

**ANNE ARUNDEL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY**  
**2022 – 2025 Strategic Plan**



*Helping People, Changing Lives*

Approved by the Board of Directors on  
Date: November 18, 2021

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2
Executive Summary	3
Agency Profile	4
Agency Programs	5
Strategic Planning Process	7
Community Needs Assessment Results	8
Customer Satisfaction Results and Input	9
Efforts to Combat Poverty	9
Mission, Vision, and Core Values	10
Results-Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA)	11
Strategic Issues and Priorities	12
National Community Action and ROMA Goals	13
Strategic Goals	13
Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Expected Outcomes, and Metrics	14
Implementation and Evaluation	25

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency (AACCAA) recently engaged in planning to determine the new strategic direction that will guide its efforts for the next three (3) years. The Agency's virtual strategic planning process began in October 2021 and was completed in November 2021 when AACCAA's Board of Directors approved the plan. The strategic planning committee included board members, executive leadership, and key management staff. The primary goal was to develop a comprehensive strategic plan that enhances AACCAA's ability to be high-performing, while also providing the blueprint to effectively combat poverty and promote family self-sufficiency.

AACCAA contracted a qualified consulting firm to facilitate its strategic planning process. The President/Chief Executive Officer of the firm has nearly 25 years of experience in writing, implementing, and overseeing community action strategic plans.

The consultant met with the strategic planning committee via a virtual retreat and coordinated efforts with AACCAA's Certified Results-Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) Trainer to ensure that the plan complied with ROMA and met requirements of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Organizational Standards.

AACCAA obtained valuable information from its 2021 Community Needs Assessment (CNA) and Self-Assessment. The Agency brainstormed to determine (9) nine strategic issues and then narrowed that list to five (5) strategic priorities that were utilized to develop family, agency, and community goals.



- Goal 1: AACCAA will help people living in poverty achieve self-sufficiency and economic mobility. (Family)
- Goal 2: AACCAA will provide high-quality and affordable child care resources. (Family)
- Goal 3: AACCAA will enhance its capacity to achieve results. (Agency)
- Goal 4: AACCAA will obtain additional and diversified funding. (Agency)
- Goal 5: AACCAA will help people living in poverty improve the communities in which they live. (Community)

AACCAA implemented the use of the ROMA Next Generation (NG) framework in developing its strategic plan. ROMA NG will be used for continuous quality improvement to enable AACCAA to measure, analyze, and communicate performance. ROMA NG will help the agency shift to a continuous learning culture rather than a compliance and reporting culture, generating outcomes that improve communities and help people living in poverty obtain self-sufficiency and economic mobility.

# AGENCY PROFILE

On January 8, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson announced his War on Poverty by introducing legislation that would expand the federal government's role in poverty reduction efforts. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 created the framework for community action agencies to help fight America's War on Poverty. Community Action Agencies were founded on the idea that local citizens were the most knowledgeable and best equipped to address problems of poverty in their communities. Community Action gave previously powerless people the means to work toward their own economic and social advancement. Community Action Agencies help people to help themselves in achieving self-sufficiency. Today, there are approximately 1,000 Community Action Agencies in the United States.



Since 1965, Community Action has served residents of the City of Annapolis and all of Anne Arundel County. As the county's designated anti-poverty agency, AACCAA administers programs designed to help lower-income families and individuals increase their assets and reach self-sufficiency. AACCAA has programs that help household members from infancy through their senior years.

The Agency's six program areas are as follows: 1) Early Head Start; 2) Health and Wellness Equity; 3) Asset Building; 4) Housing Assistance and Energy Assistance Services; 5) Returning Citizens; and 6) Youth Development Services. Additionally, AACCAA is committed to identifying gaps in programming and developing new initiatives to better serve the community.

AACCAA is accountable to and governed by a qualified fifteen (15) member board of directors. The Board has a tripartite structure with five members from the low-income sector, five members for the public sector, and five members from the private sector. The agency has forty-five (45) dedicated employees who thrive on providing outstanding customer service to improve lives and promote self-sufficiency. In the Fiscal Year 2021, AACCAA provided assistance to more than 20,000 individuals and had a funding level of \$4,056,236. The Agency was fortunate to administer funds and implement impactful programs to help individuals with issues surrounding COVID 19.

## **The TWO (2) GENERATION/WHOLE FAMILY APPROACH**

AACCAA has implemented a new approach within the agency. The 2-Generation /Whole Family Approach concept is designed to move families from poverty to self-sufficiency. The target population includes the agency's forty-five (45) Head Start families. The agency has implemented a customized program to empower families with the tools, knowledge and resources to gain economic stability, enhance child development and promote self-sufficiency. The program focuses on an integrated approach, using an innovative and intentional framework.

# AGENCY PROGRAMS

## Energy Assistance Program

Community Action Agency of Anne Arundel County's Energy Assistance Program provides support to income-eligible residents to help reduce the costs of their heating and electric bills. A universal application is available. Staff members are available, Monday - Friday, from 8:30 a.m.– 4:30 p.m., to assist with the programs below.

- Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP): MEAP provides assistance with home heating bills. Payments are made directly to utility companies to provide relief to customers.
- Electric Universal Service Program (EUSP): The EUSP provides financial assistance with current and/or past due electric and gas bills. Customers also receive referrals for energy efficiency measures to reduce future utility bills.
- Utility Service Protection Program (USPP): UPSS allows MEAP eligible households to enter into a year-round even monthly payment program with their utility company. The monthly payments are determined by using the estimated cost of the customer's average utility usage minus the MEAP benefit.



## Housing Assistance and Services

Community Action's Housing Assistance and Services program is a one-stop resource for assistance on housing, emergency assistance, or other needs that disrupt independent living. AACCAA's counselors help customers set goals and budgets, prevent foreclosures and evictions, repair credit, and offer workshops to help plan for a first-time home purchase. Comprehensive case management helps households create short and long-term goals, including budgeting, banking, credit repair, employment, and home ownership.

Community Action offers two-hour financial literacy workshops to help customers make smart decisions with their money. The Agency also partners with a local bank, utilizing trained instructors to assist with workshops.

AACCAA provides individuals with first-time home buyers information, while also helping them to successfully prepare for and navigate the purchasing process. For customers facing evictions or foreclosures, the Agency's HUD-Certified housing counselors provide:

- Foreclosure prevention counseling, including one-on-one mortgage default counseling and foreclosure mitigation workshops;
- Counselors can assist homeowners with the loan modification application process;
- Emergency assistance to avoid eviction or to help with the first month rent in a new home; and
- Information for senior citizens, age 62 and older, who are interested in reverse mortgages.



Community Action's Housing Assistance and Services staff work with a network of community partners to avoid homelessness in Anne Arundel County. The Agency is an active member of the Anne Arundel County Continuum of Care, whose mission is to prevent homelessness and help residents achieve stable housing.

### **Health and Wellness Initiative**

Community Action's Health and Wellness Initiative addresses health disparities that impact impoverished communities in Anne Arundel County through prevention and awareness activities. The Agency increases health and wellness touch points, promotes healthy lifestyles, supports and assists customers in accessing health and wellness resources, while also building and strengthening public policy action on health access issues.



Each month, the Health and Wellness Initiative showcases wellness themes to build awareness of specific diseases and preventative measures people can take to safeguard their health. AACCAA also provides workshops and activities to address wellness related topics such as: COVID-19 prevention practices, stress reduction, heart disease management, weight loss and obesity, cancer education, smoking cessation, exercise, substance abuse, mental health, and nutrition education.

### **Returning Citizens Program**

Many returning citizens, residing in Anne Arundel County, who exit the correctional system are faced with a myriad of challenges, which include a lack of education and employment skills, antisocial attitudes and values, mental health and substance abuse issues, medical problems, lack of housing, and family concerns. Community Action of Anne Arundel County has a history of helping to address these issues and assisting citizens in becoming productive members of society. The Community Action Agency utilizes a recognized certification and career pathway program, focusing on in-demand occupation sectors for men and women who have been involved in the adult justice system. Agency staff also develops an individual case plan for each participant, based on an assessment of criminogenic risks and needs, and workforce readiness. The program aims to guide participants into sustained employment, while also promoting community safety through a reduction of recidivism. This worthwhile program serves adults exiting the correctional system who reside within Anne Arundel County.

### **Youth Development Services**

Community Action's Youth Development Services assists children and youth, ages 5-24, at its office in the Stanton Center, which is located at 92 West Washington Street in Annapolis. The Youth Development Services provides therapeutic, preventative, and educational services and programming to benefit Anne Arundel County children and youth. Community Action, in partnership with Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation, offers youth, ages 16-24, a summer training and internship program. The Summer Youth Works program offers comprehensive workforce preparation training, career exploration, and paid summer internships to assist young people as they make career decisions and prepare to join the workforce.

### **Early Head Start Program**

Early Head Start is a federally-funded program serving infants and toddlers, from birth through age three (3). Community Action's Early Head Start center provides full-time services with individualized programming to maximize children's development, while also offering high-quality childcare for working parents. The Early Head Start Center has seven (7) classrooms located at 135 Stepney's Lane in Edgewater.

The Agency serves families residing in South Anne Arundel County. The staff provides hands-on education for each child, with a teacher-to-child ratio of 3:1 for infants and 4:1 for toddlers. Early Head Start parents also benefit from AACCAA's 2-Generation/Whole Family Approach. Parents receive case management and coaching services, have access to all Agency programs, health and nutrition workshops, ESL classes, access to tutors for GED classes, and can serve on the program's Policy Council. The program is no-cost to eligible families.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

AACCAA began its strategic planning process in October 2021 after completing a comprehensive Community Needs Assessment (CNA). This important process is generally facilitated via an in-person retreat but had to be changed to a virtual format due to health and safety concerns related COVID-19. It is important to note that the virtual format did not compromise the integrity of AACCAA's strategic planning process.

AACCAA utilized a qualified consultant to facilitate the process. Additionally, the Agency has a certified Result-Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) Trainer on staff who ensured that the plan complied with ROMA and the requirements of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Organizational Standards.



The facilitation phase included an introductory meeting which was attended by AACCAA's strategic planning committee members. The training discussed a practical approach to strategic planning that was easy to master, while also assisting agency leadership with enhancing the capacity of its committee members. Additionally, each committee member completed an electronic survey or hard copy strategic planning workbook that was developed by the consultant to gather intentional data for the plan. AACCAA's results-oriented strategic planning method provided an opportunity for the Agency to go beyond the written strategic plan to enhance effectiveness and achieve results.

AACCAA utilized the following steps in facilitating its strategic planning process:

- **Gathering Data (2 Hours)** - AACCAA revisited its mission, vision, and core values. The committee decided to revise the agency mission, keep the same vision, and add one core value (Promotion of Innovation) to its current list of core values. This step also included a comprehensive review of AACCAA's 2021 Community Needs Assessment (CNA). Additionally, an honest self-assessment was conducted and reported to the strategic planning committee. The final step in gathering data consisted of conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) of AACCAA.
- **Analyzing Data (2 Hours)** - This interactive step included conducting a detailed analyzation of all gathered data. Then, the strategic planning committee used the gathered data to determine strategic issues and priorities in order to develop five (5) goals. It is important to note that AACCAA's strategic goals are related to the three (3) national community action goals, six (6) ROMA goals, and Early Head Start requirements.
- **Writing the Plan** - The strategic planning consultant coordinated efforts with subgroups of the strategic planning committee to finalize objectives, strategies, expected outcomes, and metrics for each goal. Additionally, there was collaboration with AACCAA's Chief Executive Officer to finalize content and complete the written plan. AACCAA's Strategic Plan was approved by the its Board of Directors on November 18, 2021.

# COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

AACCAA conducted an intensive assessment in its service area to determine family and community needs. The agency used both quantitative and qualitative data to identify critical issues to assist the agency in strategic planning and developing the priority of services to implement. Data collected from the agency-wide Community Needs Assessment included participation from low-income individuals, community organizations, faith-based agencies, the private & public sector, and educational institutions.

The community needs identified are listed below:

## Top Three Community Needs

#1: Lack of Affordable Child Care (Education)

#2: Lack of Affordable Housing

#3: Skill Training for Employment

## Community Needs Assessment Key Findings

- Single mother families and their children, continue to experience disproportionate rates of poverty. Of the 5,645 households in poverty, female-headed households represented 58.6% of all households in poverty, compared to 31.6% and 9.7% of households headed by males and married couples, respectively.
- As of 2019, the most recent U.S. Census data available, fewer Anne Arundel County households had incomes below Federal Poverty Income Guidelines. However, COVID-19 erased gains made by the most vulnerable populations, causing job loss or insecurity, social isolation, a challenging educational environment, and an uncertain future for many people.
- Pandemic-related income loss has created more of a need for families in an already difficult housing market. Availability of affordable housing is lacking throughout the entire service area which has led to exaggerated and unaffordable rents.
- The unemployment rate is 4.8 percent, lower than the state average of 6.1 percent. However, there are 32,641 Anne Arundel County residents (5.8 percent) living below the poverty level. There are racial disparities in the number of individuals living below the poverty level: 3.5 percent of Caucasian; 1.8 percent of Hispanic or Latino; 4.3 percent of Asian; and 12.1 percent of African Americans. Economic distress is spread unequally throughout the county with pockets of low income and poverty level families clustered in North and South County areas and in Annapolis.
- The highest percentage of poverty is in the ZIP Code that contains Brooklyn Park at a staggering 27.3 percent followed by Curtis Bay; both areas border Baltimore City. North Beach and Deale (South County) have almost twice the level of poverty as the county average.
- The four (4) largest ethnic groups in Anne Arundel County are Caucasian (66.7%), Black or African American (18.3%), Hispanic or Latino (8.4%), and Asian (4.2%). Additionally, 19% of the households in Anne Arundel County speak a non-English language at home as their primary language, and 84.8% of the residents in Anne Arundel County are U.S. citizens.



# CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RESULTS AND INPUT

AACCAA is dedicated to obtaining customer input into the types of services that are provided for low-income families in its service area. The Agency involves low-income individuals in its community needs assessment and also has customers to complete satisfaction surveys. The Community Needs Assessment and customer satisfaction surveys completed by low-income individuals are collected and utilized to determine the needs that AACCAA will address with funding and if modifications need to be made to service delivery.



Excellence in Customer Services is one of the AACCAA's core values. The Agency is committed to providing a positive experience and outstanding customer service to its customers, both external and internal. AACCAA realizes the importance of treating all customers with respect and desires to exceed its customers' expectations. The overall customer satisfaction results consistently show approximately 83% to 95% of customers are satisfied with the services that they receive at AACCAA.

## EFFORTS TO COMBAT POVERTY

AACCAA developed five (5) strategic goals that will position the agency to effectively address family, community, and agency needs. To help combat poverty, AACCAA's Board of Directors approves a Community Action Plan annually as outlined in the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Organizational Standards.

The Community Action Plan highlights the comprehensive approach of all components working to ensure effective operations, service delivery, coordination, linkages, and meeting gaps in services.



The Community Action Plan also includes an annual work plan that sets agency-wide targets and expected outcomes. The annual work plan summarizes the work AACCAA will complete through National Performance Indicators (NPIs). Since this is a three-year strategic plan, AACCAA will develop three (3) annual work plans to assist with the achievement of its Strategic Plan. The agency has a goal to successfully coordinate effective planning, ROMA, CSBG Organizational Standards, its three-year strategic plan, along with high-performing programs and the 2-Generation/Whole Family Approach, to combat poverty and help families achieve self-sufficiency.

# MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

## **Mission**

The Community Action Agency provides comprehensive services that assist people living in poverty to achieve self-sufficiency and economic mobility by collaborating with community partners.

## **Vision**

The Community Action Agency will become the recognized leader in addressing poverty and improving the quality of life in the communities of Anne Arundel County.

## **Core Values**

### [Commitment to Community](#)

We believe in working together, sharing ideas, bringing change and open communications with our community residents, partners and stakeholders.

### [Excellence in Customer Service](#)

We believe in treating our clients, vendors and employees with the highest degree of dignity, equality and trust.

### [Dedication to Staff](#)

We believe in building strong relationships by respecting one another and valuing each other's needs, time and contributions.

### [Integrity](#)

We believe in being honest, trustworthy, respectful and ethical in our actions.

### [Stewardship of Resources](#)

We believe in being dedicated to building a better, stronger and more durable agency for future generations, meeting our commitments to stakeholders, developing our people and helping improve our communities.

### [Promotion of Innovation](#)

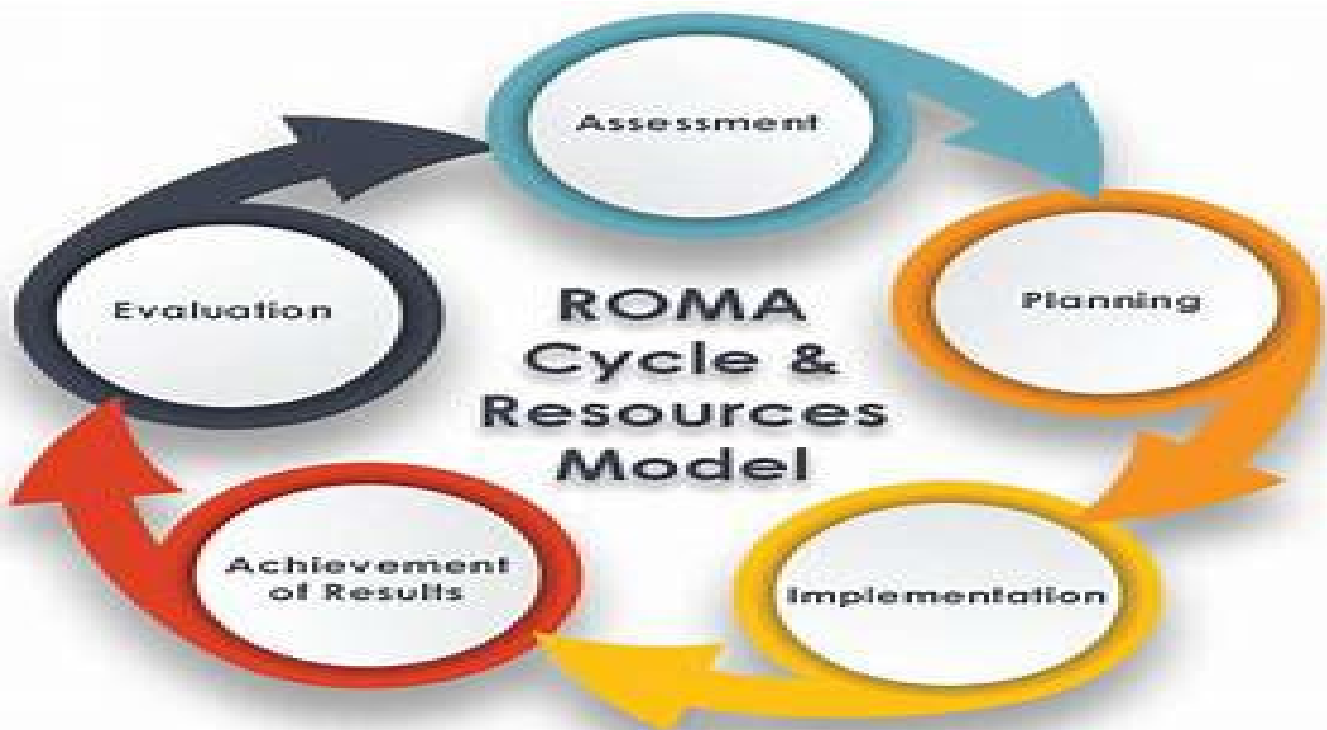
We believe in a continuous improvement mindset that fosters forward-thinking ideas to enhance our capacity to achieve outcomes.



# RESULTS ORIENTED MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (ROMA)

AACCAA implemented the use of the ROMA framework in developing its strategic plan. ROMA will be used as follows:

- For continuous quality improvement to enable AACCAA to measure, analyze, and communicate performance.
- To help AACCAA shift to a culture of continuous learning rather than compliance and reporting culture.
- To help AACCAA generate robust results for people living in poverty and the communities in which they live.
- To build on ROMA principles and practices to support AACCAA as it gathers and uses data at all points of the cycle. Data collected and analyzed from assessment through evaluation will be utilized by AACCAA to identify successes and challenges, making use of the information for continuous improvement.



# STRATEGIC ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

To identify strategic issues, the strategic planning committee brainstormed to determine nine (9) issues facing AACCAA that were based on the community assessment, self-assessment, and Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis. Then, the committee narrowed the strategic issues to five (5) strategic priorities that were utilized to develop goals, objectives, strategies, and expected outcomes.

## Strategic Issues

- Expansion of whole family approach in delivery of services
- Pursue and acquire diversified funding
- Promotion of workforce development opportunities that lead to employment paying a living wage
- Educate and advocate for affordable housing
- Provide quality and affordable child care resources
- Additional training opportunities for board of directors and staff
- Improve branding, marketing, and community outreach
- Effective communication
- Sufficient human resources

## Strategic Priorities

Expansion of whole family approach in delivery of services

Pursue and acquire diversified funding

Promotion of workforce development opportunities that lead to employment paying a living wage

Educate and advocate for affordable housing

Provide quality and affordable child care resources

The goals outlined in AACCAA’s Strategic Plan are related to the National Community Action and ROMA Goals.

## ROMA Goals

- Goal 1:** Low-income people become more self-sufficient. **(Family)**
- Goal 2:** The conditions in which low-income people live are improved. **(Community)**
- Goal 3:** Low-income people own a stake in their community. **(Community)**
- Goal 4:** Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved. **(Agency)**
- Goal 5:** Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results. **(Agency)**
- Goal 6:** Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems. **(Family)**

## National Community Action Goals



**Goal 1:** Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

**Goal 2:** Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.

**Goal 3:** People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.

## Strategic Goals

### Family Level Goals

AACCAA will help people living in poverty achieve self-sufficiency and economic mobility.

AACCAA will provide high-quality and affordable child care resources.

### Agency Level Goals

AACCAA will enhance its capacity to achieve results.

AACCAA will obtain additional and diversified funding.

### Community Level Goal

AACCAA will help people living in poverty improve the communities in which they live.

# FAMILY LEVEL GOAL

**Goal 1: AACCAA will help people living in poverty achieve self-sufficiency and economic mobility.**

(ROMA Goals 1 & 6) (National Community Action Goal 1)

**Objective 1.1: Provide a whole family approach in the delivery of services.**

## Strategies for Objective 1.1

- Promote the 2-Generation whole family approach model agency-wide from frontline to executive leadership, while also training staff on the new mindset regarding service delivery.
- Continue to utilize the client management and tracking system to complete intakes and determine eligibility for all agency programs.
- Provide effective case management services that include intentional in-house collaboration and coordination of programs that lead to stability and self-sufficiency.
- Provide a wide variety of services such as budgeting, financial literacy training, asset management, soft skills, and life skills training in an effort to assist families in obtaining an enhanced quality of life and economic mobility.
- Provide stabilization services in the areas of utility assistance, emergency rental assistance, nutrition assistance, returning citizens, and health and wellness.
- Continue to provide youth development activities by enrolling individuals in Project Ignite, Summer Future Success Programs, and Healing Youth Alliance.
- Implement an in-house referral system that includes tracking the number of and outcome of referrals.
- Provide external referrals to other providers of services and resources as needed.
- Outline the 2-Generation whole family approach model in strategic plan, programmatic annual work plans, and Community Action Plan (CAP).



**Objective 1.2:** Assist individuals with obtaining employment that pays a living wage.

**Strategies for Objective 1.2**

- Collaborate with Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (AAWDC) to assist unemployed individuals with obtaining employment.
- Collaborate with AAWDC to provide job readiness and job placement assistance.
- Continue mutually beneficial relationships with partners that provide workforce development training and resources.



- Design internal employment training opportunities with the capacity to assist customers virtually.
- Engage in strategic job development and incorporate job placement assistance in the 2-Generation whole family approach.
- Collaborate with partners to provide comprehensive services in the areas of education, job training, childcare, and transportation that remove barriers to employment that pays a living wage.
- Assist unemployed youth with soft skills training and/or obtaining employment to gain skills or income.

- Assist employed individuals with obtaining an increase in earned income and/or employment benefits.
- Provide referrals to other providers of employment-related resources and services as needed.

**Objectives 1.3:** Assist individuals with affordable housing opportunities.

**Strategies for Objective 1.3**

- Continually advocate for the development of affordable housing throughout Anne Arundel County.
- Provide emergency rental assistance to eligible households to help them obtain and maintain housing.
- Connect individuals to first-time home buyer programs, educational resources and financial assistance.
- Provide opportunities for individuals to obtain financial literacy training and credit repair in an effort to improve their ability to become homeowners.
- Provide referrals to other providers of housing services and resources as needed.



## Expected Outcomes for Goal 1

- AACCAA will help people living in poverty achieve economic mobility and self-sufficiency.
- AACCAA will help people living in poverty remove barriers to obtaining employment that pays a living wage.
- AACCAA will help stabilize the households of people living in poverty.
- AACCAA will help people living in poverty with obtaining and maintaining affordable housing.

## Metrics for Goal 1

- Number of unemployed individuals who obtained full-time employment up to a living wage.
- Number of unemployed individuals who obtained full-time employment that exceeds a living wage.
- Number of individuals who maintained employment for 90 days.
- Number of employed individuals who obtained an increase in income and/or enhanced benefits.
- Number of individuals who obtained an increase in basic skills and/or obtained a GED, certification, or diploma.
- Number of individuals who received utility assistance.
- Number of individuals who avoided eviction.
- Number of individuals who obtained safe and affordable housing.
- Number of individuals who became homeowners.
- Number of individuals who no longer qualify for community action assistance.





# FAMILY LEVEL GOAL

**Goal # 2: AACCAA will provide high-quality and affordable child care resources.**

(ROMA Goal 6) (National Community Action Goal 1)

**Objective 2.1:** Ensure that children make improvement and progress across all areas of development and learning.

## Strategies for Objectives 2.1

- Ensure that all classrooms offer developmentally-appropriate instruction that utilizes effective curriculum, while also providing opportunities for growth in social-emotional, language/literacy, cognitive, physical, and mathematics developmental areas.
- Utilize child observations and classroom assessments to continually monitor to obtain data that will be used for planning and continuous improvement.
- Provide coaching and professional development goals for teachers based on individual needs identified through classroom observations and other monitoring tools.
- Complete monthly progress monitoring and reporting in areas of curriculum fidelity, teacher/child interactions, child assessment, and individualization.
- Provide opportunities for families to be actively involved in their child's development through school-to-home activities, home visits and family conferences, and socializations.



**Objective 2.2:** Provide family engagement opportunities to enhance functioning level and ability to achieve self-sufficiency.

## Strategies for Objective 2.2

- Utilize family engagement opportunities, along with the comprehensive 2-Generation whole family approach, to assist eligible families.
- Partner with families to identify and gain access to resources that will help them become stable and have an enhanced quality of life.
- Effectively coordinate efforts and provide in-house referrals to maximize services offered by AACCAA.
- Provide intentional assistance and resources in the areas of mental health, and physical and/or intellectual disabilities.
- Provide opportunities for parents to volunteer, participate on committees, and attend trainings.

- Provide a wide variety of educational resources for parents to enhance knowledge related to children’s health, nutrition, and dental needs.
- Provide external referrals that promote advocacy and connect families to needed resources.

**Expected Outcomes for Goal 2**

- Early Head Start families will develop effective parental and advocacy skills.
- Early Head Start families will become more stable and achieve self-sufficiency.
- Early Head Start children will continuously grow, develop, and make strides toward success in school and life.
- Early Head Start children will be mentally and physically healthier and in safer environments.



**Metrics for Goal 2**

- Increase the number of children who meet expectations for school-readiness.
- Decrease the number of children not receiving accurate and timely referral services related to mental and physical health.
- Increase participation in parent committee meetings.
- Increase the number of families participating in AACCAA’s 2-Generation whole family approach.
- Increase family self-sufficiency.

# AGENCY LEVEL GOAL

**Goal # 3: AACCAA will enhance its capacity to achieve results.**

(ROMA Goal 5)

**Objective 3.1: Enhance the involvement and engagement of the board of directors.**

## Strategies for Objective 3.1

- Recruit and maintain a qualified and engaged board of directors.
- Provide periodic training and development opportunities for board of directors.
- Sponsor training on board roles and responsibilities at least every two years.
- Develop a more robust new board member orientation and conduct orientation within sixty (60) days of being seated on the board.
- Develop impactful board standing committees to enhance participation, engagement, and knowledge.
- Complete a board self-assessment every two years and utilize the self-assessment to determine board training and development strategy.

**Objective 3.2: Improve the performance and cohesiveness of staff to achieve agency mission and vision.**

## Strategies for Objective 3.2

- Make certain that staff understands the major goals and objectives of all agency programs, ensuring that team members comprehend AACCAA's overall operation and how the programs work together to have a positive impact on families and communities.
- Implement an open communication strategy that encourages innovation, inclusion, and promotion of a continuous improvement mindset.
- Facilitate monthly meetings with program directors that update staff on best practices, policy changes, and important information related to program implementation, internal collaboration efforts, and effectiveness of referrals.



- Provide quarterly staff development and trainings to better equip AACCAA to effectively implement programs, enhance performance, and accomplish mission.
- Recruit and maintain a knowledgeable, high-performing workforce.
- Provide timely communication of programmatic and pertinent financial information.
- Encourage two-way communication that flows both upward and downward to ensure effectiveness. (Upward: Entry-level to program leadership and Downward: Program leadership to entry-level)

**Objective 3.3:** Improve marketing and branding efforts to enhance community visibility and awareness.

**Strategies for Objective 3.3**

- Develop a Marketing and Branding Plan.
- Continue to provide high-quality marketing materials, brochures, and flyers.
- Participate in ten (10) community events annually throughout entire service area.

- Develop and release intentional client success stories and highlight AACCAA’s accomplishments.
- Become more active on various social media platforms.
- Use social media, website, television, radio, and newspapers to articulate AACCAA’s accomplishments, highlight success stories, and market programs/services.
- Create and utilize a comprehensive electronic mailing list that includes businesses, elected officials, partners, funding sources, and other external stakeholders.
- Continue to develop and distribute a quarterly electronic newsletter.



- Continue to complete an annual report that highlights agency accomplishments, programs, and outcomes.
- Provide an informative website that includes current programmatic and financial information, upcoming events, and the latest agency news.

### Expected Outcomes for Goal 3

- AACCAA will improve visibility and have positive community image.
- AACCAA will improve its service delivery and operation.
- AACCAA will enhance the capacity of internal stakeholders to achieve agency mission.

### Metrics for Goal 3

- Increase presence on social media.
- Increase the number of success stories developed.
- Increase the number of community events where AACCAA participates.
- Increase the number of publications.
- Increase training and development opportunities for board of directors.
- Increase training and development opportunities for staff.



# AGENCY LEVEL GOAL

**Goal 4: AACCAA will obtain additional and diversified funding.**

(ROMA Goal 5)

**Objective 4.1: Increase unrestrictive financial resources.**

## **Strategies for Objectives 4.1**

- Develop a comprehensive fundraising plan.
- Establish an annual fundraising goal.
- Establish an ad hoc fundraising committee.
- Establish an annual giving goal for board of directors.
- Sponsor an annual fundraising event to solicit sponsorships and donations from businesses and partners.
- Facilitate board and executive leadership regular engagement with potential donors and financial supporters.
- Request financial support from both county and city governments annually.

**Objective 4.2: Increase nonfederal funding over the next three years.**

## **Strategies for Objectives 4.2**

- Continually submit grant applications to private foundations.
- Continually submit grant applications to local and national businesses.
- Seek performance-based grant funding.

## **Expected Outcomes for Goal 4**

- AACCAA will have an increase in unrestrictive financial resources.
- AACCAA will have additional and diversified funding.
- AACCAA will engage in regular fundraising.
- AACCAA will improve its overall financial health.

## **Metrics for Goal 4**

- Increase unrestrictive financial resources.
- Increase nonfederal funding.



# COMMUNITY LEVEL GOAL

**Goal 5: AACCAA will help people living in poverty improve the communities in which they live.**

(ROMA Goals 2 & 3 and National Community Action Goals 2 and 3)

**Objective 5.1: Increase and strengthen partnerships with external stakeholders.**

## **Strategies for Objective 5.1**

- Develop positive relationships with new and existing partners to maximize resources and available assistance.
- Develop mutually beneficial Memorandums of Understanding to assist AACCAA with achieving its mission.
- Foster relationships with elected officials to increase community assistance and spark positive change.
- Become more involved with the business community and obtain their support in improving communities and obtaining additional funds.
- Enhance community relations activities and offer support to external stakeholders and partners.
- Utilize positive relationships with vendors to facilitate additional resources for low-income individuals and financial support for AACCAA.



**Objective 5.2: Consistently advocate to enhance services and resources available for people living in poverty.**

## **Strategies for Objective 5.2**

- Seek opportunities and collaborations that will increase the availability of safe and affordable housing.
- Consistently promote workforce development opportunities that connect people living in poverty to employment that pays a living.
- Engage local employers to provide employment opportunities for people living in poverty.
- Maintain a viable and effective relationship with local workforce development agencies to foster innovative employment-related opportunities.
- Promote the creation of quality and affordable child care resources.
- Encourage community action professionals to participate on local boards that focus on workforce development, affordable housing, and child care.

**Objective 5.3: Empower people living in poverty to participate in activities to improve community conditions.**

**Strategies for Objective 5.3**

- Utilize AACCAA programs as opportunities to enhance the capacity, leadership, and commitment of people living in poverty.
- Encourage and provide volunteer opportunities for people living in poverty.
- Ensure that customer input and feedback are captured in the community needs assessment process.
- Continue to allow customers to complete customer satisfaction surveys and utilize the information in planning.

**Expected Outcomes for Goal 5**

- AACCAA will establish additional mutually beneficial partnerships.
- AACCAA will develop relationships with various groups of external stakeholders.
- Low-income individuals will have an increase in knowledge that will help them work with AACCAA to improve conditions in the communities in which they live.
- Communities where low-income individuals live will offer economic opportunity and affordable housing options.
- Communities where low-income individuals live will have additional community resources.
- Low-income individuals will provide input and feedback in the development of resources and services offered by AACCAA.

**Metrics for Goal 5**

- Increase the number of volunteers who worked with AACCAA to improve conditions in the community.
- Increase volunteer hours donated.
- Increase affordable housing, child care resources, and workforce development opportunities.
- Increase AACCAA partnerships with external stakeholders.
- Increase the number of community initiatives on which AACCAA is represented.





# IMPLEMENTATION

AACCAA has a high-performing team that includes a qualified board of directors and dedicated staff that will implement the strategic plan. It is important to note that all programs operated by the AACCAA completes annual operating plans to guide its work. Additionally, AACCAA completes a comprehensive work plan each year that includes specific strategies that AACCAA will implement to achieve goals and objectives. Managers and staff will align the program specific operating plans, the agency-wide annual work plan, and approved budgets to accomplish strategic goals.

AACCAA will proceed as follows to accomplish its strategic goals:

- Develop and implement an agency-wide mission driven mindset.
- Develop mutually beneficial partnership agreements.
- Continually engage the community and external stakeholders.
- Effectively implement the 2-Generation whole family approach in the delivery of services.

AACCAA's executive director will assign strategic goal oversight to senior leaders who will provide regular milestone reports to the executive director. The executive director and senior staff will periodically review the implementation progress and provide corrective action as needed. AACCAA has a Certified ROMA Trainer on staff to assist with this process.

# EVALUATION

The Program Committee of AACCAA's Board of Directors will oversee the execution of the Agency's strategic plan. The Board will receive quarterly strategic updates and conduct a review every six months that references goals, objectives, and outcomes achieved. Progress reports will be shared at board meetings and with AACCAA's executive leadership. AACCAA will use the ROMA Next Generation (NG) framework to evaluate its progression in meeting strategic goals.

AACCAA will complete the following to evaluate its progress in accomplishing strategic goals:

- Design a strategic plan report based on the approved plan.
- Provide quarterly strategic planning reports to the Board of Directors. (CSBG Organizational Standard 6.5)
- Complete a review every six months by tracking progress, challenges, and accomplishments of goals and outcomes.
- Facilitate an annual meeting to review strategic accomplishments and challenges.
- Recommend annual strategic updates and adjustments that will enhance effectiveness to accomplish goals and achieve outcomes. (CSBG Organizational Standard 9.3)
- Revise the plan as needed if there are significant changes to the environment.



*Helping People, Changing Lives*

#### **COMMUNITY ACTION PROMISE**

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live.

We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.