



## **PROGRAMS IN COOK COUNTY 2024**

### **EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

**Adult Education** – (218) 264-9593

**CareerForce** – (218) 735-6849

**Diversionsary Work Program (DWP)** – (218) 264-9596

**Minnesota Dislocated Worker Program (DW)** – (218) 748-7332

**Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)** – (218) 264-9593

**Minnesota Family Resiliency Program (MFRP)** - (218) 264-9593

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** - (218) 264-9593

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP Outreach)** - (218) 264-9593

### **HEAD START**

**Early Head Start** - (218) 748-7351

**Head Start** - (218) 748-7351

### **HOUSING RESOURCES**

**Homebuyer Assistance/First-time Homebuyer** - (218) 735-6895 or (218) 999-0828

**Homeless Services** – Call 211 for an intake

### **HOUSING SERVICES**

**Business Energy Retrofit Program (BER)** - (218) 780-8061

**Downtown Building Rehab (DBR)** - (218) 780-8061

**Energy Assistance Program (EAP)** - (218) 735-6839 or (844) 568-0149

**Single Family Rehabilitation** - (218) 735-6879

**Weatherization Assistance Program** - (218) 735-6822

### **SENIOR AND NUTRITION SERVICES**

**Bone Builder Classes** - (218) 409-5991

**Food Shelves** – (218) 404-6050 or [foodaccess@aeoa.org](mailto:foodaccess@aeoa.org)

**Nutrition: Senior Dining & Meals on Wheels** – (218) 735-6899

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP Outreach)** - (218) 259-4524 or 748-7325

**Tax Assistance Program** – 651-297-3724

**Volunteer Services** - (218) 409-5991

### **TRANSIT**

**Dial-a-Ride** - (800) 862-0175

**Scheduled Services** - Visit [www.arrowheadtransit.com](http://www.arrowheadtransit.com) or call (800) 862-0175

**Volunteer Driver Program** - (218) 735-6812 or (218) 735-6854

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS**

### **EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

#### **Adult Education**

The Adult Education program provides a full spectrum of learning options for community members who are age 17 years or older and are not enrolled in or required to be enrolled in any school in the K-12 system. In addition, the individual must lack a secondary high school credential and/or function below the 12<sup>th</sup> grade level in any of the basic academic areas including reading, math, and ability to read, write and understand English. Adult Education services include: basic skill and computer training, GED preparation, English language learning (ELL), college and career preparation, and industry-specific training (i.e., carpentry pre-apprenticeship, ServSafe food manager certification, para-professional certification). Services are available in person and online.

#### **CareerForce**

As a partner with CareerForce, AEOA provides under-employed and unemployed individuals with information on coping with unemployment, seeking and applying for employment, maintaining employment, as well as providing information on training opportunities and other forms of employment and training assistance. Job Clubs offer an opportunity for job seekers to network with other job seekers and to share experiences in their search for employment.

#### **Diversionsary Work Program (DWP)**

The Diversionsary Work Program (DWP) is a four-month program that helps low-income Minnesota families find a job. The program is aimed at helping participants obtain employment quickly and preventing them from needing additional public assistance services. Most families are enrolled in this program when they first apply for County assistance and can only be referred to AEOA by a County Financial Worker.

#### **Minnesota Dislocated Worker Program (DW)**

The Minnesota Dislocated Worker (DW) Program helps workers who lost their job through no fault of their own find a new career. An individual typically must qualify for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits to be eligible. DW staff work with the unemployed worker to re-enter the workforce in a stable job within a high-demand occupation providing career counseling and planning. Resources available through the DW program can include financial assistance for approved training, housing assistance, transportation assistance, relocation assistance, childcare, and other career-related needs. There may also be an opportunity for paid on-the-job training.

#### **Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)**

The Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) is the state's public assistance program for low-income families with children. The program focuses on the overall family's well-being and provides resources to move to employment quickly, whether this be through up-skilling or through help with interview and job search skills. Referral to this program can only be provided to AEOA by a County Financial Worker.

#### **Minnesota Family Resiliency Program (MFRP)**

The Minnesota Family Resiliency Program (MFRP) is a program provided to individuals who have lost their primary source of income for reasons such as loss of a relationship through separation, divorce,

death, or disability. If you lose public assistance benefits you may also qualify for the program. You must have provided unpaid household services for at least two years, have lost your primary source of income, and now find that you must support yourself or your family. Employment Counselors help individuals seek employment, assist in budgeting, teach stress management skills, and provide guidance and support, among other things. There are limited financial resources to assist clients with training costs, transportation, childcare, and housing assistance. Eligible MFRP participants may also be eligible to receive services from the Dislocated Worker program which could include additional assistance with training, transportation, childcare, and housing assistance.

### **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps, is a program provided to adults with or without children who are seeking employment. AEOA Employment Counselors help SNAP clients in gaining the appropriate skills and abilities to obtain employment to gain self-sufficiency.

### **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP Outreach)**

The Adult Education program provides screening to community members to help them determine if they are eligible for SNAP services. That goal is to help people make an informed decision about what hunger resources are available to them to ensure an overall successful transition from poverty to self-sufficiency.

## **HEAD START**

### **Early Head Start**

Early Head Start provides early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families and pregnant women and their families. The principles are designed to nurture healthy attachments between the parent and child; emphasize a strengths-based, relationship-centered approach to services; and encompass the full range of a family's needs from pregnancy through a child's third birthday. Applications are always welcome.

### **Head Start**

Head Start provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families from birth until the child's fifth birthday. The program's services and resources are designed to foster stable family relationships, enhance children's physical and emotional well-being, and establish an environment to develop strong cognitive skills.

## **HOUSING RESOURCES**

### **Homebuyer Assistance/First-time Homebuyer**

The Homeownership Assistance Program is designed to promote and encourage homeownership by providing training and counseling to first-time homebuyers. We conduct a series of Homestretch Workshops, open to anyone interested in learning how to buy a home. The classes are open to anyone currently in or interested or previous homeowners. Down payment and closing cost assistance may be available to income-eligible, qualified first-time homebuyers who complete the workshop.

## Homeless Services

AEOA's homeless services are designed to keep community members housed, either through prevention resources or rapid rehousing. This includes assistance in finding housing and other support services, as well as direct assistance with rent, security deposits, mortgage, and other assistance targeted for families, single adults, and youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Those experiencing homelessness or precariously housed should start the eligibility process by calling 211 for an intake.

- a. **Emergency and Transitional Housing**—AEOA owns and operates the homeless shelter, Bill's House in Virginia, which consists of four emergency housing units and eight transitional housing units. AEOA also owns and operates the homeless shelter Home on the Range in Hibbing that consists of 28 emergency housing units, as well as two additional emergency apartment units in Hibbing. Individuals can reside in emergency housing units for a maximum of 30 days and 90 days in transitional units. Residents of AEOA shelters receive case management, which provides one-to-one supportive services to help them stabilize their lives and work on self-sufficiency.
- b. **Homeless Youth Housing**--Owned by AEOA, the Virginia Youth Foyer is independent and permanent living for youth who are homeless and in need of permanent housing. The building consists of 13 efficiency units and two 2-bedroom units. Youth play an active role in creating community within the Foyer as support groups, cooking groups, parenting classes, GED prep, and more take place on-site. Specialists in mental health and chemical health assist in assessment, goal planning, and case management for those young people most in-need.
- c. **Housing Support Services for Adults with Serious Mental Illness (HSASMI)** – HSASMI provides direct services to adults with serious mental illness who need assistance with accessing housing. Eligible clients are screened and assessed, and an individualized housing support plan is developed. The client receives assistance with the housing search, application process, identifying resources available to cover one-time expenses that facilitates the access of housing and establishment. In addition, a housing support crisis plan is developed that includes prevention and early intervention services when the client's housing is jeopardized.
- d. **Permanent Supportive Housing** – Located in Eveleth at the Italian American building is the Single Room Occupancy program that is owned and operated by AEOA. This program consists of 12 efficiency apartments for single homeless individuals. Site-based Section 8 is provided, and individuals pay 30% of their income for rent.

The Ivy Manor Apartments, formerly known as the "LaSalle Apartments" are in Virginia. The building began rehabilitation starting December 2016 and a Grand Opening event was held in July 2018. The Ivy Manor provides housing stability to individuals who are homeless or have physical and/or emotional disabilities.

## MNSure Marketplace Assistance

AEOA's certified Navigator is available to provide individuals and families with free face-to-face assistance to help them achieve successful enrollment into health coverage through the MNSure Marketplace. AEOA's Navigator provides assistance to any consumer who contacts them for help and complies with MNSure's data privacy and security standards requirements.

## **HOUSING SERVICES**

### **Business Energy Retrofit Program (BER)**

The Business Energy Retrofit Program is designed to educate and help assist businesses within the Taconite Assistance Area with energy-efficient decisions and aid in financing the energy retrofit project. The BER program will support and provide the business up to \$20,000 in eligible retrofit expenses or one-third of the total project up to \$60,000. Applicants are required to obtain prevailing wage compliant bids from local contractors and submit with AEOA's application.

### **Downtown Building Rehab (DBR)**

The Downtown Building Rehabilitation Program is designed to help aid in financing code compliant construction and remodeling projects on main streets downtown. The DBR Program will support and provide 1/3 project cost up to \$50,000 in eligible expenses. Up to 10% of awarded grant funding may be utilized for professional services such as an architect or engineer. Applicants are required to obtain prevailing wage compliant bids from local contractors and submit with AEOA's application.

### **Energy Assistance Program (EAP)**

AEOA's Energy Assistance Program helps low-income residents heat their home throughout the winter by providing help and information needed to manage their fuel costs. The program provides financial grants to be used toward energy costs for residential heating bills with additional funds available for crisis situations and energy related repairs. Households must provide verification of their incomes for the eligibility period to qualify for this program.

### **Single Family Rehabilitation**

AEOA administers a variety of programs for eligible homeowners to make basic improvements to the safety, livability, energy efficiency and accessibility of their home. Examples of improvements include: electrical wiring, furnace or boiler replacement, window and door replacements, siding and roofing, plumbing and septic system upgrades, mold and radon mitigation and lead-based paint hazards. You may be eligible if you: own and occupy your home, are current with property tax and mortgage payments, have homeowner's insurance and meet program income limits.

### **Weatherization Assistance Program**

Weatherization Assistance services are available to income-eligible homeowners. AEOA's highly qualified Energy Auditors provide client education and perform energy audits to evaluate energy usage. AEOA's experienced and Skilled Work Crews will then complete improvements to reduce heating costs. Examples of improvements include: exterior wall and attic insulation, air sealing, and home heating systems repair. Services are free for low-income households who qualify.

## **SENIOR AND NUTRITION SERVICES**

### **Bone Builder Classes**

Bone Builders is an RSVP signature program, developed by the research from Tufts University. Participants use a combination of weight-bearing exercises, balance, and strength training guided by a trained instructor. The idea behind the program is to increase muscle and bone density in seniors, prevent and reverse osteoporosis, and improve balance thereby reducing the risk of injury from falls. A side benefit is that participants experience increased energy and well-being through the socialization the group provides.

### **Food Shelves**

AEOA provides 501(c)3 status to Food Shelves across Cook, Lake, and St. Louis County to provide emergency and short-term assistance to income-eligible individuals and families who have run out of options to alleviate hunger.

### **Food Access**

Assistance and support for many programs related to creating healthy and equitable food access.

a. **Food Shelves**

AEOA provides 501(c)3 status to Food Shelves across Cook, Lake, and St. Louis County to provide emergency and short-term assistance to income-eligible individuals and families who have run out of options to alleviate hunger

b. **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP Outreach)**

AEOA's Senior Services staff and the Adult Basic Education program provide screening to community members to help them determine if they are eligible for SNAP services. The goal is to help people make an informed decision about what hunger resources are available to them to ensure an overall successful transition from poverty to self-sufficiency.

### **Nutrition: Senior Dining & Meals on Wheels**

AEOA's Nutrition services provide a full spectrum of services for seniors to live healthy and independently. In addition to nutritious meals, the service includes nutrition screening, assessment, and education. A Registered Dietitian completes a nutritional analysis and approves the cycle menus. Meals comply with the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans and provide a minimum of one-third of the dietary reference intakes established by the Food and Nutrition Board. The program specifically targets older adults 60 years of age or older with the greatest economic or social need, with attention to disabled, low-income, and minority individuals, as well as older adults in rural communities, older adults with limited English proficiency, and older adults at risk of institutional care.

a. **Meals on Wheels** - Also known as Home Delivered Meals, this is a service for dining patrons 60 years of age or older who have been assessed and are deemed "homebound." Once prepared, the meals are packed for home delivery by volunteers. Service is available at a discounted rate. For many home-delivered meal recipients, the volunteer delivering the meal may be the recipient's only human contact of the day.

b. **Senior Dining** - Dining services are offered at numerous locations such as senior housing, community or senior centers, and some restaurants for individuals 60 years of age or older. Dining patrons enjoy the company of peers, great conversation, and meals that provide over 40% of the daily intake of most key ingredients. Dining is open to all individuals 60 years of age or older with the opportunity for a reduced rate.

### **Tax Assistance Program**

Through AEOA's Tax Assistance Program, certified AARP Tax-Aide Program volunteers are available February 1 through April 15 to prepare Minnesota and federal tax forms for low- to-moderate-income individuals and senior citizens throughout Lake and St. Louis County. Through Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), certified volunteers are available throughout tax season to prepare taxes for low-to-moderate income individuals and senior citizens in Lake and Cook Counties.

### **Volunteer Services**

AEOA's Volunteer Services has two branches: AmeriCorps Seniors Arrowhead Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and Arrowhead Volunteers. Arrowhead RSVP engages persons 55 and better in volunteer services to meet critical community needs and to provide a high-quality experience to enrich their lives. Arrowhead Volunteers promotes volunteering by assisting people up to age 54—including families—to find meaningful volunteer opportunities in their communities. AEOA's Volunteer Services involve being a tutor and mentor for children, delivering Meals on Wheels, creating emergency kits, helping at local food shelves, preserving history, and much more.

## **TRANSIT**

### **Dial-a-Ride**

Arrowhead Transit's Dial-a-Ride is an on-demand system that provides transportation to individuals in our service areas. Passengers only need to call our dispatch at 800-862-0175 and select the number for their county or city. All transit buses are ADA accessible, and drivers are trained to assist passengers on and off the buses.

### **Scheduled Services**

Arrowhead Transit has scheduled stops and provides a Dial-A-Ride Service in many areas.

### **Volunteer Driver Program**

The Volunteer Driver Program assists individuals on Medical Assistance to get to and from medical appointments. Arrowhead Transit has contracts with four major insurance companies and with various counties in the area. The Volunteer Program encourages the individual to contact their insurance provider to see if they qualify for the program. The Volunteer Driver Program operates in ten counties including Aitkin, Carlton, Chisago, Cook, Isanti, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Pine, and St. Louis, and can perform medical rides in other counties in Greater Minnesota as requested by the insurance companies.