



**Bucks County**  
Pennsylvania

## **Recovery Plan Performance Report**

**State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds**

2021



## Bucks County, Pennsylvania

### 2021 Recovery Plan

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## GENERAL OVERVIEW

### **Executive Summary**

#### *American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding*

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (H.R. 1319) is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus package passed by Congress, signed by President Joe Biden on March 11, 2021, in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and related economic challenges. First proposed on January 14, 2021, the package builds upon many of the measures in the CARES Act of 2020, and in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, including \$350 billion in state and local aid to municipalities and counties through the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to support immediate pandemic response, address economic fallout and lay the foundation for a strong and equitable recovery.

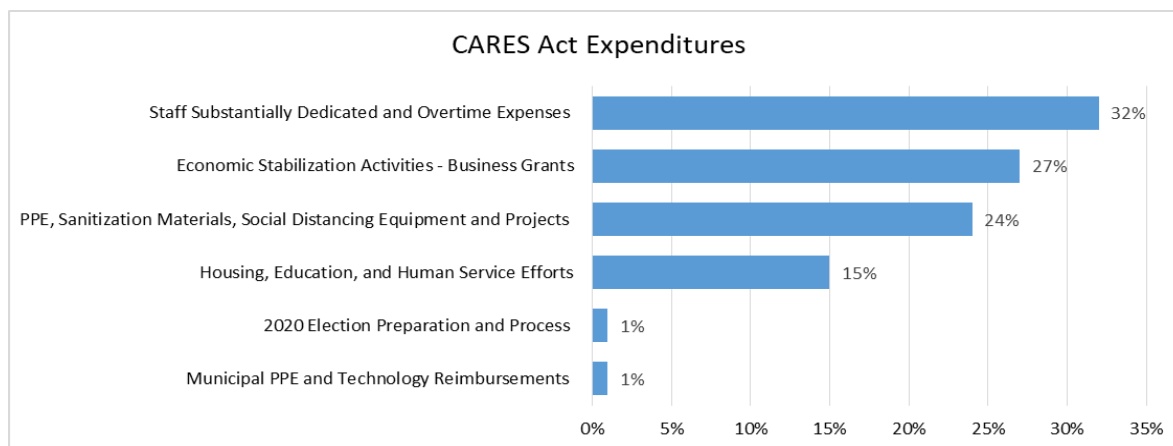
Bucks County government was awarded \$122,034,082 of SLFRF and received the first 50 percent payment of \$61,071,041 on May 19, 2021. The County should receive the second 50 percent payment of \$61,071,041 on or after May 19, 2022. Funds must be incurred by December 31, 2024 and expended by December 21, 2026. This project is being supported by Federal Award Number (FAIN SLFRP0222) awarded to the County of Bucks by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

#### *County Recovery Plan Report*

Our County is committed to utilizing the ARPA funding in an innovative and equitable manner. We will listen to our residents, community and business partners, and research best practices and leverage all other financial resources to develop impactful initiatives and investments in infrastructure that will have a long-term, measurable and sustainable impact. The plan will contain detailed information on funding allocations and eligible expenditures, program initiatives and outcomes, and service level indicators for pandemic relief efforts provided to residents and businesses alike.

#### *Recovery Efforts to Date*

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March of 2020, the Bucks County Board of Commissioners, along with its County Department of Health, Emergency Services, Housing and Community Development, Workforce and Economic Development, and various Human Services agencies, have deployed millions of dollars in federal, state, and local assistance to address the impact of the pandemic on residents, businesses, and organizations throughout the County. The chart below provides an aggregate of the funding utilized in these efforts:



While much work has been accomplished through the use of CARES Act funding, Bucks County is grateful to have the financial resources through the ARPA to continue to address the many challenges it faces in managing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The public will be able to follow our initiatives and expenditures through this report, to learn the programs developed and how investments will provide a positive and long lasting impact in our community.

## Uses of Funds

The County intends to use its allocation of ARPA funds in the following areas:

- a. Public Health
- b. Negative Economic Impacts
- c. Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities
- d. Premium Pay
- e. Water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure
- f. Revenue Replacement

Project plans within each of the above categories will be identified and included in this plan as approved by the Bucks County Board of Commissioners.

The plan will remain flexible and be revised as additional Treasury guidance is received, information is obtained, and priorities are identified. Program expenditures will be evaluated on a regular basis throughout the grant program period between March 3, 2021 and December 31, 2024. The County will continue to use its accounting consultant to assist with fiscal and eligibility compliance in use of ARPA funds.

### *Programs Using Other ARPA Funds*

Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERA) - The ERA program makes funding available to assist households unable to pay rent or utilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Two separate federal programs were established: ERA1 provided up to \$25 billion under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, enacted on December 27, 2020, and ERA2 provided up to \$21.55 billion under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, enacted on March 11, 2021.

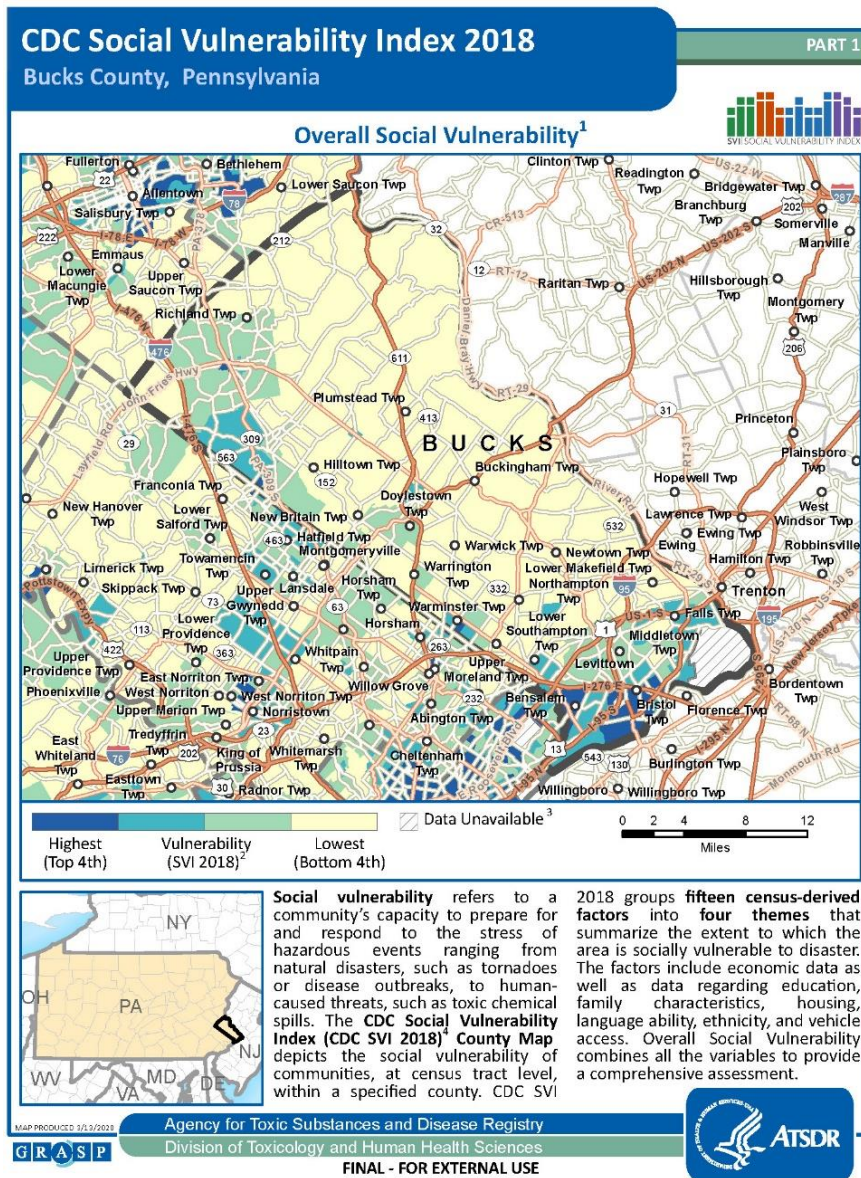
The Bucks County Rental Assistance Program (BERA) provides rental and utility assistance to eligible Bucks County tenants. BERA program activities to date are provided below:

- \$11,368,390.34 has been spent in financial assistance to households and \$1,067,893.55 in administrative/housing stability services to total \$12,436,283.89 spent through all ERAP sources to date
- 1,267 households served with financial assistance through the program
- 49% (625) of households served are under 30% area median income (AMI)
- 32% (395) of households served are Black or African American, 51% (641) White, 7% (95) Multi-Racial, 2% (29) Asian, less than 1% (11) American Indian or Native Hawaiian, and 7% (96) refused or data not collected
- 10% (132) of households served identify as Hispanic/Latino
- 64% (807) of households served have a female head of household

Please visit the site for program details: <https://www.buckscounty.gov/828/Emergency-Rental-Assistance-BERA>

## Promoting Equitable Outcomes

Bucks County programs will be designed to promote equitable outcomes, advancing racial equity and support for underserved communities and vulnerable populations, specifically communities within social vulnerability tracts shown below and defined by the Center for Disease Control's Social Vulnerability Index (CDC SVI). Accordingly, communities must prepare for and respond to natural or human-caused disasters, or disease outbreaks. Reducing social vulnerability can decrease both human suffering and economic loss. A number of factors, including poverty, lack of access to transportation and housing may weaken a community's ability to prevent human suffering and financial loss in a pandemic or disaster. These factors are known as social vulnerability. CDC SVI uses U.S. Census data to determine the social vulnerability of every census tract. Census tracts are subdivisions of counties for which the Census collects statistical data. CDC SVI ranks each tract on 15 social factors and groups them into four related themes. Each tract receives a separate ranking for each of the four themes as well as an overall ranking (see map below).



Bucks County will focus its efforts on providing services and programs to address the negative economic impacts of the pandemic which have been most severe among low-income, high-poverty populations through strategic targeted programs and improvements to existing services within identified areas of most need utilizing the CDC SVI. Outcomes will be achieved and reported accordingly.

## Community and Business Engagement

The County issued a COVID-19 needs assessment survey to its diverse nonprofit service provider network in early June 2021. A roundtable discussion was held with the providers to review survey results and prioritize current and future funding-based needs. Below is a listing of the highest areas of concern discussed:

Behavioral Health & Developmental Support	Child Welfare and Foster Care
Affordable Housing	Domestic Violence
Premium Pay	Food Security
Substance Use Treatment	Healthcare for Children
Increase Salaries of Social Services Staff	Healthy Childhood Environment
Health Disparities	Additional Training for Workers
Public Health	Negative Economic Impacts from COVID
Transportation	Re-entry of the Incarcerated
Childcare	Translation Services
Employment Support	Schools
Education Disparities	Vaccine Incentives
Homelessness	Juvenile Probations Office/Community Based Supports
Lost Revenue	Credit Rating Support
Technology/Internet Upgrades	Facility Improvements

Our community non-profit service providers will develop program and project funding proposals based on the above identified areas of need. Proposals will be evaluated and funded according to criteria developed to serve individuals with significant barriers to services, including people of color, people with low incomes, limited English proficiency populations, and other underserved individuals with barriers.

In addition, the County will be hosting a roundtable event in September 2021, for our business community to discuss current economic recovery efforts as well as eligibility criteria to access the County's "Bucks Back to Work" \$5mm business grant program.

## Labor Practices

Workforce practices and labor standards in place by the county will result in high-quality infrastructure projects. These practices and standards were in place in the County prior to receipt of the ARPA funds and will continue to be utilized in the execution of this plan. Davis-Bacon and related Acts, legally required for all federally funded projects, will be applied to infrastructure projects constructed using ARPA funds. The County has historically used Davis Bacon wages in all federally funded contracts with contractors and subcontractors. Davis-Bacon as well as our Responsible Contractor's Ordinance language will be incorporated into all contracts so that employees performing work on ARPA funded projects are receiving required wage rates for their labor.

## Use of Evidence

Evidence-based program evaluations are valuable instruments of public programs or services. These tools can provide the ability to apply scientific, tested and proven methods of service delivery or allow for evaluation of intended outcomes. The County continues to evaluate the best potential use of funds and "Use of Evidence" requirements. To date, the County will be requiring all partner providers, sub recipients, or contractors to describe goals, evidence basis, and projected outcomes for awarded project(s).



## Table of Expenses by Expenditure Category

The use of ARPA funds will include support for Bucks County's public health response, areas of negative economic impact, premium pay for essential workers, and water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure with primary focus on services to disproportionately impacted communities. The table below will be updated as projects commence and funds are expended in the applicable categories.

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
1	Expenditure Category: Public Health		
1.1	COVID-19 Vaccination		
1.2	COVID-19 Testing		
1.3	COVID-19 Contact Tracing		
1.4	Prevention in Congregate Settings (Nursing Homes, Prisons/Jails, Dense Work Sites, Schools, etc.)		
1.5	Personal Protective Equipment		
1.6	Medical Expenses (including Alternative Care Facilities)		
1.7	Capital Investments or Physical Plant Changes to Public Facilities that respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency		
1.8	Other COVID-19 Public Health Expenses (including Communications, Enforcement, Isolation/Quarantine)		
1.9	Payroll Costs for Public Health, Safety, and Other Public Sector Staff Responding to COVID-19		
1.10	Mental Health Services		
1.11	Substance Use Services		
1.12	Other Public Health Services		
2	Expenditure Category: Negative Economic Impacts		
2.1	Household Assistance: Food Programs		
2.2	Household Assistance: Rent, Mortgage, and Utility Aid		
2.3	Household Assistance: Cash Transfers		
2.4	Household Assistance: Internet Access Programs		
2.5	Household Assistance: Eviction Prevention		
2.6	Unemployment Benefits or Cash Assistance to Unemployed Workers		
2.7	Job Training Assistance (e.g., Sectoral job-training, Subsidized Employment, Employment Supports or Incentives)		
2.8	Contributions to UI Trust Funds*		
2.9	Small Business Economic Assistance (General)		
2.10	Aid to nonprofit organizations		
2.11	Aid to Tourism, Travel, or Hospitality		
2.12	Aid to Other Impacted Industries		
2.13	Other Economic Support		
2.14	Rehiring Public Sector Staff		
3	Expenditure Category: Services to Disproportionately Impacted Communities		
3.1	Education Assistance: Early Learning		
3.2	Education Assistance: Aid to High-Poverty Districts		
3.3	Education Assistance: Academic Services		
3.4	Education Assistance: Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Services		

Category		Cumulative expenditures to date (\$)	Amount spent since last Recovery Plan
3.5	Education Assistance: Other		
3.6	Healthy Childhood Environments: Child Care		
3.7	Healthy Childhood Environments: Home Visiting		
3.8	Healthy Childhood Environments: Services to Foster Youth or Families Involved in Child Welfare System		
3.9.	Healthy Childhood Environments: Other		
3.10	Housing Support: Affordable Housing		
3.11	Housing Support: Services for Unhoused persons		
3.12	Housing Support: Other Housing Assistance		
3.13	Social Determinants of Health: Other		
3.14	Social Determinants of Health: Community Health Workers or Benefits Navigators		
3.15	Social Determinants of Health: Lead Remediation		
3.16	Social Determinants of Health: Community Violence Interventions		
4	Expenditure Category: Premium Pay		
4.1	Public Sector Employees		
4.2	Private Sector: Grants to other employers		
5	Expenditure Category: Infrastructure		
5.1	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater treatment		
5.2	Clean Water: Centralized wastewater collection and conveyance		
5.3	Clean Water: Decentralized wastewater		
5.4	Clean Water: Combined sewer overflows		
5.5	Clean Water: Other sewer infrastructure		
5.6	Clean Water: Stormwater		
5.7	Clean Water: Energy conservation		
5.8	Clean Water: Water conservation		
5.9	Clean Water: Nonpoint source		
5.10	Drinking water: Treatment		
5.11	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution		
5.12	Drinking water: Transmission & distribution: lead remediation		
5.13	Drinking water: Source		
5.14	Drinking water: Storage		
5.15	Drinking water: Other water infrastructure		
5.16	Broadband: "Last Mile" projects		
5.17	Broadband: Other projects		
6	Expenditure Category: Revenue Replacement		
6.1	Provision of Government Services		
7	Administrative and Other		
7.1	Administrative Expenses		
7.2	Evaluation and data analysis		
7.3	Transfers to Other Units of Government		
7.4	Transfers to Nonentitlement Units (States and Territories only)		



**Project Inventory**

The County does not have active projects to report on for this period and no expenditures through July 31, 2021.

**Performance Report**

The County does not have active projects to report on for this period and no key performance or mandatory performance indicators through July 31, 2021.

The County's Recovery Plan Performance Report will be updated when project data becomes available.