



RMAPI
ROCHESTER-MONROE
ANTI-POVERTY INITIATIVE

2025 Policy Agenda

The Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI) has developed a list of policy priorities for 2025 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



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
- Support inclusionary land use and zoning policies/practices
- Stabilize rental housing by limiting rent increases and preserving existing low-cost, quality rental housing
- Help renters stay in their homes through increased public funding for housing subsidies and vouchers and access to legal representation
- Ensure fair access to affordable homes, mortgages, credit, and funding for repairs for homeowners of color in order to address the racial wealth gap and increase housing and neighborhood stability

Policy Priority 2



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

- Maximize the impact of public benefits by making them more accessible and facilitating smooth transitions off of them
- Increase public benefits based on inflation and current costs of living
- Address rising food insecurity through increased SNAP benefits and universal school meals
- Broaden access to Guaranteed Basic Income
- Strengthen tax credits for low-income families including the federal- and state-level child tax credits and the earned income tax credit
- Implement a living wage standard that ensures earned income is sufficient to meet essential living needs and build wealth



Policy Priority 3

CRIMINALIZATION,
EXPLOITATION, AND
PREDATORY PRACTICES



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

- Eliminate predatory fees, fines, and financial practices in systems that exploit people experiencing poverty
- Ensure low-income communities have fair access to credit, banking, and financial systems
- Prevent rollbacks to existing bail reform laws
- Eradicate punitive policies and practices in legal and public safety systems that disproportionately harm low-income and Black and Brown families and communities

Policy Priority 4

CHILD CARE



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

- Address the shortage of family access to affordable child care by improving compensation and supporting education and training for the provider workforce
- Support family caregivers to provide child care by increasing their compensation and streamlining the process of becoming a legally exempt provider
- Increase the capacity of the child care system to provide flexible options and care for those with non-traditional hours or schedules and children with special needs
- Increase funding for greater access to out-of-school time programs for school-age youth

Policy Priority 5

HEALTH EQUITY



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

- Invest in the mental health workforce by making education and training more accessible, prioritizing cultural responsiveness, and building on communities' strengths
- Ensure access to quality and affordable mental health, physical health, and social care services through increased reimbursement rates and equitable compensation practices
- Prioritize community-based solutions to mental health crises
- Change licensure and insurance regulations to allow mental health clinicians to serve patients in non-clinical settings, make it easier for providers to accept insurance, and reduce out-of-pocket costs for families