



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
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MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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COUNTY EXECUTIVE BELLO ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF “STEPS TO SUCCESS ROCHESTER” PROGRAM, CALLS FOR COMMUNITY SIGN-UPS

ROCHESTER, NY — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello today announced the launch of Steps to Success Rochester, a new upward mobility navigation program designed to help families increase income, strengthen stability, and achieve long-term economic success. The County is looking to enroll 700 households and is now actively recruiting eligible participants.

Steps to Success is focused on helping families achieve measurable gains across five key pillars of upward mobility: family stability, well-being, financial management, education and training, and employment and career advancement.

Eligibility is open to families in receipt of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families with household income at or below 100% Federal Poverty Level, at least one child under 18 in the household and residing in zip codes **14605, 14608, 14611, and 14621**.

“Steps to Success is about giving families the tools, support, and guidance they need to build a stronger future,” **said County Executive Bello**. “By connecting residents to real opportunities and personalized support, we are helping more people move toward financial stability and long-term success.”

“By connecting families to critical resources like housing support, workforce training, financial coaching, and health services, the *Steps to Success Rochester* initiative empowers residents to build stability and achieve long-term economic success,” **said Mayor Malik D. Evans**. “I’m grateful for our partnership with Monroe County and local community organizations as we work together to expand opportunity and create a more equitable and prosperous Rochester for all.”

Steps to Success will operate in three community-based organizations located throughout the City of Rochester: Urban League of Rochester, Action for a Better Community, and Catholic Charities Family and Community Services.

“The Steps to Success Rochester program is an important investment that will help families take meaningful steps toward upward mobility,” **said Aqua Y. Porter, executive director of the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative**. “This is exactly the kind of coordinated, community-based approach that will have a long-term impact in Rochester.

The Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath) model is an evidence-based approach that has shown success by addressing barriers to upward mobility together and focusing on long-term economic mobility rather than short-term fixes. We must support programs that recognize the true challenges of living in poverty—that not one single program alone can lift a family out of poverty—and that we need a sustained, cooperative approach that brings together multiple systems to address real needs. By connecting residents to housing, workforce opportunities, and financial coaching, this initiative will create real pathways to upward mobility.”

“TogetherNow is proud to partner with Monroe County on Steps to Success and to support a more connected, person-centered approach to financial mentoring and economic mobility,” **said Laura Gustin, President & CEO TogetherNow.** “Through MyWayfinder, we are helping create a digital access point that makes it easier for community members to learn about the program, complete screening, and strengthen coordination across providers and systems. We are excited to support this work and the County’s vision for making services easier to access and more responsive to the needs of residents.”

“We are honored to be part of this county initiative alongside our community partners,” **said Tiffany Owens, Interim CEO of Urban League of Rochester.** “Providing the resources, guidance, and coordinated support needed to advance upward mobility for the families we serve aligns closely with the longstanding mission of the Urban League of Rochester. For over six decades, we have been committed to empowering individuals and strengthening our community, and Steps to Success represents a meaningful extension of that work.”

“Poverty is a reality for far too many families in the City of Rochester,” **said Lori VanAuken, President and CEO of Catholic Charities Family and Community Services.** “Building on our legacy of service, we stand ready to work with these families by providing consistent guidance, support and real-world opportunities to build long-term stability. Together with our partners in Steps to Success Rochester, we are dedicated to building a community where every person can flourish.”

“Steps to Success is a powerful investment in families and the future of our community,” **said Mubarak Bashir, VP for Youth and Community Services.** “At Action for a Better Community, we know that with the right support, coaching, financial guidance, and individualized planning, families can achieve lasting economic mobility. We are proud to partner with Monroe County Department of Human Services and community organizations to help residents build stronger, more stable futures.”

Participants will receive individualized support through a comprehensive assessment process using an evidence-based mobility mentoring model. This approach identifies each household’s unique needs and creates a personalized plan for long-term progress. Financial incentives will be provided as participants reach milestones in their plan.

Supports and services will be customized based on each household's assessment and may include:

- Connections to primary health care and mental health providers
- Support for housing stability and potential housing-related assistance
- Financial counseling and coaching
- Access to education and workforce training opportunities
- Assistance with childcare, transportation, or essential household needs
- Support for employment navigation and entrepreneurship

To learn more or sign up for Steps to Success Rochester, visit <https://www.monroecounty.gov/hs-steps-success> or call 211.

Steps to Success Rochester is the second program of the Project Prosper initiatives, funded with \$25 million in one-time funding from the NYS Office of Temporary Assistance, and administered through the Department of Social Services in collaboration with the City of Rochester.

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