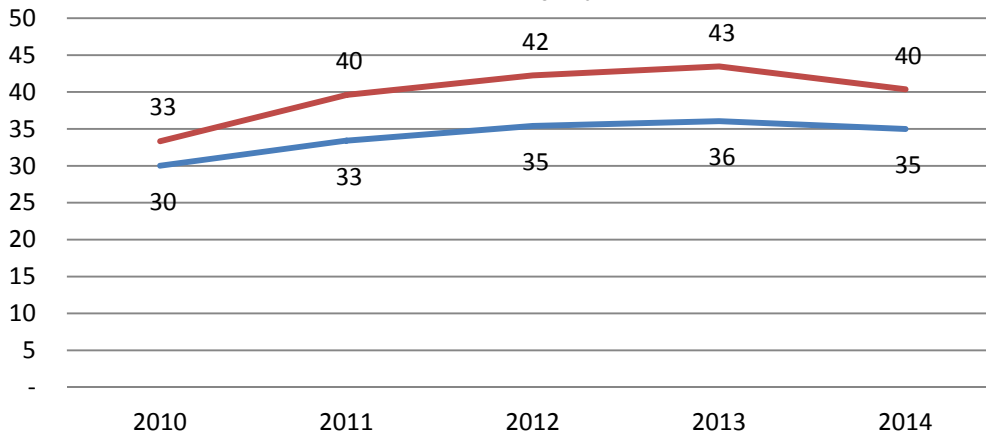


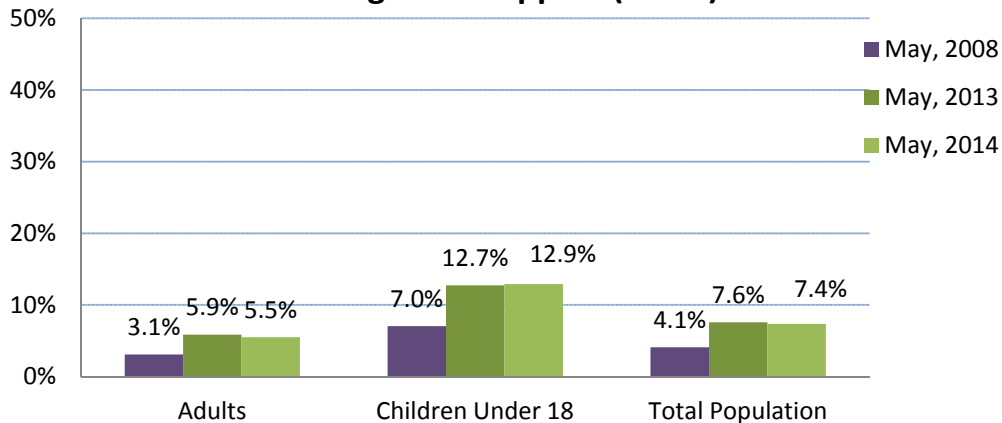
Chart 23: SNAP Cases / 1,000 Residents



Sources: DHS MAXIS, MN State Demographic Center Population Estimates, MN State Demographic Center Population Projections

— Olmsted County

Char 24: Proportion of Olmsted County Population Receiving Food Support (SNAP)



Source: DHS MAXIS; U.S. Census Bureau Population Projections; U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2008-2013

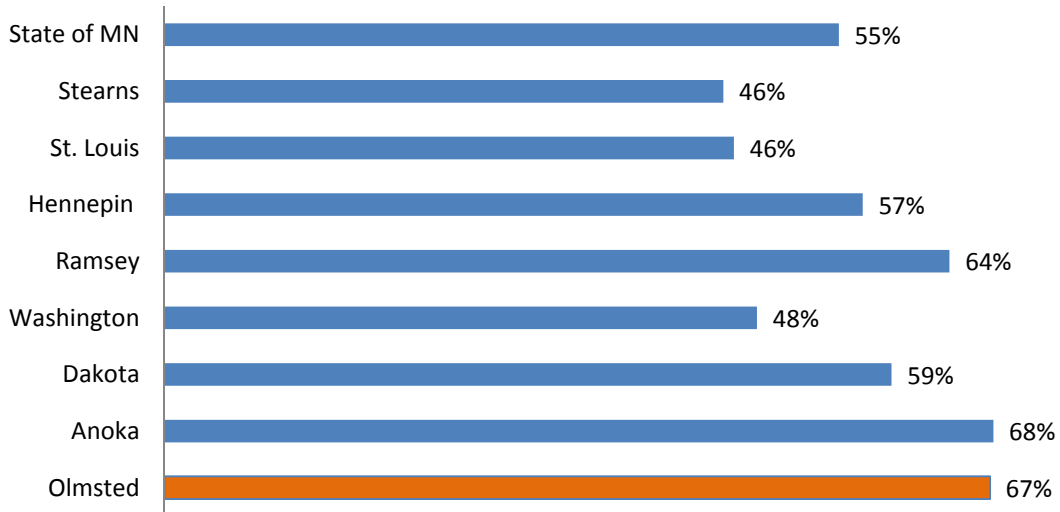
Average length of time on programs:

SNAP benefits vary from household to household, depending on the number of people within a household, the employment status of the recipient(s), the age and health of the recipient(s), etc. For most healthy adults between the ages of 18 and 50 (without children), SNAP benefits are limited to a 3-month period, at which point the recipient will have to submit a renewal application. Most households under the SNAP program receive benefits for a 6-month period before requiring renewal. Benefit periods can range from 1 month to 3 years.

Results (Outcome Measurement):

Although imperfect, one measure of SNAP participation rates is the total number of recipients divided by the total population below 125% poverty. Chart 25 shows that in 2014, Olmsted County is 67% around participation rate by this measure. This is higher than most comparison counties and the statewide rate of 55%.

Chart 25: SNAP Participation Index
(SNAP Participants / Population Under 125% FPG)

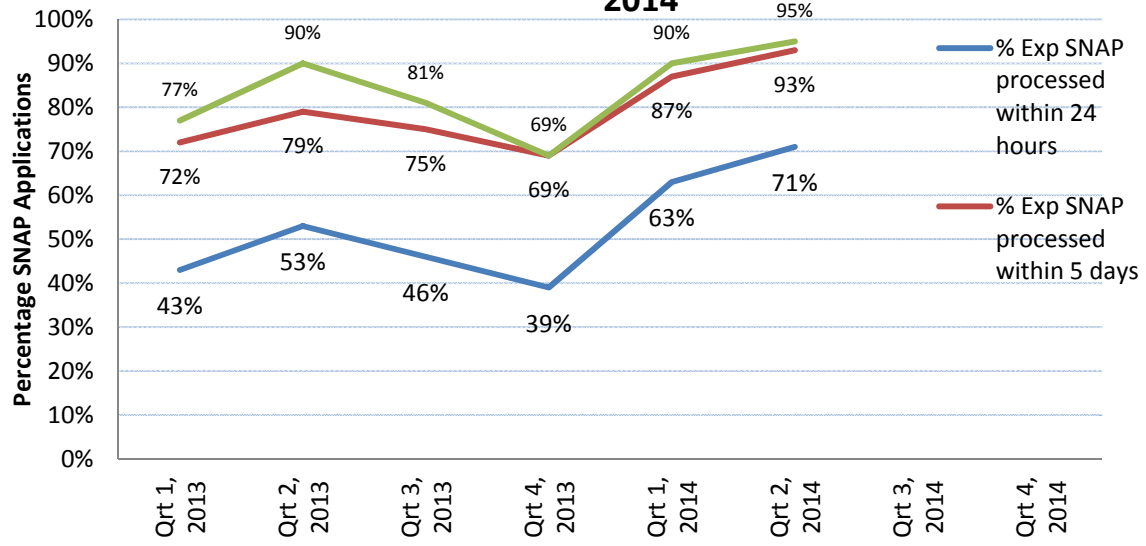


Source: U.S. Census ACS 2008-2012;
DHS MAXIS SNAP average monthly participants, January-June 2014

Process measures:

As a result of a strong focus on improving processes in 2013 and 2014, dramatic improvements have been made in the processing and efficiency of SNAP applications. In Q2 2014, 95% of applications were processed within the state required 30 day timeline. See Chart 26 below.

Chart 26: Olmsted County SNAP Processing Times, 2013-2014



Source: DHS/DEED Reports, Compiled by Olmsted County FSA

Public Health Care Programs: Medicaid

Overview

Medical Assistance (MA) is Minnesota's Medicaid program. It is the largest of Minnesota's publicly funded health care programs. It provides health care coverage to over 700,000 low-income Minnesotans each month. Three-fourths of those are children and families, pregnant women and adults without children. The others are people 65 or older and people who have disabilities.

Most enrollees get their health care through health plans. The rest get care on a fee-for-service basis, with providers billing the state directly for services provided.

MA is funded with state and federal funds. The Minnesota Department of Human Services oversees the program statewide. Eligibility is administered by county offices. The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services oversees Medicaid nationally.

Legislative purpose of the program:

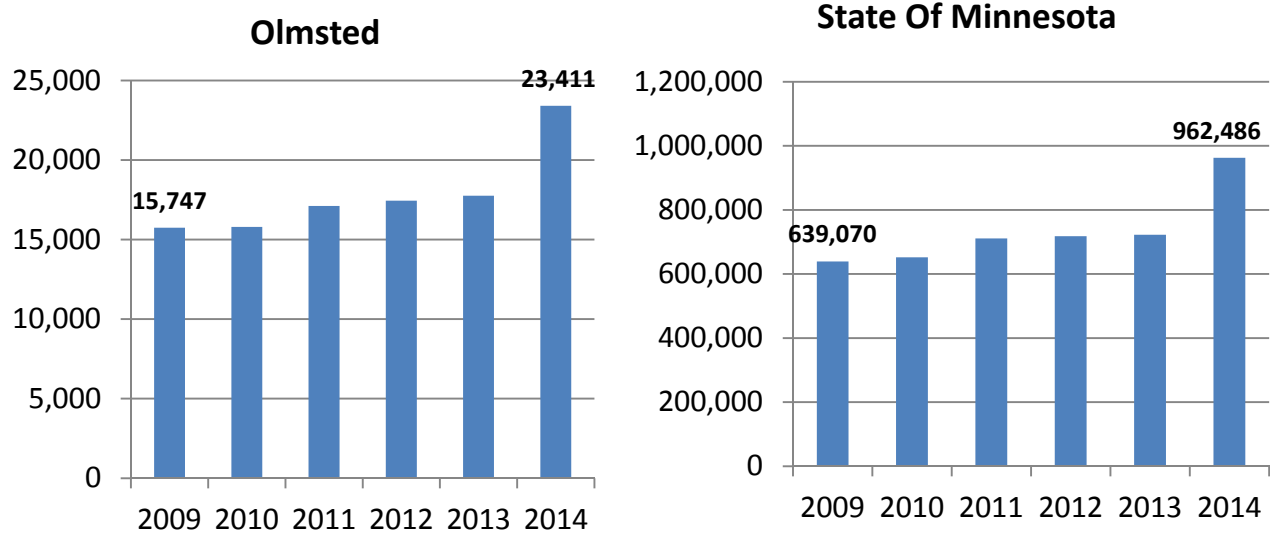
- 1965-Medicaid was established by the U.S. Congress as Title XIX of the Social Security Act. This federal law requires all states to offer basic health care services to certain categories of low income individuals. States are reimbursed by the federal government for part of the cost of providing the required services.
 - The federal law also gives states the option to cover additional services, and additional categories of low-income individuals, in their Medicaid programs. States that provide optional coverage receive federal reimbursement for part of the cost of this coverage.
- Medical Assistance (MA), Minnesota's Medicaid program, was established by the legislature and implemented in January 1966.
- Medical Assistance (MA)/Medicaid: is a jointly funded, federal-state program that pays for health care services provided to low-income individuals & families. The programs have different eligibility requirements, and each provides different health care coverage for people who are eligible.

Medical Assistance Eligibility:

To Qualify	Other conditions/Groups		
Be a citizen of the United States or a qualified non-citizen			
Be a resident of Minnesota			
Be a member of a group for which MA coverage is required or permitted under federal/state law	Parents or caretakers of dependent children Pregnant women Children under 21 Persons age 65 or older Persons with disability or who are blind Adults without children, ages 21-64 People living in a nursing home Children eligible for or receiving state or federal adoption assistance payment		
Meet income/Asset Guidelines	Group	Federal Poverty Level	Asset Provision
	Parents/Caregiver Children 19-20 Adult w/o child	133% Hh=1: \$1,293	No asset Test
	Children 2-18	275% Hh=1: \$2,674	No asset Test
	Under 2	283% Hh=1: \$2,703	No asset Test
	Blind, Elderly Disabled	100% hh=1: \$973	\$3000 single \$6000 –hh two
	Blind, Elderly, Disabled with Spendedown	75% Hh=1:\$730	\$3000 single \$6000 –hh two

Population:

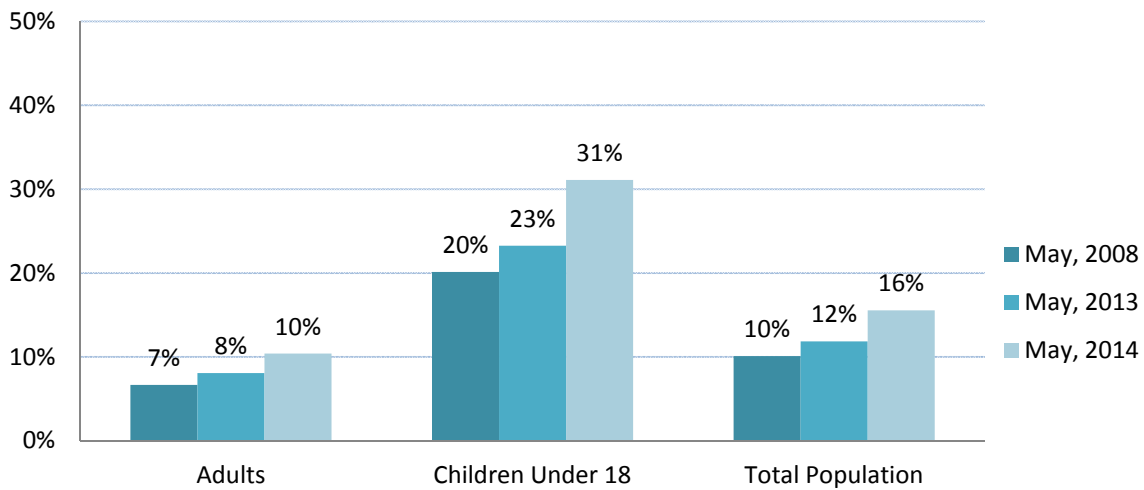
**Chart 27: Average Number of Persons enrolled in Health care
Olmsted County vs. State of MN
Year 2009-2013**



2013-

**149,226 persons in Olmsted County: 12% of population on medical assistance
5,420,380 persons in Minnesota: 13% on medical assistance**

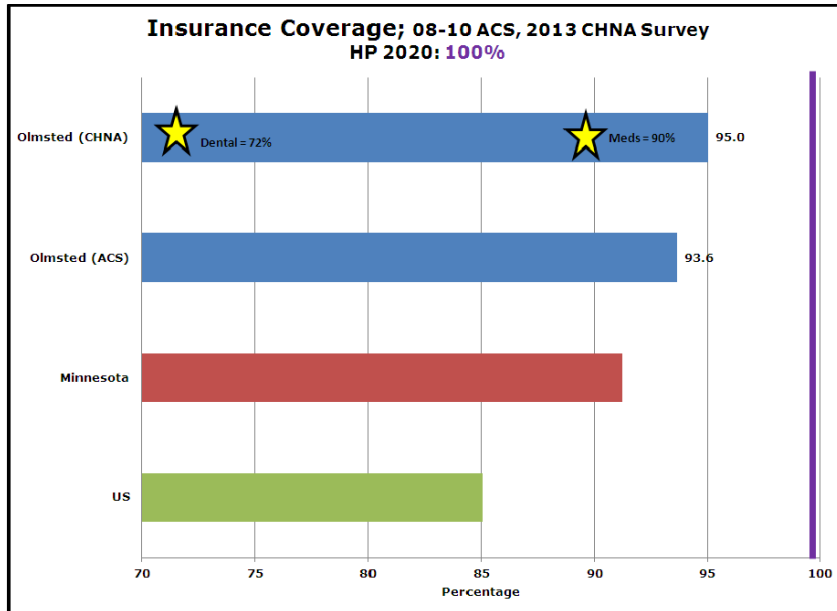
Chart 28: Proportion of Olmsted County Population on MA



Source: DHS MAXIS; MNSure; U.S. Census Bureau Population Projections;
U.S. Census Bureau ACS 2008-2013

Outcome Measurement:

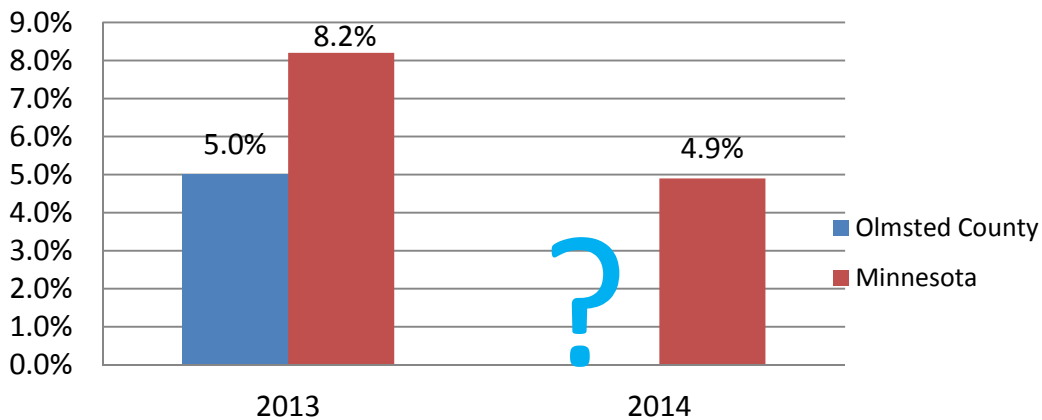
From the most recent American Community Survey (2008-2010) 92% of Minnesota Residents have health coverage. At a national level, 85% of population has health insurance. The 2013 Olmsted County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) Survey indicates that 95% of Olmsted County adults currently have health insurance, 90% have insurance that covers prescription medications, and 72% have dental insurance.



Reference: Olmsted County Community Health Needs Assessment – 2013 Healthy People 2020; Olmsted County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) 2013 Survey; United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), 2008-2010

The goal of Medical Assistance is to ensure that the population without means has access to health insurance. As Chart 29 describes, the statewide rate of uninsured residents dropped from 8.2% in September of 2013 to 4.9% in July of 2014, primarily due to the Affordable Care Act, which requires all people to have health insurance and provides for expanded coverage eligibility for Medicaid programs. It is very likely that the uninsured rate in Olmsted County has also dropped, however, specific data are not available at this time.

Chart 29: % Population Uninsured



Sources: MN SHADAC; Olmsted County Public Health

Current Community Perception:

According to the 2013 CHNA Survey the availability of health insurance and affordable health care was noted to be one of the most pressing community health issues impacting Olmsted County. Access to healthcare was a priority that was present in each session; participants were concerned about the cost of health care and insurance.

Issues for coming year:

- *Concerns/changes*
 - MNSure Underdeveloped Software
 - Minimum functionality and extreme technical glitches
 - Worker working in 'crisis mode'
 - Conceptually MNSure's intent is to be an automated market place -it was rolled out as a change to health care policy when it is truly a technical project
 - Lack of Access to Dental care in Olmsted County
 - Limited number of those who accept patients with Public insurance
- *Plans / opportunities*
 - Implementation of Electronic Document Management System has provided many internal efficiencies so that we have capacity to take on future healthcare growth
 - Implementation of the Affordable Health Care Act will provide insurance opportunities to every individual regardless of employment and income.