



Exemplary Examples of

Data-and-Evidence-Driven State and Local ARP Implementation

The federal \$1.9 trillion [American Rescue Plan \(ARP\)](#) is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reinvent how government delivers services and improves outcomes to advance a post-pandemic recovery in the short term and economic mobility and racial equity over the long term. \$350 billion in State and Local Fiscal Relief Funds (SLFRF) in ARP have gone directly to state, local and tribal governments to help them respond to COVID-19, recover from its negative impacts, rebuild critical infrastructure, and replace lost revenue. This represents one of the largest investments by the federal government in its state, local, and tribal government partners.

Shortly after President Biden signed ARP into law, the U.S. Treasury release guidance that include several of RFA's [recommendations](#) on how to support and incentivize governments to invest these dollars through evidence-based approaches. The final guidance issued to state, local, and tribal governments from the U.S. Treasury includes [Five Key Provisions](#), which provide a framework for how governments can and should use data and evidence to drive the spending of these dollars towards transformative community change:

- 1) [Build Data & Evidence Capacity](#): Authorizes governments to use their ARP funds to build and strengthen their data and evidence capacity (i.e. hire data & evaluation teams, build data infrastructure, create performance management systems).
- 2) [Use Data & Evidence](#): Encourages governments to invest their ARP funds in evidence-based solutions backed by strong, moderate, or preliminary evidence (i.e. replicate tested and proven programs around public safety, affordable housing, and workforce development; develop results-based contracts with nonprofit providers; evidence-based grantmaking).
- 3) [Invest in Evaluation](#): Requires governments to identify whether projects will undergo rigorous program evaluation, designed to build evidence (i.e. partner with local and national researchers to conduct evaluations, publicly share evaluation results).
- 4) [Engage Communities](#): Encourages governments to seek and incorporate diverse community feedback from constituents, community-based organizations, and the communities themselves in planning efforts (i.e. strengthen relationships with community-based organizations via new collaborative governance models, participatory budgeting, develop new methods of reaching and listening to communities of color).
- 5) [Ensure Equitable Outcomes](#): Directs governments to develop and pursue equitable outcomes that prioritize economic and racial equity (i.e. use data and evaluation to identify gaps, disaggregate data to track equality of fund distribution and impact).

Based on an assessment of over 200 Recovery Plan Performance Reports, Results for America has identified the following exemplary examples across the Five Key Provisions. You can explore the data further in our [ARP Data & Evidence Dashboard](#).

1) Build Data & Evidence Capacity

Colorado: The state has invested ARP funds to operationalize an evidence-based policy (EBP) framework that helps policymakers prioritize resources when revenues decline. To support the integration of the framework into the fiscal year 2021-22 budget, the governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting conducted training sessions with leaders across state agencies on how to bring data and evidence into budget processes.

Connecticut: As an evidence-building strategy for its ARP investments, the state plans to communicate the focus on evidence-building to agencies and project implementation teams to ensure awareness that evaluation and data analysis are allowable expenses. Additionally, the state will encourage the expanded use of existing data and evidence resources, such as the state longitudinal data system (P20 WIN), which is a potential backbone for integrating data across agency systems. For example, the P20 WIN research agenda includes a focus on college and career readiness, student readiness, financial aid, workforce training programs and barriers to success, all of which are areas for substantial investment in Connecticut's SLFRF Recovery Plan.

Washington, DC: The District is investing its ARP funds in a new Launch, Evaluation, and Monitoring (LEM) hub. The capacity-building initiative will include a team dedicated to the rigorous performance management and evaluation of select programs, including some ARP funded projects, to help inform decisions about which investments have the highest positive impact on residents and should be continued beyond FY24. Additionally, the District has an existing process for evidence-based budgeting that it applied to the investment of ARP funds. Mayor Bowser's proposed budget, which includes ARP investments, was reviewed for evidence and scored by "The Lab" – the Mayor's scientific team – prior to submission to the DC Council.

2) Use Data & Evidence

Connecticut: The state is investing ARP funds to create a statewide, universal home visiting program. Home visiting sends registered nurses from the community to the homes of newborns within the first three weeks of birth to conduct health and wellness checks for both the infant and mother. Registered nurses inform mothers of the core functions of infant and maternal health and of the community resources available to meet their identified needs. The nurse documents physical assessments, community referrals, and general visitation outcomes and shares the appropriate information to the family's health-care providers.

Michigan: The state is allocating ARP funds to its Great Start Readiness Program, which is grounded in a strong evidence base. Research studies have offered positive cost-benefit analyses of similar preschool programs and proven the long-term effects of early learning participation.

Detroit, MI: The city is investing ARP funds in its Skills for Life program. Workers will be paid for five days of work per work; three of which will be spent working on projects that are important to

the City, and two days will be spent attending education or training to earn a credential that leads to a career. To support workers, the program will also help with transportation, the development of a childcare plan, career coaching, and other supports to increase the long-term success of participants.

Gilbert, AZ: The city determined its ARP investment plans based on community feedback, a needs assessment, and identification of evidence-based, data-supported programming. It will be investing in two specific areas: a family advocacy center and support to nonprofit entities that have suffered economic hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The need for a family advocacy center, which will provide victim services, was identified through a review of sex crime-related data from 2015 to 2020, showing that Gilbert experienced a 45.6% increase in sex crime-related offenses involving an adult victim and a 48.6% increase in sex-crime-related offenses involving a child victim. The solution of an advocacy center was informed by the 2019 Children's Advocacy survey that speaks to the efficacy of these centers to improve services and outcomes for victims. Similarly, and in keeping with Gilbert's use of evidence and data-driven practices, the need for support to its nonprofit community partners is expected to continue to grow. Nonprofits have requested an increase of over 59% in municipal funding support over the past two fiscal years.

3) Invest in Evaluation

Tennessee: As part of its ARP recovery plan, the state allocated \$2 million to its Office of Evidence and Impact within the Department of Finance and Administration. The funding will accelerate a program inventory across executive branch agencies, allowing the state to gather better performance metrics, understand which programs are working, and re-evaluate funding for those that are not.

Racine, WI: The city is investing its ARP funds to expand support to its highly successful, free HSED (high school equivalency degree) program, which has graduation rates of 80+%. Since 2019, the city has partnered with the YWCA Southeast WI to promote and scale up the HSED program. The YWCA now has capacity to serve many more city residents - in both English and Spanish - and the program is offered at no cost to participants, but it does require considerable time: the program is approximately 12-16 hours/week for 16 weeks. For residents who are already balancing jobs and caregiving responsibilities, adding schooling to that poses significant challenges, and for those facing tradeoffs between investing in school and earning additional income, taking time out of work for schooling may not be feasible. ARP investments will be utilized to provide scholarships to support up to 250 adult city residents in attaining their high school diplomas or equivalency degrees. This investment will include a rigorous evaluation to determine the effectiveness of providing supplemental scholarships and further build evidence.

Madison, WI: The city is developing plans to implement new, evidence-based programs that include evaluation to determine the efficacy of the intervention. For example, it is launching a pilot mental health emergency program: Community Alternative Response for Emergency Services (CARES). Madison plans to fund an external evaluator to design a study and independently assess the program.

4) Engage Communities

Georgia: The state's Office of Planning and Budgeting has pursued a multi-pronged stakeholder engagement strategy to raise awareness of ARP funding opportunities. It held outreach sessions with city- and county-level groups in communities across the state. Media outreach and direct outreach to local governments also helped raise awareness of the ARP grant application process and plans for ARP funds.

Cook County, IL: The county has taken several approaches to meaningfully engage residents to determine ARP funding priorities. The county partnered with community-based organizations from marginalized communities, hosting meetings, administering surveys, and creating a process for ongoing engagement. Additionally, it developed a website to educate the public and trusted messengers about ARP, securing professional assistance to ensure robust engagement in the planning and implementation of ARP.

5) Ensure Equitable Outcomes

Minnesota: The state offers an example of how to leverage ARP funds in pursuit of equity. Programs run by the state's Department of Education, including a summer preschool program, specifically target historically underserved communities and children unable to attend a quality early childhood program due to COVID-19.

Milwaukee County, WI: The county was the first jurisdiction in the U.S. to declare racism a public health crisis in 2019. This enabled them to develop a framework centered on health and equity which they are now applying to the use of its ARP dollars. This includes the development of an opioid tracking dashboard to help target supports to the areas across the county most in need.

King County, WA: The county has developed a vision and framework for promoting equity in how it invests its ARP funds. Using its Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan as a basis for programmatic decisions, as well as a theory of change for how to resolve inequities in educational, economic, and health outcomes, the county will work to ensure its investments of ARP dollars lead to equitable outcomes for its residents.

Boston, MA: The childcare sector, already a low-paying sector before the pandemic, has a severe workforce shortage. In order to incentivize hiring, the city will provide direct ARP grants to childcare businesses that have hired new childcare staff (or rehired previously laid off staff) since July 1, 2021. Part of the grant will be for the hiring organization and part of the grant will be intended as a bonus for the employee. The intended outcomes of this program are to draw qualified caregivers back into the childcare workforce with better pay, help childcare workers remain in the field with augmented pay, and help childcare businesses retain their workers with annual bonuses.