

Homelessness, Human Services and Libraries

Partnering with local human service
providers

or, a social worker in the library?



MULTNOMAH COUNTY OREGON

Multnomah County Library and Human Services Survey

Multnomah County's Department of Human Services is conducting a survey to better understand the needs of library patrons and learn how patrons might use services if they were offered in partnership with the library. You may answer only the questions you wish; the more information we have, the better we can align needs with resources. This survey should take less than five minutes to complete.

1. What is your age?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65 or over |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 | |

2. What is your race/ethnicity? (Please select all that apply.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> African | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Slavic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American | <input type="checkbox"/> White |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Eastern | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

3. What is your gender?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

4. Have you ever served in the armed forces?

- Yes
- No

5. Do you ever use the library to take a break from the weather (heat or cold)?

- Yes
- No

6. What is your current living situation?

- Own home
- Rent a room/shared housing
- Rent apartment
- Staying with friends/family
- Hotel/motel
- Shelter
- Treatment center
- Living in vehicle (car, truck, camper)
- Outside (street, overpass, woods, park)

7. How often do you use the library?

- Daily
- More than once a week
- Weekly to monthly
- Monthly or less frequently

8. How long do you stay when you come?

- Less than one hour
- 1-4 hours
- 4 hours or longer

9. How do you spend your library time? (Please select all that apply.)

- Use library computers
- Look for books, magazines, newspapers, other materials
- Hang out or meet friends
- Read
- Research/study
- Use restroom
- Ask questions or receive personal assistance
- Other _____

10. If you use library computers, what do you use them to do? (Please select all that apply.)

- Look for work
- Check email
- Look for housing
- Look for services
- Do research/reading
- Other _____

11. Are you currently using any of the following services? (Please select all that apply.)

- Computer classes
- Job search assistance
- Mental health counseling
- Help with drug or alcohol
- Help for people in unhealthy, controlling or abusive relationships
- Help with housing
- Other _____

12. Would you be interested in information on any of the following services? (Please select all that apply.)

- Computer classes
- Job search assistance
- Mental health counseling
- Help with drug or alcohol
- Help for people in unhealthy, controlling or abusive relationships
- Help with housing
- Other _____

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your input is valuable.

Recommendations

- Recommendations were divided into three prioritized groups: those that should take effect immediately, those that can be accomplished within the next six to 12 months, and those that may take more than 12 months to complete.

Immediate Action

- DCHS and MCL will arrange meetings between key partners and discuss parameters for adding MCL to the locations that accommodate regular county outreach activities.
- MCL will develop a deeper relationship with Project Respond and make sure all employees know when, why and how to make contact.

Six to 12 Month Actions

- DCHS and MCL will develop a training for employees who serve as Person In Charge (PIC) to increase awareness and common understanding of the services and offerings from county and independent agencies by county region in order to facilitate better referrals to patrons in need. Include when and how to use the Crisis Hotline (and other tools), along with information about what will happen as a result of a crisis line call.
- The library will ensure that all library PICs attend Mental Health First Aid training.
- DCHS and the library will work to develop a Commons page to be used by public service staff as a quick reference guide for issues relating to homelessness or mental health issues.
- The library will create a way to promote 211 services to patrons. This could be accomplished via public programs, a website campaign, or one-on-one interactions between library staff and patrons.

12 Months (or more)

- The library will work with DCHS to develop a three-hour training session for public service employees who do not serve as PIC but are likely to have interactions with patrons experiencing difficulties with housing, addiction, mental health, or domestic violence issues. Ideally this would provide staff members with basic coping methods and hand-off skills to be applied when they need to redirect patrons to someone more skilled.