



RMAPI
ROCHESTER-MONROE
ANTI-POVERTY INITIATIVE

2024 Policy Agenda

The Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI) has developed a list of policy priorities for 2024 aimed at breaking the cycle of poverty by shifting power to enable upward mobility for all families. Our decisions and actions will center on those who have been historically disadvantaged by racism, trauma, and community disinvestment.

Policy Priority 1

HOUSING



Increase affordable housing options throughout Monroe County, focusing on rental housing for low/very low-income households and homeownership for low/moderate-income homeowners.

- Construct and renovate rental housing at all price points and subsidize/incentivize new construction of deeply affordable rental housing and affordable starter homes for first-time homebuyers
- Eliminate exclusionary zoning policies/practices and create inclusionary policies
- Stabilize rent by limiting increases and preserving existing low-cost, quality rental housing
- Guarantee fair access to mortgages, credit, and funding for repairs for homebuyers of color in order to address the racial wealth gap and increase housing and neighborhood stability

Policy Priority 2

INCOME



Ensure that households have sufficient income to meet their needs through living wages, gradual transitions off of public benefits, and opportunities for savings and wealth generation.

- Calculate public benefits based on inflation and a realistic cost of living
- Increase public funding for housing subsidies and vouchers
- Address rising food insecurity through increased SNAP benefits and universal school meals
- Strengthen tax credits for low-income families including the federal- and state-level child tax credits and the earned income tax credit
- Broaden access to Guaranteed Basic Income



Policy Priority 3

CRIMINALIZATION
AND EXPLOITATION



Eliminate penalties, fees/fines, and financial practices that exploit low-income people and criminalize poverty.

- Eliminate predatory fees and fines in the court, legal, and financial systems
- Support and prevent rollbacks to existing bail reform laws
- Eliminate excessive charges for everyday needs that exploit people living in poverty
- Enable public banking options to increase access and equity in the financial system

Policy Priority 4

CHILD CARE



Invest in more flexible and affordable child care and school-age care options for all families.

- Increase the capacity of the child care system to provide flexible options and care for those with non-traditional hours or schedules
- Increase funding for out-of-school time programs for school-age youth
- Support family caregivers providing child care by increasing compensation for this care and streamlining the process of becoming a legally exempt provider

Policy Priority 5

MENTAL
HEALTH CARE



Increase access to culturally responsive and affordable mental and behavioral health services.

- Invest in the current and future mental health workforce through changes to education, training, and compensation that center on racial equity
- Prioritize community-based solutions to mental health crises
- Change licensure and insurance regulations to allow clinicians to serve patients in non-clinical settings, make it easier for providers to accept insurance, and reduce out-of-pocket costs for families