

# annual report

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The Division of Social Services is part of the City of Newton Health and Human Services Department. The Social Services division provides case management, outreach, information, and referral for Newton residents. The division's staff members also provide trainings to residents on issues related to social services and the needs of Newton residents.

### How the division helps:

- Access to community resources
- Budget/ financial planning
- Emergency oil/ fuel assistance
- Food pantry referrals
- Housing information/ applications
- Shelter Referrals
- WIC referrals
- SNAP applications
- Mental health referrals
- Substance use treatment referrals
- Substance use education
- Narcan education
- Workforce development

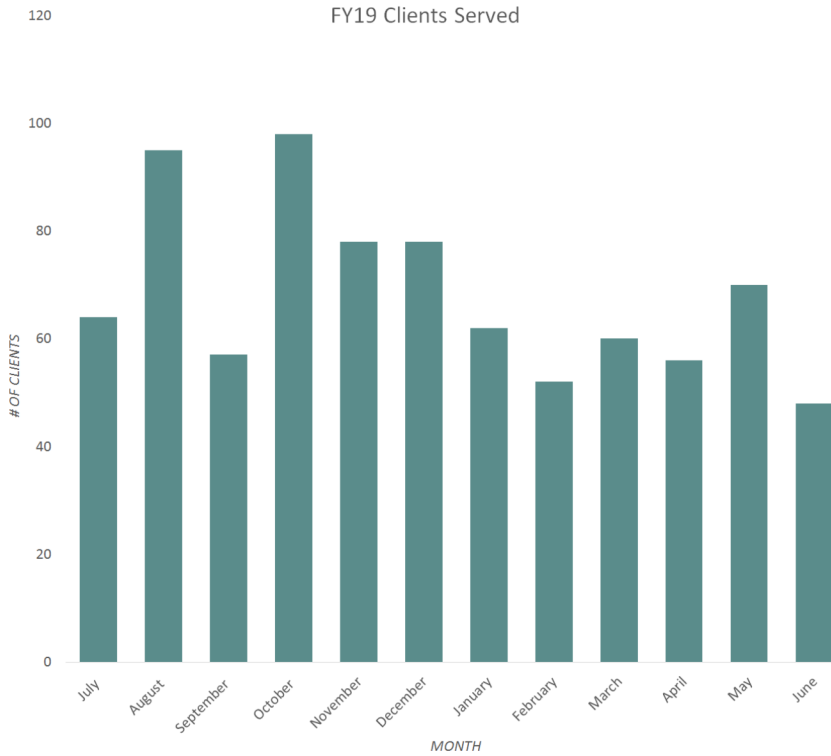
### The Social Services Team

Pam Weissman, Anne Grossman, and Nancy Storer staff the social services division. They provide case management, outreach, and program planning within the Department of Health and Human Services.

### What to Expect

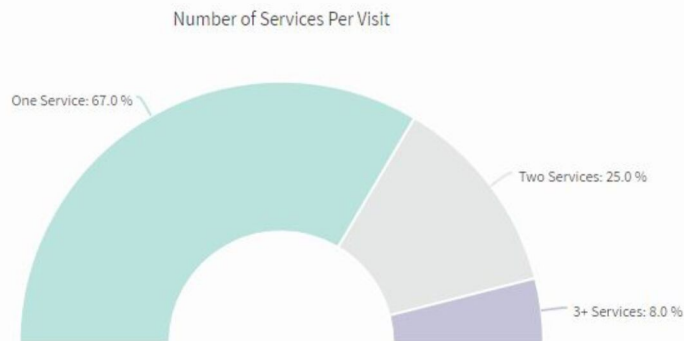
Social Services staff members meet with residents at the Health and Human Services Department, in clients' homes, or other community locations. Staff members provide information and work with residents to assist in determining the best services for clients. Staff help with referrals and creative problem solving to help address clients' needs. Short term case management services are available to any Newton resident.

# SOCIAL SERVICES FY19



From July 1, 2018 through June 20, 2019, 818 unique Newton residents received services from division staff. A wide range of services were provided with some residents seeking help for more than one need.

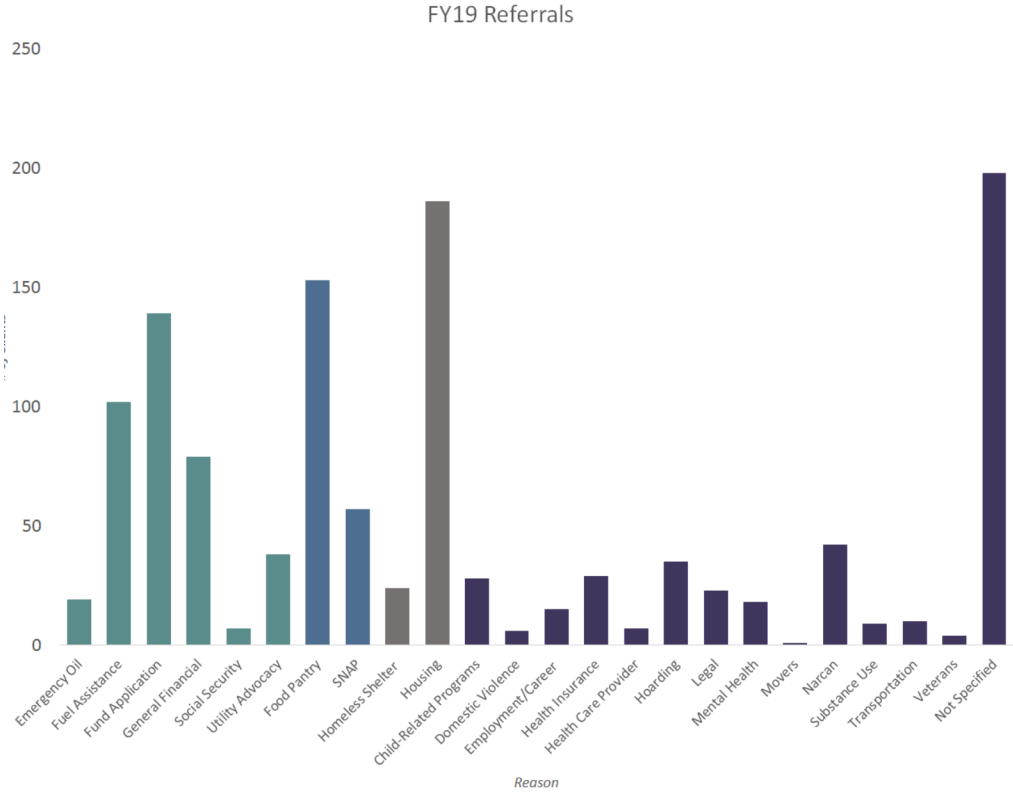
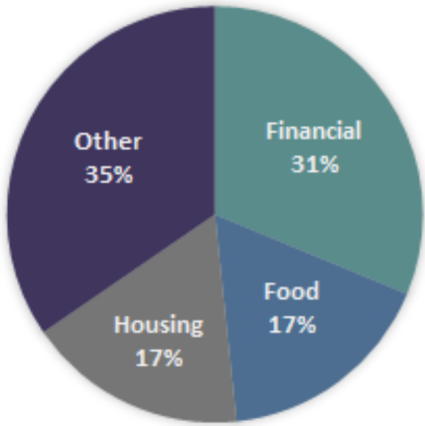
Social service related needs are placed into four main categories: Financial needs, food needs, housing needs, and other needs. While clients are often referred to the division for a primary need, over 25% of clients reported two or more reasons for their visit.



# REFERRALS FY19

Most residents who seek social services have multiple needs addressed during their appointments. Over thirty percent of clients are seen for assistance in accessing financial resources for basic needs such as housing, utility and other essential needs. The secondary reasoning for assistance is access to food. This includes both applications for federally funded SNAP programs and local food assistance such as the food pantries, mobile market, and the Food For Families program.

FY19 REFERRAL CATEGORIES



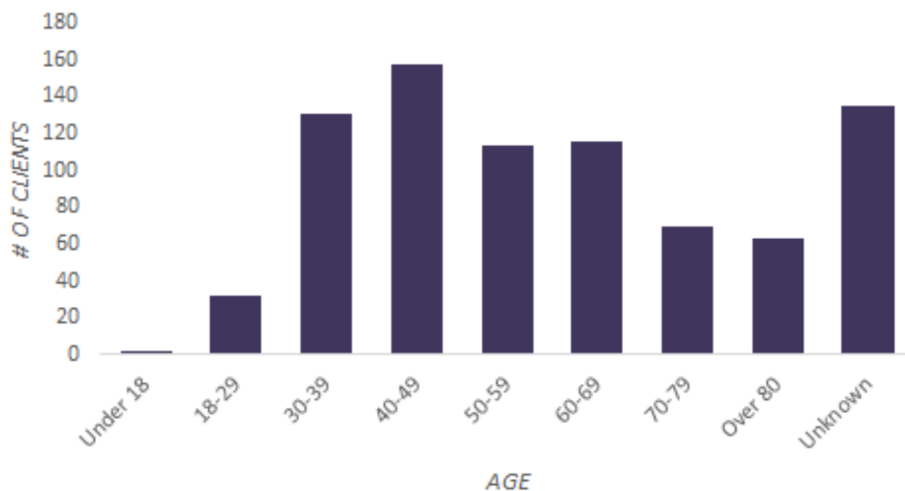
The above chart provides a more detailed description of reasons for referral. There is a high volume of services listed in the "other" category. The greatest need in this area is for supportive listening and problem solving. The social services division is well versed in a wide range of social services and continually expands knowledge of resources.

# CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS FY19

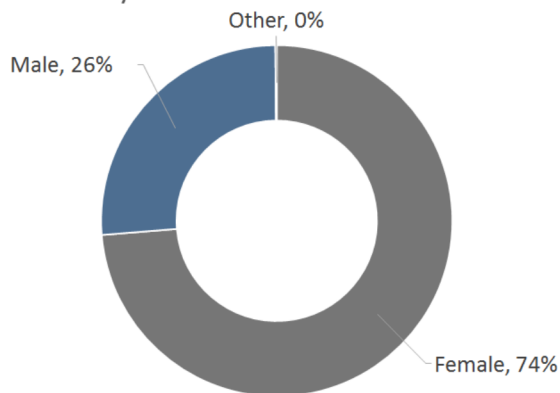
## Age

The division of social services sees residents of all ages, but primarily serves adults. This year, the largest group of residents seen were adults over 60, with 40-49 years the next largest grouping. Regardless of age, different benefits and resources exist for those under and over age 60.

FY19 Clients by Age



FY19 Clients by Gender



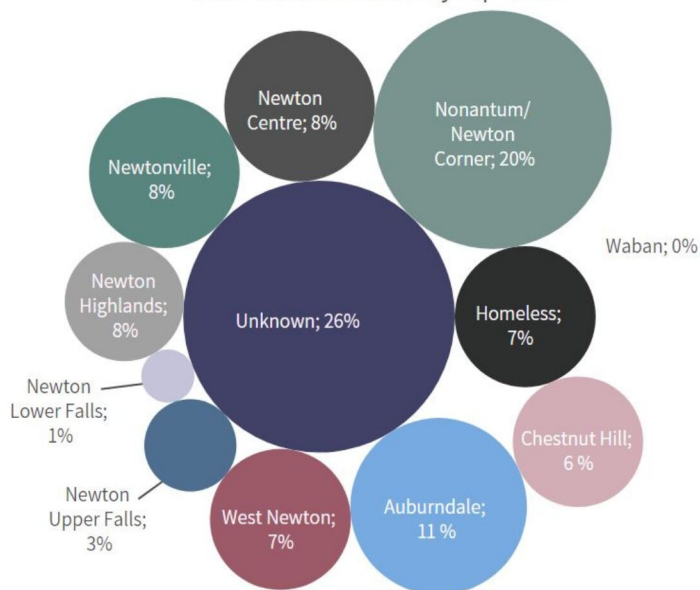
## Gender

Nearly three times more women than men sought assistance. While this pattern isn't unusual among similar social services providers, it indicates that the division may be missing opportunities to assist men. Addressing this potential need will be part of next fiscal year's outreach plan.

## Neighborhoods Served

When possible, clients this year were asked to provide their zip code. The highest percentage of known clients reside within the Newton Corner/ Nonantum village of Newton which share the zip code 02458. This area is the city's most densely populated neighborhood and reflects the high need populations which reside in that area. Seven percent of the clients served in FY19 indicated they were currently homeless.

FY19 Clients Served by Zip Code



## SPECIAL INITIATIVES

FY19

### **Narcan Distribution** **170 PEOPLE TRAINED**

The Narcan distribution program - introduced in August 2018 - resulted in 170 people trained to use the opioid reversal drug, Narcan. Individuals, private businesses, and other staff members learned about the opioid crisis, how Narcan works and how to effectively respond to a suspected opioid overdose. Residents who requested Narcan received a complimentary kit containing Narcan, gloves, CPR shield, and other personal protective equipment. With the help of the division's partner, Newton-Wellesley Hospital, this program has saved lives in Newton.

### **Food for Families** **1,483 BAGS OF FOOD**

The Food for Families program is a partnership with the Newton Food Pantry that provides bags and backpacks to families. The bags contain kid friendly breakfast and lunch items like pasta, cereal, and soup. These backpacks help Newton families supplement their food supply. This program runs year-round, but increases during the summer. Bag and backpack pick-up locations are located through out the City of Newton, including the Health at Human Services Department in City Hall. During FY19, 1,483 bags were distributed to Newton families.

### **Holiday** **Gift Drive**

**100 FAMILIES**  
**PARTICIPATED**

The social services team has continued to partner with Village Bank to provide holiday gifts for our highest need families with children ages 10 and under.. The bank collects and hosts the gift drive while the social services team notifies residents in need about the program. City social services staff are present at the gift distribution and provide information about other resources. In 2018, over 100 families participated in this program.

# SPECIAL INITIATIVES FY19

## Cradles to Crayons 800 STUDENTS SERVED

Cradles to Crayons is a local nonprofit organization that provides kids the supplies they need. As a service partner, social services staff members order "kidpacks" for children 12 and under filled with clothing, books, toys, art supplies, and seasonal outerwear. This service is offered year-round. In late summer, Cradles to Crayons provides school backpacks filled with supplies for students preparing to go back to school. In 2019, Newton students received 800 backpacks and the department looks forward to growing this partnership to reach more students in the new fiscal year.

## Hoarding 65 ATTENDEES

The social services division was awarded a \$4,000 MassHousing Lee Manillo grant in FY19. The grant funded community programs and supported an intern program from Wellesley College. Hoarding treatment experts led two community programs focused on decluttering at home. More than 65 people attended these workshops and left with decluttering tools. Additionally, 9 recovery peers completed the Riverside treatment group to be leaders in the Buried in Treasures coaching model. Four students from Wellesley College were trained and supervised while providing a minimum of three hours per week of decluttering services to residents,

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LOCAL  
PARTNERS

5

SPECIAL  
INITIATIVES

1

MISSION

## LOOKING AHEAD FY20

### COMMUNITY VISIBILITY

During FY20, the division will increase community-based programming. The data suggests clients in specific neighborhoods receive strong case management services while there are gaps in other neighborhoods. The division will work to further develop connections throughout the city so all residents are aware of available services. To do this, staff will develop formal and informal partnerships with the area councils and faith-based organizations with the specific goal of increasing the division's visibility.

Work with transitional age adults, age 18 - 25 years old, will continue during FY20. Collaborations with staff and students at Newton North and Newton South high schools will be further developed so graduating students know they have adults in the community to turn to for assistance navigating life after high school. In addition, staff are partnering with Newton Wellesley Hospital Workforce Development Council. Mass Bay Community College and trade organizations will begin working with the division to develop career pathways for young adults in Newton. Group information sessions and parent support groups will begin to help young adults and their parents better understand the challenges facing this age group and how to overcome them.

### YOUNG ADULT PROGRAMMING

### NEWTON CARES

Newton Cares plans to continue to increase awareness about suicide risk and prevention. The division will further assess the needs of the community related to Newton Cares programming and continue to offer QPR training. The social services team will continue to support those affected by suicide deaths and provide prevention education throughout the community. The division plans to partner with the Human Rights Commission during Pride events during FY20. The joint program will give Newton residents an opportunity to learn about and share their experience of mental health through art.



## LOOKING AHEAD FY20

### HOARDING

In FY18 and FY 19 the division was awarded the MassHousing Lee Mannillo grant. In FY20, we are applying for this grant again to continue community education and harm reduction efforts to address hoarding and the risks associated with these behaviors. If awarded the grant, the social services division in collaboration with the Wellesley College psychology program plan to offer in-home sorting for residents. In addition, the Hoarding Task Force will continue to meet regularly to provide support and services to residents.

Helping residents with housing needs is one of the most challenging aspects of the division's work. With limited options for permanent, low-income housing in Newton, a large number of residents seek services because they are at risk of losing housing or are already homeless. Housing in Newton is unaffordable for most, and many lifelong residents are priced out of their home community. Staff continue to learn more about any and all resources to keep residents housed, and continue to work with city planners to further collaborate on housing crisis solutions.

### HOUSING

### NEWTON PATH

The Narcan distribution program has been very successful in training and distributing Narcan in Newton. During FY20, the division will continue to offer education and training for residents and identify groups who would benefit from learning more about harm reduction, community support, and resources, including Narcan. The division will continue to develop relationships with individuals in need through collaboration with the police and the police social worker.