



mn COUNCIL FOR MINNESOTANS
OF AFRICAN HERITAGE

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



A report published by the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage (the Council) in accordance with MN Statute 15.015 Subdivision 8 governing Ethnic Councils. Prepared by Justin Terrell, Executive Director of the Council with contributions from staff and council members.

Photography © 2018 by Tamika Garscia Photography

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

CONTENTS

Ethnic Council Statute	3
The African Heritage Community	5
Report on 2018 Activities	9
Outreach.	9
Legislative	11
Civic Engagement	13
2018 Financial Report	14
2019 Agency Objectives	16
Committees and Council Members	17
Staff	18

MINNESOTA STATUTE 15.0145 ETHNIC COUNCILS

Subd. 8. Reports. A council must report on the measurable outcomes achieved in the council’s current strategic plan to meet its statutory duties, along with the specific objectives and outcome measures proposed for the following year. The Council must submit the report by January 15th each year to the Chairs of the committees in the House of Representatives and the Senate with primary jurisdiction over state government operations. Each report must cover the calendar year, of the year before the report is submitted. The specific objectives and outcome measures for the following current year must focus on three or four achievable objectives, action steps, and measurable outcomes for which the Council will be held accountable. The strategic plan may include other items that support the statutory purposes of the council but it should not distract from the primary statutory proposals presented. The biennial budget of each council must be submitted to the Legislative Coordinating Commission by February 1st in each odd-numbered year.



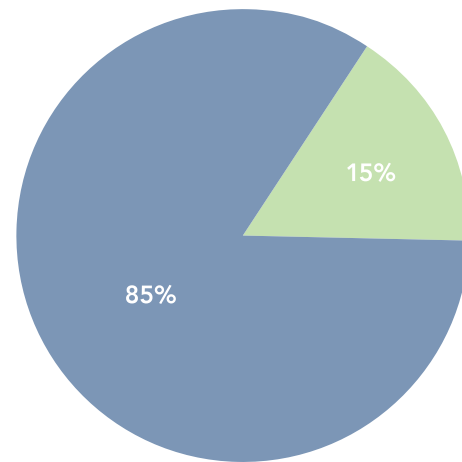


THE AFRICAN HERITAGE COMMUNITY

The state demographer reports that approximately 425,197 members of the African Heritage community live in Minnesota.¹ The African Heritage community comprises approximately 6 percent of Minnesota’s total population. It is the second-largest population group in the state. This includes native-born African Americans (226,944) and foreign-born residents (134,186), many of whom were born in the Sub-Saharan African nations of Ethiopia, Liberia, and Somalia. If Minnesotans of African Heritage are not African American, they are primarily foreign born. There are nearly as many Minnesota-born members of the African Heritage community as there are foreign-born members.

Minnesotans of African Heritage live primarily in the Twin Cities area. Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and their surrounding suburbs are home to the largest populations of Minnesotans of African Heritage. Growing populations exist in the cities of Greater Minnesota, including Duluth, Rochester, and Saint Cloud. For this reason, the Council’s outreach efforts focused on building relationships in these cities.

BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN MINNESOTA IN 2017

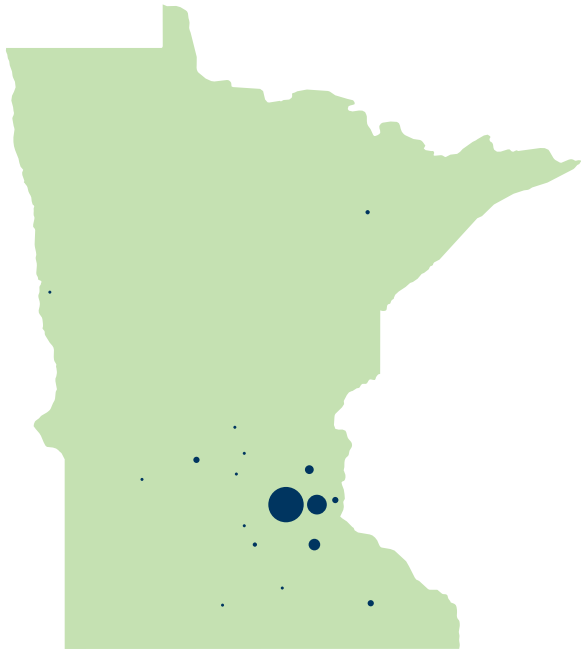


Black or African American Alone: 361,130
 Black or African American and Other Race: 64,067

Total: 425,197

¹ All data provided by the state demographer is from 2017. Note that the data for African immigrant groups tends to be incomplete and rarely disaggregated. For that reason, the data in this section will reflect what the state demographer has provided in relation to the African-American population.

BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICANS IN MINNESOTA IN 2017 BY LOCATION



Racial Disparities Affecting the African Heritage Community

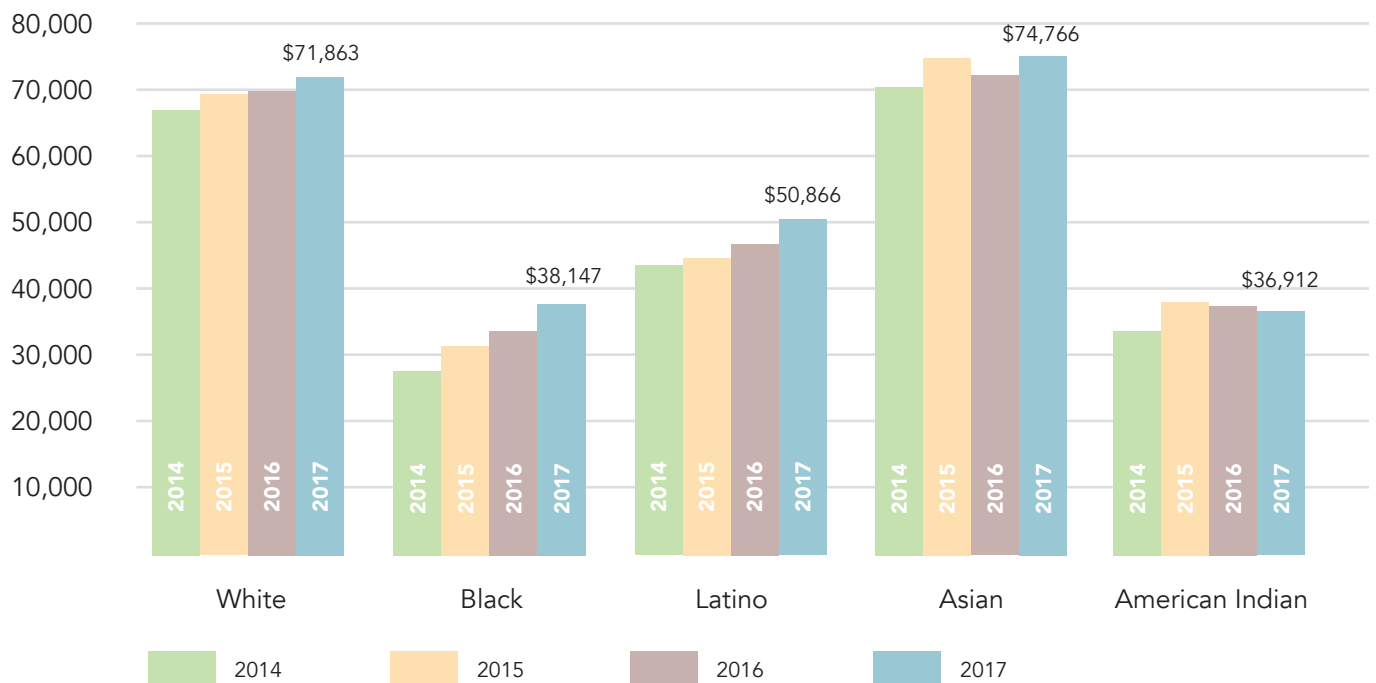
Minnesota is home to several of the nation's worst racial disparities affecting the African Heritage community. The following are important areas that reflect some of our state's racial disparities: income, health, housing, and education.

Income

The median income of people of African Heritage is approximately \$38,100. On average, high-earning individuals in our community earn the equivalent of a middle-class income for other populations of Minnesotans.

Approximately 98,741 people of African Heritage live below the state poverty level. The majority of these individuals are children between the ages of 6-18 years old and young adults between the ages of 26-34 years old.

REAL MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN MINNESOTA, 2014-2017

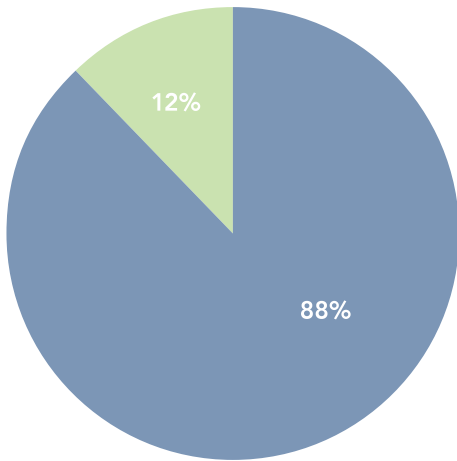


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Access to Health Insurance

Tens of thousands of individuals of African Heritage do not have access to adequate health insurance. Most of these individuals are working-age adults, as federal medical programs such as CHIP and Medicare cover many young children and older adults. Young adults aged 26-34 years are most likely to lack access to health insurance.

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE AGES 26-35

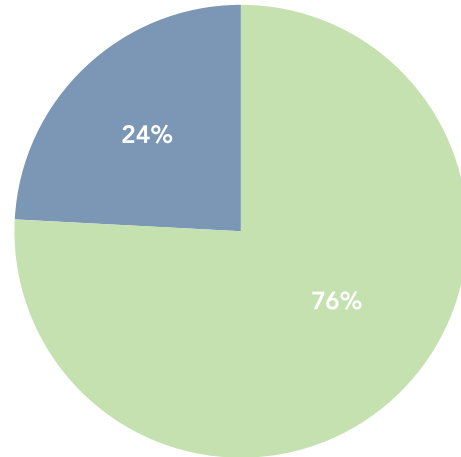


With Health Insurance: 49,021
Without Health Insurance: 6,589
Total: 55,610

Housing

Less than 1 percent of the African Heritage community own homes. Of 116,805 housing units occupied by people of African Heritage, 88,810 of them are rented.

OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS



Owner-Occupied Housing Units: 27,995
Renter-Occupied Housing Units: 88,810
Total: 116,805

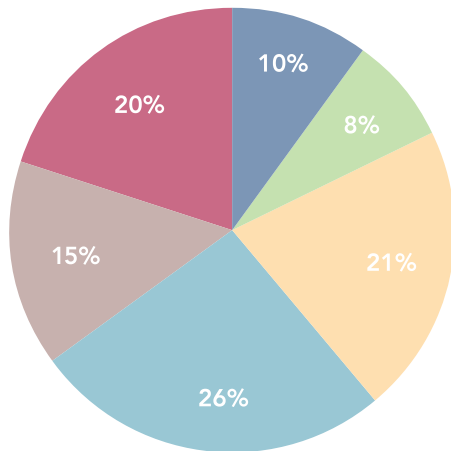


Education

Thousands of people within our community report not having a high school diploma. Furthermore, in a recent survey of nearly 200,000 individuals over 25 years of age, just 27,685 had earned an Bachelor's degree or higher.²

² Source: 2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT BY AGE 25 AND OVER



- Less Than 9th Grade: 20,499
- 9-12th Grade, No Diploma: 16,305
- Regular High School Diploma: 41,230
- Some College, No Degree: 51,281
- Bachelor's Degree: 27,685
- Other: 39,415

Total: 196,415





2018 OUTREACH REPORT

In 2018, the Council launched a regional outreach strategy to build relationships in the Twin Cities, Duluth, Saint Cloud, and Rochester. The Council met with organizations led by Minnesotans of African Heritage to learn about issues affecting local African Heritage populations. The Council held at least two meetings in each region and worked closely with local chapters of the NAACP. In the Twin Cities, the Council participated in several summer events and worked with Black Votes Matter MN to implement our civic engagement strategy.

Outreach During the Legislative Session

During the legislative session, the Council focused its efforts at the Capitol (see “2018 Legislative Report” later in this report). The Council participated in three metro-area events and signed up 38 new people to receive Council news.

Outreach Over the Summer

Once the legislative session ended, the Council toured the state, participating in ten community events in six different cities.

Events the Council attended included Minneapolis’ Juneteenth celebration, Saint Paul’s Rondo Days, and three new Conversations with the Council events (see “Conversations with the Council” below). The Council engaged 332 community members at these summer events.

New Outreach Tools

In January 2018, the Council led an evaluation of its community email and phone list. The results revealed the Council was not optimally engaging with community members. To maximize the effectiveness of its communication with the African Heritage community, the Council launched several new tools.

Weekly Email Bulletin

In January 2018, the Council started sending weekly email bulletins highlighting the work of the Council and informing Minnesotans of upcoming meetings and events. At first, the Council's email list included 587 community members. By December 2018, this number had grown to 2,113 members, an increase of more than 428 percent.

According to GovDelivery the administrator of the Council's weekly bulletin, the average mailing is opened by 24 percent of recipients. This is well above the Council's initial goal of 10 percent, a common standard used by state agencies. This tool has allowed the Council to share its work with more than 2,000 Minnesotans and clearly communicate our outreach efforts and events.

Conversations with the Council

In April, the Council hosted its first community conversation at Afro Deli in South Minneapolis. Then-Council Chair Nasser Mussa invited members from the African Heritage community to learn more about the Council and share their ideas on how the Council can be a stronger partner with the community. The Council held similar events in Rochester, Duluth, and Saint Cloud. The Council engaged with more than 78 community members and developed stronger partnerships in these cities.

Statewide Conference Call

The Council invited its new statewide partners to participate in a monthly conference call. The Council used this call to coordinate civic engagement strategy across the state, including voter education events. The Council directly supported events in Duluth and Rochester that drew diverse audiences. Saint Cloud hosted voter education events, but the Council did not directly support these events.

In the Twin Cities, the Council partnered with Black Votes Matter MN to co-host candidate forums for Hennepin County Commissioner, County Attorney,

and Governor as well as two early voting events. All of these events were coordinated during the statewide call. It was also during this call that the Council was made aware of a resolution in Duluth to provide free bus transit on Election Day to boost voter turnout. Subsequently, the Council submitted a letter of support to the Duluth Transit Authority (DTA). The resolution passed, and DTA buses offered free fares on election day.

Lessons Learned

There is no better use of the Council's time and resources than to be in the community listening and learning from our constituents. Community members appreciated our presence and learned more about the mission and work of the Council. As a result, the Council has added more than 1,500 members to our email list, built relationships in new regions of the state, and added new tools to help the agency communicate with its constituents. We see this as a move in the right direction, away from the Council's previous reputation.





2018 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

In 2018, the Council launched a legislative agenda in collaboration with the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans and the Council on Latino Affairs as well as organizations within the African Heritage community. The Council advised the Governor's office on nine issues.

By the end of session, two of the Council's priority bills earned hearings in the House and were fiercely debated, and earned bipartisan support. The Governor accepted the Council's advice to veto an anti-protest bill and directed his Commissioner of Public Safety to work with the Council to host a community listening session after the officer-involved shooting of Thurman Blevins in North Minneapolis. The Council is thankful to lawmakers and to the Governor's office for working with its constituents.

I. 2018 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Increase Teachers of Color Act HF3594

The Increase Teachers of Color Act is a bill that would create programs to increase the number of

teachers of color by 1 percent. People of color and Native Americans represent 33 percent of Minnesota's student body, but only represent 4.2 percent of Minnesota's teachers. On March 22, the Education and Finance Committee held a hearing for HF3594. The Council mobilized teachers of color to attend the hearing and submitted 28 letters from students of color to the committee. The committee ultimately determined not to move the bill forward, and the bill died in the House.

Domestic Violence Prevention Fund HF3307

This bill would create a Minnesota Department of Health fund for culturally specific services to address domestic violence and help sexual assault victims. The bill was unable to meet its March 23 deadline to be heard in committee, so the bill did not move forward this year.

Restoration of Civil Right to Vote HF0951

This bill would restore voting rights to Minnesotans serving felony probation. Approximately 63,000 Minnesotans are unable to vote due to a felony

conviction. Approximately 51,000 of these citizens live in the community on probation or supervised release and cannot vote. An estimated 64 percent live outside the Twin Cities area, making this a statewide issue. As 70 percent of those disenfranchised are white, 24 percent are African American, and 6 percent are Hispanic and Native American, this issue is cross-cultural and urgent. On March 22, the House Committee on Public Safety and Security Policy and Finance heard the House version of the bill. The committee did not consider the bill for passage. Ultimately, the bill was not considered in any omnibus bill and did not face passage this year.

Minnesota African American Family Preservation Act HF3973 and SF3779

This bill would establish best practices for child protection as it relates to African-American families. Black families are disproportionately represented in child protection and once involved, the outcomes are inequitable. Racial disparities are found across the entire child protection process, from initial reporting and assessment to discharge from the system. Black children are placed in out-of-home care at a rate 5.3 times higher than white children and are much more likely to age out of the foster care system. The bill was not introduced in committee, so could not move any further in the process.

On March 28, Senator Hayden added an amendment to a bill modifying the child foster care training requirements introduced by Senator Relph. The amendment would have established an African-American child welfare working group within the Department of Human Services (DHS). This amendment was voted down due to fears of adding a financial cost component to the bill. However, DHS has since agreed to work with community liaison Kelis Houston, who helped craft the bill, to discuss ways to address African-American disparities in Minnesota's child welfare system.

II. GOVERNOR'S ACTION TAKEN ON ADVICE OF THE COUNCIL

Anti-Protest Bill HF0390

This bill, introduced by Representative Zerwas of Elk River, would have increased penalties for obstructing highways, airport, or transit traffic. Legislators were clear that this bill was written in response to protests led by members of the African Heritage community in the wake of the officer-involved shooting of Philando Castile. Staff met with Representative Zerwas to explain the Council's position. Upon the passage of the bill with bipartisan support, the Council submitted a statement advising the Governor to veto the bill. The Governor vetoed the bill on May 19, 2018.

Response to the Officer-Involved Shooting of Thurman Blevins

In response to the officer-involved shooting of Thurman Blevins by a Minneapolis police officer, the Council was asked to engage with the community. The community was unclear on the investigative process and asked the Council to request more information from the BCA. In addition, Council staff worked with the Minneapolis Police Department's rapid response team as the investigation proceeded.

The Council called for the release of video and audio evidence from the incident. The Council also advised the Governor's office to direct the Commissioner of Public Safety to require the BCA to engage the community in partnership with the Council. BCA Superintendent Drew Evans worked with the Council's Executive Director to host a community listening session on July 12, 2018. Members of the Blevins family disrupted this meeting, and the Council administered an apology. This was the first time the BCA had attempted to meet with the community during an investigation. Some criticized the Council for hosting the BCA listening session. However, other community members, lawmakers, and law enforcement praised the Council for challenging the BCA to make its investigative process more transparent and acknowledge the pain in the community.

III. LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

African Heritage Day on the Hill

The Council hosted African Heritage Day on the Hill on February 27. More than 200 members of the community gathered in the Capitol rotunda to hear from Commissioner of Human Rights Kevin Lindsey, the Governor's Chief Diversity Officer James Burroughs, Saint Paul's first black mayor Melvin Carter, and the state's five legislators of African Heritage: Senators Jeff Hayden and Bobby Joe Champion and Representatives Rena Moran, Ilhan Omar, and Erin Maye Quade. Council Chair Nasser Mussa offered remarks, as did Council Executive Director Justin Terrell. Following the rally, community members met with legislators and advocated for the Council's legislative agenda.

Legislative Breakfast

On February 21, the Council hosted its annual Legislative Breakfast with sitting legislators. It was an opportunity to introduce the Council's legislative priorities. Six Council members and five legislators attended, including Representatives Moran, Maye Quade, and Koonish Podeine.

Session Debrief and Other Community Events

During the final weeks of the legislative session, the Council hosted 35 community members over three days, facilitating meetings with eight lawmakers as they debated issues on the floor. Once the legislative session concluded, the Council hosted a community debrief with the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans and the Council on Latino Affairs. Each Executive Director spoke to the efforts of their respective councils. Community partners recapped the top issues the Councils had advocated for during the legislative session. In addition, Representative Lucero and Senator Laine gave legislative reports. Breakout sessions followed the plenary programs so that each council could discuss issues in-depth. Commissioner Lindsey of the Department of Human Rights attended our Council's breakout and shared his work to address disparities in discipline in the education system.

The Council also supported other African Heritage groups who rallied at the Capitol during the legislative session. The following is a list of those groups: NAACP, the National Pan-Hellenic Council, and the Organization for Liberians in Minnesota all held rallies at the Capitol.

2018 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Summer outreach efforts gave the Council the opportunity to sponsor and co-host voter education events throughout autumn. These events, such as Souls to the Polls and the Community People's Forum, were 100 percent nonpartisan. Through these efforts, the Council engaged with more than 70 community members and strengthened its partnerships in Greater Minnesota.

In the Twin Cities, Black Votes Matter MN (BVM) worked with the Council to co-host efforts to engage the African Heritage community. Together, the Council and BVM co-hosted eight events and ran ads in

the Spokesman, Recorder, and on KMOJ radio. No financial transactions took place between BVM and the Council. No Council funds were used to purchase the ads or sponsor any of the events.

For the first time ever, the Council called its full list of constituents who signed up to engage with the Council to get out the vote. The Council hosted two phone banks with 14 volunteers and called 593 community members. Altogether, 67 community members agreed to vote early, and 14 attended early voting events with the Council in Minneapolis and Saint Paul.



Finally, the Council continued its community outreach across the state, attending and tabling at events such as the African Immigrant Conference in Brooklyn Park, Souls to the Polls in Duluth, and the Minnesota African Preservation Act Town Hall in Minneapolis. The Council reached 161 community members through its participation in these and other events.

Lessons Learned

The Council feels its partnerships with the NAACP in Greater Minnesota and BVM in the Twin Cities were beneficial. Our efforts produced 67 voters from the African Heritage community, including 14 in-person early voters. Calling the Council's full community outreach list (593 dials) resulted in positive feedback from our constituents. The Council plans to repeat this activity each fall.

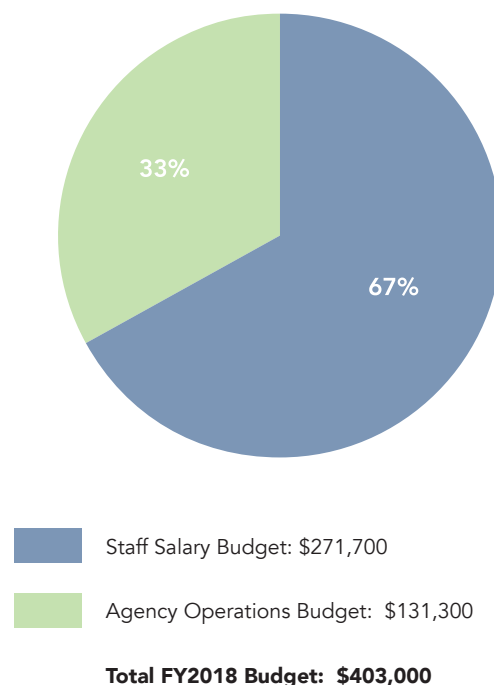
While the results of our voter engagement events were rewarding, feedback from all of the agency's partners suggest voter engagement is a role better suited for community organizations. As a state agency, the Council was prevented from moving as fast or nimbly as other organizations could. Instead, staff recommend the Council host an annual meeting each fall to engage our constituents.

2018 FINANCE REPORT

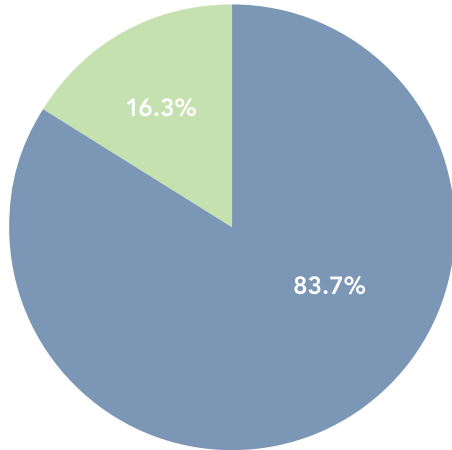
In FY2018, the Council's operating budget was \$403,000, with more than half (\$271,700) budgeted for staff salaries. The Council is budgeted for three Full Time Employees (FTEs) and one Part Time Employee (PTE), for a total of four positions. Total staff spending for FY2018 was \$138,963.77, as the Council staffed just two FTEs throughout the year. This generated an agency staff savings of \$160,639.92. The Council used this savings to offset spending for items budgeted at a lower rate for FY2018. Staff savings have carried over to FY2019 and will be expended by the end of the fiscal year or eliminated once the FY2020-21 biennium budget begins on July 1, 2019.

General spending for agency operations was \$131,300. Space rental, IT, and professional services such as contracts and sponsorships accounted for most of the spending. Most vendor contracts were made with companies owned by individuals of African Heritage.

FISCAL YEAR 2018: AGENCY BUDGET

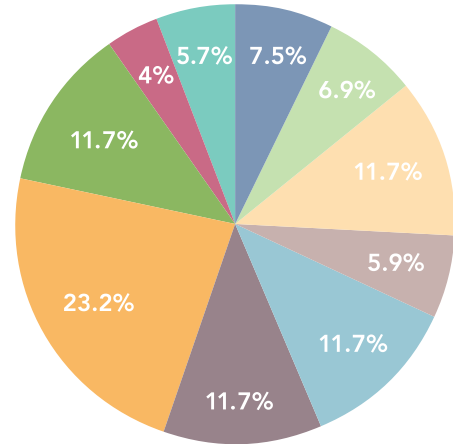


2018 PROMPT PAYMENTS (WITHIN 30 DAYS)



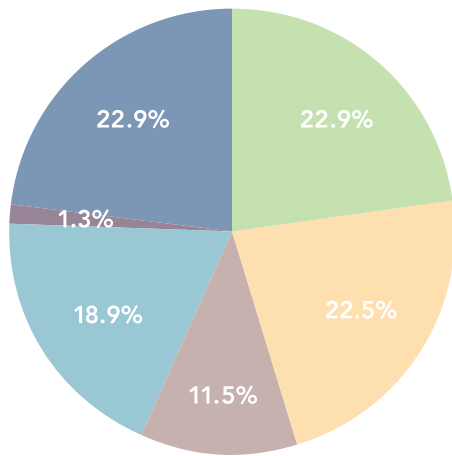
On-Time Payments: 190 of 227 (83.7%)

2018 SPONSORSHIPS WITH VENDORS OF AFRICAN HERITAGE (ACCOUNT CODE 43000 & 41100)



- Conversation with Council-Rochester: \$642.76
 - Conversation with Council-St. Cloud: \$596.00
 - Mayor Carter Reception with Booth: \$1,000
 - NAACP Day on the Hill Rotunda Setup: \$515
 - Freedom Banquet with Table: \$1,000
 - Festival of Fathers with Booth: \$1,000
 - Juneteenth Booth: \$2,000
 - Liberian Independence Day with Table: \$1,000
 - Black Men Healing Conference: \$350
 - Rondo Days Booth: \$500
- Total Spent: \$8,603.76**

2018 CONTRACTS WITH VENDORS OF AFRICAN HERITAGE (ACCOUNT CODE 41130)



- Annual Report and Day on the Hill: \$5,000
- Photography FY 2018: \$4,950
- Facilitation of Retreat and Report Back: \$2,500
- Contract to Lead Legislative Strategy: \$4,155
- Performance at Session Debrief: \$300
- End-of-Session Outreach and Debrief: \$5,000

Total Spent: \$21,905
100% Vendors of African Heritage



2019 AGENCY OBJECTIVES

Secure Budget Appropriation and Change Request

For its FY2020–2021 biennium budget, the Council aims to secure an appropriation of \$812,000 with a \$249,000 change request, for a total of \$1.061 million. This figure will continue to support the agency's legislative agenda, statewide outreach, and partnerships in Greater Minnesota. The increase to the budget will support an additional 1.5 FTEs and office space to accommodate needed staff and interns.

Advance Legislative Agenda

Restoration of Voting Rights

In the upcoming year, the Council will continue to advocate for the Restoration of Civil Right to Vote bill (HF0951). This bill would restore voting rights to Minnesotans serving felony probation. Approximately 63,000 Minnesotans are unable to vote due to a felony conviction. Approximately 51,000 of these citizens live in the community on probation or supervised release and cannot vote. An estimated 64 percent of them live outside of the Twin Cities area, making this a statewide issue. Since 70 percent of those disenfranchised are white, 24 percent are African American, and 6 percent are Hispanic and Native American, this issue is cross-cultural and urgent.

African American Family Preservation Act

In 2019, the Council will continue to press legislators introduce the Minnesota African American Family Preservation Act (HF3973 and SF3779) in committee. This bill establishes best practices for child protection as it relates to African-American/black families. Black families are disproportionately represented in child protection and once involved, the outcomes are inequitable. Racial disparities are found across the entire child protection process, from initial reporting and assessment to discharge from the system. Black children are placed in out-of-home care at a rate 5.3 times higher than white children and are much more likely to age out of the foster care system.

Black Immigration: Driver's Licenses for All

This year, the Council intends to deepen its advocacy for driver's licenses for unauthorized immigrants, including those of African Heritage. Possession of a legal driver's license reduces silenced deportations and tensions between law enforcement officers and people of color. More than a dozen states across the nation allow unauthorized immigrants to obtain driver's licenses. In Minnesota, similar bills have struggled to make it through the legislative process.

Community Outreach

2019 Priorities Questionnaire

The Council intends to survey communities of African Heritage across the state to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of its constituents. An electronic version of the survey is available on the Council's website: <https://mn.gov/cmah>.

2020 Greater Minnesota City Partnership Expansion

The Council will continue to expand its community partnerships in Greater Minnesota over the next two years. With growing populations in Moorhead, Willmar, Worthington, and Austin Minnesota, the Council is exploring opportunities to work more closely with these communities.

Fall Annual Meeting

As the Council continues to grow and take on more issues, the Council will establish an Annual meeting to ensure community members have an opportunity to engage with Council members and its partners. In fall 2019, the Council will bring people across the state together to talk about the work of the Council and launch its work for the 2020 legislative session.

COMMITTEES

In addition to advising legislative leaders in the enactment of legislation, the Council collaborated with executive branch agencies to provide input on bringing racial equity to state services and administrative policies and practices. In 2018, the Council served as a liaison to the following executive branch committees:

Cultural and Ethnic Community Leadership Council

Minnesota Department of Human Services
444 Lafayette Road
St Paul, MN 55155
<https://mn.gov/dhs/>

Civic Engagement Committee

Minnesota Department of Human Rights
Freeman Building
625 Robert Street North
Saint Paul MN 55155
<https://mn.gov/mdhr/>

Ombudsman Committee

Minnesota Office of Ombudsman for
Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities
121 7th Place East
Suite 420 Metro Square Building
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2117
<https://mn.gov/omhdd/>

Violent Crime Coordinated Committee

Minnesota Department of Public Safety
445 Minnesota Street
Saint Paul MN 55101-5155
<https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/ojp/Pages/violent-crimes-coordinating-council.aspx>

Governor's Workforce Development Board– Racial Equity Committee

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic
Development
332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200
Saint Paul, MN 55101
<https://mn.gov/deed/>

Minnesota Internal Control Round Table

Minnesota Management and Budget
658 Cedar Street
Saint Paul, MN 55155
<https://mn.gov/mmb/internalcontrol/>

COUNCIL MEMBERS

11 GOVERNOR APPOINTEES

Atty. Amran Farah, Chair

Term Ends 01/06/2020

Nerita Hughes, Vice Chair

Term Ends 01/03/2022

Mustafa Jumale, Secretary

Term Ends 01/06/2020

Olivia Jefferson

Term Ends 01/07/2019

Fatima Tanni Lawson, Ph.D. Treasurer

Term Ends 01/06/2020

Nasser Mussa

Term Ends 01/07/2019

Walter L. Smith III

Term Ends 01/04/2021

Hukun Abdullahi

Term Ends 06/07/2021

Vacant Governor Appointee

Vacant Governor Appointee

Vacant Governor Appointee

4 LEGISLATIVE MEMBERS

Rep. Rena Moran (DFL)

Term Ends 01/01/2020

Vacant House Member (GOP)

Sen. Jeff Hayden (DFL)

Term Ends 01/01/2020

Vacant Senate member (GOP)





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