

# data & ta

## data access & technical assistance service

Travis County HHS, Research & Planning Division

### Overview

The Research & Planning Division (R&P) offers a Data Access and Technical Assistance Service, to assist you with your information needs. We know that there is a lot of information out there, and our goal is to help make it more accessible to you. This can include accessing some data for you, or pointing you in the direction of sources and providing technical assistance to you in using them. We can also help you to present the data you need in meaningful and compelling ways.

### Services Offered

**Data Requests:** With the data request arm of our service, we can deliver products like a single statistic, a chart or a table, a spreadsheet of data, or a local map, to help your organization with short-term needs (such as securing grants, and understanding service population demographics).

**Technical Assistance:** With the technical assistance arm of our service, we can help you build capacity in the areas of researching, analyzing, and visually presenting data. We offer coaching and instruction on accessing and navigating public data sources online, extracting meaningful information, and creating compelling graphic representations of your data. We can also refer you to the resources that we often use in our research.

### Considerations for Requests

All requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, according to the complexity of the request and the staff time available. Here are some additional criteria for requests:

- We can assist customers whose information needs will support their efforts around local service delivery and community planning.
- Data requests should fall within the geographic scope of the Travis County area.
- We can access data from free, public use data sources. We cannot access subscription-based services or purchase data on behalf of customers.
- We can respond to requests that can be completed in a relatively short time frame.
- We can assist with data needs that fall within the scope of the issue areas in which R&P already engages. These include: general demographics and community trends, aging, basic needs, education, early childhood, health and human services legislative issues, housing, immigrant issues, poverty, workforce, and veterans.
- Each request is unique and our workload varies. As a general guideline, we suggest a lead time of at least one week for simple requests (for example, a single statistic or chart), at least two weeks for complex requests (such as a map, or research requiring multiple sources), and at least two weeks for technical assistance. Upon further consultation, we will give you an estimated timeframe for your specific request.

### Case Examples

- A local non-profit organization focused on education, produced a report on Child Care in Travis County. We created maps for their report that showed the quality rating status of licensed child care centers, the under-five child population, and the under-six child poverty rate in Travis County.
- The local Workforce Board needed basic data on Travis County veterans for a grant application. Through consultation, an R&P planner and the grant writer determined the best data to explore. The planner downloaded data from the American Community Survey, performed statistical testing to ensure reliability, and created a spreadsheet highlighting relevant data points.

### How to Make a Request

To submit your request, please send an email to **HHS\_R&P@traviscountytx.gov**, and include your name and agency, a phone number where we can reach you, a brief description of your data or technical assistance need, and the approximate date by which you need it. R&P staff will contact you within three business days to discuss your request in greater detail. If we are unable to accommodate a request, we will make referrals to other sources. We look forward to assisting you with your information needs.