Who We Serve

Hygiene Poverty in Southeastern Wisconsin

An analysis of Giving to the Nations service data, January 2023 – June 2026

Volunteers at a Giving to the Nations giveaway event. Photo courtesy of Giving to the Nations.

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Summary

Between January 2023 and June 2026, Giving to the Nations received 4,298 applications for hygiene products and put 2,995 boxes into households' hands. Those applications represent 14,204 household members across those applications, 6,935 of them children.

Three findings stand out.

- Preparation is not the constraint. Of the requests the organization could act on, 97% had a box prepared and made available. The gap between applications received and boxes delivered is mostly repeat requests inside the 90-day eligibility window, together with applicants who live outside the service area. It is not a sign of unmet need.
- The households served are young and poor. Children under five are the largest single age group. Women aged 18 to 24 outnumber men the same age by two and a half to one, and 63% of applicants report annual household income below $20,000.
- Reach and need are in different places. Service is deep in Racine and thin in Milwaukee, whose highest-poverty ZIP codes hold the largest concentrations of people below the poverty line anywhere in the three-county area.

Service delivery

From application to box in hand

A simple ratio of boxes delivered to applications received gives 70%. That figure understates the organization's performance, because the denominator contains requests that were never available to fill. Repeat requests inside the 90-day window came from households that had already been served. Incomplete forms and applicants outside the service area were not eligible. A small number of applications were still in progress at the June 30 cutoff.

Once those are set aside, 3,695 actionable requests remain, of which 3,576 (96.8%) had a box prepared and made available. The largest recoverable loss sits at the end of the process. Here 581 boxes were prepared and offered but never collected within the two-week hold, which is 16.2% of everything offered.

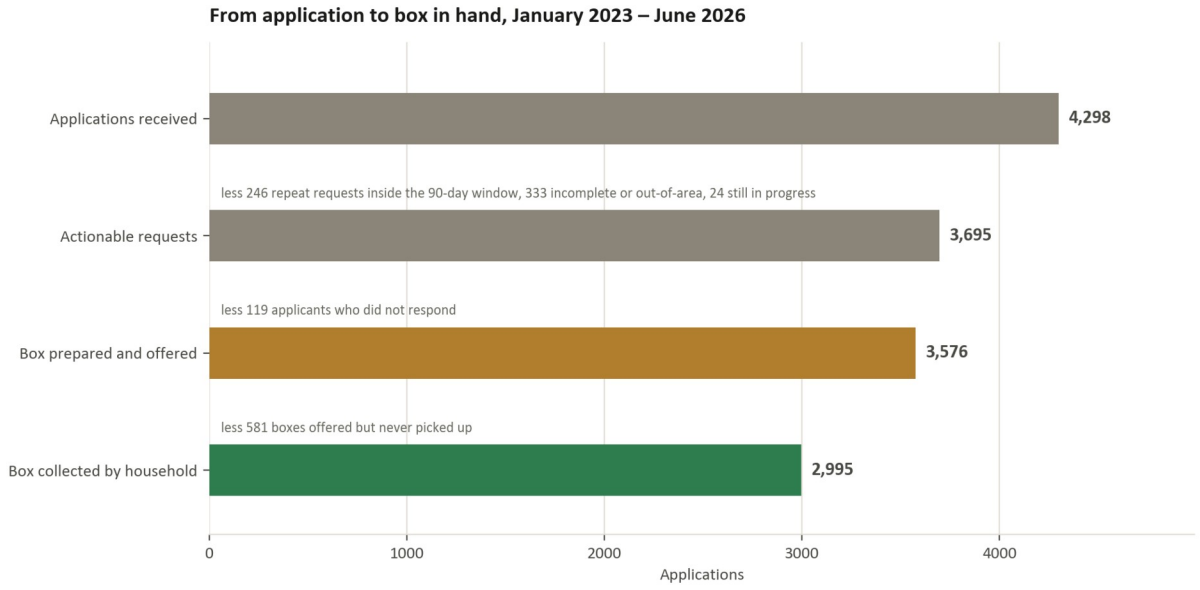

Figure 1. The service funnel, January 2023 – June 2026.

Stage	Applications	% of all applications
Applications received	4,298	100.0
Actionable requests	3,695	86.0
Box prepared and offered	3,576	83.2
Box collected by household	2,995	69.7

Table 1. Service funnel stages.

Volume over time

Applications arrive through two channels. Direct requests, 2,846 over the period, come in continuously through the online form. Giveaway-event applications, 1,452, arrive in batches on paper forms, and this is why monthly totals spike. Those peaks track the organization's own event calendar rather than changes in need. The exception is September 2023, when a Facebook post circulated widely and produced 282 direct requests in a single month. It is a reminder that awareness, not need, often limits who applies.

The distinction between the two channels matters when reading the year-over-year totals, which fall from 2023 to 2026. That decline should not be read as falling demand. Direct requests, the organic signal, ran about 718, 840, and 614 across 2023 through 2025, and 478 in the first half of 2026, a pace above any prior full year. What contracted is the number of giveaway events, and events are the channel limited by funding rather than by need. The falling total is a budget story, not a demand story, and it points back to the resource question raised in the recommendations.

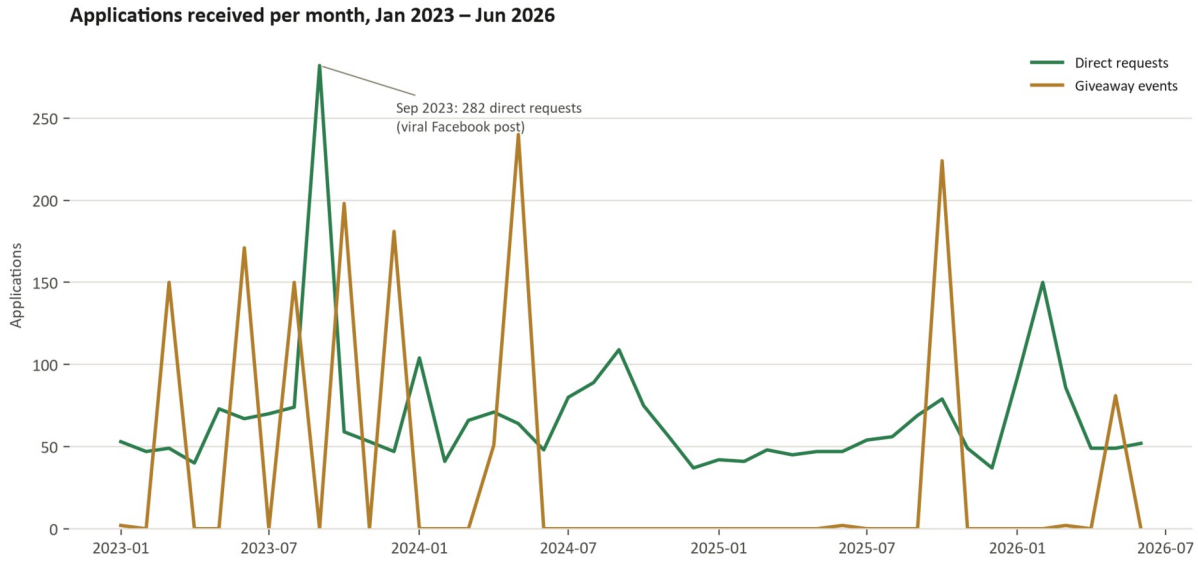

Figure 2. Applications per month by intake channel.

Year	Served	Not collected	Closed / other
2023	1319	195	252
2024	768	121	242
2025	557	149	134
2026	351	116	94

Table 2. Applications and outcomes by year. 2026 covers January–June.

Seasonality

Direct requests were averaged by calendar month and adjusted for how many years each month is observed. September is the busiest month, at about 88 requests. August and January follow, at about 73. November and December are the thinnest, at about 53 and 40. For planning, that late-autumn trough is the natural window to build inventory and recruit volunteers before demand rises again in the new year.

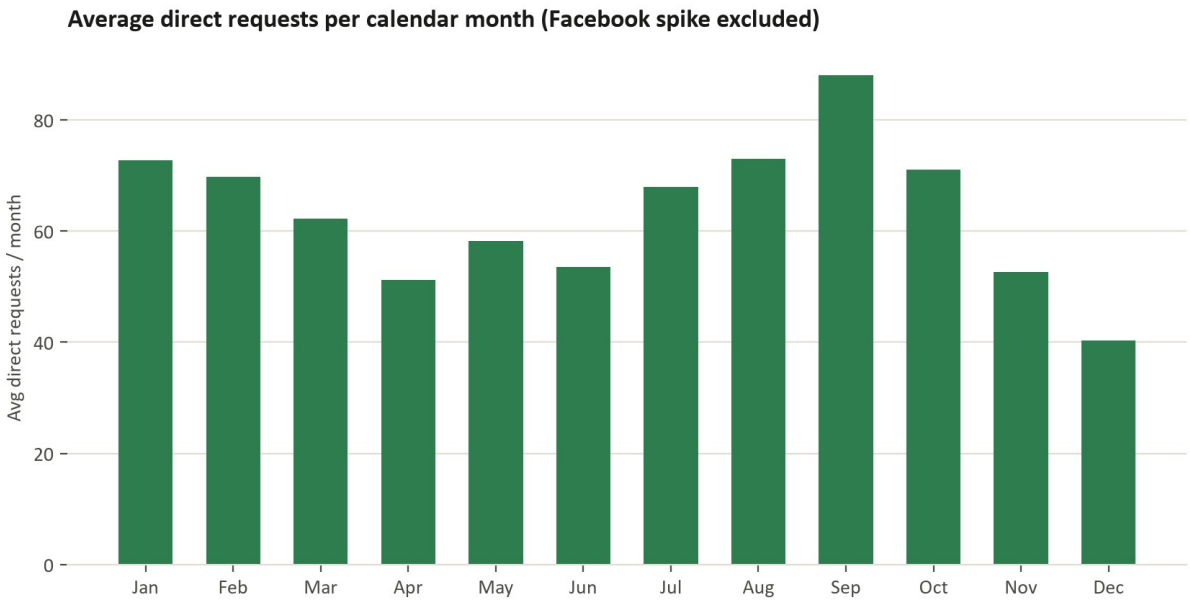

Figure 3. Average direct requests by calendar month, September 2023 spike excluded.

Who we serve

Age and household composition

The 4,298 applications describe 14,204 household members. Because applicants are de-identified, a household that applied more than once is counted each time, so this is a count of members across applications rather than of unique individuals. Children account for 6,935 of that total, and children under five are the largest single age band. Among young adults the imbalance is pronounced, with 1,282 women aged 18 to 24 against 511 men the same age. Set against the number of very young children, the population being served is largely young mothers with small children. That bears directly on product mix, and on which funders are the natural fit.

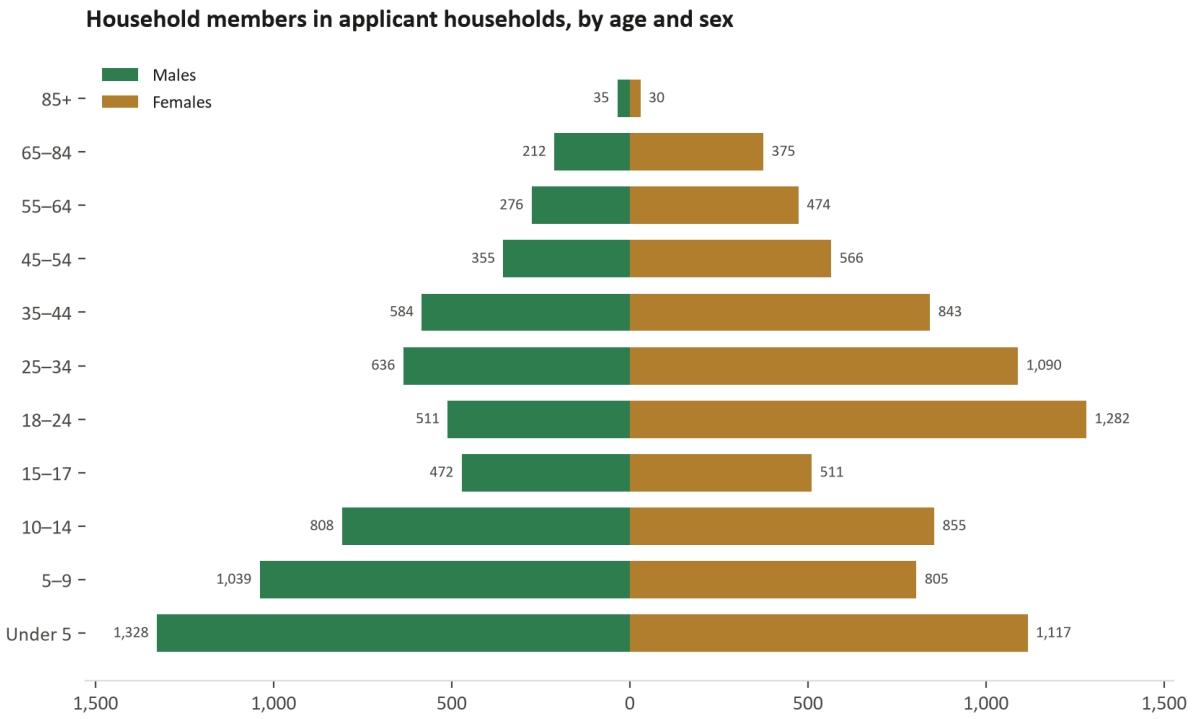

Figure 4. Household members by age band and sex.

Household size splits between people living alone and small families. 1,418 applications come from single-person households, of which close to half are adults aged 18 to 24 and about a third are 55 or older. Households of three to five people account for about another third of applications. The median household size is three.

Two kinds of records are set aside from this particular chart, because they would distort a count of household sizes. The first is the three veterans' events, each entered as a single row that records the number of veterans served rather than one household. The second is applications that left the household grid blank, where no size can be computed. Every other section of this report uses all applications; only the household-size distribution needs these two exclusions.

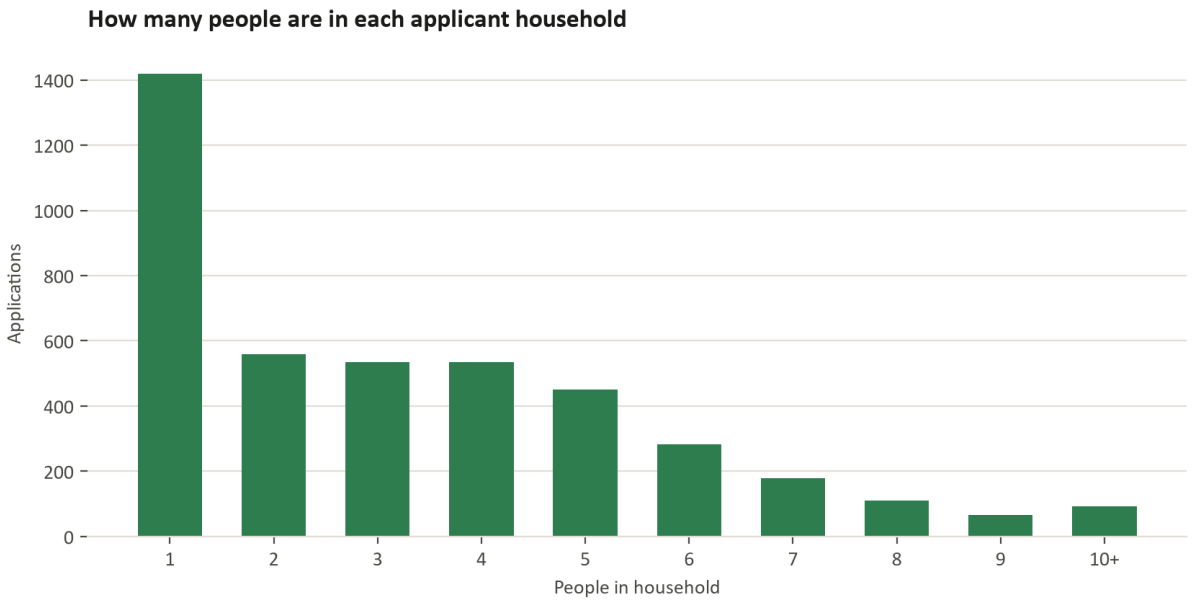

Figure 5. Household size distribution. Excludes the three group-entry veterans' events and applications with no household roster, as explained above.

Income and employment

63% of applicants report annual household income below $20,000, and 1,926 applications, about 45%, report below $10,000. For a family of three, $20,000 falls well under the federal poverty line. Of applicants who answered the employment question, 61% are not employed, and 36% of all applicants said an emergency situation prompted them to reach out. Income was not provided on 417 applications.

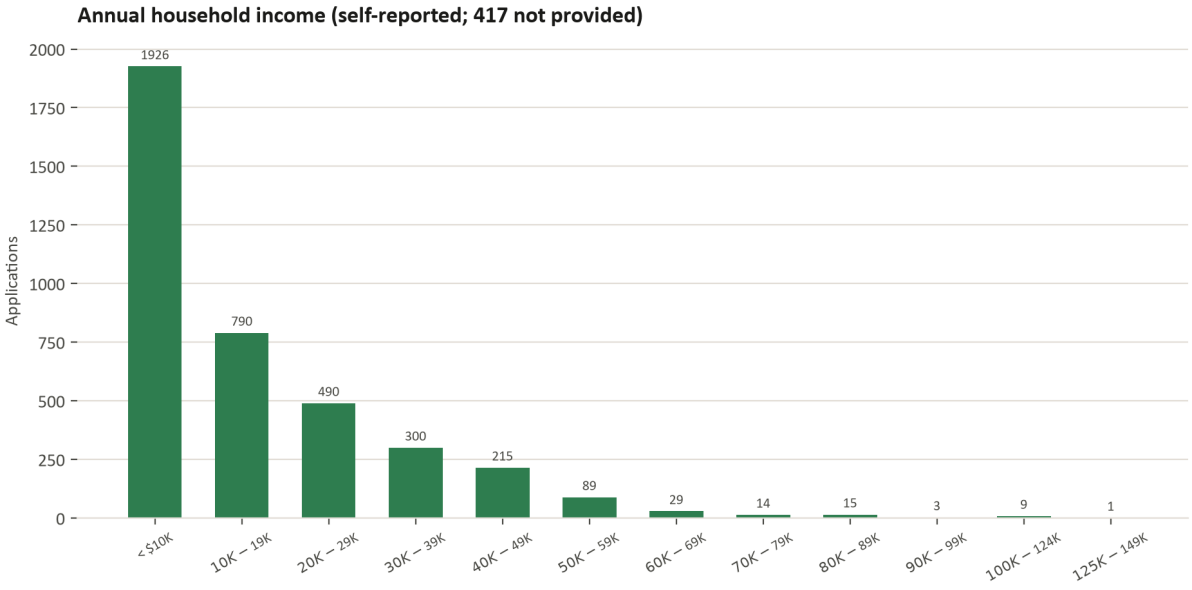

Figure 6. Self-reported annual household income.

Race and ethnicity

Applicants are racially diverse: 1,402 White (33%), 1,061 Black or African American (25%), 300 Asian (7%), and 133 two or more races (3%). Separately, 23% of applicants identify as Hispanic or Latino.

One measurement caveat belongs with any use of these figures. Race is not reported on 28% of applications, and those are concentrated in the paper forms collected at giveaway events. The online form makes the question required, so direct-request records are close to complete. Moving more event intake to the digital form would close the gap.

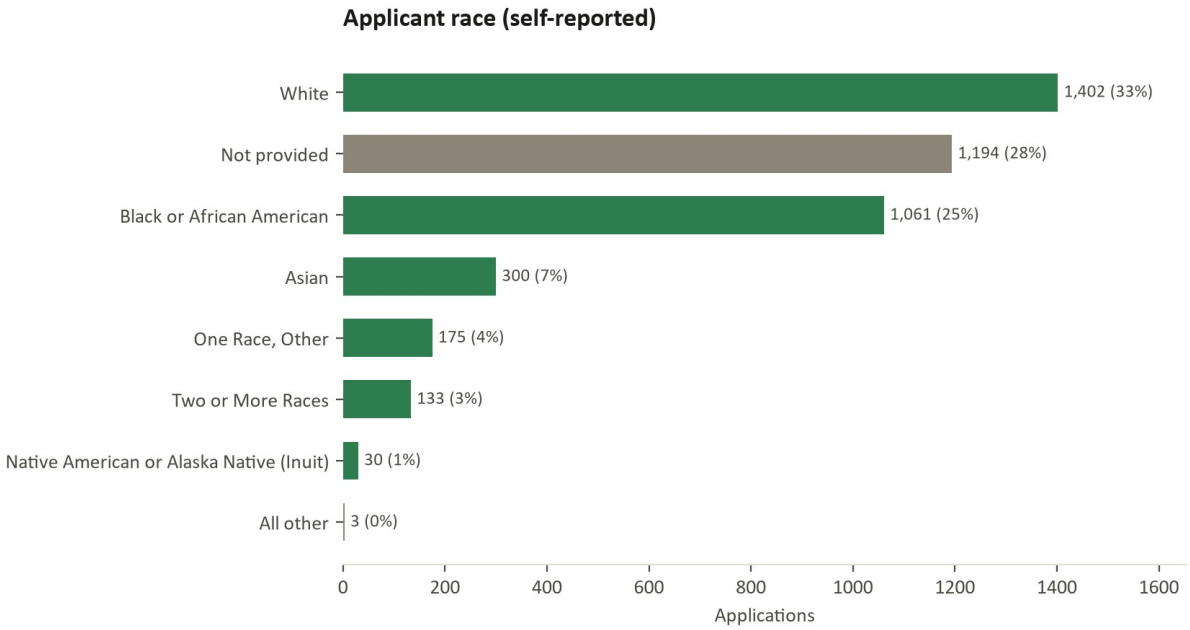

Figure 7. Self-reported race.

Public assistance already received

These are households that are, for the most part, already inside the public safety net and still cannot cover hygiene products. Counting only applicants who named a specific program, at least 70% of Racine applicants, 68% of Milwaukee applicants, and 80% of Kenosha applicants report receiving some form of public assistance. Food assistance, through SNAP or Wisconsin's FoodShare, is the most common, reported by about 55% across the three counties, followed by Medicaid or BadgerCare and, for the youngest families, WIC.

These shares are a floor, not a full count. The intake form recorded a blank answer as "None", so applicants who skipped the question were counted as receiving nothing, which understates true participation. The point for a funder is that hygiene poverty here is not a gap left by families outside the system. It is a gap the existing programs do not reach, because none of SNAP, Medicaid, or WIC can be spent on soap, diapers, or laundry detergent.

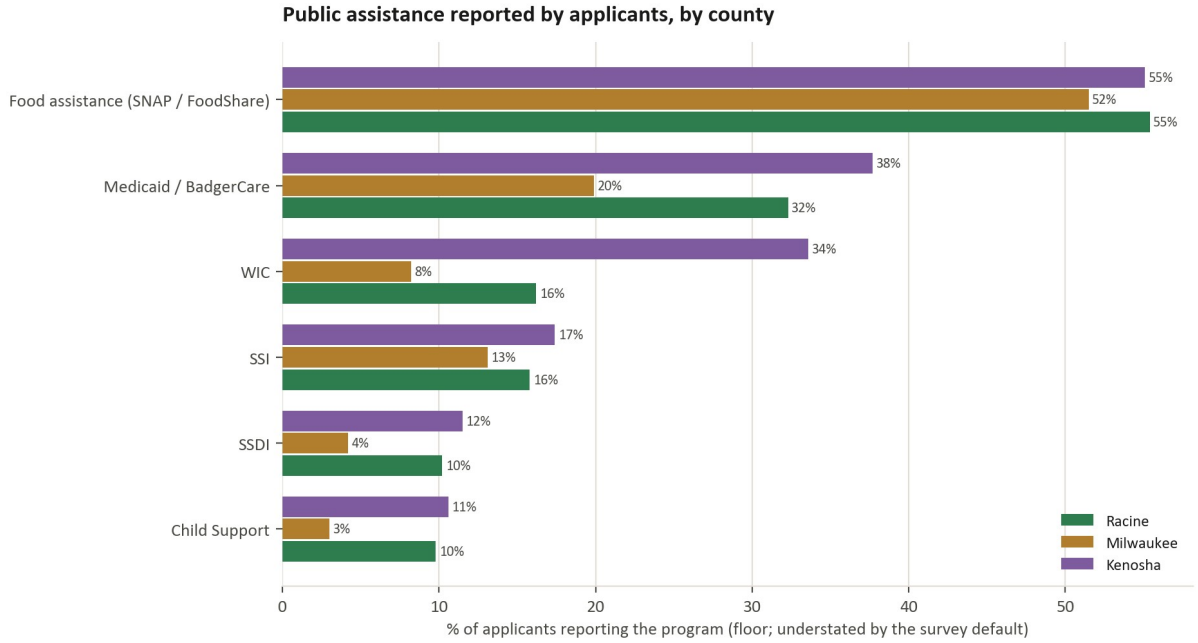

Figure 8. Public assistance reported by applicants, by county. Shares are a floor: a blank answer was recorded as "None", so true participation is higher.

Where we serve

County and ZIP distribution

Service began concentrated in Racine County and has widened. Racine applications ran 1,603 in 2023, 769 in 2024, 498 in 2025, and 264 in the first half of 2026. Milwaukee grew from 29 in 2023 to 286 in 2024 as funder restrictions eased, holding at 232 in 2025. Kenosha ran 99, 63, and 102 across the first three years and has already recorded 179 in the first six months of 2026.

These year-to-year comparisons should be read with the service area in mind. In 2023 and 2024 the organization worked mainly in Racine County under funder restriction. From 2025 it expanded into Milwaukee and Kenosha. Thus the Racine decline and the growth elsewhere are in part the same story about where the organization was permitted to work.

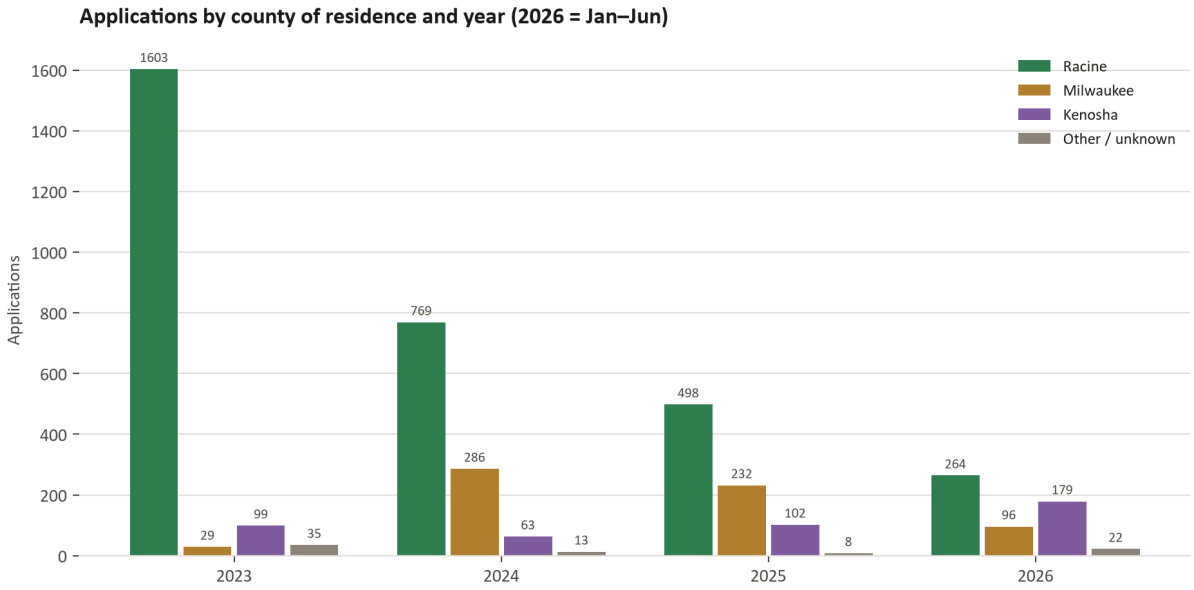

Figure 9. Applications by county of residence and year.

Year	Racine	Milwaukee	Kenosha	Other / unknown
2023	1603	29	99	35
2024	769	286	63	13
2025	498	232	102	8
2026	264	96	179	22

Table 3. Applications by county and year. 2026 covers January–June.

Five Racine ZIP codes account for 71% of all applications, and ZIP 53403 in downtown Racine alone accounts for close to one in four.

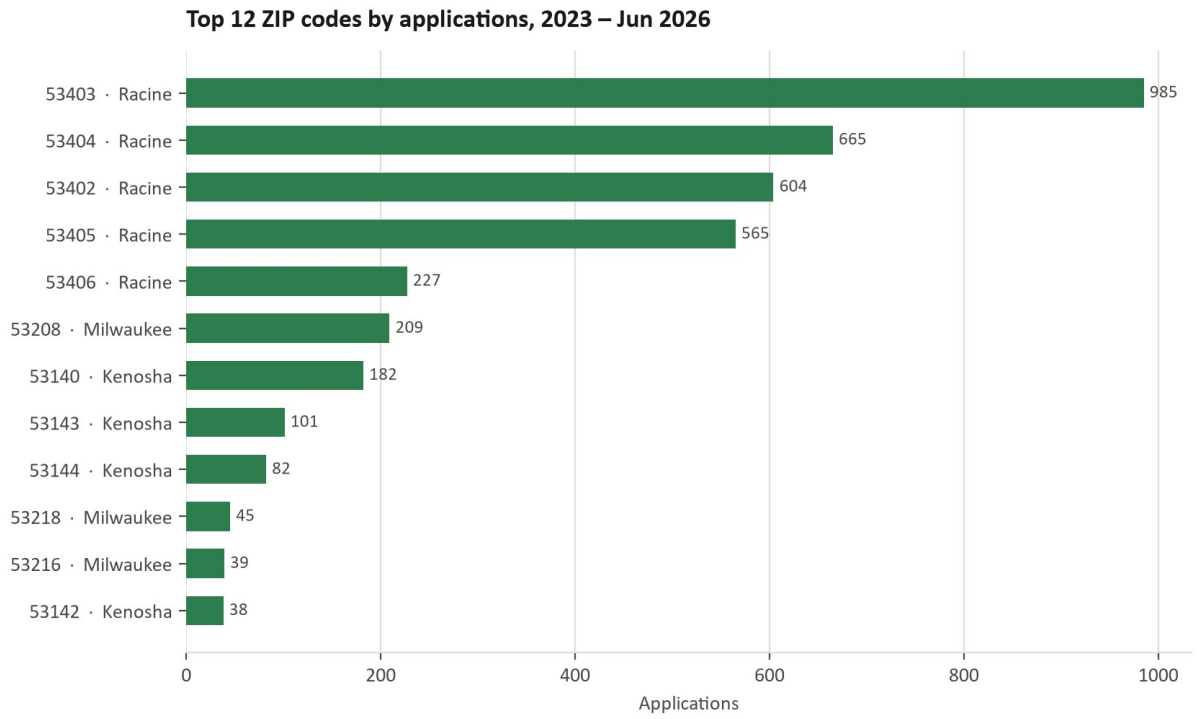

Figure 10. Top twelve ZIP codes by applications.

Need and reach

Setting the service record against Census poverty estimates shows where the organization is deeply established and where it is not. In Racine's core ZIP codes there are 19 to 23 applications for every 100 residents below the poverty line. Kenosha runs between 1.4 and 3.3, and is climbing. Milwaukee sits below 1 across most of its ZIP codes, even though it contains the largest poverty populations in the three-county area. ZIP codes 53215, 53204, 53218 and 53209 each hold between 5,000 and 13,000 residents below poverty.

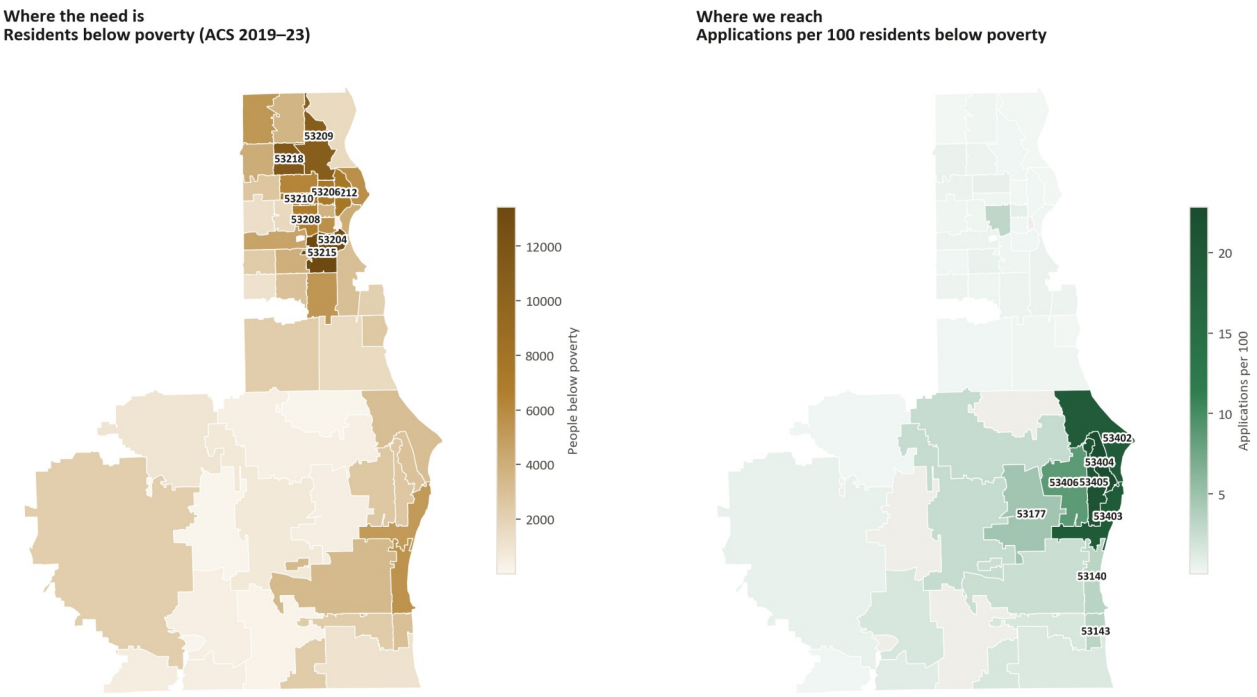

Figure 11. Residents below poverty (left) against applications per 100 residents below poverty (right). Grey ZIP codes on the right have too small a poverty population for a rate to be meaningful.

One exception points to a method. ZIP 53208 reaches 3.1 applications per 100 residents below poverty, well above the rest of Milwaukee, and 53208 is where giveaway events were held. Events appear to be the effective way into a neighborhood where the organization is not yet known, much more so than waiting for online applications to arrive.

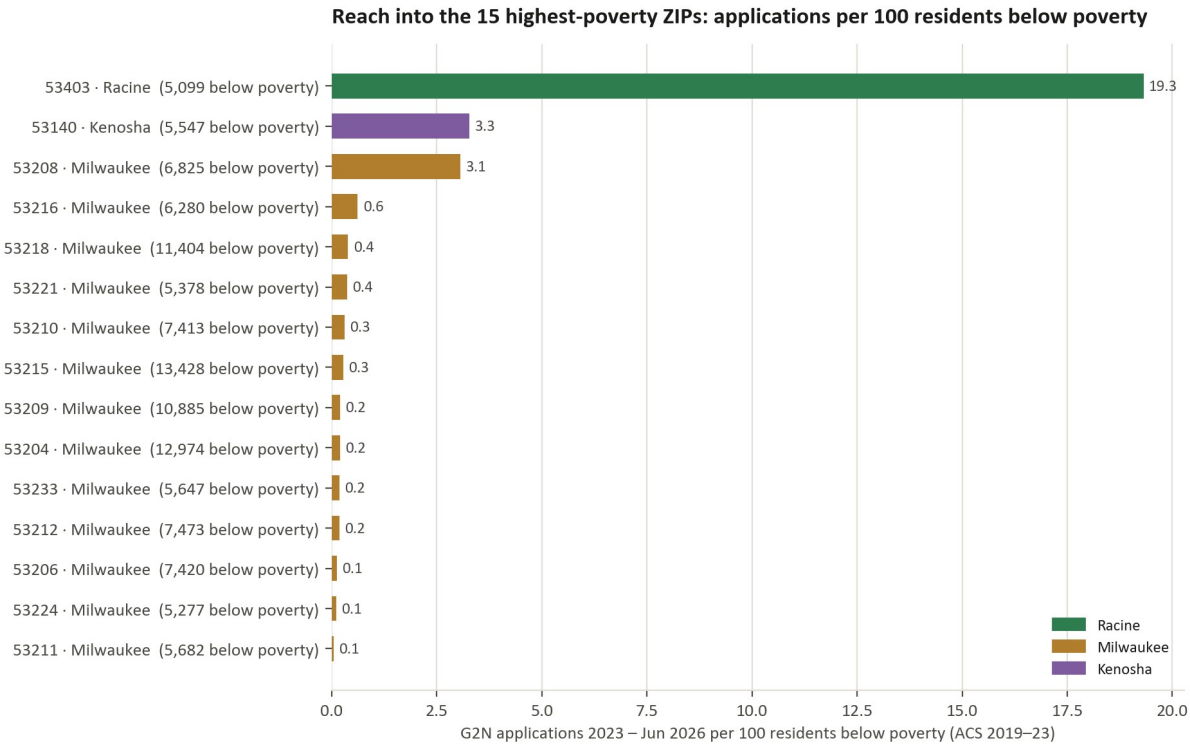

Figure 12. Reach into the fifteen ZIP codes with the largest below-poverty populations.

How service runs

Time from request to box

The two intake channels produce very different experiences. An applicant who comes to a giveaway event leaves with a box the same day. An applicant who applies online waits a median of 20 days, with a quarter waiting over 30 days and one in ten over 49.

This interval reflects the distribution model as much as processing time. Through the end of 2024, direct-request boxes went out on a weekly courier run; since early 2025 they have been distributed through partner pickup locations on a two to three week cycle. An applicant therefore waits for the next distribution window, not only for a box to be packed.

The longer waits, the tail beyond 30 days, have a specific cause the organization can name, and it is funding. When the budget for product is exhausted, applications are held rather than declined. Once new funding arrives, it takes about two to three weeks to buy product in bulk and pack the boxes, and only then are applicants contacted to confirm they still need help. The long tail is made up of applications that sat through one of these funding gaps. It is not a packing delay. It is the interval between when a family applied and when money was next available to serve them.

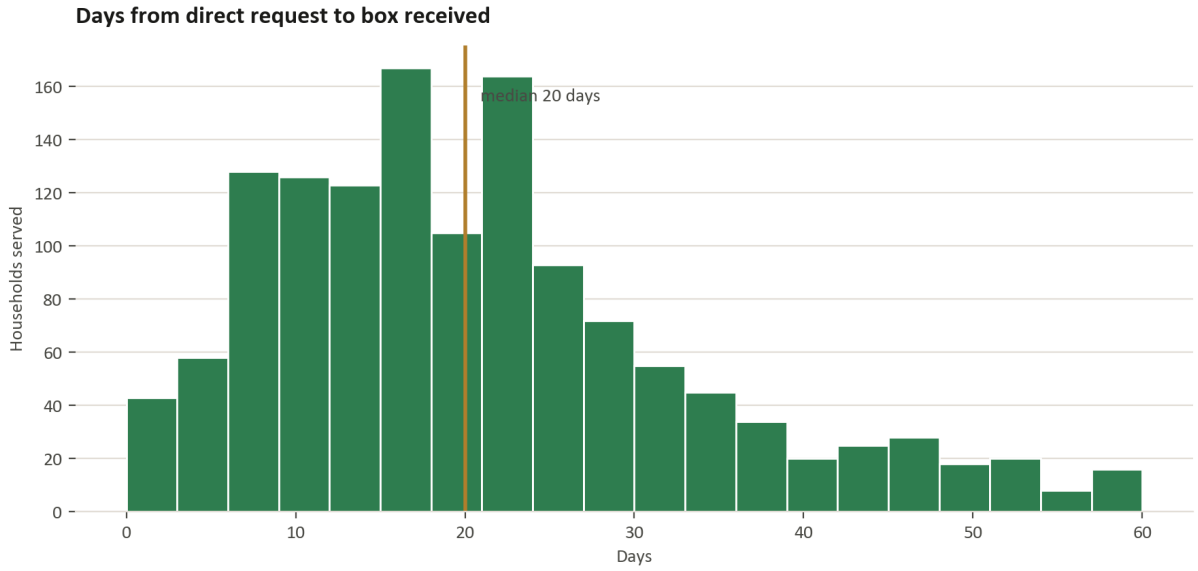

Figure 13. Days from direct request to box received. Event applicants are excluded because they receive a box at the event, so their wait is zero by construction.

Why prepared boxes go uncollected

581 boxes were prepared and offered but never collected. That loss is entirely a direct-request phenomenon, since boxes at events are handed over on the spot. Within direct requests it runs at 27%. Two patterns in the data point at what to do about it.

The first is the wait, and its cause is the funding cycle described above. Where a box was ready within a week of the request, 17% went uncollected; where it took over 30 days, 40% did. Households that never collected had waited a median of 18 days for their box to be ready, against 13 days for those who collected, and the difference is statistically clear. The organization's account explains the link directly: the long waits are the funding-gap periods, and by the time money returns and the applicant is contacted, weeks or months later, many no longer respond, because the emergency has passed or the household has moved on. The data is consistent with this. These losses are episodic rather than steady. They concentrate in particular months, several of them above 30% while many others sit far lower, which is the pattern an on-and-off funding supply would produce, not a constant inefficiency in how boxes are handled.

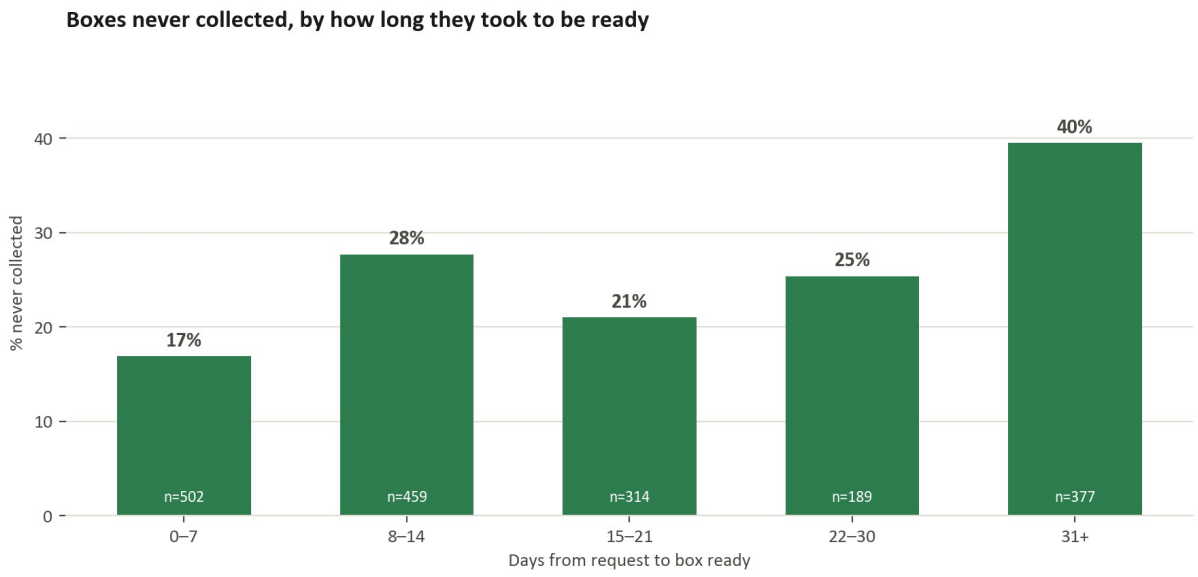

Figure 14. Share of prepared boxes never collected, by how long the box took to be ready. Direct requests only. The relationship is not perfectly stepwise, but the fastest and slowest bands differ by more than two to one.

Days to box ready	Boxes offered	% never collected
0–7	502	16.9
8–14	459	27.7
15–21	314	21.0
22–30	189	25.4
31+	377	39.5

Table 4. Non-collection by time to box ready. Direct requests only.

The second is household size. 8% of one-person households missed pickup, against about 22% of households of three or more. Larger households are the ones least able to make an extra trip, which points at transport and childcare as the barrier.

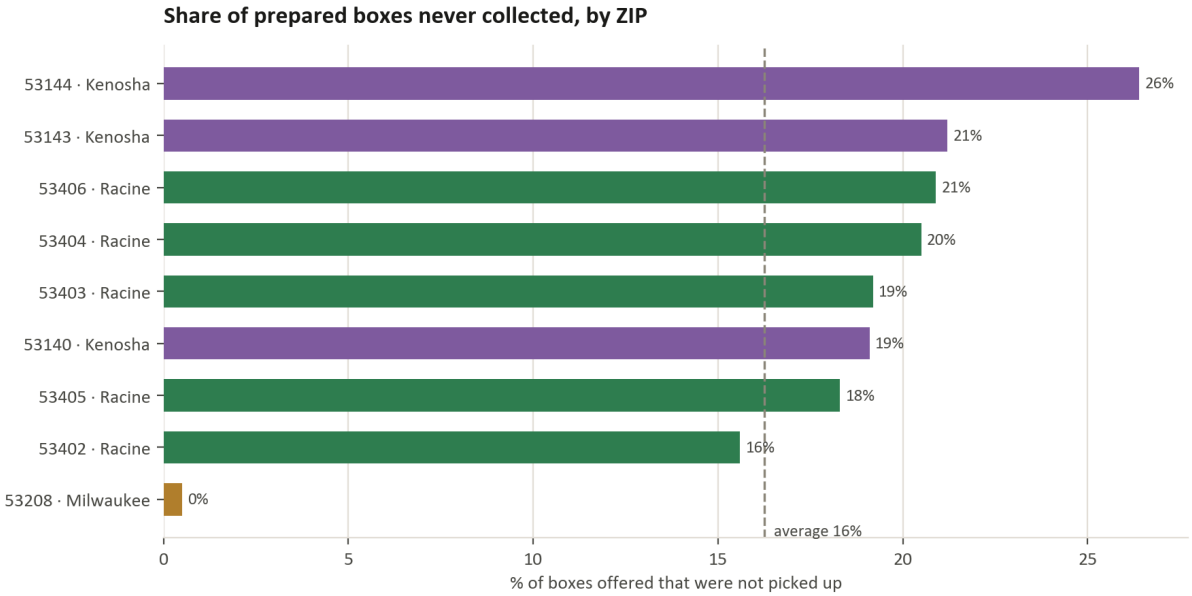

Figure 15. Share of prepared boxes never collected, by ZIP code. ZIP codes with at least fifty boxes offered.

The natural remedy for a transport barrier is delivery, and the organization has already tested it. From September 2023 through December 2024, boxes were delivered weekly by courier in the eastern part of Racine County. It did not remove the loss. Applicants had to confirm their address by a weekly cutoff or the delivery was cancelled, and one to two of every five to nine scheduled deliveries were cancelled for want of a confirmation. Boxes were also taken from porches, or failed to reach the address. The organization moved to partner pickup locations in part to secure more and closer sites for applicants, and to connect them with other services. The lesson from the field is that delivery relocates the collection problem rather than removing it. The household-size pattern still points to a real barrier, but the remedy is not as simple as delivering.

How applicants find the program

Referral channels differ so sharply between counties that a single outreach strategy will not work across the service area. In Milwaukee, 36% of applicants who reported a channel heard about the program from a friend, whereas only 10% came through Facebook and 3% through an online search. In Racine that pattern is close to reversed, with Facebook at 22% and online search at 17%. Kenosha stands apart for organizational referrals at 16%, about six times Racine's rate, which suggests partner agencies are carrying the referral load there.

This bears directly on the Milwaukee expansion. Applicants in Milwaukee arrive through people they know rather than through digital channels. That is consistent with 53208, the one Milwaukee ZIP code with meaningful reach, being where giveaway events were held. A referral channel is recorded on 53% of applications.

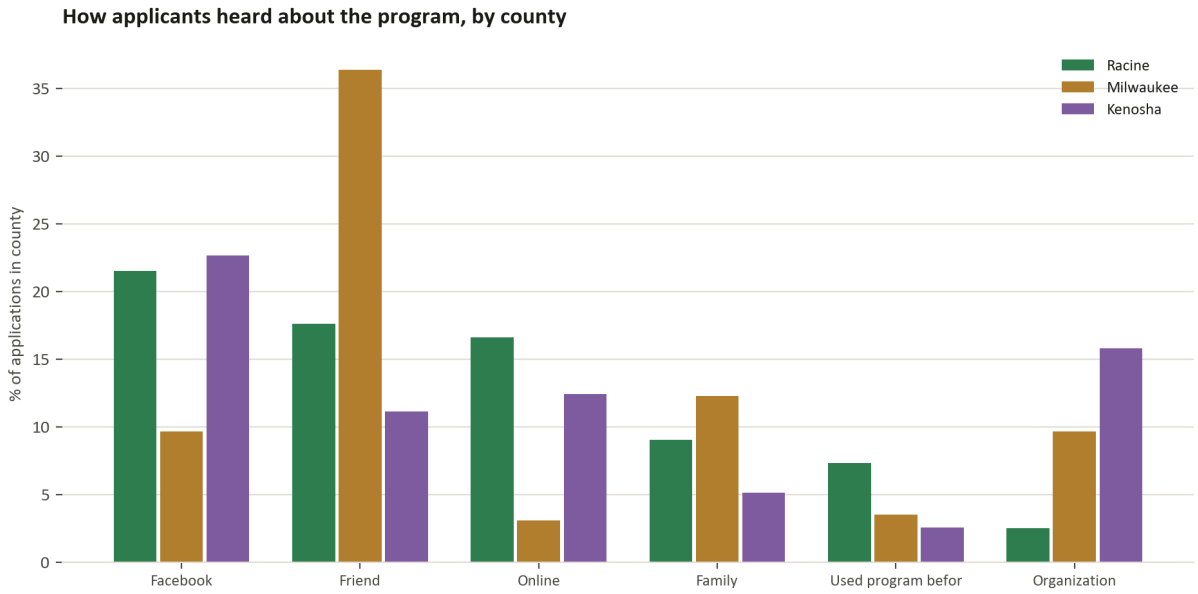

Figure 16. Referral channel by county, as a percent of applications reporting a channel.

How large the need actually is

The reach figures above use the federal poverty line as the denominator, because that is the measure published at ZIP-code level. It is a low bar. United For ALICE, which stands for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed, counts households that earn above the poverty line but still cannot meet a basic survival budget. On that measure, the population that cannot reliably afford household essentials is about three times larger than the poverty count.

In Racine County, 27,831 households, or 35.2% of all households in the county, fall below the ALICE threshold, against 8,585 in poverty. In Kenosha County the figures are 26,270 (37.6%) against 8,119. In both counties the ratio is the same: 3.2 households that cannot afford basics for every one officially in poverty.

The threshold itself has moved sharply. A Racine household under 65 needed about $45,000 to meet a survival budget in 2019, and about $56,600 by 2023, a rise of 26% in four years. This is the mechanism behind hygiene poverty in a county with low measured unemployment. When the cost of housing and essentials climbs faster than wages, discretionary-looking items such as soap, detergent and personal care are among the first things a household stops buying.

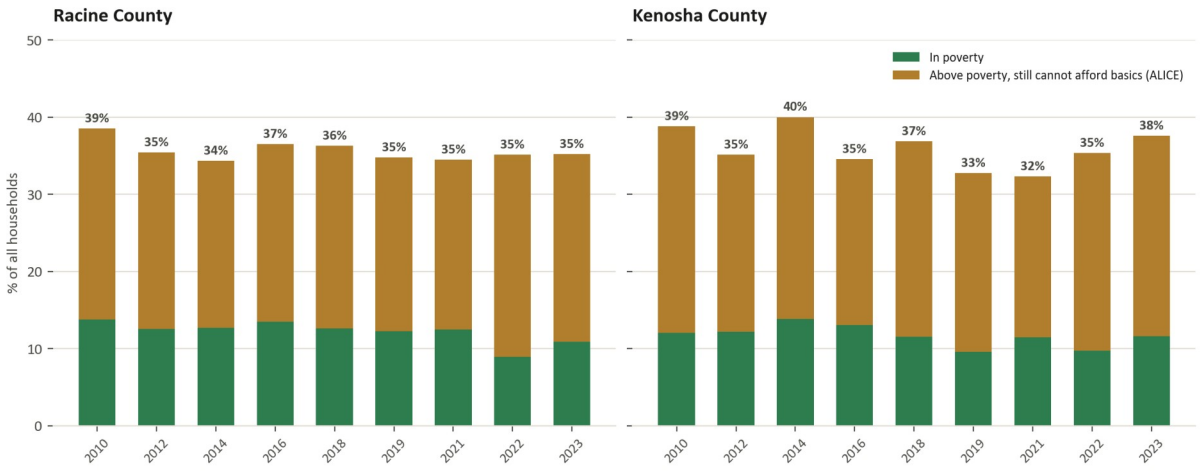

Figure 17. Households in poverty and households above poverty who still cannot afford a survival budget, as a share of all county households. Source: United For ALICE. Milwaukee County is not covered by the series available for this analysis.

Read against the service record, this sets the scale of the opportunity rather than the scale of a shortfall. Giving to the Nations received 3,134 applications from Racine County across three and a half years, in a county where some 28,000 households cannot reliably afford basics. The organization is not close to a ceiling on need.

What expansion would be walking into

Two of the author's earlier studies of these same counties, one on food deserts and one on hunger and housing instability, identify vehicle access, food-retail availability, and housing cost burden as what separates struggling neighborhoods from stable ones. Those studies are published at census-tract and county level. Rather than approximate them down to ZIP codes, the same measures were drawn directly at ZIP level from the American Community Survey and the USDA's SNAP retailer directory, which records each store's ZIP.

The comparison is stark. In the five Racine ZIP codes the organization serves today, 8% of households have no vehicle. In the six Milwaukee ZIP codes with the largest below-poverty populations, 18% do, which is over double. SNAP receipt runs 36% against 16%, and severe rent burden 29% against 22%.

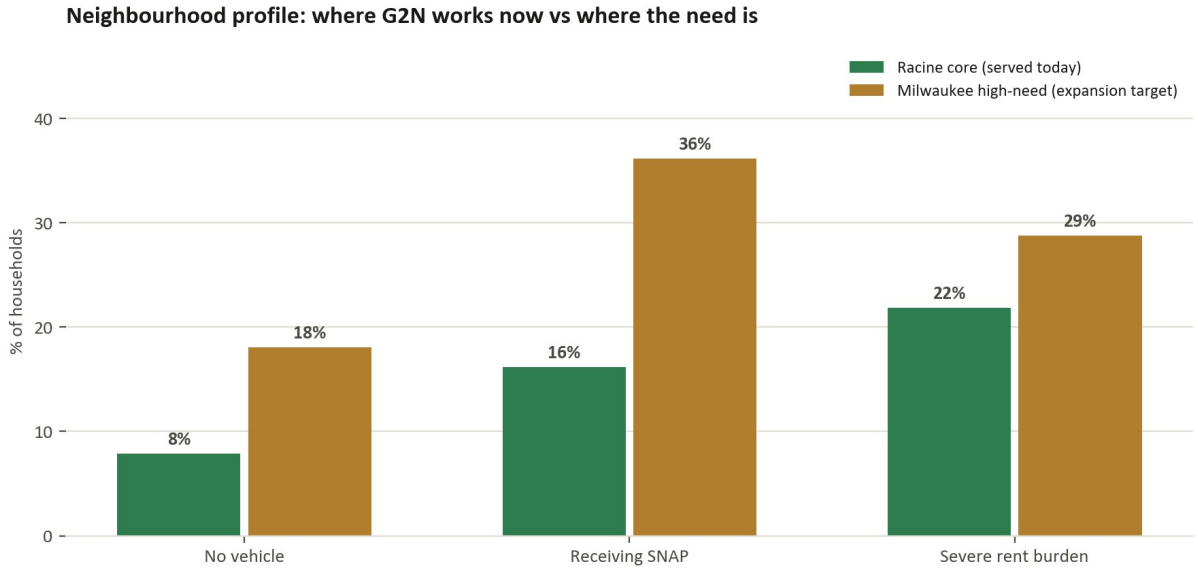

Figure 18. Neighborhood profile of the Racine ZIP codes served today against the highest-need Milwaukee ZIP codes. ACS 2019–2023.

This matters operationally. The current model asks an applicant to collect a box, and already loses about 16% to 21% of prepared boxes in Racine, where most households have a car. Carrying that model unchanged into neighborhoods where twice as many households have none would be expected to lose more. Two findings sharpen the point. Events have no collection loss at all, because the box changes hands on the spot, and Milwaukee applicants arrive through people they know rather than online. Read together, and given that home delivery was tried and did not remove the loss, the evidence points toward an event-led approach in Milwaukee rather than an application-and-collect one. The constraint on that approach is cost, discussed in the recommendations below.

One hypothesis was tested and not supported. If neighborhood access drove non-collection, the ZIP codes with the least vehicle access should lose the most boxes. Across the ZIP codes where enough boxes were offered to compare, they do not. Non-collection sits between 16% and 26% regardless of vehicle access, and no statistically meaningful relationship survives once the one event-served ZIP code is set aside. Thus the drivers of non-collection are the length of the wait, which the organization ties to gaps in its funding supply, and household size, not the character of the neighborhood. That distinction matters for expansion: the losses are not a Milwaukee problem waiting to happen, but a funding problem the organization already lives with in Racine. Steadier funding, more than any change of geography, is what would lift collection.

How this compares with similar organizations

The closest peers to a hygiene-product nonprofit are not food banks but other basic-necessity providers: hygiene banks, diaper banks, and period-supply banks, all of which procure and distribute goods that public assistance does not cover. There is no national performance-benchmarking dataset for these

organizations, so nothing here grades this organization against a peer. What the sector does provide is well-measured evidence on the scale of the need, and one useful contrast in operating models.

The need is national, and it reaches beyond any one product

Diaper need is the best-measured piece. The National Diaper Bank Network's Diaper Check 2023, a national survey, found that 47% of United States families with young children struggle to afford diapers, up 14 percentage points since 2010. One in four of those families reported missing work or school because they lacked the diapers needed to leave a child at childcare, losing an average of 5.1 working days in a single month. A shortage of a basic supply is therefore more than a matter of comfort. It produces measurable losses in employment and earnings, which is the argument that carries into a funding conversation, and it applies directly to soap, detergent and personal care.

Period products show the same pattern. The Alliance for Period Supplies reports, from the U by Kotex State of the Period survey, that two in five people who menstruate have struggled to afford period products, that close to two-thirds of low-income women cannot reliably afford them, and that one in three have missed work, school, or other activities for lack of supplies. Only about 4% of people know of a local source of free or reduced-cost period supplies, which speaks to how thinly this need is served.

The broadest measure of the specific goods this organization distributes comes from Feeding America's In Short Supply study. In a national survey of households with children, 34% of low-income families reported difficulty affording basic non-food household goods such as soap, cleaning supplies and personal care items. Their coping strategies were the ones this population would recognize: going without soap, and skipping laundry or dishes to stretch what they had. The same study makes the connection a general-purpose funder will care about. Among families who could not afford these basic goods, 82% were also food insecure. Hygiene need and food need travel together. Food insecurity is itself rising across the region: by Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap estimates, about one in eight people in eastern Wisconsin and about one in seven in Milwaukee County are food insecure, and every county in the area saw an increase in the most recent data. A case built on hygiene poverty is, at the same time, a case about the households that food-focused funders already recognize.

How the model differs from a hygiene bank

It is worth being precise about how Giving to the Nations operates, because it does not follow the standard hygiene-bank or diaper-bank model, and the difference matters for how the results should be read. A typical bank vets partner agencies, gives those partners bulk or prepackaged product, and leaves the partners to set eligibility, vet recipients, and keep distribution records. Giving to the Nations does close to the reverse. It vets every applicant itself, then supplies partner pickup locations with a set number of boxes and an approved-applicant list for each distribution window. Partners help spread word of the program and host the pickup; they do not decide who is served. This is also why the Kenosha figures ran high for a time: one partner location had taken it upon itself to deliver boxes to applicants it referred, a practice that has since stopped.

Two implications follow. First, the organization already works through partners for the last step of distribution, so the open question is not whether to adopt a partner model but how many pickup sites to run and where. Second, because eligibility and record-keeping stay in-house, the data in this report describe the whole served population directly, rather than a set of partner-reported subsets. That is a real strength for the kind of analysis presented here.

A caution belongs with the sector comparison. These organizations are analogues rather than a matched peer group, the national figures describe related but different product categories, and none of the sources provides operational benchmarks such as collection rates or cost per household against which this organization could be scored. The comparison establishes the scale and legitimacy of the need; it does not grade performance.

What the data suggests

Six observations follow from the analysis. They are offered as evidence for the organization's own planning judgment, not as recommendations about matters where local knowledge is decisive.

- Capacity is not the limiting factor. With a box prepared for 97% of actionable requests, questions about whether the organization can meet demand are answered by the record.
- Collection follows the funding supply. Boxes ready within a week are collected far more often than those held over a month, 17% missed against 40%, and the organization ties the long waits to periods when the product budget had run out and applications were held. The losses are episodic, concentrated in particular months, which fits that account. The lever is steadier funding, so applications are not held, more than it is packing speed or pickup location.
- Delivery is not the fix for the collection loss. It was run weekly through 2024 and did not remove restocks; it added cancelled deliveries and boxes lost from porches. The larger-household pattern is real, but the answer is closer and more frequent pickup, not a return to home delivery.
- Late autumn is the natural build window. Demand is thinnest in November and December and rises through the new year, which favors stocking and volunteer recruitment in that period.
- Milwaukee expansion should be event-led. The single Milwaukee ZIP code with meaningful reach is the one where events were held; Milwaukee applicants arrive by word of mouth rather than online; and Milwaukee households are half as likely to have a vehicle for collection. All three point away from an application-and-collect model there.
- The binding constraint is funding, and the scale of the need dwarfs a single event. At about $27 a box, one $4,000 event of 150 boxes is under an hour of distribution; a full year at the current delivery pace, about 850 boxes, is about $23,000 of product, and meeting the actionable demand the analysis documents, before any Milwaukee expansion, is closer to $28,000 a year. Steady annual funding, not one-off event money, is what would keep applications from being held, let the organization buy in bulk, and open the highest-need Milwaukee and Kenosha neighborhoods while keeping the year-round direct channel running.

Appendix A. ZIP-level detail

All ZIP codes in the three-county service area with at least ten applications, ordered by the size of the population below the poverty line. Poverty estimates are American Community Survey 2019–2023 five-year figures by ZIP-code tabulation area. A rate is not shown where the below-poverty population is under 200, because a per-100 rate on so small a base is not meaningful.

ZIP	County	Below poverty	Poverty rate	Applications	Served	Apps per 100
53215	Milwaukee	13,428	23.1%	37	35	0.3
53204	Milwaukee	12,974	32.6%	26	25	0.2
53218	Milwaukee	11,404	28.2%	45	41	0.4
53209	Milwaukee	10,885	24.4%	22	19	0.2
53212	Milwaukee	7,473	26.2%	14	13	0.2
53210	Milwaukee	7,413	30.4%	23	20	0.3
53208	Milwaukee	6,825	25.0%	209	208	3.1
53216	Milwaukee	6,280	21.1%	39	38	0.6
53233	Milwaukee	5,647	62.1%	11	10	0.2
53140	Kenosha	5,547	19.6%	182	127	3.3
53221	Milwaukee	5,378	14.1%	20	19	0.4
53403	Racine	5,099	19.4%	985	633	19.3
53214	Milwaukee	4,611	13.3%	16	16	0.3
53225	Milwaukee	4,129	16.6%	21	17	0.5
53219	Milwaukee	3,972	11.5%	20	19	0.5
53205	Milwaukee	3,773	41.9%	30	29	0.8
53144	Kenosha	3,399	13.4%	82	53	2.4
53402	Racine	3,111	8.9%	604	417	19.4
53207	Milwaukee	3,054	8.9%	13	11	0.4
53143	Kenosha	3,042	14.3%	101	67	3.3
53404	Racine	2,916	24.3%	665	438	22.8
53222	Milwaukee	2,690	11.1%	13	12	0.5
53405	Racine	2,660	9.6%	565	367	21.2
53406	Racine	2,607	10.3%	227	155	8.7
53142	Kenosha	2,378	7.1%	38	23	1.6
53105	Racine	2,261	7.9%	14	4	0.6
53158	Kenosha	1,071	5.9%	15	13	1.4
53182	Racine	771	9.0%	20	7	2.6
53177	Racine	467	7.3%	22	12	4.7
53126	Racine	383	5.5%	10	7	2.6
53108	Racine	74	2.5%	10	4	—

Table A1. ZIP-level need and reach (31 ZIP codes).

Appendix B. Data and method

Source and handling

- 4,298 de-identified applications supplied by Giving to the Nations, covering January 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026.
- Personal identifiers were removed by the organization before transfer. A scan of the received file found contact details in three free-text answers: one email address with a telephone number, and two street addresses. These were deleted before any analysis and the organization was notified.
- Geography is analyzed at ZIP-code level only. Dates are aggregated to month or year. Every figure and table in this report is an aggregate; no individual household appears anywhere in it.

Data security

The full applicant file was held and analyzed on a single password-protected research computer to which only the researcher had access. Every figure in this report was computed locally from that file. No applicant's personal information, whether names, addresses, contact details, or the free-text answers applicants wrote, was emailed, placed in shared storage, or otherwise transmitted anywhere. The only external data requests made during the analysis were for published Census statistics, which carry no information about any applicant. Aggregate figures were processed with AI assistance, described in the following section.

Use of AI assistance

Artificial-intelligence assistance (Claude, developed by Anthropic) was used in producing this analysis. It is disclosed here in full.

- What it was used for: writing and reviewing the analysis code, generating the figures and tables, and assisting with drafting and editing the text of this report and the accompanying presentation.
- What it saw: aggregate figures only, meaning counts, percentages, and summary tables. No individual applicant record was ever provided to it. The free-text answers applicants wrote were deliberately never read into it; they were profiled by length and scanned for contact details by local code only.
- What it did not do: it did not decide how variables were defined, which records were included or excluded, what the results mean, or what should be recommended. Those decisions were made by the researcher, who reviewed and verified the code before it was run and checked every number that appears in this report against the underlying data.
- Reproducibility: the complete set of analysis scripts is retained and can be re-run to reproduce every figure and table here from the source file.

Definitions

- Served: an application whose status is Picked Up or Delivered.
- Actionable request: an application excluding repeat requests inside the 90-day eligibility window, incomplete forms, applicants outside the service area, and applications still in progress at the cutoff.
- Not collected (Restock): a box that was prepared and made available but not picked up within the two-week hold.

Known limitations

- The service area changed during the period. 2023 and 2024 were primarily Racine County under funder restriction; 2025 onward included Milwaukee and Kenosha. Year-to-year geographic comparisons partly reflect that change.
- The assistance question defaults to "None" when left blank, so it cannot be read as a measure of who does not receive assistance. The reported program shares in the Public assistance section are therefore a floor: applicants who skipped the question were recorded as receiving nothing, so true participation is higher than shown.
- Race is not reported on 28% of applications, concentrated in paper event forms.
- Three veterans' events are recorded as group entries rather than individual households. They are excluded from household-level statistics and included in application counts.
- The September 2023 surge followed a widely shared social media post and does not represent a change in underlying need; it is excluded from the seasonality figure.

Comparison data

- U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019–2023 five-year estimates, by ZIP-code tabulation area: table S1701 (poverty status), B08201 (vehicle availability), B22010 (SNAP receipt), B25070 (gross rent as a share of income).
- ZIP-code boundaries: U.S. Census Bureau cartographic boundary file, 2020 ZIP-code tabulation areas.
- United For ALICE, Wisconsin county series (Kenosha and Racine), household counts by poverty and ALICE status and the county survival budget.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture SNAP retailer directory, used for counts of authorized food retailers by ZIP code.
- National Diaper Bank Network, The NDBN Diaper Check 2023; Alliance for Period Supplies (U by Kotex State of the Period, 2021); and Feeding America, In Short Supply (2013) and Map the Meal Gap (2024, 2023 estimates). Cited for national and regional context on hygiene, period, diaper, and food need, as analogues rather than performance benchmarks.

Appendix C. County breakouts

The tables below split the report's headline measures into the three counties served, for funders whose interest is specific to one area. They expand on the figures in the main text and do not restate the caveats attached to each measure there.

Stage	Racine	Milwaukee	Kenosha
Applications received	3,134	643	443
Actionable requests	2,644	616	385
Box prepared and offered	2,529	616	381
Box collected	2,054	601	296
Collected % of offered	81.2	97.6	77.7

Table A2. Service funnel by county.

Year	Racine	Milwaukee	Kenosha
2023	1232	12	54
2024	448	280	30
2025	250	224	78
2026	124	85	134

Table A3. Boxes collected by year and county. 2026 covers January–June.

Measure	Racine	Milwaukee	Kenosha
Applications	3,134	643	443
People in households	10,308	1,967	1,533
Children in households	5,014	935	784
Income under $20k (%)	67.9	39.8	64.8
Income under $10k (%)	48.7	27.7	42.0
Not employed, of answered (%)	59.0	76.5	69.1
Emergency situation (%)	37.0	46.1	30.3
On at least one program, floor (%)	70.2	67.8	79.5
Median household size	3.0	3.0	3.0
White (%)	34.1	10.1	53.3
Black or African American (%)	25.8	26.1	17.2
Asian (%)	0.4	43.4	0.2
Hispanic or Latino (%)	26.1	11.8	32.5
Race not provided (%)	30.5	1.1	17.6

Table A4. Demographic and need profile by county. Assistance shares are a floor (see the Public assistance section).