



2024

ANNUAL REPORT

**Southeast Tennessee
Human Resource Agency**



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ABOUT SETHRA

The Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency (SETHRA) is one of nine Human Resource Agencies that cover the entire state of Tennessee. Organized under the Human Resource Act of 1973, SETHRA was established to address the needs of families, individuals, and communities across the southeast region. In addition to being a Human Resource Agency, SETHRA is also a Community Action Agency, a rural Public Housing Authority, and a public transportation provider. Grant funding from multiple local, state, and federal sources support SETHRA’s need-based and income-based programs and services.

MISSION AND VISION

SETHRA’s mission is to provide quality services and resources to those in need. Our vision is to eliminate generational poverty.



Message from the Chairman

Dear Friends, Partners, and Community Members,

As we close another year, I am honored to share highlights of our progress and accomplishments at the Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency (SETHRA). This year has been one of growth, innovation, and a deepened commitment to empowering the residents of our region to lead more self-sufficient lives.

We proudly launched a Recovery Court Program in partnership with the judges of the 12th judicial district, a vital initiative that provides individuals with a path to rehabilitation and recovery through a blend of accountability and support.

Additionally, the establishment of three Day Reporting Centers for Corrections represents a significant leap forward in how we approach corrections. These centers serve as a structured, community-based alternative to incarceration, offering resources like job readiness, counseling, and substance abuse treatment while allowing individuals to maintain ties to their families and communities.

The backbone of our mission is the effective delivery of essential services, and this year saw key improvements in our operational capacity. Investments in commodity storage and distribution have enhanced our ability to provide vital resources to those in need, ensuring that food is distributed more efficiently and equitably across our service area.

In our ongoing commitment to improving mobility for our clients, we implemented new transportation software and camera systems. These advancements have increased the efficiency, safety, and reliability of our transportation services, ensuring that individuals can access work, education, medical care, and other critical needs with greater ease and confidence.

As we celebrate these accomplishments, we remain steadfast in our commitment to addressing the evolving needs of our community. None of this progress would have been possible without the dedication of our staff, the support of our partners, and the trust of those we serve.

On behalf of the Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency, I extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you who have contributed to this year's success. Together, we are building stronger communities and brighter futures.

With gratitude,



David Jackson
Marion County Mayor



SETHRA Governing Board



Chairman

David Jackson

Mayor, Marion County

Vice Chairman

Doug Collins

Mayor, City of Ducktown

Treasurer

John Gentry

Mayor, McMinn County

Secretary

Keith Cartwright

County Executive, Sequatchie County

Senator Adam Lowe, State of TN

Mayor Clint Huth, City of Dunlap

Community Representative Devona Smith, Sequatchie County

Mayor Eddie Jewell, Meigs County

Mayor Gary Davis, Bradley County

Mayor Gregg Ridley, Bledsoe County

Community Representative Jeannie Anderson, McMinn County

County Executive Jim Vincent, Rhea County

Consumer Representative Leigh Drouillard, Sequatchie County

Consumer Representative Lexi Hyatte, Rhea County

Mayor Michael Brady, Grundy County

Mayor Philip Cagle, City of Pikeville

County Executive Robby Hatcher, Polk County

Representative Ron Travis, State of TN

Consumer Representative Susan Ratliff, McMinn County



SETHRA at a Glance

FY 2024

Revenues	\$19,605,743
Expenses	\$19,153,496
Total Assets	\$14,519,196

*unaudited

Full-Time Staff **154**

Part-Time Staff **37**

FY 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

New Move Up Program Empowers Formerly Homeless to Transition from Supportive Housing to Independent Living

In FY 2024, SETHRA implemented a new Move Up program for participants in its Permanent Supportive Housing Program (PSH). PSH provides permanent housing, intensive case management, and supportive services for people who have experienced chronic homelessness and have a disabling condition. After getting stabilized with health and housing, participants now have the option to apply for Move Up, which transitions them to SETHRA's Housing Choice Voucher Program without having to relocate. This program improves SETHRA's Housing Choice Voucher utilization and opens a spot in the PSH program for others in need.

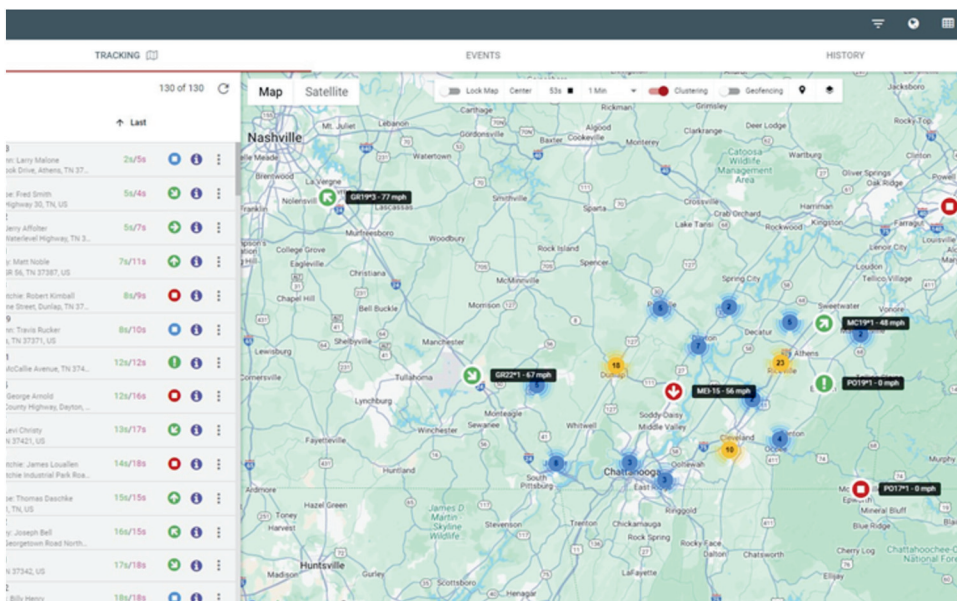


FY 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

New Transit Software and Cameras Enhance Efficiency and Safety

In early 2024, SETHRA implemented new transportation software to enhance our scheduling capabilities. This cloud-based software streamlines the booking process by integrating trip data directly from our insurance companies, significantly reducing the time needed to process bookings. The new software makes life easier for our riders and transit operators by enabling them to schedule more efficiently. The software automatically compiles client priorities and locations into a short list of optimal routes, allowing our operators to create routes in minutes instead of manually determining the best options. This enhanced efficiency not only saves time but also ensures that we meet client needs more effectively.

SETHRA also installed a new camera system in all vehicles in the fleet providing advanced safety and operational monitoring features that ensure both driver and fleet safety. These high-definition cameras are equipped with live monitoring capabilities, allowing operations managers to view real-time footage. In addition, each vehicle is fitted with an onboard emergency button, enabling drivers to discreetly alert Operations Managers to immediate issues or concerns. Once alerted, we can access the live camera feed to assess the situation and determine the appropriate next steps. This system not only helps us address incidents promptly but also provides an opportunity to recognize and reward drivers for exceptional behavior and safe driving practices. In many cases, we have been able to correct errors quickly and proactively, while also acknowledging those who demonstrate positive actions on the road.



SETHRA Starts Recovery Court in Partnership with the 12th Judicial District

In September 2023, SETHRA partnered with the judges of the 12th Judicial District to launch a new Recovery Court. The district is comprised of Bledsoe, Sequatchie, Marion, Rhea, Grundy, and Franklin counties. The program focuses on assisting non-violent offenders in all six of those counties with resources for counseling and recovery. The Recovery Court program provides a path to recovery for nonviolent offenders. SETHRA is honored to work alongside judges who genuinely care about the people who come before them who are struggling with addiction. This program is not only an opportunity to save and change lives, but to improve the quality of life for the people we serve.



Pictured: Mayor David Jackson, Rachel Hackworth, Sheriff Bill Phillips, Mayor Jim Vincent, Mayor Greg Ridley, Judge Justin Angel, Judge Bradley Sherman, Megan Rollins, Chancellor Melissa Willis, David Johnson, Mayor Clint Huth, Kayla Holder.



USDA Grant Recipient

In August of 2024, the **U.S. Department of Agriculture** announced SETHRA as the recipient of a **\$208,137 grant** through the Emergency Rural Health Care Grant Program.

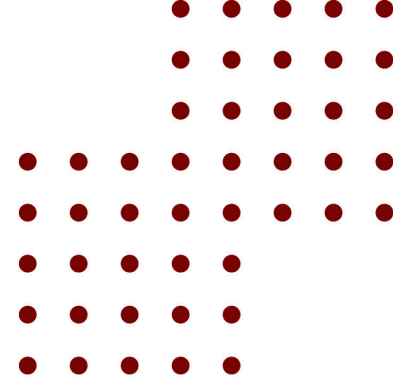
SETHRA was excited to receive this grant award as it will significantly increase our capacity to distribute food and meals to low-income, disabled, and elderly households in our rural service area. The vision for this program is to increase commodities distributions from quarterly to every other month, provide additional refrigerated produce, and increase the number of homebound seniors receiving meals delivered to their home. Funding from USDA Rural Development is an investment in our communities with long-term benefits to the people we serve.



Pictured, from left to right: Mayor David Jackson, Marion County, Tenn. and SETHRA's Governing Board Chairman; Rachel Hackworth, Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency Executive Director; Arlisa Armstrong, Tennessee Rural Development State Director; Lavelle Barker, Food Distribution Coordinator; Amber Espindola, Director of Department of Aging and Disability Services; Mayor Clint Huth, City of Dunlap, Tenn.



HOUSING SERVICES



HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

217 households assisted with **\$1,555,553** in rental and utility assistance.

PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAM

107 households assisted with **\$454,497** in rental and utility assistance.

CEDAR GROVE APARTMENTS

12 clients served in **10** households.

EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE (ERA) AND EVICTION PREVENTION PREVENTION (EPP)

183 clients served with **\$374,123.23** ERA and EPP assistance.

LOW INCOME HOUSING ENERGY ASSISTANCE (LIHEAP)

\$2,122,661.43 in assistance provided for regular LIHEAP to **2,871 clients**.
\$66,901.59 in assistance provided for LIHEAP crisis to **988 clients**.

WEATHERIZATION AND EMERGENCY HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

30 Homes received home repairs
\$244,903 in assistance provided

USDA 502 AND 504 HOME LOAN PROGRAMS

11 Clients assisted with Home Purchases or Home Repairs
\$1,096,421 in assistance provided



SUPPORT SERVICES

THRIVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM

192 clients served with **\$154,747.71** of assistance for car repairs, licensing, rent assistance, rent deposits, and utilities.

HEALTH

24 clients served with **\$14,920.56** of assistance for prescription, vision, dental assistance and food vouchers.

AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES



IN-HOME HEALTH AID SERVICES

9,561 hours serving **90 households**

NUTRITION

14,564 meals provided to **65 clients**

REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE SERVICES

Maintained fiduciary responsibility for **1,150** clients, 979 being Social Security clients and 171 Veteran clients. The program managed **\$15,285,964.15** in client funds.

The Representative Payee Department significantly improved its efficiency and client convenience by distributing debit cards to clients and reducing weekly check disbursements. The department also began utilizing ACH payments for rent payments on behalf of clients.



FOOD ASSISTANCE

COMMODITIES

2,900 households served with **7,867 boxes** of food.



Volunteer support from community partners including **Lodge Cast Iron, Citizens Tri-County Bank, Head Start, and Helping Hands** has been a tremendous help to SETHRA's commodity food distribution program. SETHRA began utilizing volunteers in FY 2024 to assist with boxing and distributing food throughout 8 counties and 9 distribution sites.

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

150 Childcare Home Providers

25 Childcare Centers

1,232,498 nutritious meals/snacks served to children in licensed/approved homes and centers.



JUSTICE SERVICES

151 clients served with **12 graduates** through Community Corrections.

37 clients served with **28 graduates** through Juvenile Probation.

7 clients served through Recovery Court.

1,949 clients supervised with **550 graduates** through Misdemeanor Probation.

90 clients served with **15 graduates** through the Community Corrections Day Reporting Centers.

SETHRA INTRODUCES EQUINE THERAPY AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO TRADITIONAL ALCOHOL AND DRUG TREATMENT



The Day Reporting Centers celebrated two graduations during the fiscal year with a total of 15 graduates. These graduates completed a nine-month long intensive program that included reporting to the offices 4 days a week for 4 hours a day while maintaining full-time employment. The DRC's were proud to partner with Bits and Pieces Equine Therapy to offer our participants an alternative approach to traditional alcohol and drug treatment. This partnership allows us to provide a unique therapeutic experience that leverages the healing benefits of equine-assisted therapy, supporting personal growth, emotional awareness, and recovery in a non-traditional setting.



TRANSPORTATION ROADEO

2024 Transportation Rodeo: SETHRA's Transportation Teams participated in the annual Tennessee Public Transportation Association's Rodeo qualifying event. This event is held each year, giving our Drivers the opportunity to put their experience to the test. The drivers complete a course that includes skills such as serpentine turns, narrow pass throughs, curb-side park and pick-up, wheelchair securement, safety check of the bus, and identifying potential hazards on or around the bus. The Drivers are scored based on their performance and the top performing Drivers advance to compete at the state level.



CUATS - CLEVELAND URBAN AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM

47,142 boards for the fixed routes
14,456 trips total for demand response

RURAL TRANSPORTATION

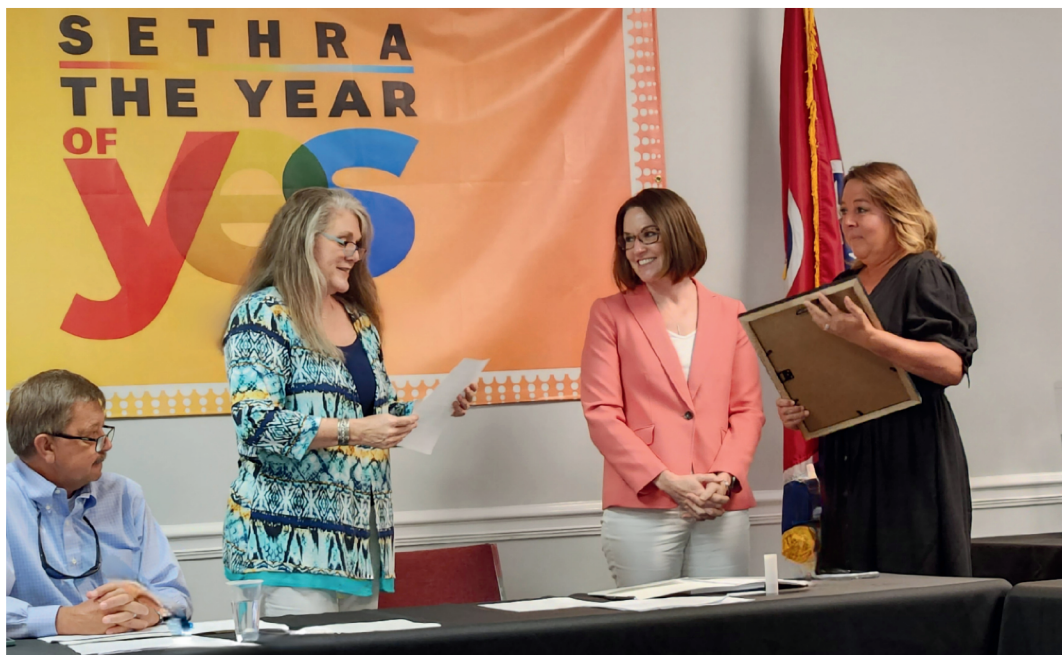
2,344,043 miles traveled to provide **100,599 riders** transportation.
57,939 trips total for demand response



CASA - COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES

As of June 18, 2024, CASA was officially established as their own private, 501c3 nonprofit organization named CASA of the Sequatchie Valley. This accomplishment stands as a testament to the vision, passion, and hard work of Director Margie Clemmer and her team, with a renewed focus on expanding its reach and enhancing its services to better serve the children of the Sequatchie Valley.

SETHRA and its Governing Board of Directors extends its heartfelt gratitude to CASA of the Sequatchie Valley for its unwavering commitment to the well-being of our children and for its continued efforts to make our community a safer, more nurturing place for all children to thrive.



Pictured, from left to right: Mayor David Jackson, Marion County, TN and SETHRA's Governing Board Chairman; Jeannie Anderson, SETHRA's Board Community Services Committee Chair, Rachel Hackworth, Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency Executive Director; and Margie Clemmer, CASA of the Sequatchie Valley Executive Director.





Looking Forward

SETHRA is always looking for new ways to improve our services in Southeast Tennessee. There are a couple of projects we are excited to share in this report as they are well on their way to being a reality.



Grundy Go Pilot Project

In partnership with the South Cumberland Community Fund and Grundy County healthcare providers, SETHRA is working to improve access to food and healthcare for Grundy County residents. Phase 1 of the project will provide set schedules of transportation to grocery stores and will begin in early 2025. Phase 2 is a coordinated effort between healthcare providers and SETHRA to transport multiple riders without access to transportation who live in the same area to providers on specific days of the week or month. Phase 2 is expected to begin mid-year of 2025. Lessons learned from the pilot project will be utilized to implement similar projects throughout the service area.

Rural Electric Vehicle Research Project

In partnership with Tennessee Tech, TDOT, and the U.S. Dept. of Energy, SETHRA was provided with two Ford Mustang Mach-E Selects as part of research project to evaluate the use of electric vehicles in rural areas. In 2025, SETHRA will roll out a micro-transit project that will allow residents in Sequatchie County to request a ride within the Sequatchie County limits. Only utilizing the electric vehicles for this project, riders will be able to request a ride and be picked up within an hour.



FY 2024

Revenue by Program

Program	Revenue
Rural Transit	\$5,898,545
Cleveland Urban Area Transportation System C.U.A.T.S	\$1,263,799
State of TN, Local Revenue	\$432,712
HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program	\$1,913,689
Community Services Block Grant	\$407,964
Child And Adult Food Program (CACFP)	\$2,459,653
LIHEAP	\$3,064,795
LIHWAP	\$364,928
Emergency Repair	\$211,128
Weatherization	\$453,463
Justice Services	\$1,089,033
HUD PSH	\$628,771
Rep. Payee	\$574,494
Aging & Disability	\$202,612
Cedar Grove	\$51,032
Commodities	\$49,902
CASA	\$191,354
Emergency Rental Assistance/Eviction Prevention Program	\$320,683
USDA RD 502	\$8,250
TOTAL	\$19,605,743



Special Thanks to Our Funders



LOCAL

Bledsoe County
Bradley County
Grundy County
Just One More Foundation
Marion County
McMinn County
Meigs County
Rhea County
Sequatchie County
City of Cleveland
Southeast TN Area Agency on Aging and Disability
Waterfall Car Wash

STATE

TN Division of TennCare
TN Dept. of Children's Services
TN Dept. of Corrections
TN Dept. of Human Services
TN Dept. of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
TN Dept. of Transportation
TN Commission on Aging and Disability Services
TN Commission on Children and Youth
Tennessee Housing Development Agency
State of Tennessee

FEDERAL

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
U.S. Dept. of Human Services
U.S. Federal Transit Administration





SETHRA

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