

STRATEGIC PLAN

THE PATH TO PROSPERITY



Episcopal
Community
Services

2018–20
FISCAL YEARS

Episcopal Community Services is initiating a radical shift in our approach to service that will result in economic independence for generations of families to come.

The following pages describe the agency's revised vision, mission, and values and outlines a comprehensive three-year plan that shifts all our work to helping people and communities achieve economic independence.

The board and staff of ECS are proud to present a comprehensive strategic plan that is at the leading edge of how social services are offered.

In recent years, this agency has faced a challenge that is endemic to organizations serving under-resourced people and communities: How can sustained impact be achieved so that families can move out of poverty for good?

We revised our vision, mission, and values statements and adopted a research-informed model for working with people to increase their upward economic mobility.

Responsible evolution is a part of the legacy of ECS. We are a leader in social services in the Philadelphia region, grounded in the Episcopal tradition, with a proud history of blending compassion with impact. As we approach 150 years of service in 2020, ECS is committed to creating a lasting change in people's lives.

We have laid out goals for the next three years; however, the evolution of the work will continue over the next several decades. This is a plan for transformation, and it reflects a shared commitment to progress on the part of our participants, stakeholders, and community partners.

The next three years are just the beginning.



OUR VISION

Episcopal Community Services envisions a world where the path to prosperity is available to all.

OUR MISSION

Episcopal Community Services challenges and reduces intergenerational poverty. We increase the ability of people to improve their lives and achieve economic independence. We call upon every person to participate in sustainable, positive change for our communities.

OUR CORE VALUES

DIGNITY

We honor the inherent worth of every human being.

JUSTICE

We confront systems and policies that deprive our participants and their communities of choice and opportunity.

COMMUNITY

We integrate the ideas and perspectives of participants, staff, board of trustees, peer agencies, and stakeholders.

IMPACT

We make a measurable difference in people's lives.



The strategic plan is the result of a year’s worth of reflection and analysis, utilizing research on the best work in the field of human services. The three goals of Episcopal Community Services’ strategic plan are as follows:

- 1 THE PROSPERITY MODEL**
Services and advocacy positions align with economic mobility outcomes

- 2 OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE**
Infrastructure, operations, and human and financial capacity exemplify core values, organizational excellence, and position the agency for strategic growth

- 3 LEADERSHIP AND VISIBILITY**
ECS is positioned as a leader in the region around economic mobility issues

THE PATH TO PROSPERITY MODEL

Over the next three years, ECS is shifting all work to economic mobility outcomes for people in our programs. We are tracking our own success by our ability to help our participants achieve their goals and improve their lives.

The Path to Prosperity Model is our approach to ensuring that people in our programs can identify what they need and achieve their goals. It reflects our commitment to working with people to chart their own paths to success.

We mirror these commitments at every level of the organization—be it program design, talent development, or agency leadership. As we continue to develop this model, we believe that we will see meaningful, sustainable change in people’s lives and in our community.

OUR APPROACH:

MOBILITY MENTORING®

This research-based case management practice was designed by our partners at Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath) in Boston. Developed for over a decade, Mobility Mentoring® is the professional practice of partnering with individuals and families so they may acquire the resources, skills, and sustained life changes necessary to attain and preserve their economic independence. Mobility Mentoring uses coaching, incentives, goal setting, and a tool called the Bridge to Self-Sufficiency® to walk people through the achievement of their goals.

NAVIGATING THE SYSTEM

Having worked extensively with low-income and vulnerable families, ECS knows that many people end up relying on multiple systems for their housing, education, workforce development, and even meals—almost all of which are offered in an uncoordinated way. We start with a comprehensive view of participants’ goals—for themselves and for their families—illuminating the way that disparate needs relate and charting a path to economic independence.

FEEDBACK DRIVES QUALITY

The people and families in our programs are experts in what they need and experts on what we can do to be a resource. We rely on qualitative and quantitative data, including direct feedback from participants, to inform program improvements. We also use what our participants tell us about their needs to guide our advocacy work and confront the systems change we know is necessary.

COLLABORATION

In any strong partnership, expertise is leveraged and efficiencies multiply. That is why ECS believes in, and relies on, a diversity of ideas and perspectives. We are in community with participants, staff and board, volunteers, peer agencies, and stakeholders. All partner with us to carry out our mission to challenge and reduce poverty. There is no shortage of problems to be solved. To make an impact on poverty, we must work together.

Fulfilling the Mission: ECS' Strategic Direction

ECS will achieve its mission by aligning all work with the Prosperity Model. Additionally, we will launch a new intensive program—the first of its kind in Philadelphia—that will result in sustained change in people's lives.

GOAL 1: THE PROSPERITY MODEL

Services and advocacy positions align with economic mobility outcomes

- Assess, implement, and transition the ECS adaptation of EMPATH's Mobility Mentoring® through existing programs, filling service gaps through partnerships or program development
- Design and launch a new program that will provide heads-of-household with five years of support, at the end of which they will have a job that pays enough to support their family and enough in savings to secure a foundation for the future
- Evaluate the transition and the effectiveness of the Model by monitoring service delivery outcomes
- Lead and support advocacy positions that promote economic independence

GOAL 2: OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Infrastructure, operations, and human and financial capacity exemplify core values, organizational excellence, and position the agency for strategic growth

- Ensure the agency has the optimal infrastructure and funding to support the Prosperity Model and strategic goals
- Strengthen and clarify the relationship between board of trustees and staff
- Reestablish chaplaincy services
- Expand organizational capacity to recruit, support, and retain talent aligned with ECS mission, core values, and the pillars of self-sufficiency

GOAL 3: LEADERSHIP AND VISIBILITY

ECS is positioned as a leader in the region around economic mobility issues

- Advance an advocacy strategy that addresses systems-level changes
- Increase and expand the agency's presence, visibility, and influence around issues of economic mobility
- Build relationships that encourage engagement and support for expanding our impact on economic mobility
- Engage and educate volunteers in a way that furthers efforts to increase economic independence in communities



Achieving Our Mission: One Year at a Time

Episcopal Community Services' 2018-2020 Strategic Plan is transformational for the organization. Annual markers have been identified to keep the agency on track toward accomplishing its goals, requiring the careful, consistent work of every staff person. ECS will remain nimble to tackle the unforeseen, while holding itself accountable to serving our participants with improved outcomes as we challenge poverty.

While long-term change at the participant- and systems-levels will take more than three years to fully achieve, this plan provides a foundation for the depth of sustained change that is needed in the region. The challenges of intergenerational poverty are more daunting now than ever. It is time for a more focused, unified strategy that goes beyond maintenance and stabilization for people experiencing poverty by creating meaningful, measurable, and lasting change.

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