



2025-2028

FORT BEND COUNTY Community Health Improvement Plan



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Executive Summary

The [2022 Fort Bend County Health and Human Services Community Health Assessment \(CHA\)](#) identified the county's top five priorities, based on over 800 responses from the community and 25 key informant interviews. In collaboration with existing and new partners – from sectors including healthcare, education, philanthropy, faith-based and many more – we refined our goals, objectives and strategies from the [2022 Community Health Improvement Plan \(CHIP\)](#) to support community projects, programs and policies.

The 2025–2028 Fort Bend County Community Health Improvement Plan (FBC CHIP) includes ten objectives that address five priority areas. The following priority areas are listed in order of greatest impact on the health outcomes of Fort Bend County residents, as identified in the [2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment: Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel](#) by the Houston Population Research Center at Rice University's Kinder Institute for Urban Research and the Institute for Health Policy at the UTHealth Houston School of Public Health. This reprioritization reflects the current health needs of Fort Bend County residents.



Heart Disease



Obesity



Mental Health



Maternal Health & Prenatal Care



Housing

The 2025–2028 FBC CHIP is designed to be a strategic framework for community health, that evolves with the changing needs of the community. It is developed and written in a way that engages multiple perspectives and voices so that all community groups and sectors – private and nonprofit organizations, government agencies, community and faith-based organizations, academic institutions and residents can collaborate to improve the health and well-being of all who live, worship, work, and play in Fort Bend County. We encourage you to review the priorities and goals, reflect on the suggested strategies, and consider how you can participate in this effort: individually, within your organizations, and collectively as a community.

On behalf of Fort Bend County Health and Human Services, we would like to thank everyone who participated in the CHIP input sessions for their time, input, and expertise as a member of the community we serve. FBCHHS encourages anyone who serves the residents of our community, to utilize the 2025–2028 FBC CHIP as a roadmap to guide existing and future efforts to make Fort Bend County the healthiest community it can be.

Introduction

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) defines a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) as a “long-term systematic effort to address public health problems on the basis of the results of community health assessment activities and the community health improvement process.” Having recently achieved PHAB Accreditation, Fort Bend County Health and Human Services (FBCHHS) is committed to sustaining excellence in public health practice and accountability to the community. This CHIP is guided by [NACCHO’s MAPP 2.0 framework](#), which provides a structured, collaborative, and data-driven approach to community health improvement planning.

The CHIP acknowledges the significant contribution of many sectors within our community to improve the health of the entire county. CHIPS are created through a community-wide, collaborative planning process that engages partners and organizations to develop, support, and implement the plan. A CHIP is intended to serve as a vision for the health of the community and a framework for organizations to use in leveraging resources, engaging partners, and identifying their own priorities and strategies for community health improvement.

After gathering input from individuals from across Fort Bend County, the following themes emerged:

- Leverage partnerships and collaboration
- Promote awareness and education
- Increase access to services, care, and programs

Although FBCHHS serves as the local health department (LHD), collaboration outside of the department is key to achieving the goals, objectives, and strategies set forth by this plan. Building on its accreditation status and utilizing the MAPP 2.0 framework, FBCHHS will ensure that this CHIP is both actionable and measurable, with progress tracked through performance management and continuous quality improvement.



Acknowledgments

Listed in alphabetical order are organizations, agencies and stakeholders that participated in the CHIP planning process:

A Heart for Senior Care
Abigail's Place
AccessHealth
Advocacy Now
Alzheimer's Association
ARTreach
Attack Poverty
AVDA
Bo's Place
Boys & Girls Clubs
Catholic Charities
Child Advocates of Fort Bend
Christ Clinic of Katy
Coalition for the Homeless
Counseling Paid Forward
DePelchin Children's Center
Dini Spheris
Easter Seals
Family Houston
Fort Bend County Behavioral Health Services
Fort Bend County Supervision & Corrections
Fort Bend County Court at Law #3
Fort Bend County Emergency Medical Services
Fort Bend County Human Resources
Fort Bend County Judge's Office
Fort Bend County Libraries
Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office
Fort Bend County Social Services
Fort Bend Family Promise
Fort Bend Habitat for Humanity
Fort Bend History Association
Fort Bend ISD
Fort Bend Meals on Wheels
Fort Bend Regional Council on Substance Abuse
Fort Bend Transformation Church
Fort Bend Women's Center
Foster Grandparent Program
God's Garden
Grace After Fire
Gratia Plena
Greater Houston Community Foundation
HEB
Henderson Wessendorff Foundation
HOPE Clinic
Hope Fort Bend Clubhouse
Houston Area Parkinson Society
Houston Humane Society
Houston Womb Service
Ibn Sina Foundation
Institute of Spirituality and Health
Katy Cares
Lamar Consolidated ISD
March of Dimes
Memorial Hermann Hospital System
Memorial Hermann School Based Clinics
Mental Health America Greater Houston
NAMI Greater Houston
Parks Youth Ranch
Pregnancy Resource Medical Center
Premier Doulas
Rescue Us Mission
Rosenberg Railroad Museum
Rosenberg Richmond Helping Hands
Rupani Foundation
San Jose Clinic
SERJobs
Stafford Municipal School District
Sugar Land Methodist Church
Tahirih Justice Center
Texana Center
The Arc of Fort Bend
The George Foundation
The Network of Behavioral Health Providers
Understanding Houston
UT Health
YMCA

Many thanks to the Fort Bend County community for taking part in this initial effort. The above list is not exhaustive of all the community partners who have contributed to this Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).

FBC Community Profile

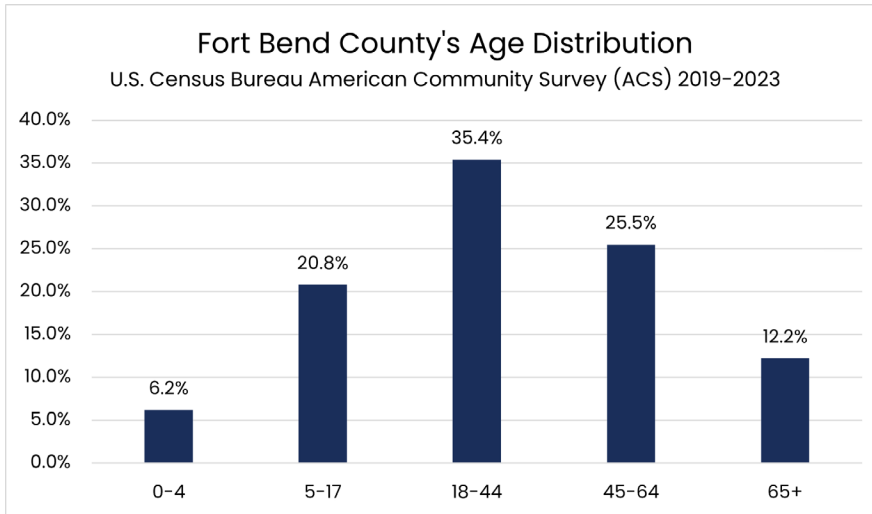


Figure 1

Fort Bend County's Age Distribution from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 2019-2023.

Ages 0-4 years are 6.2% of the population.

Ages 5-17 years are 20.8% of the population.

Ages 18-44 years are 35.4% of the population.

Ages 45-64 years are 25.5% of the population.

Ages 65+ years are 12.2% of the population.

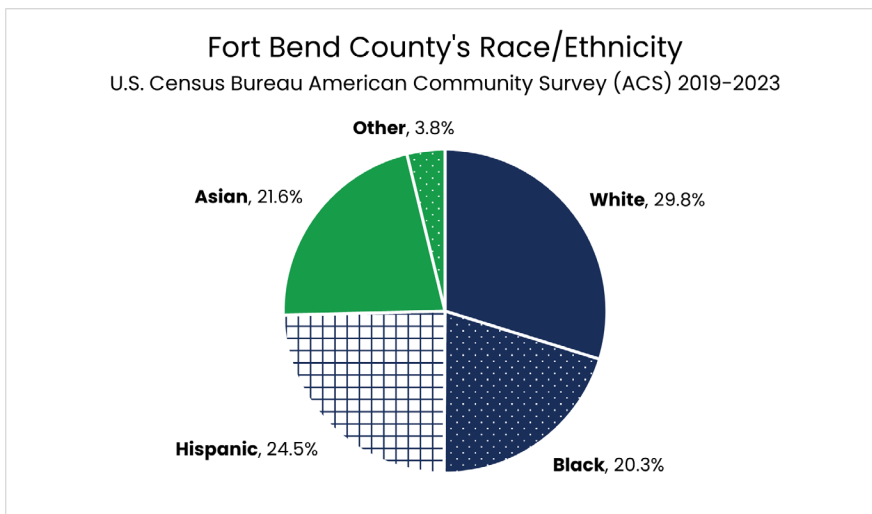


Figure 2

Fort Bend County's Race or Ethnicity from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 2019-2023.

29.8% of the population identify as White.

20.3% of the population identify as Black.

24.5% of the population identify as Hispanic.

21.6% of the population identify as Asian.

3.8% of the population identify as Other.

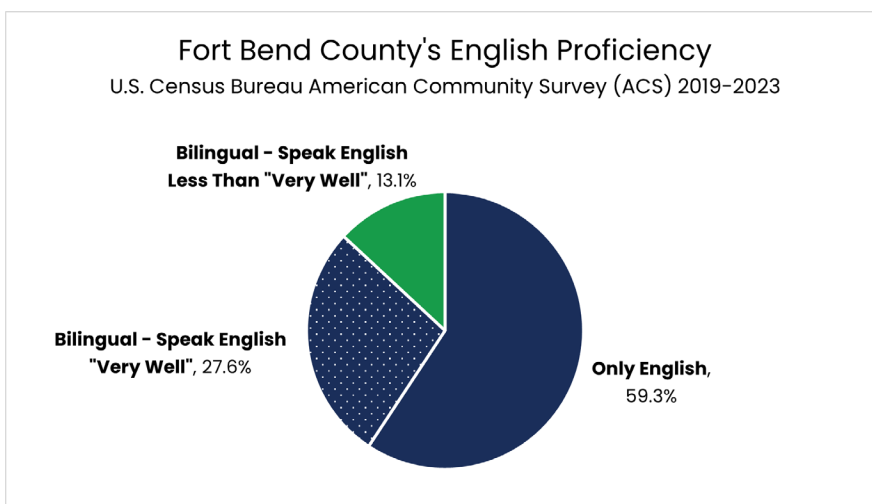


Figure 3

Fort Bend County's English Proficiency from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 2019-2023.

59.3% of the population speak Only English.

27.6% of the population are Bilingual and Speak English "Very Well."

13.1% of the population are Bilingual and Speak English Less Than "Very Well."

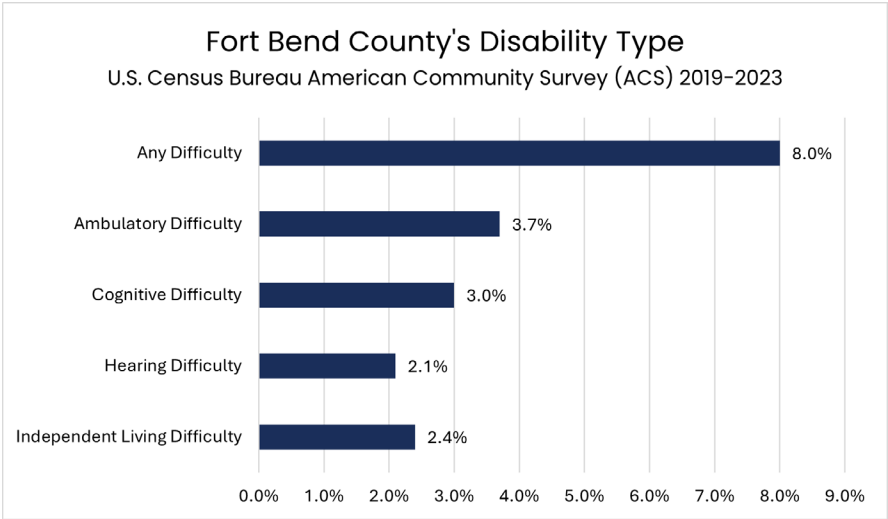


Figure 4
Fort Bend County's Disability Type from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 2019-2023.

2.4% of the population have Independent Living Difficulty.
3.7% of the population have hearing Difficulty.
3.0% of the population have Cognitive Difficulty.
3.7% of the population Ambulatory Difficulty.
8.0% of the population have Any Difficulty.

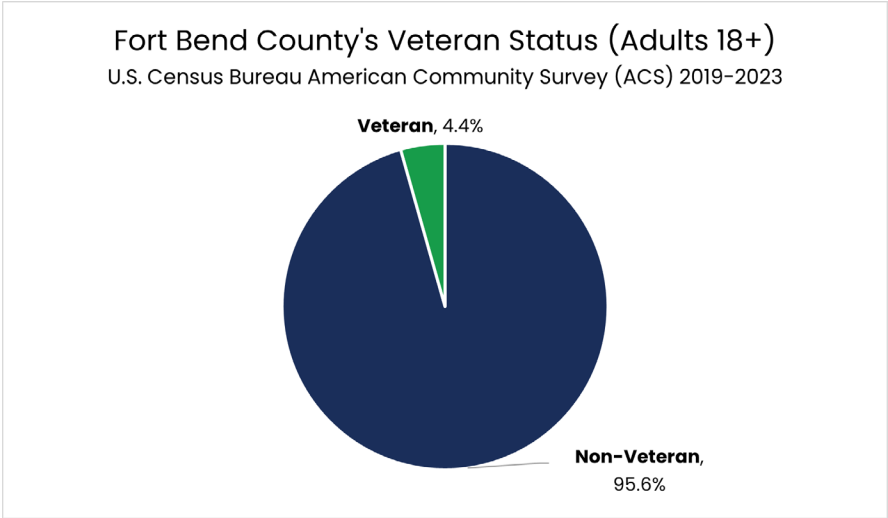


Figure 5
Fort Bend County's Veteran Status (Adults +18) from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 2019-2023.

95.6% of the population are Non-Veterans.
4.4% of the population are Veterans.

Methodology

FBCHHS developed the original Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) in 2022 following completion of the county's Community Health Assessment (CHA). The 2022 CHA identified five priority health areas—mental health, housing, obesity, heart disease, and maternal and prenatal care—and the resulting CHIP established goals, measurable objectives with 2022 baselines, and evidence-informed strategies aligned with Healthy People 2030 and public-health best practices. Action plans were informed by multi-sector stakeholder engagement and community input sessions involving more than 150 participants from government, healthcare, community organizations, community and faith-based members.

In 2025, in partnership with UT School of Public Health and Rice Institute for Urban Research, FBCHHS completed a new CHA to reassess community health status, update population-level indicators, and quantified current Fort Bend County health needs, health disparities, and access barriers. Data for all priority areas are drawn from the 2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment: Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel and County Health Rankings & Roadmaps.

In alignment with the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Standards and Measures, the CHIP was revisited to ensure strategies reflect the most recent assessment findings and remain responsive to emerging community health needs. Following the completion of the new CHA, the order of the county's top health priorities was re-evaluated to reflect current community health data and trends. Although the same five issues remain important, heart disease has moved to the top priority position due to rising rates of illness and mortality; obesity ranks second, mental health ranks third, maternal and prenatal health rank fourth, and housing remains fifth. This updated prioritization ensures that resources and strategies are aligned with the community's most urgent health concerns.

2022 Baseline

To preserve continuity in tracking progress over the life of the CHIP, FBCHHS is maintaining the 2022 baseline measures that were established when the plan was first developed. Keeping these baselines allows FBCHHS to monitor change over time without interrupting trend lines or resetting performance targets mid-cycle. At the same time, the 2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment (2025 CHA): Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel offers a more current picture of community health conditions, including updated prevalence estimates, disparities, and key factors influencing each priority area. For this reason, the revised Problem Statements and updated strategies draw on 2025 CHA findings to reflect present-day needs, while the evaluation of progress continues to reference the 2022 baseline values. This approach balances consistency in measurement with responsiveness to new data and changing community conditions.



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Priority 1: Heart Disease



Cardiovascular risk factors remain prevalent across Fort Bend County. The 2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment (2025 CHA): Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel identifies substantial rates of hypertension (25%), high cholesterol (24%), and diabetes or high blood sugar (12%), all of which increase the risk of heart disease. Behavioral risks persist, with 17% of adults reporting no weekly physical activity and 31% rating their physical fitness as fair or poor. Food insecurity affects 27% of households, limiting access to nutritious foods that support cardiovascular health. Access challenges continue to hinder disease management, with many residents reporting that cost, insurance limitations, or limited appointment availability prevented them from receiving needed medical care.

County Health Rankings indicators further underscore the cardiovascular disease burden in the county. 33% of adults have obesity, 10% experience frequent physical distress, and preventable hospital stays occur at a rate of 2,830 per 100,000 Medicare enrollees, with higher rates among Black and Hispanic residents. The county has 1 primary care physician for every 1,130 residents, indicating limited capacity for prevention and chronic disease management. These findings highlight substantial and inequitable cardiovascular health needs across the community and demonstrate the importance of sustained, coordinated interventions. Heart disease has risen to the county's top priority in the 2025 CHIP due to increased risk factor prevalence and higher burden of preventable morbidity and mortality compared with 2022.

Goal: Improve cardiovascular health by increasing awareness and access.

Objective	Strategy
<p>Objective 1.1</p> <p><i>Decrease the prevalence of coronary heart disease, stroke and hypertension in Fort Bend County residents</i></p>	<p>1.1.1 Increase awareness about healthy eating and physical activity through community programs and events.</p>
	<p>1.1.2 Provide education about how to access healthcare in the community (HP 2030)</p>
	<p>1.1.3 Provide education and training about the symptoms of and how to respond to coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension and comorbidities.</p>
	<p>1.1.4 Increase the availability of behavior modifications to promote a healthy lifestyle in adults without cardiovascular risk factors.</p>

Data for this priority area are drawn from the [2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment: Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel](#) and [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#).

Priority 2: Obesity



Obesity continues to affect the health of many Fort Bend County residents. County Health Rankings data indicate that 33% of adults have obesity. The 2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment (2025 CHA): Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel finds that 31% of residents rate their physical fitness as fair or poor and 17% report no weekly physical activity. Chronic conditions associated with obesity remain common, including hypertension (25%) and high cholesterol (24%). Food insecurity, which affects 27% of households, contributes to inconsistent access to healthy food options.

Environmental and behavioral factors provide additional context. Fort Bend County scores 8.5 on the Food Environment Index—above the national average—and 89% of residents have access to exercise opportunities; however, only 20% live near a park. County Health Rankings report that 22% of adults are physically inactive, aligning with local CHA estimates. These data demonstrate that obesity is influenced by behavioral, environmental and socioeconomic factors, reinforcing the need for comprehensive, community-centered strategies. Obesity now ranks as the second priority in the 2025 CHIP, reflecting its growing contribution to chronic disease burden and population-level health risks since 2022.

Goal: Improve health by decreasing obesity.

Objective	Strategy
<p>Objective 2.1</p> <p><i>Decrease the prevalence of adult obesity by increasing awareness, education and training for Fort Bend County residents.</i></p>	<p>2.1.1 Promote awareness about healthy eating and physical activity in the community through community events, programs and partnering with community-based organizations.</p>
	<p>2.1.2 Promote access to safe and healthy foods to improve community health.</p>
	<p>2.1.3 Promote awareness for existing and new partnerships that increase access to physical activity programs and environments.</p>

Data for this priority area are drawn from the [2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment: Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel](#) and [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#).

Priority 3: Mental Health



Mental health remains a significant concern in Fort Bend County. County Health Rankings data show that in 2022, adults reported an average of 4.6 poor mental health days per month, and 15% experienced frequent mental distress. The 2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment (2025 CHA): Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel offers an updated picture, with residents reporting an average of 4.0 poor mental health days and 13% rating their mental health as fair or poor. Younger adults carry a disproportionate burden, averaging nearly six poor mental health days, while Hispanic and Black residents report more poor mental health days than White or Asian residents. Nearly half of residents who needed mental health care in the past year were not always able to obtain it, most often due to cost, limited insurance coverage, or limited appointment availability.

County Health Rankings indicators support these findings, showing consistent levels of poor mental health and frequent mental distress. Feelings of loneliness affect 33% of adults, contributing to elevated psychological strain. Suicide remains a concern, with 10 deaths per 100,000 residents and disproportionately higher rates among non-Hispanic White residents. These patterns reflect substantial mental health needs and persistent inequities in access to timely, appropriate care. Mental health now ranks third in the 2025 CHIP, following noted improvements in service access, alongside continued disparities identified since the 2022 assessment.

Goal: Improve mental health by increasing access to services and providing education.

Objective	Strategy
<p>Objective 3.1</p> <p><i>Increase the awareness of available mental health providers that serve Fort Bend County.</i></p>	<p>3.1.1 Increase quality student placement and internship opportunities.</p>
	<p>3.1.2 Increase mental health education and awareness within the community.</p>
	<p>3.1.3 Increase partnerships and collaborations with organizations that promote behavioral health.</p>

Data for this priority area are drawn from the [2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment: Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel](#) and [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#).

Priority 4: Maternal Health & Prenatal Care



Access to timely and adequate maternal and prenatal care remains a challenge for many Fort Bend County residents. The 2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment (2025 CHA): Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel shows that 22% of adults ages 18–29 are uninsured and 23% of Hispanic residents lack insurance, increasing the risk of delayed or inconsistent prenatal care. Nearly half of adults who needed medical care in the past year were not always able to obtain it, usually because of cost, insurance limitations, or difficulty securing appointments. Core social determinants also present risks for maternal and infant health: 27% of households experience food insecurity, and 16% fell behind on housing payments. Transportation barriers persist, with 55% of residents rating public transportation access as poor.

County Health Rankings indicators reflect these access challenges in key birth outcomes. The county’s infant mortality rate is 4 deaths per 1,000 live births, but rises to 8 per 1,000 among Black infants. The low-birth-weight rate is 9%, with higher rates among Black (12%) and Asian (10%) infants. Child mortality stands at 40 deaths per 100,000, with notable racial disparities. These findings indicate persistent inequities in maternal, infant and child health outcomes and the need for coordinated, community-driven efforts. Maternal and prenatal health now rank fourth in the 2025 CHIP, as updated data continue to show persistent disparities in birth outcomes compared with the 2022 findings.

Goal: Prevent pregnancy complications and maternal deaths and improve women’s health before, during and after pregnancy.

Objective	Strategy
<p>Objective 4.1</p> <p><i>Increase support and awareness of maternal health perinatal programs and services in Fort Bend County.</i></p>	<p>4.1.1 Promote community awareness of programs and services that support maternal health.</p>
	<p>4.1.2 Increase partnerships and collaboration with organizations that promote maternal health, focusing on reducing maternal and infant mortality and morbidity.</p>
	<p>4.1.3 Increase awareness to resources addressing non-medical drivers of health.</p>

Data for this priority area are drawn from the [2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment: Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel](#) and [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#).

Priority 5: Housing



Housing affordability and stability remain ongoing concerns in Fort Bend County. The 2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment (2025 CHA): Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel shows that 76% of adults worried about paying for housing in the past year, including 16% who worried very often. Financial strain contributed to 11% of households moving because they could not afford their home, while 16% fell behind on rent or mortgage payments, with many still behind at the time of the survey. Food insecurity, affecting 27% of households, further reflects broader economic pressures tied to housing stability. Public transportation also remains limited, with 55% of residents rating its availability as poor.

County Health Rankings indicators reinforce these challenges. Among households, 15% experience severe housing problems—such as overcrowding, incomplete facilities, or high housing costs—and 13% face severe housing cost burden. While 77% of homes in the county are owner-occupied, renters continue to face disproportionate financial and housing-related stress. These findings show that housing affordability and stability remain critical community health issues requiring sustained multi-sector action. Housing remains the fifth priority in the 2025 CHIP, underscoring the ongoing need to address affordability and stability despite limited changes since 2022.

Goal: Ensure safe and affordable housing units are available for ownership and rent.

Objective	Strategy
<p>Objective 5.1</p> <p><i>Reduce the proportion of households that spend 50% or more of income on housing in Fort Bend County.</i></p>	<p>5.1.1 Identify a community member or organization to lead affordable housing efforts in Fort Bend County.</p>
	<p>5.1.2 Partner with existing affordable housing coalitions to strengthen access to affordable housing.</p>
	<p>5.1.3 Reduce the number of residents requiring rental assistance by providing education, information, referrals, case management services, long-term housing options, financial assessments, workforce development, financial assistance, and additional comprehensive services to stabilize families.</p>

Data for this priority area are drawn from the [2025 Fort Bend County Community Health Assessment: Insights from the Greater Houston Community Panel](#) and [County Health Rankings & Roadmaps](#).



Report Prepared by:

Fort Bend County Health & Human Services

4520 Reading, Suite A-100

Rosenberg, Texas 77471

Phone: 281-238-3233

hhs@fortbendcountytexas.gov

www.fbchhs.org