

**Harlan County Community Action Agency, Inc. (HCCAA)**  
**Community Needs Assessment Report**  
***Completed February 25, 2019***

The Harlan County Needs Assessment was conducted from August 2018 to February 2019. A total of 382 Community Needs Assessment surveys were completed. One survey was used to gather data in the community from all sectors of the community including: Community Action Clients/Low-Income Residents, Faith Based Organization Representatives, Private Sector Representatives/Community Members, Community Organizations/Partners, Educational Institution Faculty/Staff, Health Care Agencies, HCCAA Board Members, HCCAA Staff/Volunteers, and Local Politicians/Government/Public Sector Representatives. Data gathering strategies included distributing surveys in person (to residents, clients, community members, etc.), mailing surveys, emailing the online survey link, adding the online survey link to our website, distributing paper surveys at partner meetings, and adding the survey link to an online focus group HCCAA has on Facebook. Community members and groups were identified as both internal and external stakeholders for purposes of relaying quantitative and qualitative feedback.

A total of 500 HCCAA surveys were distributed with 382 surveys being completed by individuals, for a completion rate of 76.4%

This report is being issued on behalf of HCCAA to inform the community, service providers, clients, funders, and anyone associated with the Harlan County community of the results of the information gathered during the Community Needs Assessment.

**Community Needs Assessment Key Findings**

The community needs assessment data is provided as quantitative and qualitative and presented in a multi-format reporting structure.

**382 Surveys Taken:**

78.01%	298	Community Action Client/ Low-Income Resident
4.97%	19	Faith Based Organization Representative
4.97%	19	Private Sector Representative (For profit, small business, etc.)
.52%	2	Community Organization/Partner
3.14%	12	Educational Institution Faculty/Staff
1.83%	7	Health Care Agencies
1.31%	5	HCCAA Board Member
4.97%	19	HCCAA Staff or Volunteer
.26%	1	Local Politician/Government/Public Sector Representative

The overall needs assessed are listed based on votes: Employment, Education, Housing, Health, Income and Asset Building, Supportive Services, and Civic Engagement.

**Education:**

Surveyors felt that the top 3 most important Education needs were: More parents involved in student's education, more assessable counseling to prepare students for tech or college, and More certificate/degree programs offered locally.

**Employment:**

Surveyors felt that the top 3 most important Employment needs were: More jobs with better pay and benefits, More training for the types of jobs available in the area, and Affordable transportation to and from job.

**Health:**

Surveyors felt that the top 3 most important Health needs were: More payment assistance programs for adult dental, hearing and/or vision, Affordable transportation for health care services, and More community focus on preventative healthcare.

**Housing:**

Surveyors felt that the top 3 most important Housing needs were: More monthly rental assistance programs, Increased availability of security/utility deposit programs, and More grants to make home ownership and home rehab affordable.

**Income and Asset Building:**

Surveyors felt that the top 3 most important Income and Asset Building needs were: More education on how to build assets, Anonymous and confidential budget counseling, and More access to low interest loans.

**Civic Engagement:**

Surveyors felt that the top 3 most important Civic Engagement needs were: More education on how to join neighborhood associations, community boards, advisory groups or similar organizations, Increasing the community's skills and knowledge for leadership development, and More knowledge on civic activities.

**Supportive Services:**

Surveyors felt that the top 3 most important Supportive Services needs were: Child support, Youth Services, and Legal Services.

**Other Key Findings:**

**Additional Survey Comments:**

\*School teaching life skills.

\*More GED programs.

\*Transportation for students to participate in after-hours activities.

- \*Job creation.
- \*Homeschooling for my kids made easy.
- \*More access to drug treatment programs.
- \*Better quality doctors.
- \*More home repair for the elderly.
- \*More rental property for ages 18 to 40.
- \*Availability of resources for homeless from age 18-22.
- \*Basic investments.
- \*More civic activities in general. Especially community revitalization projects.
- \*Jobs

In the comments or Other sections of the questions community members who took the survey expressed their opinions on what else might benefit Harlan County or what else the county lacks in services.

### Key Findings on Poverty Causes and Conditions:

After reviewing all the data gathered, there seem to be many things that contribute to the cause of poverty in Harlan County. The main reasons seem to be lack of education, insufficient employment opportunities, and environment. Although the poverty causes and conditions seems to be different in many situations.

According to the Community Action Partnership Report for Harlan County prepared on 09/26/2018, the 2016 estimated poverty rate for Harlan County is 37.1%. This rate is extremely higher than the estimated Kentucky rate of 17.74% and the estimated United States rate of 13.90%. From 2000-2016 this rate increased by 9.5%.

Lack of education is a key factor in finding employment and eliminating poverty. In the 382 community members surveyed 27.49% indicated their education level was Grades 9-12/Non-Graduate and 11.52% indicated their education level was Grades 0-8.

\*HCCAA offers WIOA program which helps many individuals obtain the skills and opportunities to receive education needed to overcome poverty.

Insufficient employment opportunities are a high contributor to poverty in this area. In the 382 community members surveyed 89.53% indicated Harlan County need more jobs with better pay and benefits and 53.93% indicated Harlan County needs more training for the types of jobs available in the area. As shown in the Community Action Partnership Report for Harlan County prepared on 09/26/2018, from 2000-2016 the population in Harlan dropped -15.57%. This is a high indication that community members move away to find better opportunities for themselves and their families.

**\*HCCAA offers WIOA program, which helps many individuals obtain the skills and opportunities to receive education and employment needed to overcome poverty.**

**Environment contributes to poverty in having the available access to the programs and services that may be offered to the Harlan County community. Lack of motivation, self-esteem, drug addictions, affordable childcare, and management of finances are all contributors to poverty in this community.**

### **HCCAA Community Needs Assessment Overall Results**

**382 Harlan County community members completed the Needs Assessment surveys.**

**Rankings:**

- 1 Employment**
- 2 Education**
- 3 Housing**
- 4 Health**
- 5 Income & Asset Building**
- 6 Support Services**
- 7 Civic Engagement**

### **HCCAA Agency Priority Rankings**

1. Although Employment was ranked #1 in the needs assessment; Harlan County CAA has placed Employment as # 2, based on need and available services.
2. Education was ranked as # 2 in the needs assessment; Harlan County CAA has placed Education as # 3, based on need and available services.
3. Housing was ranked # 3 in the needs assessment; Harlan County CAA has placed Housing as # 1, based on need and available services.
4. Health was ranked as # 4 in the needs assessment; Harlan County CAA has placed Health as # 5, based on need and available services.
5. Income & Asset Building was ranked as #5 in the needs assessment; Harlan County CAA has placed Income & Asset Building as #6, based on need and available services
6. Support Services as ranked # 6 in the needs assessment; Harlan County CAA has placed Support Services as # 4, based on need and available services.
7. Civic Engagement was ranked as #7 in the needs assessment; Harlan County CAA has placed Civic Engagement as #7, based on need and available services.