Itasca County Services

Mission:
AEOA’s mission is to strengthen communities by providing opportunities for people experiencing social and economic challenges. AEOA provides services to community members through five major departments including Employment and Training, Head Start, Housing, Senior Services, and Arrowhead Transit. Not all departments operate programs in every county within AEOA’s service area.

Key staff and board members:
Executive Director: Paul Carlson
Department Directors: Julie Greenly (Employment & Training); Jim Glancy (Fiscal Services); Skip Ferris (Head Start); Cathy Pazzelli (Human Resources); Scott Zahorik (Housing Services and Assistant Executive Director); Beth Peterson (Planning); Marilyn Ocepek (Senior Services); Jack Larson (Arrowhead Transit).
AEOA Board: The Agency is governed by a 27-member board, representing an equal cross-section of low-income individuals, public officials, and private sector parties. Currently, there is one representative of Itasca County on the Board.
Number of staff members: Forty-four (44) employees work in Itasca County
Contact information: Grand Rapids WorkForce Center, 1215 SE 2nd Avenue, Grand Rapids, MN 55744; (218) 327-6760; Grand Rapids Service Center, 421 SE 13th Street, Grand Rapids, MN 55744; (218) 327-1138; http://www.aeoa.org

In Itasca County, AEOA served...

- Adult Basic Education provided service to 220 Itasca County residents. This could include basic skills improvement, GED preparation, college and career readiness, employment skills, digital literacy, life skills, and English language learning.
- Last year, approximately 212 people who were low-income, on public assistance, or were dislocated workers were assisted with employment-related needs.
- Senior Employment Programs provided 56 individuals with an opportunity to build a pathway into employment for our low-income, older citizens, ages 55 and older. Entering the workforce, they learn and apply new skills while earning a paycheck.
- Youth Programs provided 92 youth with a connection to a variety of services which include: teaching at-risk youth independent living skills through experiential education, teamwork and individual counseling; providing training in construction and carpentry skills while working toward their GED or high school diploma; and services to build a plan to help stabilize their housing situations through rental assistance, security deposits, utility assistance, moving costs and case management.
- The Business Energy Retrofit program assisted 18 community business owners in achieving energy related improvements.
- Senior Nutrition provided 73,427 nutritious meals to seniors, roughly averaging 292 meals per day. Of those meals, 37,393 were delivered to older people who are homebound.
- Arrowhead Transit provided 152,872 rides to Itasca County passengers, totaling 470,181 miles.
- Rural Rides provided 29,953 work-related rides to obtain or maintain employment.
- The Volunteer Driver Program had 28 volunteers and provided 1,618 rides.

*AEOA is committed to continuing our strong partnership with Itasca County. We are proud of the work we do to help struggling households meet their basic needs met; homebound seniors live in their own homes; and to help people find work and have the transportation to get there. We currently have forty-four (44) people working in Itasca County who contribute to the local economy and are very dedicated to the services they provide.*