



SHELBY COUNTY GOVERNMENT DIVISION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES™

Addressing underlying conditions of wellbeing and justice, for all to reach their full potential

Community Connections

A Newsletter of the Shelby County Government's Division of Community Services

Mission Statement

The Division of Community Services promotes ongoing economic security and independence for the people of Shelby County. We do this by promoting, coordinating and delivering services that address the underlying conditions for wellbeing and justice.

Vision Statement

Shelby County Division of Community Services strives to be a highly organized team and partner, dedicated to promoting a strong community where all people are able to reach their full potential.

Vision 20/18 - One Team, One Mission

A Message from the Director's Office



I recently shared with the Division Leadership Team what I call Vision 20/18 for the Division of Community Services. I'm sure you are asking, is that a typo? Why would she call this Vision 20/18? Contrary to popular belief, 20/20 vision is only average vision for humans and not the best. This Division will strive to be better than average or good enough. We will see things that others can't and won't.

from outputs to outcomes. We will create a culture where all of us are intentional about results based accountability; defined not by how many people we serve, but how many people don't come back. This means we must be just as focused on creating a system that prevents, as well as treats. We will shift our focus from quantity (# of people served per year) to quality (are families and individuals better off?). In order for the 20/18 vision to be achieved, the Division will collectively work as one on these goals:

Goal #1: Establish an engaged, knowledgeable team able to work within their strengths.

Strategy: Strengthen leadership skills, examine our organizational structure and job descriptions to reflect the need, and support ongoing training and development opportunities for all staff.

Goal #2: Seek out new and innovative opportunities for resources (funding and programs).

Strategy: Seek new grants and funding to support existing and new programming, including prevention programming and leveraging County resources to support external partner applications for funding.

Goal #3: Increase awareness of services offered through the Division to the broader community.

Strategy: Brand and market services, including updating our online presence and focused outreach to populations and areas that are disproportionately impacted.

Goal #4: Create connectivity of services throughout the Division (and partners) for greatest impact for individuals, families and community.

Strategy: Explore establishing a division wide internal case management and referral system, that utilizes a universal intake or "no wrong door" approach for clients as well as expanding access points and service times to best meet the needs of the community.

The vision and goals set forth above will be challenging, but are absolutely achievable. It requires each one of us to be our best selves each and every day as we do this work. We must play well with others and lead to empower staff to strive for excellence; all while understanding that with empowerment comes required responsibility and accountability. We must create a culture of open communication and transparency on our team. Most importantly, we must have a spirit of continuous quality improvement with our services and for ourselves. We can never get comfortable and think that we have it figured out. The complex challenges that our clients face require us to always be willing to change to best meet their needs.

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an escapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

This quote by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was the first thing the leadership team saw when arriving at their recent retreat. It embodies the work that is ahead of us and impresses upon us the fact that what we do or don't do is a reflection of every team member and department within the Division. We are linked together as one and must move beyond the talk of being one, to walking as one. I believe in this team and have no doubt that we will move mountains together.

Let's ALL have 20/18 Vision!

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Trauma Informed and Culturally Proficient

What would you say if I told you that you could improve your outcomes with your customers and at the same time increase your job satisfaction? If you learn to engage customers differently and enlist them as your partners in growth, you will see different results. You got into this important and lifesaving work that we do in the Division of Community Services in order to make a difference.

In the Division of Community Services, we want to give you more tools to do so. We will be conducting training to make you more aware of yourself and how you interact with customers. We will also share information and skills with you to help you engage your clients in making healthier long term choices.

Let's start with the obvious. No one comes to any of the departments in our Division because things are going great. They access our services because they are mandated to do so or because they have been unable to solve their problems on their own. Our customers come to us in a time of need and it is our task to help them to leave our programs better off than when they came to us. We have learned that a "one size fits all" approach to service delivery does not work for everyone. When we try to force every customer into the same process, some are unwilling or unable to complete the process to get what they need or to make real change in their lives.

This Division training effort will focus on two main areas- trauma informed care and cultural proficiency. We will discover the importance of learning our customers' trauma history as that background can color their world view.

color their world view. A history of trauma can leave victims feeling fearful, helpless and hopeless. If we are unaware of that history, we can accidentally trigger reactions to the traumatic events that may keep the customer unable or unwilling to change leaving us baffled as to what went wrong and frustrated with them or ourselves.

The second area of focus is on becoming culturally proficient as a Division. We must implement our programs in a way that is inclusive of non-majority cultures in order to be sure that our services are truly comprehensive and accessible. We will focus on the needs of groups such as non-English speakers, immigrants, those with handicapping conditions and others who are of the non-majority. You will receive general information on these populations as well as learn ways to include a broad range of cultures in service delivery planning.

As an added bonus, you will learn about Motivational Interviewing (MI.). MI is a technique that allows you to work collaboratively with your clients to reach their goals with less emphasis on being directive. You will learn to use this skill when interacting with clients to help them choose behaviors that will help them to meet their own goals.

We look forward to working with you throughout the upcoming year. We hope that by fine-tuning communication with our customers, you will feel more empowered to help them to help themselves. The work we do can be life changing, and we want to give you the support to make that a reality.

- Ivette Baldizon & Anna Whalley

New Brand Identity

The Shelby County Division of Community Services has a new brand identity that will be recognized by all as a symbol of growth and opportunity. The symbolism of each component of the tree is as follows:

The Leaves: Service diversity

The Branches: Flexibility and uninhibited outreach

The Trunk: Protection, stability and renewed hope

The Roots: A firmly rooted structured system anchoring the community





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Keisha Walker, Administrator

The Division Insider: Veterans Services Office

The Shelby County Veterans Services Office advises veterans and their families of all rights, privileges, immunities and benefits to which they may be entitled under state and federal laws. The office operates in compliance with Tennessee Code Annotated 58-3-109 and 58-3-111 which encourages each county in the state to have a County Veterans Services Officer.

With the largest veteran population in the state of Tennessee, approximately 63,000 of which 163 are employed by Shelby County Government and the Shelby County Sheriff's Office, it is the goal of the Veterans Services Office to provide access to services and benefits and to serve veterans and their families in Shelby County as thoroughly and expeditiously as possible.

The office is located at 2670 Union Ave. Ext., 5th Floor Memphis, Tennessee 38112.

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**"WE SERVE THOSE,
WHO SERVED US"**



Community Partner Spotlight: The Family Safety Center

The Family Safety Center serves hurting families of Memphis and Shelby County who are caught up in the trauma of domestic violence by locating the core services of 10 of our 31 partner agencies in one place. They provide assistance to victims by helping them navigate through the many services available to them. Ultimately, they strive to reduce incidents of domestic violence and strengthen families in Memphis and Shelby County.

Their mission is to effectively combine civil, criminal, health and social services for victims of family violence in one location while envisioning a thriving community that embodies a spirit of compassion, collaboration and progressive change that values mutual respect, safety and serenity for all residents.

For more information about the Family Safety Center, visit their website at www.familysafetycenter.org.



Interested in having the Division of Community Services speak to your group or participate in your community health or service fair?

Contact Anna.Whalley@shelbycountyttn.gov or at 901-222-2092

