

March 2017 Bureau of Labor Statistics data show that the Indiana unemployment rate has fallen to **3.9%**, it's lowest point since June 2007. However, the unemployment rate doesn't tell the whole story. The Median Household Income for Indiana was **7%** higher in June 2007 than it is currently². This, when combined with the cumulative inflation rate³ of **17%** since 2007, has created a significant gap in buying power, making it harder for Hoosiers to afford even the most basic needs. As the cost of essentials (food, rent, gas, and prescriptions) go up, many Hoosiers are forced to choose which bill or necessity to skip. The example to the right is a true story of how Connect2Help211 Specialists brainstorm with callers to offer multiple resources to meet their most basic needs.

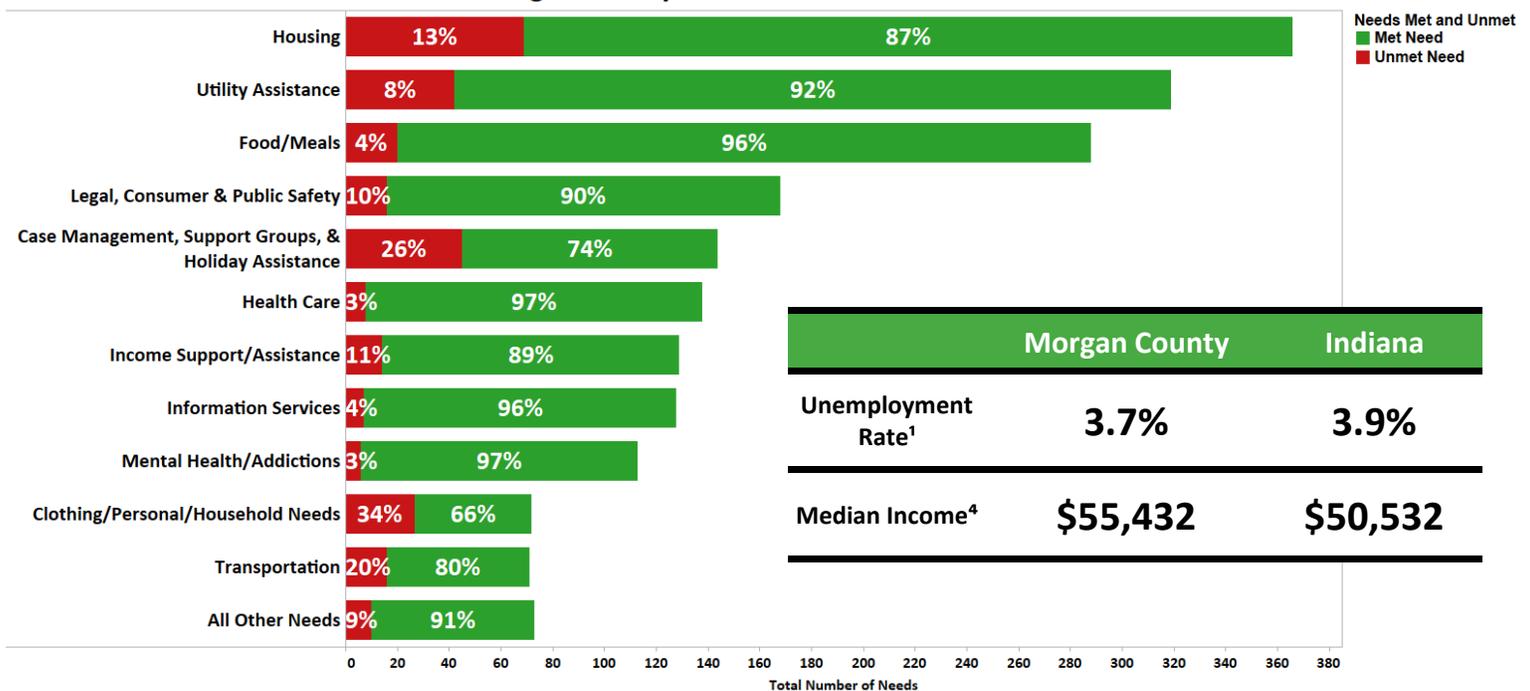


Muriel*, a 78 year old lifelong Indiana resident, dialed 2-1-1 for help purchasing prescriptions. She was in the Medicare "Donut Hole" and couldn't make up the increased co-pays on her fixed income. Her Connect2Help211 Specialist offered a *prescription assistance* program that could help get two of her prescriptions for less. However, she still needed other expensive medications. The Specialist referred her to a *senior commodity food program* that provides monthly, nutritious food packages for seniors. With this, Muriel used some of the money she would have spent on groceries to pay for her prescriptions. The specialist also offered Muriel a referral to her local Agency on Aging, where she could find case management services and learn about additional programs or options that might help in the long term.

*name changed to protect confidentiality

In the past 12 months, **1,401** Morgan County residents dialed 2-1-1 needing help with **1,980** individual needs. An additional **1,685** residents accessed our online resource database at www.connect2help211.org to find help on their own. Specialists offered callers **2,432** referrals from the database, which contains **4,338** resources serving Morgan County residents. However, even with this extensive database, there were no resources available for **251** needs (**13%**), and those were marked as "unmet". Any need can be exacerbated by an underlying situation, such as **Illness / Disability (28%)**, **Unemployed / Laid Off (13%)**, or **Reduction in Income/Hours (12%)**, as reported by Morgan County callers. The graph below shows a break down of the needs, both met and unmet, for Morgan County residents.

Morgan County's Callers' Needs



Calling 2-1-1 Does Make a Difference

Connect2Help211 follows up with our callers to see if they received the help they needed. Our outcome surveys show that **85%** of callers contacted the referrals they received from 2-1-1, and **82%** of those who contacted them reported an improvement in their situation. We also found that **95%** reported they would call 2-1-1 again if they needed help in the future.

