

# HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

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The *Health and Community Services* (HCS) portion of the [FY2014 Budget Message](#) provides an overview of the efforts that have been made in setting direction for the Healthy Communities Element. The Department of Health and Community Services has made great strides in developing their mission, organizational structure, and visioning the “future state” of the new department.

## Creation of the Department of Health and Community Services

In December 2011, the Board of County Commissioners finalized their strategic direction. With a vision of improving the quality of life of all residents, the Board aims to have municipalities, engaged citizens, and the County working together to better align resources to revitalize and redevelop communities and protect our natural resources. The Board’s strategic direction is centered around five goals:



In an effort to better align programs and services with the Board’s new Strategic Direction, departments were asked to participate in workshop sessions to take a “deep dive” into their operations and discuss opportunities for efficiencies and enhancements. Following the individual department workshops and after noticing common themes within each workshop, the departments of Health and Human Services, Community Development, Justice and Consumer Services, Code Enforcement, and Economic Development were instructed to work with the Planning Department to develop a comprehensive approach to address the cycle of poverty that negatively impacts so many Pinellas County residents. The departments jointly wrote the *Economic Impact of Poverty* report in May 2012, which detailed the five major contributors of continued poverty in five zones throughout the County and recommended 21 initiatives to break the cycle of poverty.

Following a two-day workshop, the Board adopted the report’s findings and instructed the departments to work together to implement the suggested initiatives. After a series of collaborative meetings, a change in organizational structure among the departments was recommended, and the Department of Health and Community Services was created. The organizational change will increase capability and capacity to more effectively and

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efficiently execute the Board's strategic direction and improve the quality of life for Pinellas County residents and create a sustainable community.

## Mission Statement

*The Pinellas County Department of Health and Community Services' mission is to encourage and promote the health and self-sufficiency of low-income Pinellas County residents and to create and sustain viable neighborhoods. In partnership with our community, the Department administers and coordinates high-quality prevention, intervention, and education, outreach, and enforcement services while also preserving and developing well-maintained affordable housing in safe neighborhoods. We facilitate this process by placing people first, in an effort to increase access to services, promote health, increase self-sufficiency, promote housing equality, create and sustain communities, and improve the quality of life of those who seek our services.*

The Department of Health and Community Services is comprised of approximately 160 employees and also manages contracted staff with the Pinellas County Health Department for the Mobile Medical, Health Services, and Utilization Management units. The Department will have outreach offices located in each of the five **Target Zones**, including the following locations:

2189 Cleveland Street  
Clearwater, FL 33765

647 1st Avenue North  
St. Petersburg, FL  
33701

8751 Ulmerton Road  
Largo, FL 33765

301 South Disston  
Avenue  
Tarpon Springs, FL  
34689

## Core Programs and Services

*The primary goal of the new department is to improve the quality of life of our residents through a multi-pronged approach, which includes improved health outcomes, improved housing conditions, target neighborhood revitalization, and programs and services, that provide financial empowerment and education.* In order to best meet the strategic direction of the Board, the Department will concentrate on programs and services that assist individuals with improving their health, achieving self-

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sufficiency, and accessing necessary services. At the community level, the Department will produce new affordable housing, preserve the existing housing stock, promote home ownership, and support community vitality and improvement efforts. All programs and services will be provided through collaboration with community partners to ensure positive outcomes, community support, client engagement, and controlled costs.

The new organizational structure of the Department will assist in reaching a future state by focusing efforts and resources on a set of core programs and services with the greatest impact on the community and to use data to drive decisions and improve service delivery.

## Future State of the Department of Health and Community Services

The Department of Health and Community Services will be a data-driven organization that effectively and efficiently provides services that support individuals and sustain viable neighborhoods. The Department will design programs and target resources to combat the negative contributing factors to prolonged poverty such as: insufficient access to health care, low educational outcomes, high unemployment rates, insufficient stock of quality affordable housing, high crime rates, insufficient access to fresh foods, and poor transportation.

The creation of a new department allows a start from a *clean slate* to design programs and services around community needs and better target efforts and resources to the populations who need the greatest number of services. In addition, by eliminating the silos in which county departments traditionally operated, we can implement coordinated multi-pronged initiatives that address the individual and the communities in which they reside. In order to break the cycle of poverty, there is a need to address all of the barriers to achieving self-sufficiency. The new organizational structure allows for a multi dimensional approach to revitalize and strengthen our neighborhoods while also empowering our clients to become self-sufficient.

The Department has modeled its core programs and services around the Board of County Commissioners' Strategic Outcomes.

Board of County Commissioners' Strategic Outcomes	Status
• Increase citizen satisfaction with the delivery of services	☑
• Deliver measurable savings and improved customer service from investments in technology	☑
• Utilize a data-driven approach to target opportunities for efficiencies	☑
• Achieve measureable per service/per unit cost savings	☑
• Increase employee satisfaction and engagement	☑
• Achieve cost-savings from collaborative workgroup for consolidation	☑

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By using data to make informed decisions and investing in technology to assist operations, the Department of Health and Community Services will be a modern one-stop department where low-income individuals can access needed services.