

Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN) Hotline Summary Report: Assessing community needs in Washington State during COVID-19

November 17, 2020

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About WAISN Hotline

The Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN) is the largest immigrant-led coalition in Washington. WAISN serves to protect and strengthen communities across the state by providing support, capacity, and resources¹. WAISN was created in November 2016 in response to the presidential election and is now made up of over 100 organizations with backgrounds and specialties in law, education, policy, and direct services¹. It has become a powerful, volunteer-driven network of immigrants and refugee-rights organizations, working alongside community members across the state to address systemic inequities and provide information and resources to alleviate the impact of threats and anti-immigrant actions.

One such resource is WAISN's hotline, which serves to connect community members with trusted information and resources. Since its inception, the WAISN hotline primarily served to respond to Immigration Custom Enforcement (ICE)/Custom Border Patrol (CBP) activity, report the detention of a group or individuals, referral assistance for friends and family that are detained, access to know-your-rights information and Fair Fight Bond and Accompaniment². In March 2020, as COVID-19 began to spread in Washington State, not only did WAISN start receiving an influx of calls, but the nature of the calls shifted in response to social, economic, and healthcare challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Being a trusted source of information, community members reached out to WAISN for support regarding information and questions about COVID-19, resources about rental assistance, food, utilities, workplace safety, and unemployment, primarily.

Hotline calls received- trends over time

Number of hotline calls received by WAISN by year 2017-2020

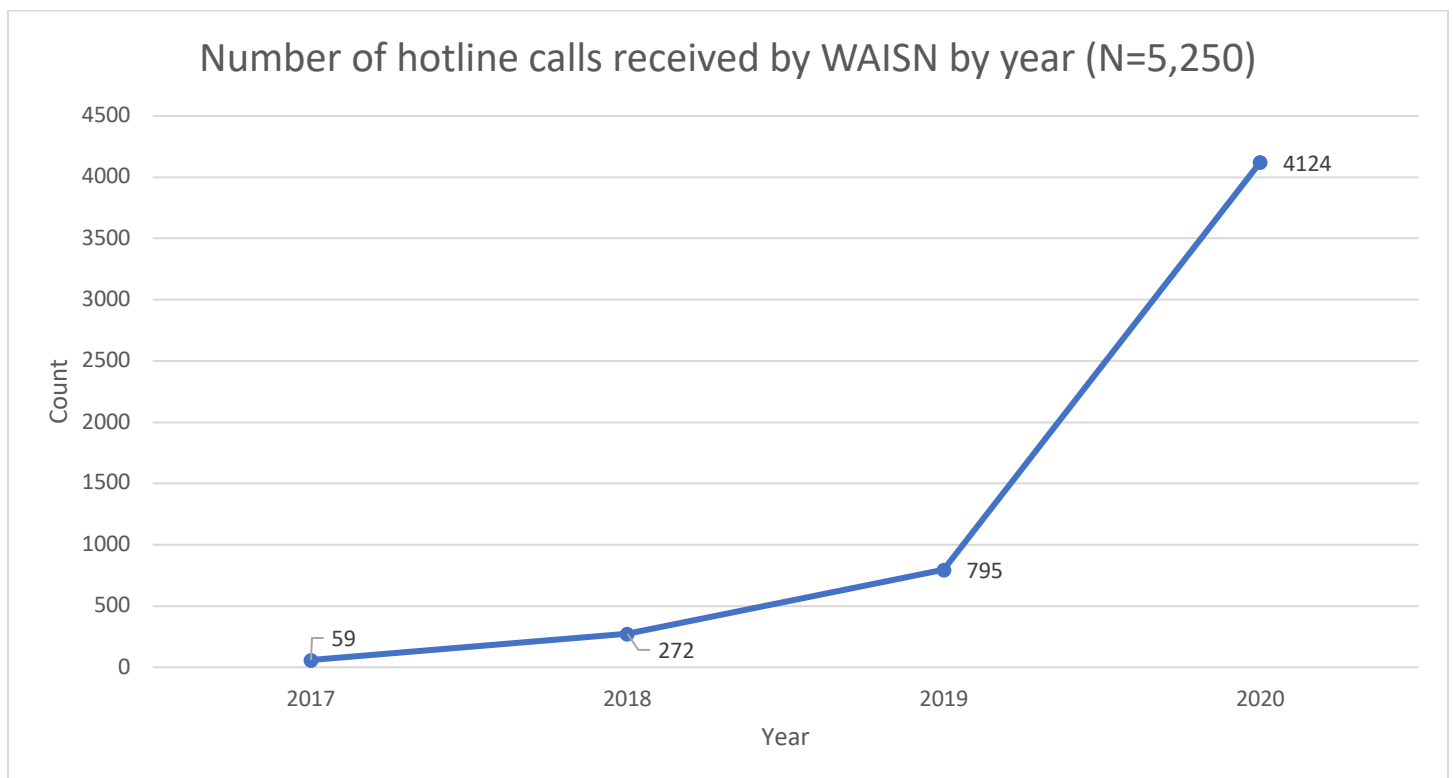


Figure 1. The number of calls received by WAISN Hotline April 17, 2017 through September 30, 2020.

Number of hotline calls received by WAISN in 2020

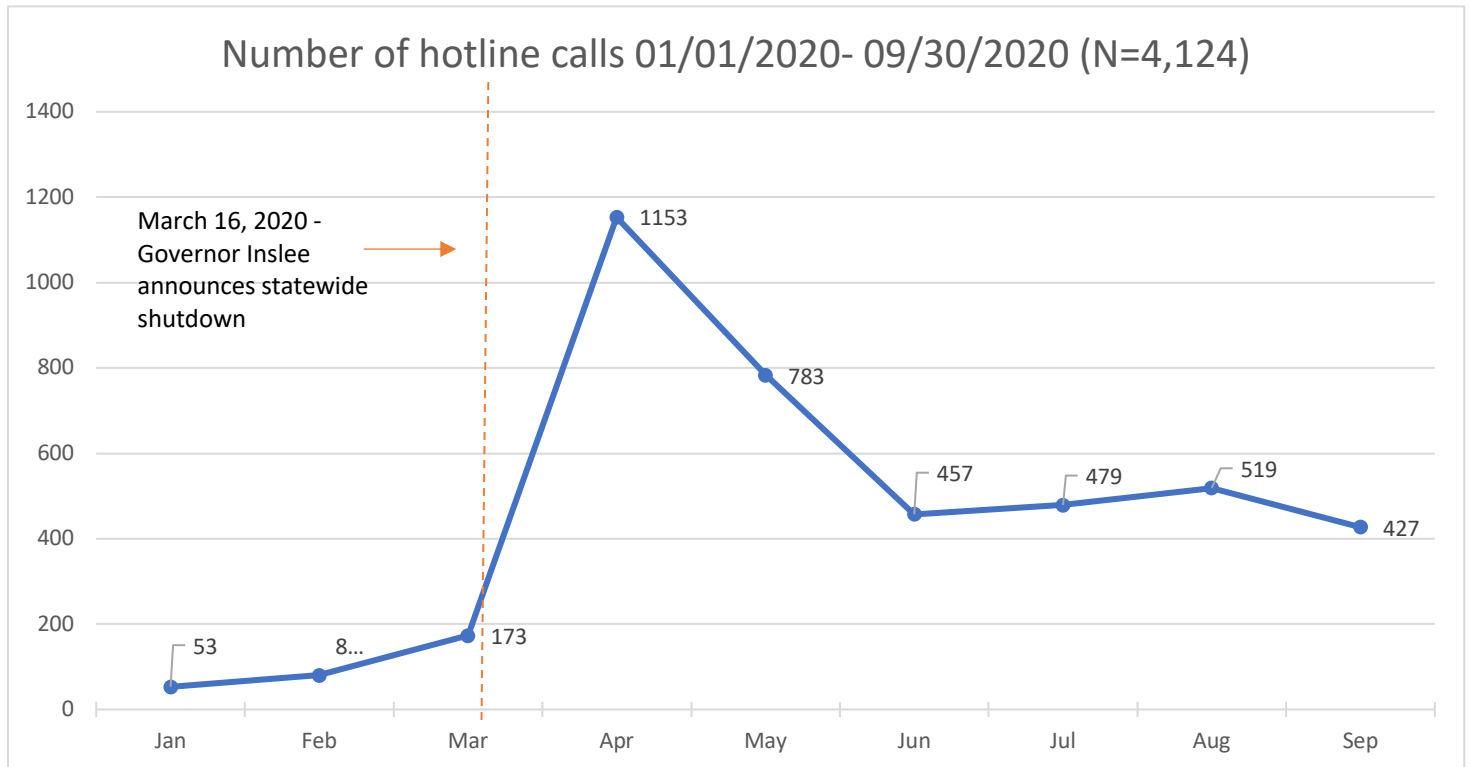


Figure 2. Number of calls received by WAISN Hotline by month, January 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020.

Data collection

The hotline is managed and coordinated by the WAISN Hotline team, led by Nedra Rivera and Linda Zietlow at WAISN. The hours of operation for the hotline are 6 am to 9 pm PST, seven days a week and it is volunteer-driven. Pre-COVID there were about 16 volunteers covering shifts for the hotline but when the influx of calls began to rise rapidly in March 2020, WAISN had to increase their hotline volunteer capacity to about 40-60 volunteers across WA State to adequately respond to the needs of all callers.

The hotline data for this report were collected in an intake form via Google forms, where volunteers document information about the nature of the calls. The questions in the intake form capture data on the primary nature of the call, often related to social determinants of health, things like access to basic needs (rent, food, health concerns, support for children), legal services, information, and help applying to community resources. WAISN has been collecting data since April 2017 and they aim to use this information to improve the effectiveness of the hotline to better serve and meet the needs of the community. The intake form format has evolved over the years and especially since March 30, 2020, to better reflect the needs of callers and make it user friendly for the hotline volunteers and case managers to efficiently meet caller's needs. For this report, we used the data collected via the intake form to understand the needs of callers during COVID-19 pandemic.

Data summary

Through the leadership, organization, and dedication of WAISN, we have a rich source of data that provides insight to the needs of predominantly Latinx, immigrant communities in WA State during the COVID-19 pandemic. The data provides information on cities and counties individuals are calling from in addition to the specific needs and resources of callers. The first COVID-19 related call received by the WAISN Hotline team was on March 16, 2020. As of September 30, 2020, they have received a total of 4,124 predominantly COVID-19 related calls since then. The resources most commonly requested during these last few months were assistance for rent/utilities, food, COVID-19 concerns (questions about testing, symptoms, and exposure), bills (internet, garbage, gas, water), financial assistance, resources for kids (baby supplies, childcare), and work concerns.

This report summarizes some of the data in the WAISN hotline intake form and includes data from March 16th, 2020 through August 3rd, 2020. There was a total of 4,124 calls received, although an important factor to keep in mind is there are some individuals that called multiple times during this period and those counts are also included in this total.

Since the pandemic, the hotline has received calls from 28 counties (out of 39) in WA in addition to calls from the following states: Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and Washington DC. The WAISN Hotline receives calls from cities all over the state, but the top 10 cities WAISN receives calls from are: Seattle, Yakima, Burien, Mount Vernon, Federal Way, Kent, Everett, Renton, Auburn, and Lynnwood.

Number of hotline calls by location (county, state, and city)

County	Number of calls
King	1355
Yakima	335
Snohomish	282
Skagit	204
Pierce	148
Franklin	82
Benton	71
Clark	60
Clallam	59
Grays Harbor	39
Mason	36
Grant	35
Whatcom	32
Thurston	32
Chelan	23
Lewis	20
Pacific	17
Adams	14
Cowlitz	9
Okanogan	9
Spokane	9

Douglas	7
Walla Walla	7
Kitsap	4
Island	3
Klickitat	3
Whitman	2
Total	2,899

Table 1. Number of calls by county in WA

Number of calls by county- all counties

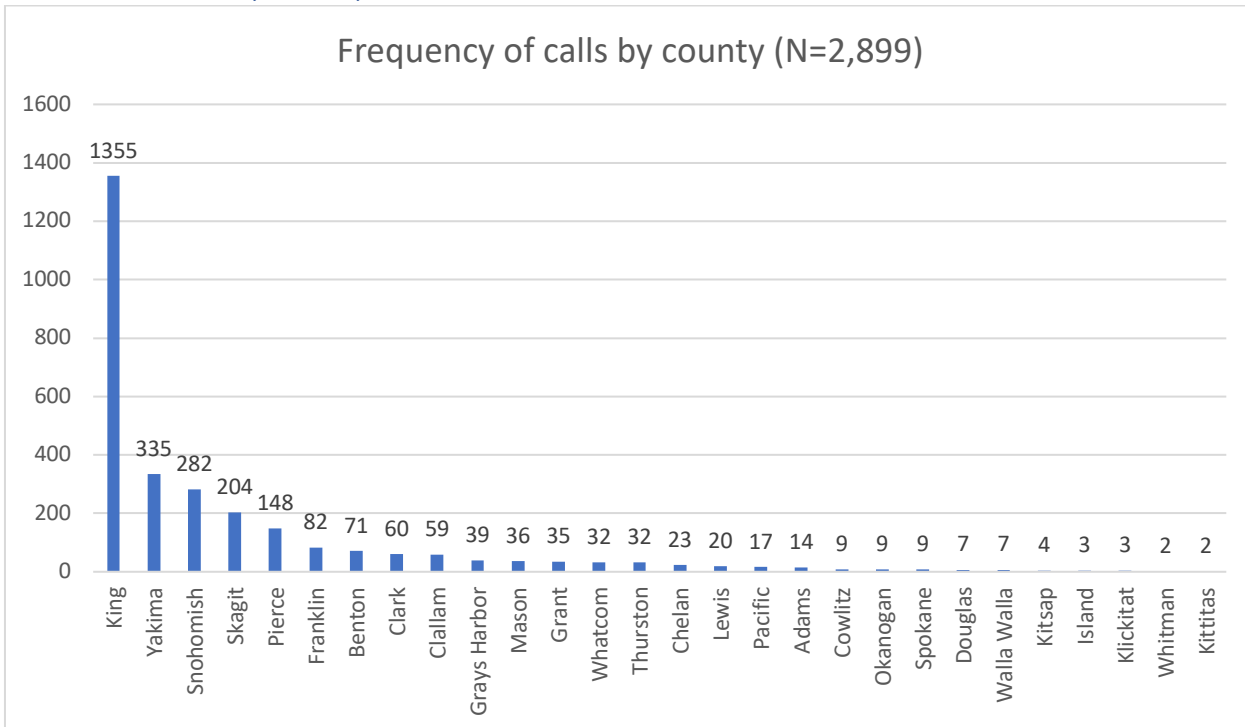


Figure 3. Number of hotline calls from 29 counties in WA.

Trends by county- excluding King County

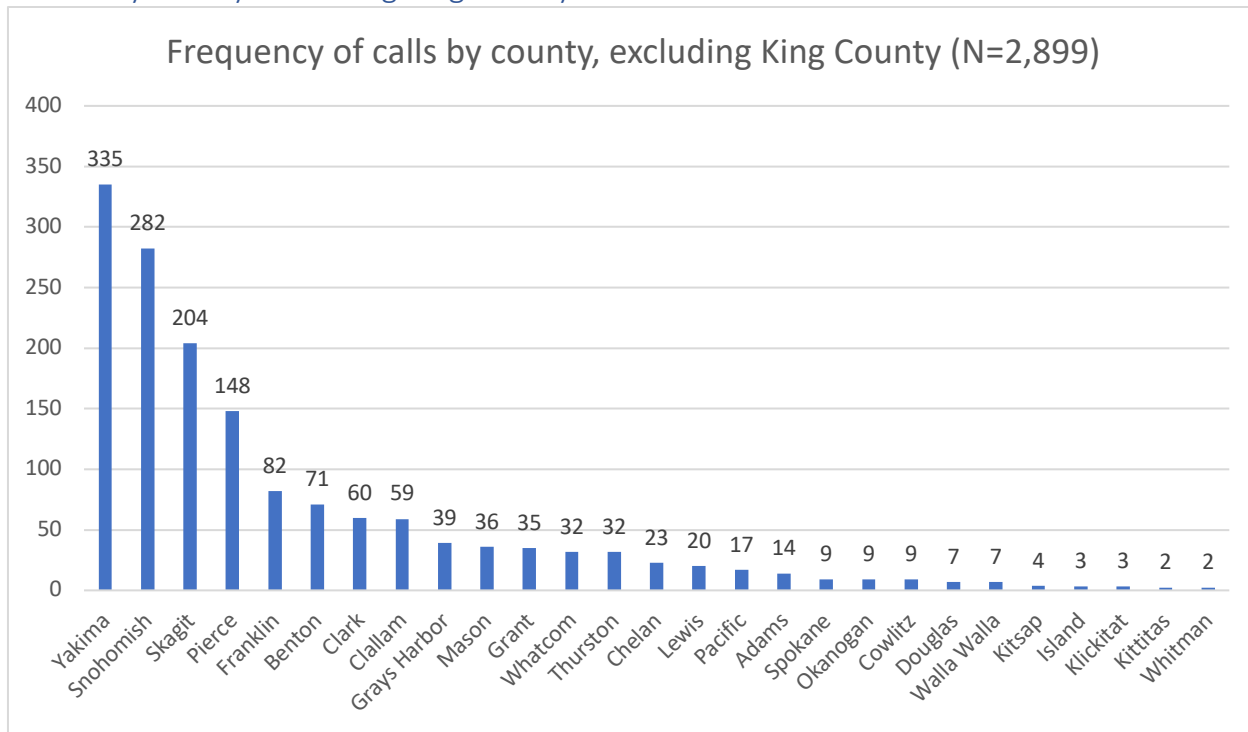


Figure 4. Number of hotline calls by county in WA, excluding King County.

Trends by county- King County over time

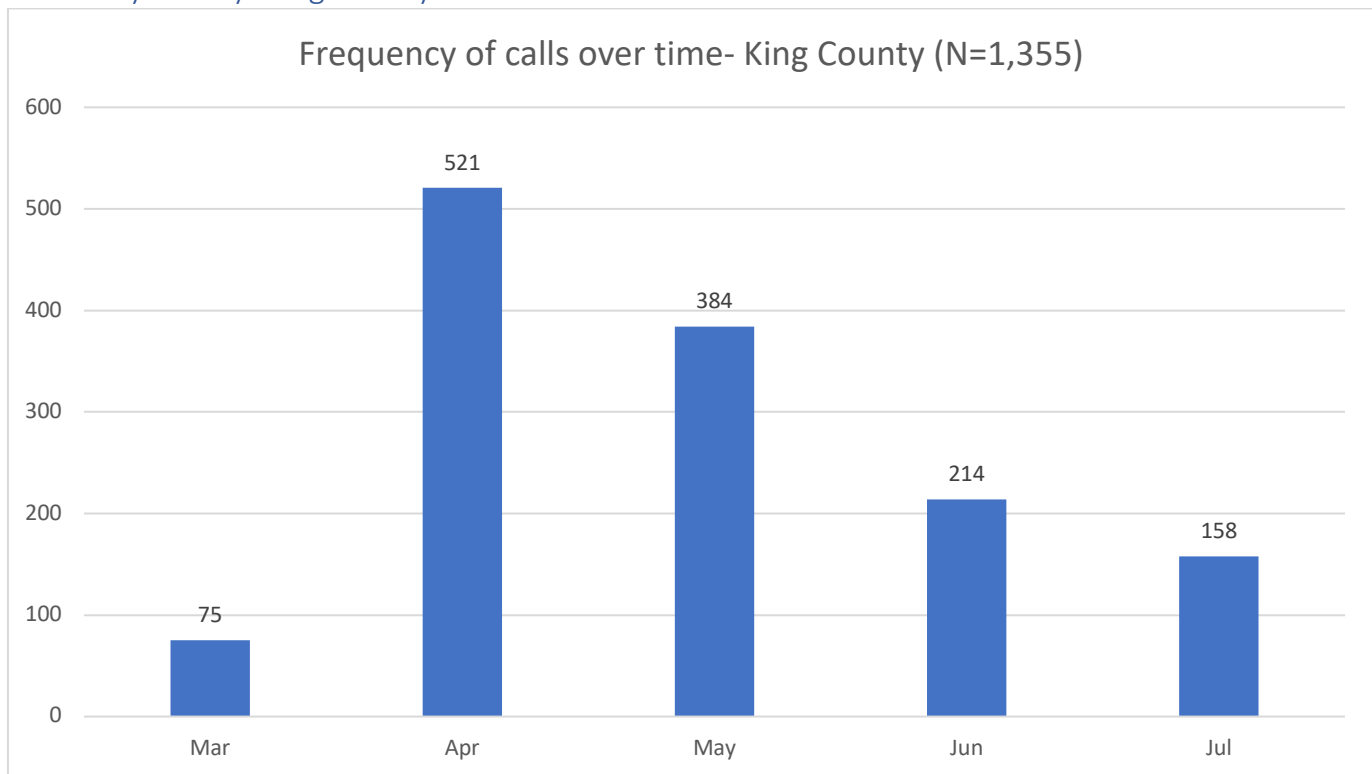


Figure 5. Number of hotline calls received from King County over time. Note: only data through the end of July 2020 included.

Trends by county- Yakima County over time

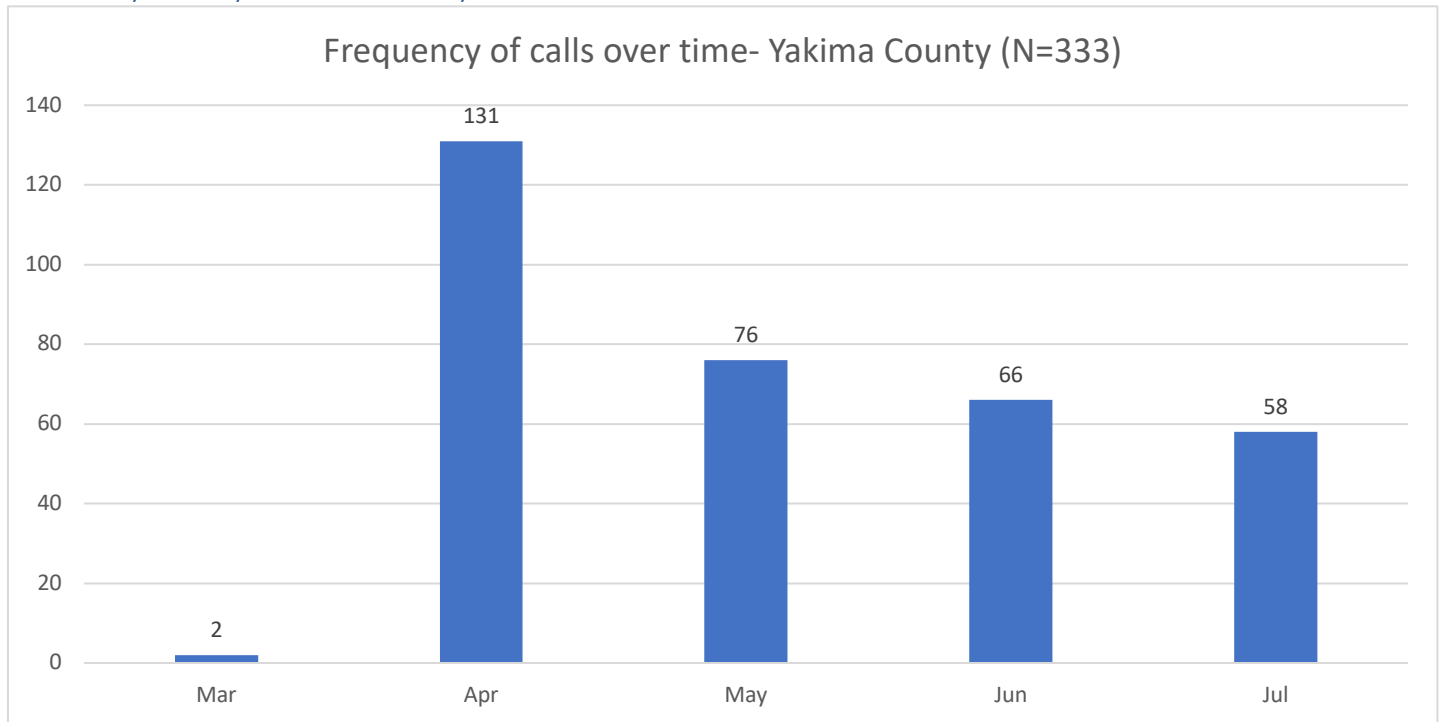


Figure 6. Number of hotline calls received from Yakima County over time. Note: only data through the end of July 2020 included.

Trends by county- Snohomish County over time

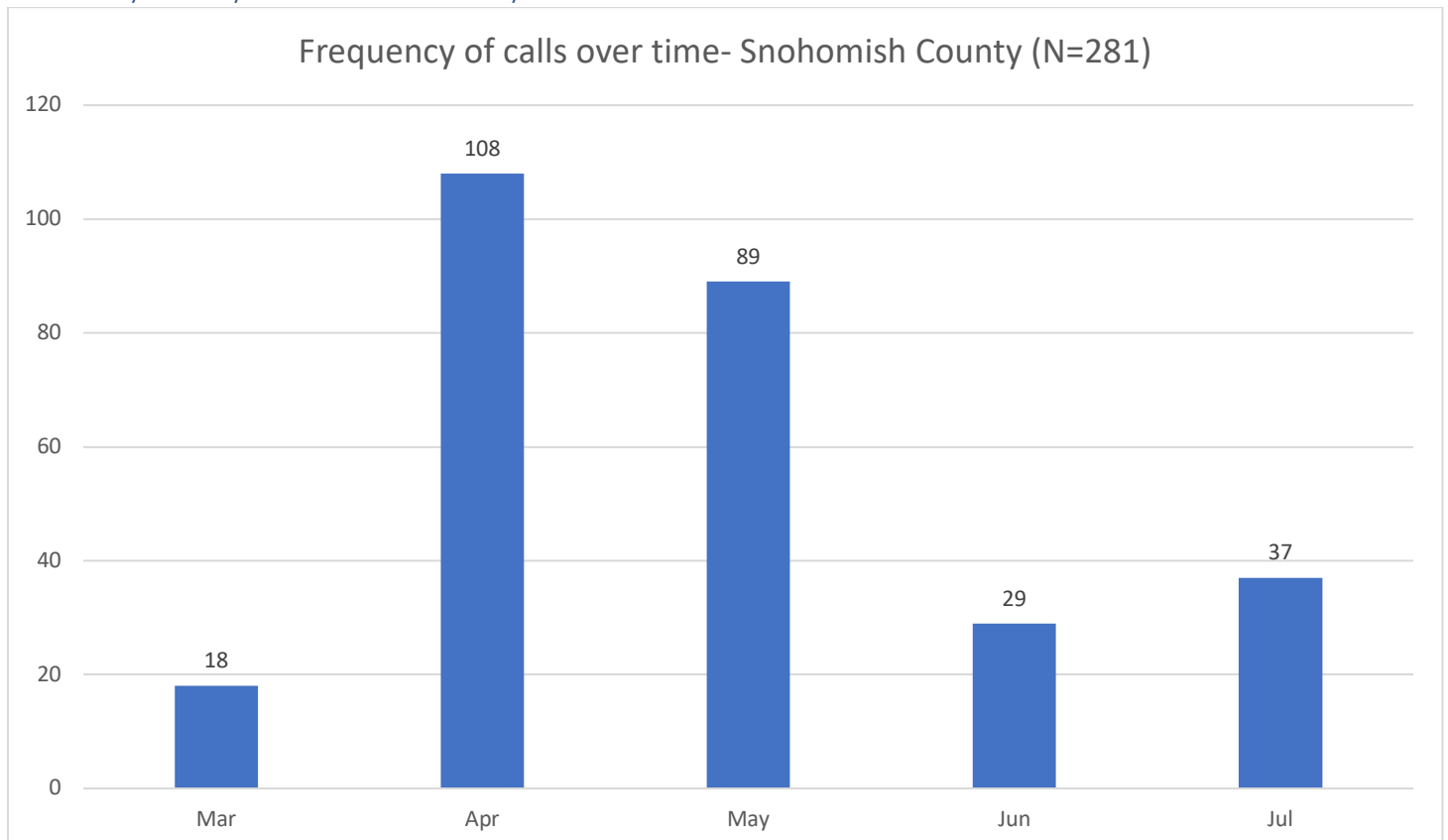


Figure 7. Number of hotline calls received from Snohomish County over time. Note: only data through the end of July 2020 included.

Trends by county- Skagit County over time

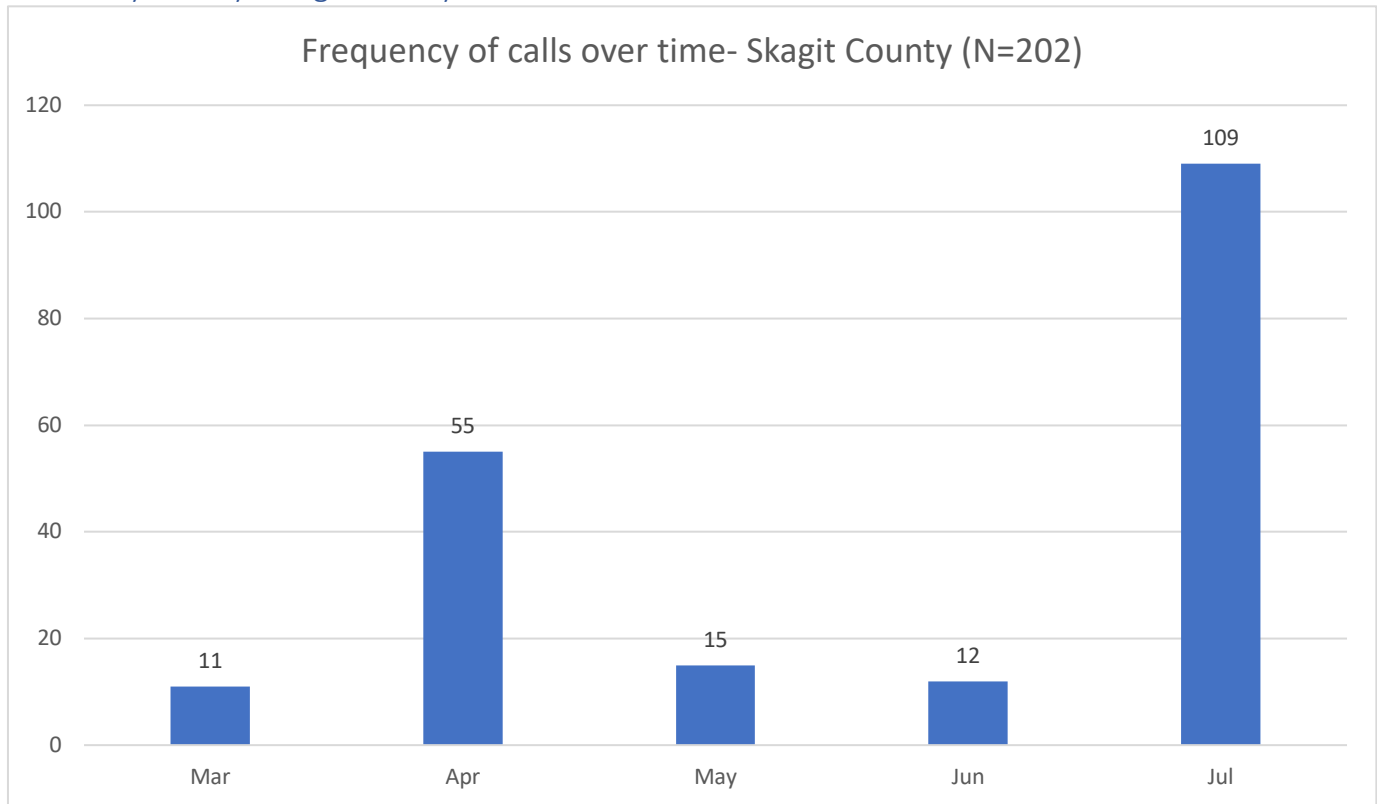


Figure 8. Number of hotline calls received from Skagit County over time. Note: only data through the end of July 2020 included.

Trends by county- Pierce County over time

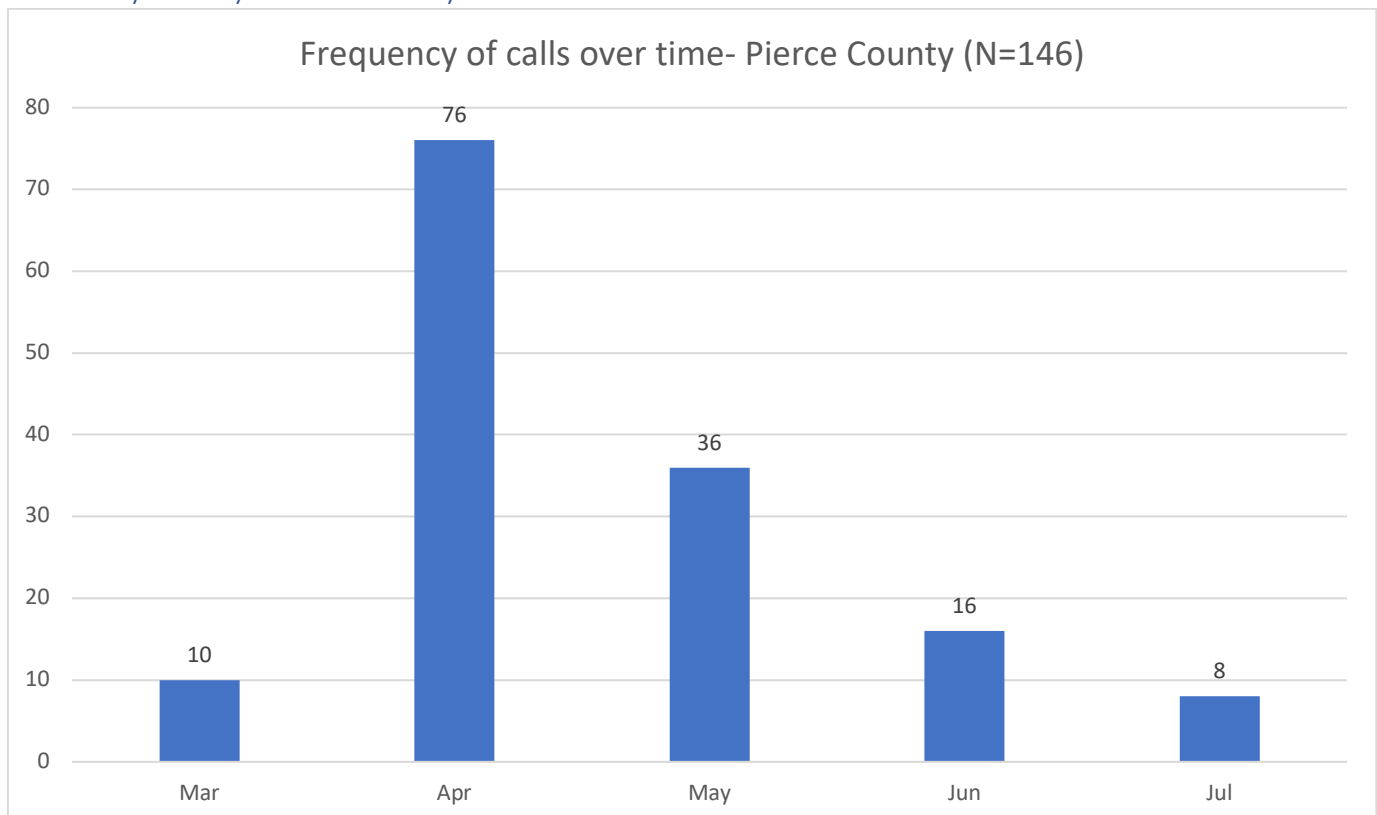


Figure 9. Number of hotline calls received from Pierce County over time. Note: only data through the end of July 2020 included.

Trends by county- Benton and Franklin Counties over time

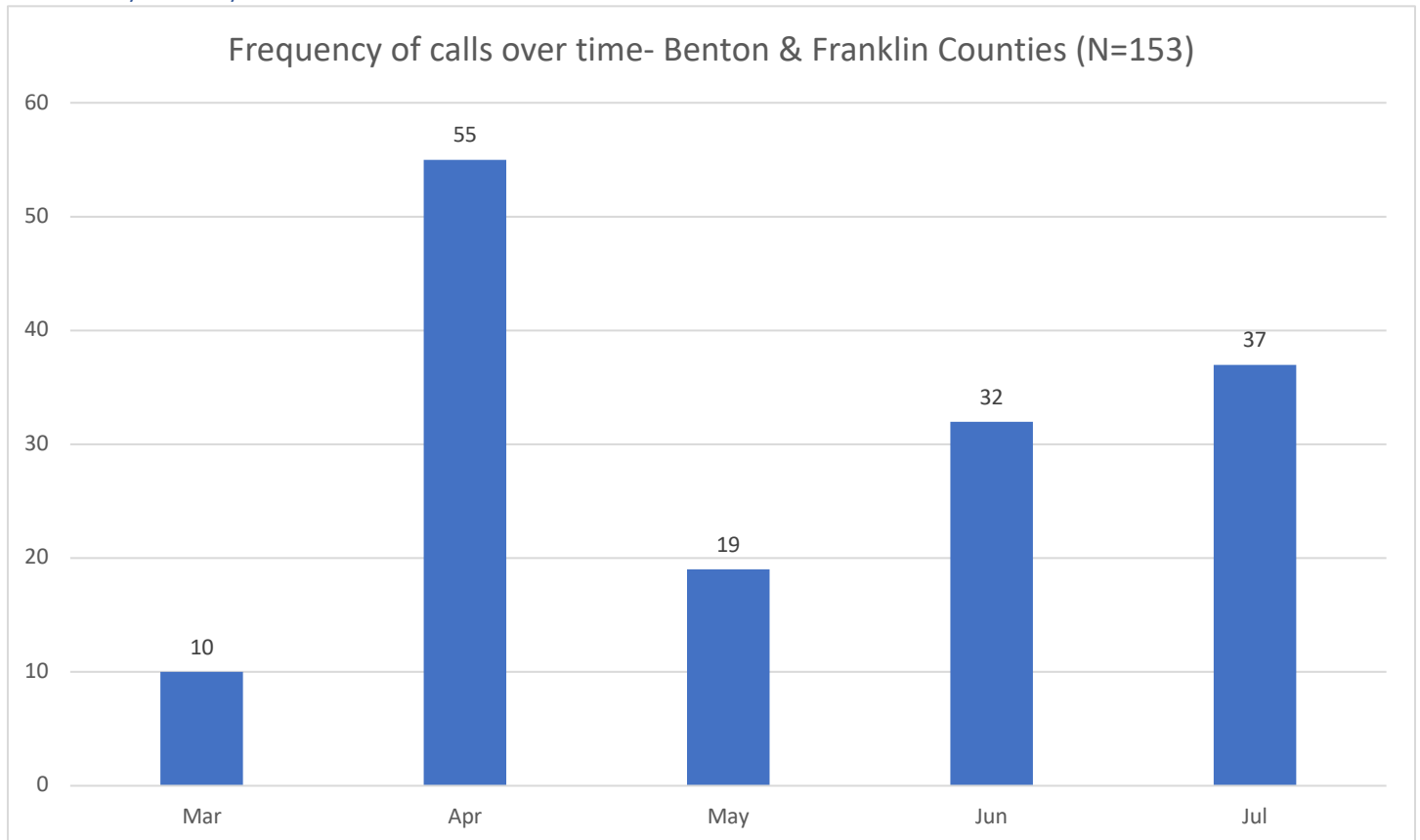


Figure 10. Number of hotline calls received from Pierce County over time. Note: only data through the end of July 2020 included.

Trends by city- Top 20

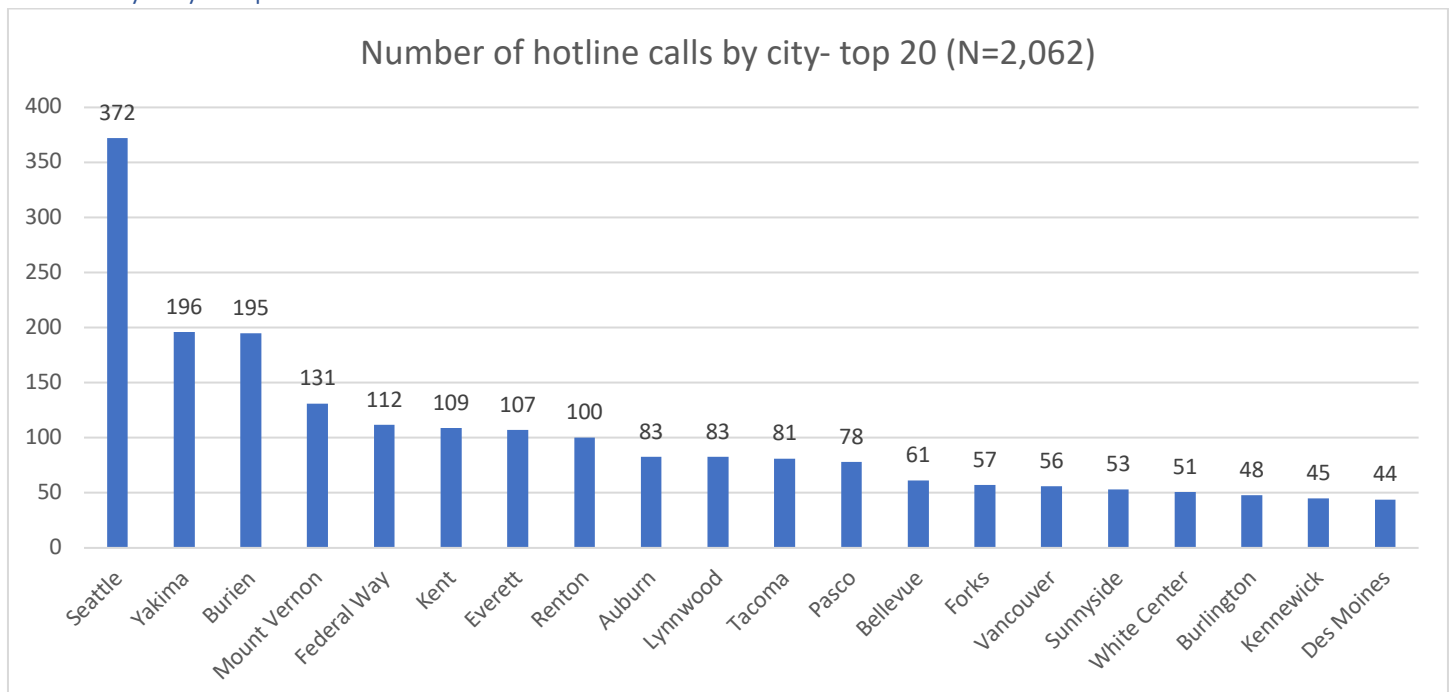


Figure 11. The top 20 highest number of hotline calls by city in WA.

Trends by city- Seattle over time

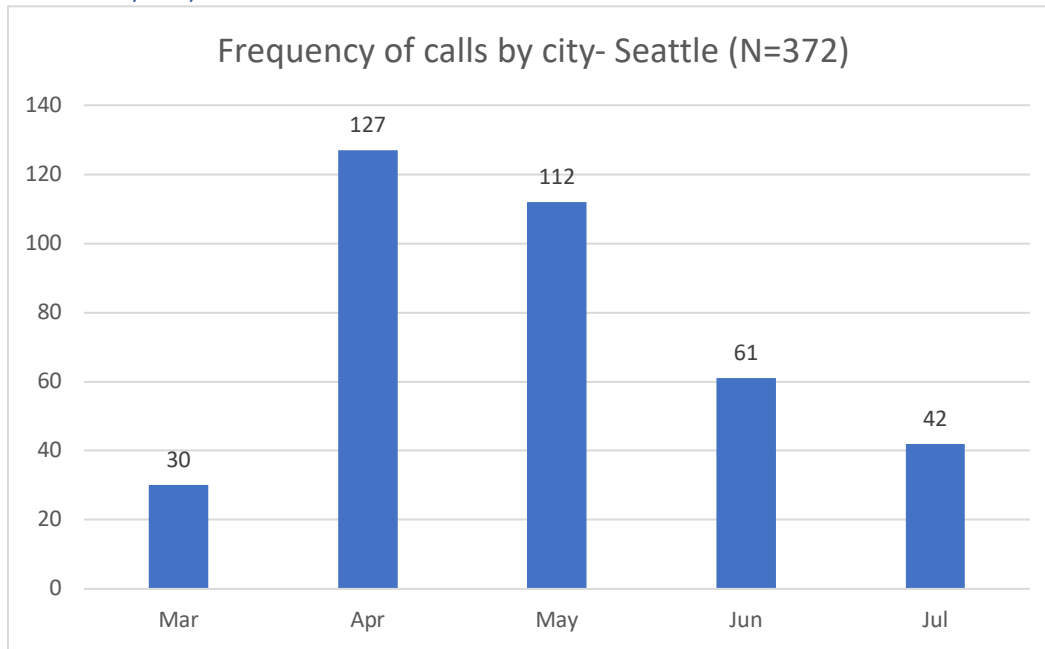


Figure 12. Count of hotline calls received by city- Seattle.

Trends by city- Seattle neighborhoods

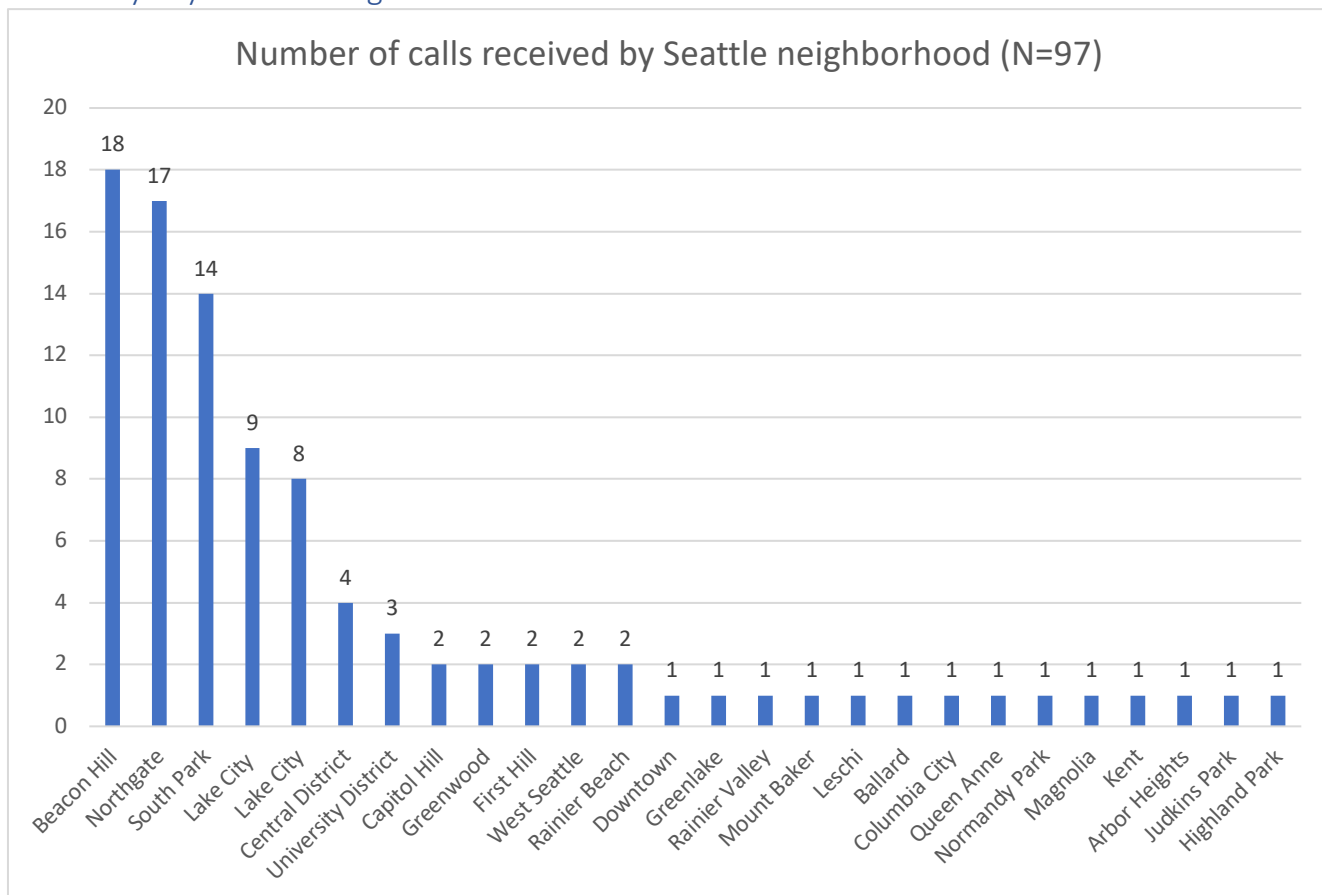


Figure 13. Count of hotline calls received by neighborhood in Seattle. Note: the total here and the previous figure are not equal because not every Seattle entry specified neighborhood.

Trends by city- Yakima over time

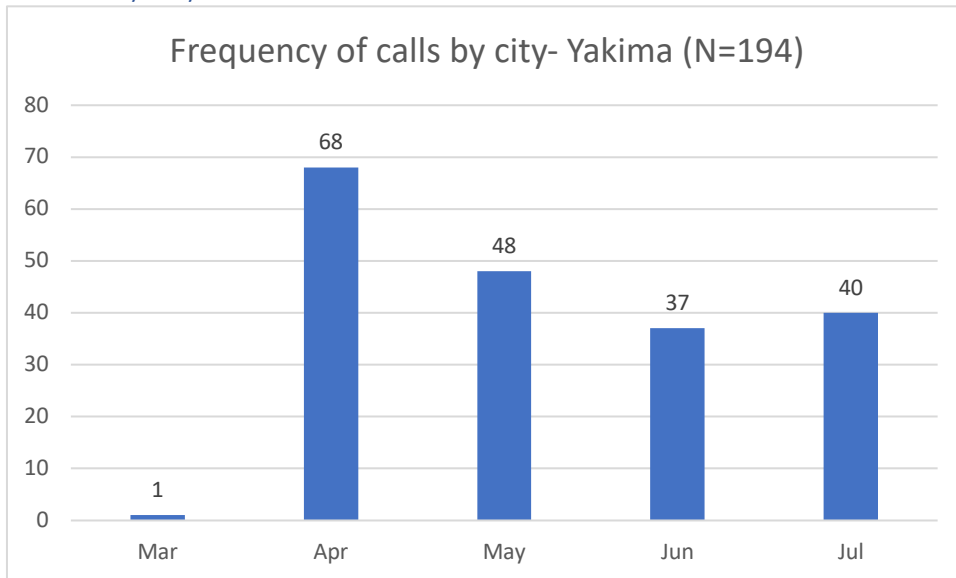


Figure 14. Count of hotline calls received by city- Yakima.

Trends by city- Burien over time

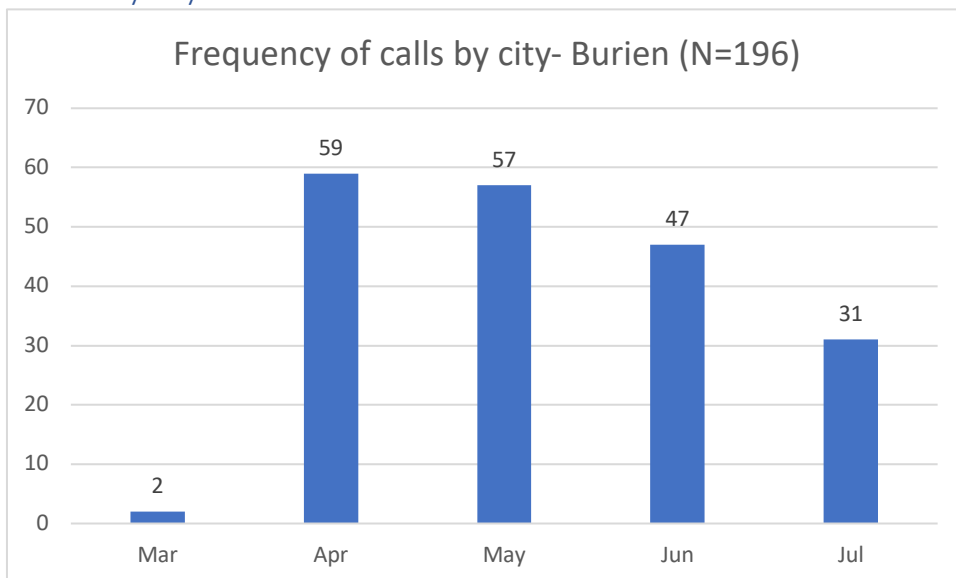


Figure 15. Count of hotline calls received by city- Burien.

Trends by city- Mount Vernon over time

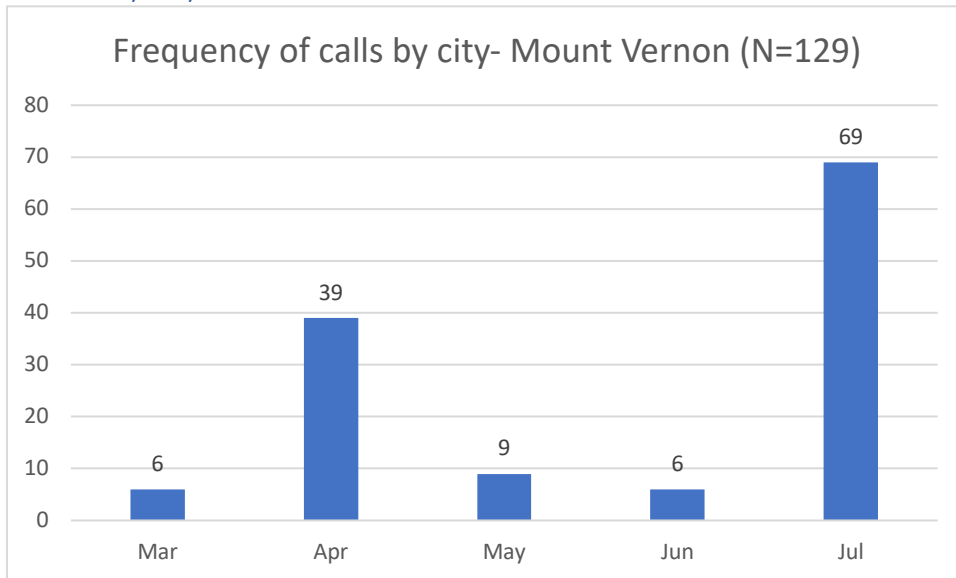


Figure 16. Count of hotline calls received by city- Mount Vernon.

Trends by city- Federal Way over time

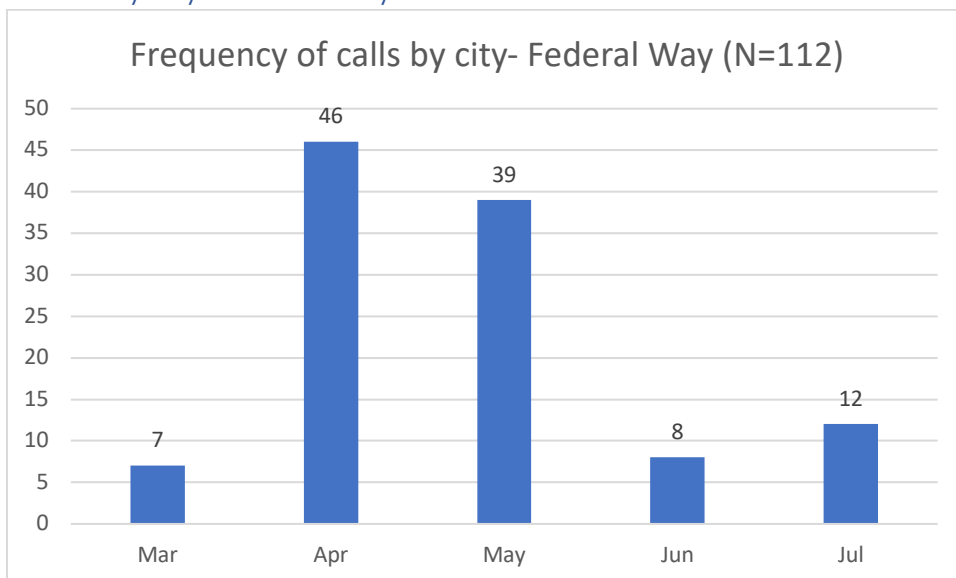


Figure 17. Count of hotline calls received by city- Federal Way.

Trends by city- South King County over time

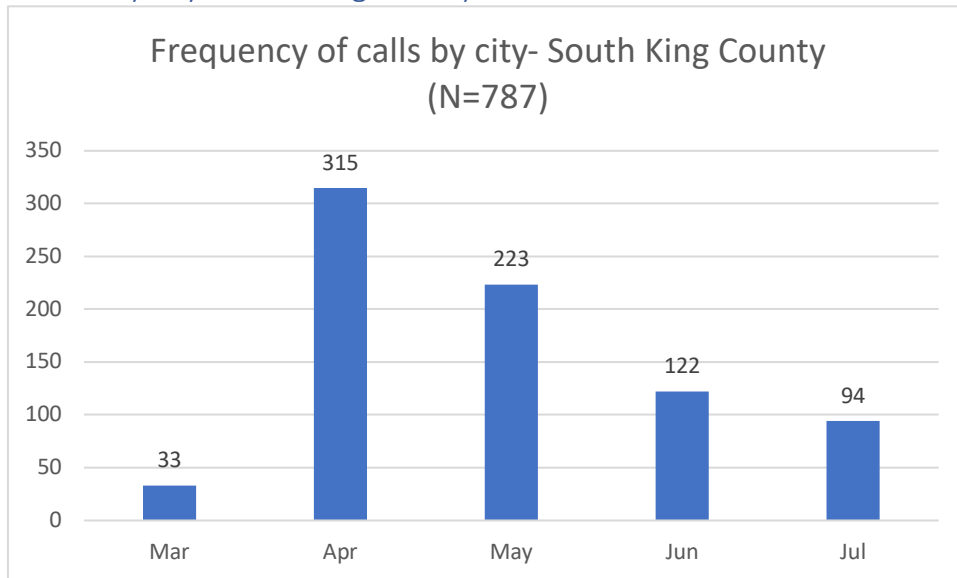


Figure 18. Count of hotline calls received by city- South King County including, White Center, Burien, Des Moines, Renton, Kent, Auburn, Federal Way, Tukwila, SeaTac, Pacific, Algona, Covington over time

Number of calls by state

State	Number of calls
California	49
Washington DC	19
Texas	11
Oregon	11
Maryland	7
New York	7
Florida	5
Idaho	5
Virginia	4
Georgia	4
New Jersey	3
North Carolina	1
Colorado	1
South Carolina	1
Illinois	1
Massachusetts	1
Rhode Island	1
Alabama	1
Minnesota	1
Total	133

Table 2. Number of calls by State

Communication- best way to contact and/or get resources to callers

To gain a better understanding of callers' preferred method of communication, we looked at the question 'what is the best way to contact and/or get resources to them?' on the WAISN hotline intake form. We had data on 2,641 responses (out of 3,046). An important factor to keep in mind is that the WAISN hotline team prefers to send resources and information via text, so many times, when callers are asked this question, volunteers first check if contacting them through text works. This might help explain, to some extent, the large number of callers that prefer being contacted through text. Additionally, there were a total of three callers that preferred mail (one preferred mail and two preferred phone and/or mail, not shown in the table below for skewing purposes). Communication through mail is not very common. The WAISN hotline team shared that it sometimes depends on the availability of the volunteer to print and mail materials to callers. There were five respondents, also not shown below, that used Facebook messenger or Whatsapp as their primary method of communication.

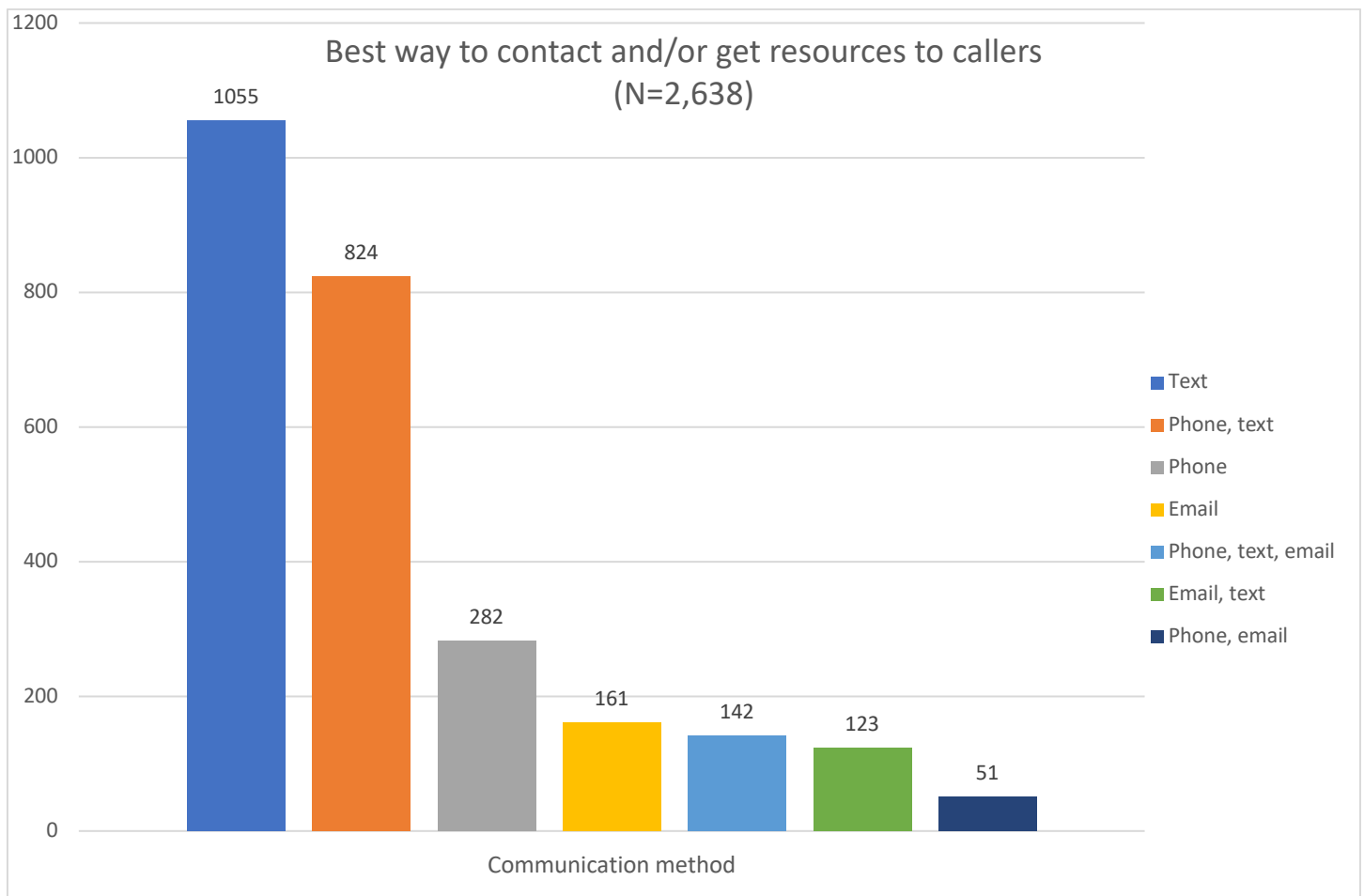


Figure 19. Best way to contact and/or get resources to callers.

Preferred language

To understand the preferred language of callers, we used responses from the 'call/message language' question on the intake form. During this period, 93% of callers preferred Spanish. Pre-COVID-19, the WAISN team estimates that calls were about half English and half Spanish, indicating a significant change in language preference of callers.

Language	Count	Percentage
Spanish	2827	92.8%

English	187	6.1%
English, Spanish	28	0.9%
Korean	1	0.03%
Triqui	1	0.03%
Russian	1	0.03%
Total	3045	100%

Table 3. Preferred language

Internet access to fill out forms

During the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic there was a significant shift from in-person work and school to working-from-home and online classes nationwide, increasing the reliance on internet. Many of the resources and information WAISN shares entail some form of internet access. We used the question on the intake form ‘Do they have internet access to fill out forms and read materials?’

Although the majority of callers (64%) have access to internet, there are about 18% of individuals that rely on their smartphone for internet access, require assistance to use the internet, or get access only through school. Another 18% of callers don’t have any access to internet and rely heavily on assistance from hotline volunteers to complete applications for resources needed. Additionally, an important thing to note is that many of the callers that said yes, there are individuals included that may only have access to internet through their phone or with help but that information wasn’t captured in the comments or captured in a systematic way.

Internet access to fill out forms

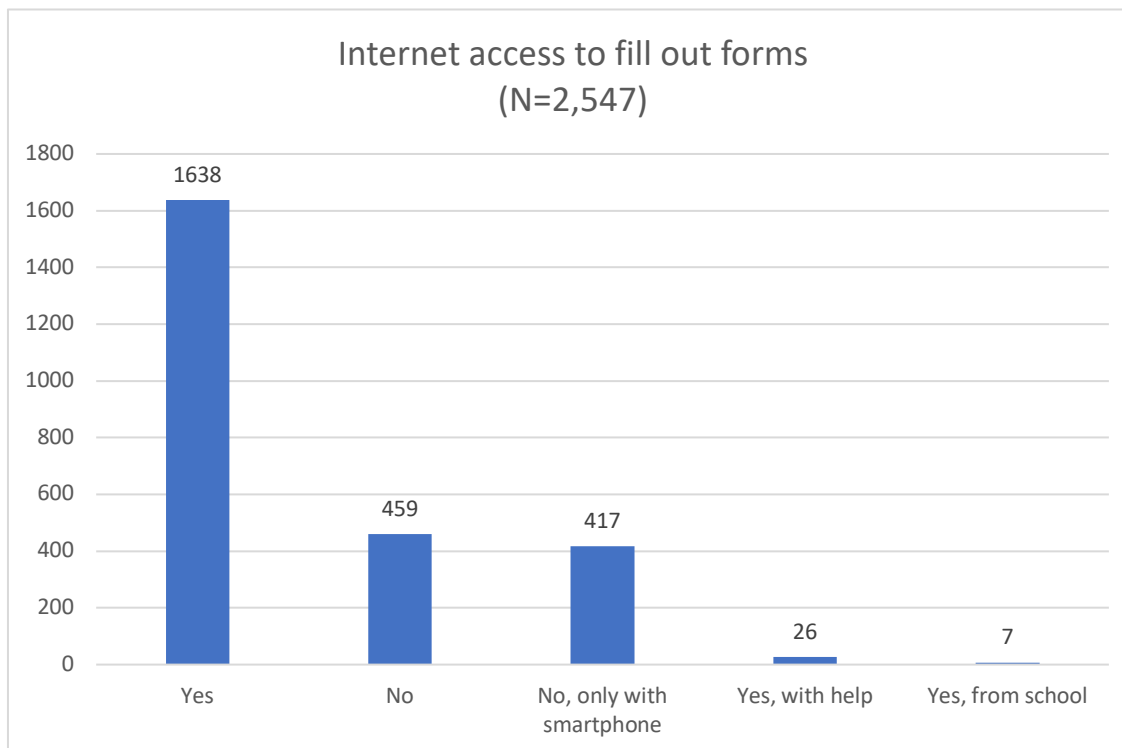


Figure 20. Internet access to fill out forms.

Resources provided

To assess the resources individuals called to ask about we used the question, ‘What type of support or resources does the person need?’ on the intake form. This question is asked at the beginning of the form. What we learned from speaking with the WAISN team is that many times individuals call about one type of

resource but through the phone conversation, other factors might come up and individuals get help with multiple resources. WAISN hotline team call this the Total Hotline Experience, where they strive to provide resources at a comprehensive and holistic level for community members across WA state and nationwide. The following table captures the primary concerns individuals called for; it doesn't capture other concerns that came up later in the conversation. It's important to note that many callers ended up receiving more resources than they initially called for; as hotline volunteers completed the intake form, most callers would share additional information or needs. Over half of callers inquired about more than one type of resource.

- **Rent/utilities-** includes anyone calling for rent assistance or utilities, and mortgage.
- **Food-** includes individuals calling for food assistance.
- **COVID-19 concerns-** includes anyone calling about testing, health questions, symptoms, treatment, or exposure concerns.
- **Social determinant of health needs-** includes anyone calling for general health inquiries (non-COVID-19 related), housing (not rent/mortgage), information on applications or resources, legal resources, household essentials, transportation, translation, pet concerns, and other miscellaneous concerns that did not fit under the other groups.
- **Bills-** includes anyone that called for assistance with bills that are not utilities (utilities are included with rent), this can be internet or medical bills for example.
- **Work concerns-** includes those calling for workers' rights information, sick pay, L&I claims, job searching, unemployment, or any other employment concerns.
- **Financial assistance-** includes individuals that express they need financial assistance, some examples are needing cash assistance or inquiring about questions/help with stimulus check.
- **Support for children-** includes individuals asking about help with baby supplies, childcare, clothing for kids, or other resources specifically for babies or kids.

Resources provided to callers

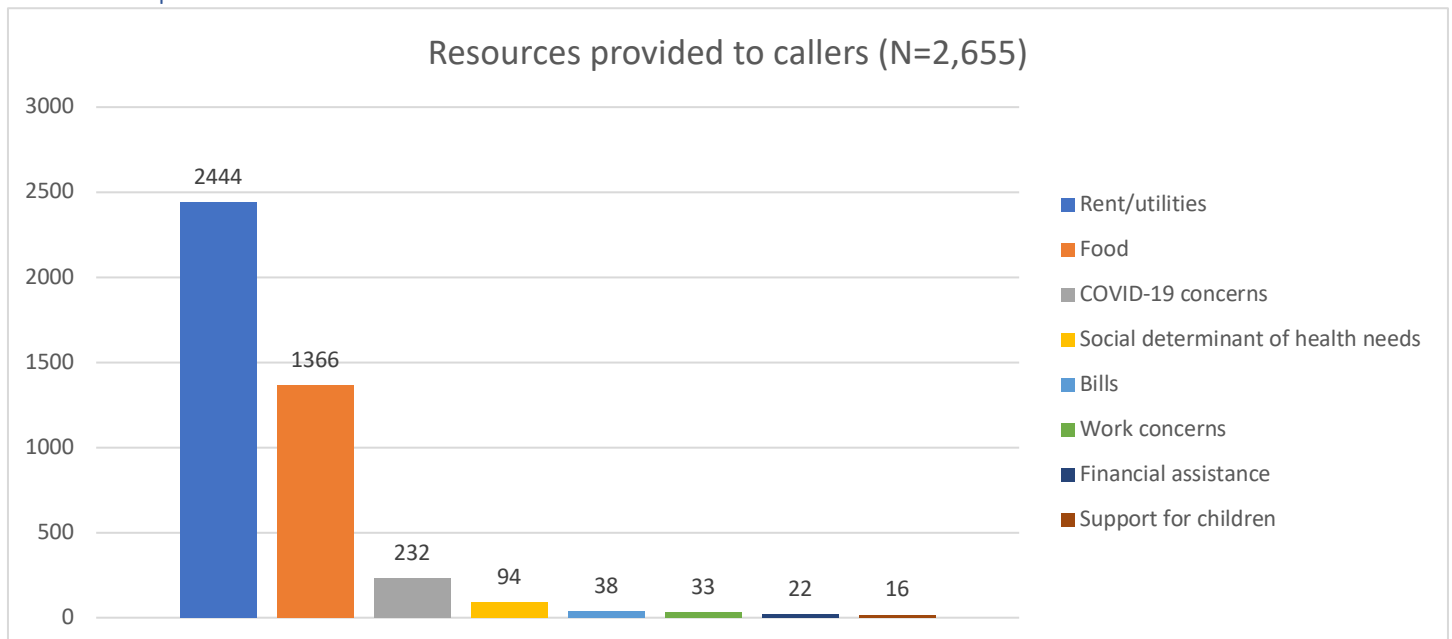


Figure 21. Resources individuals called for. Note: the discrepancy in the total is that there is data on 2,655 individuals (out of 3,046 calls) for resources provided, however, many individuals inquired multiple resources.

Number of resources initially requested

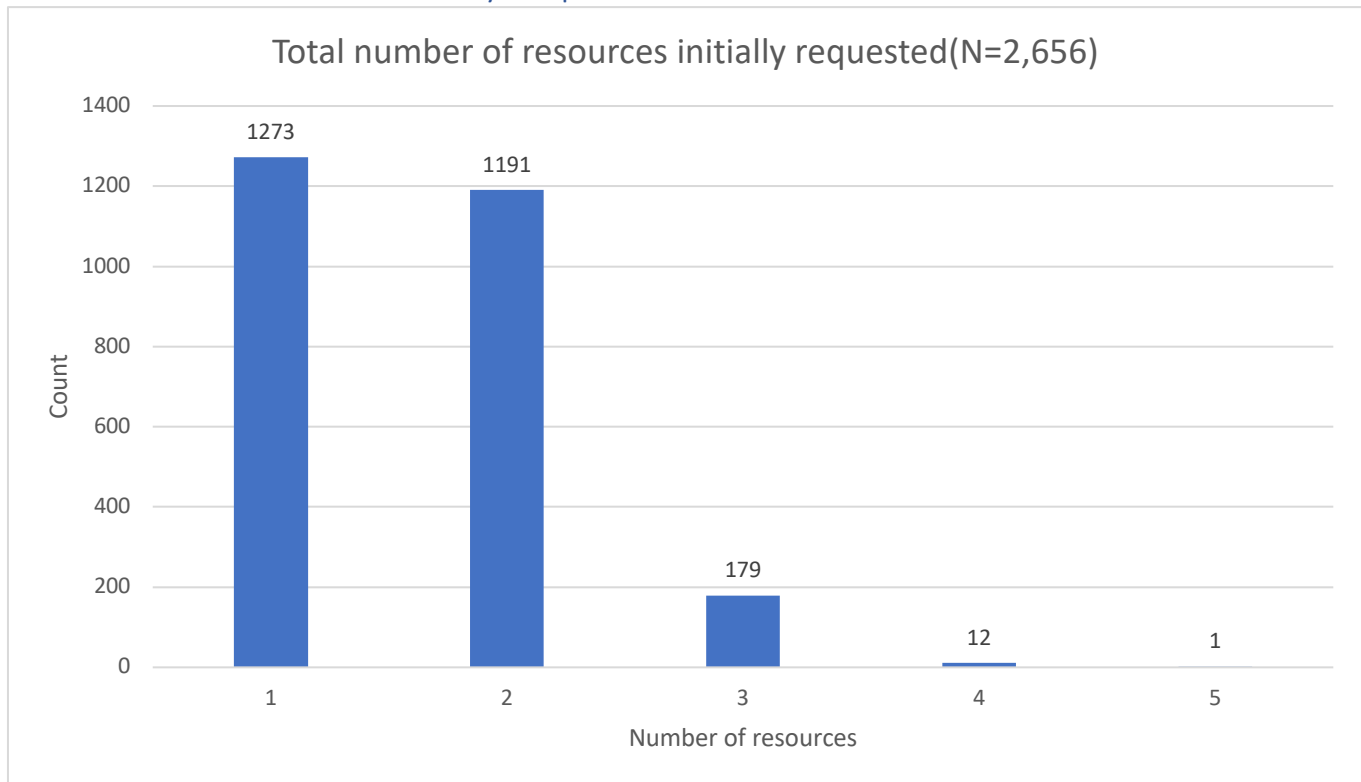


Figure 22. Total number of resources initially called for.

Resources provided- trends by month (March 2020- July 2020)

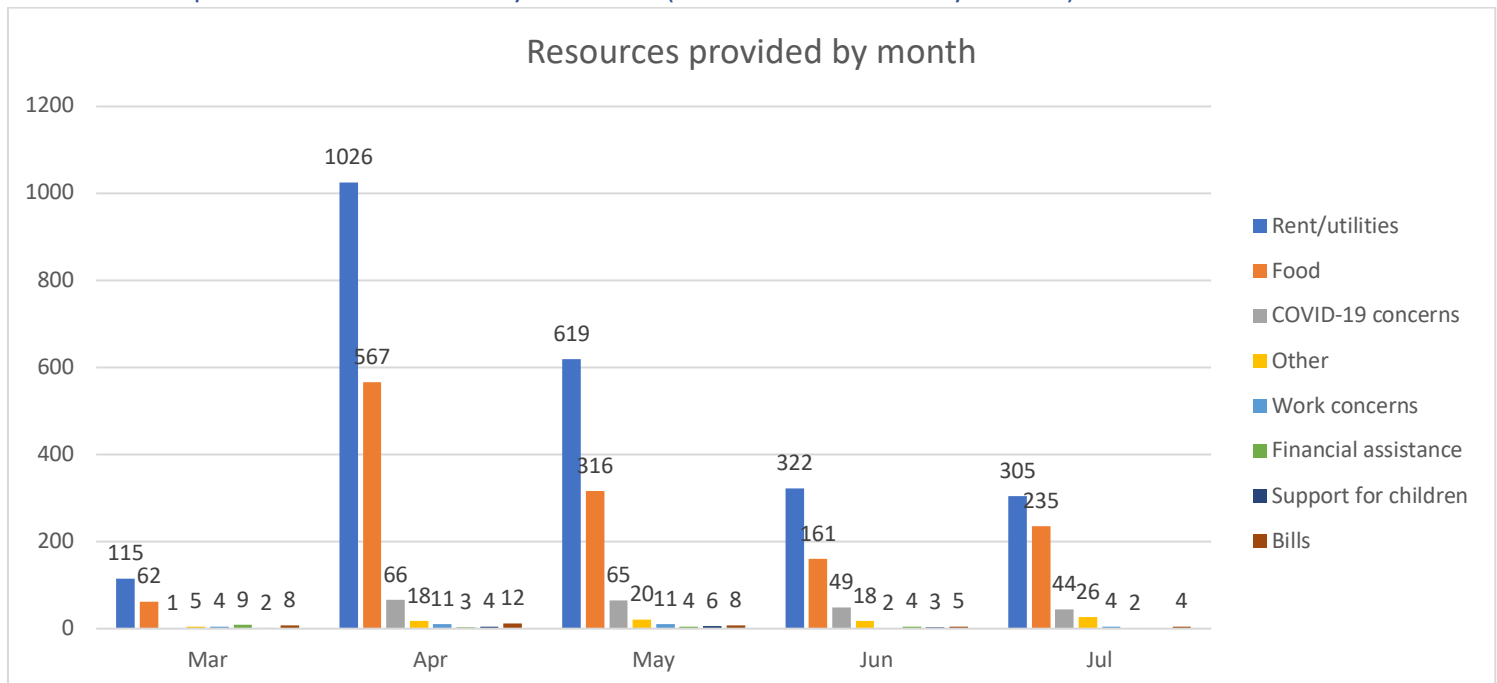


Figure 23. Frequency of resources provided by month.

Resources provided- trends by month (March)

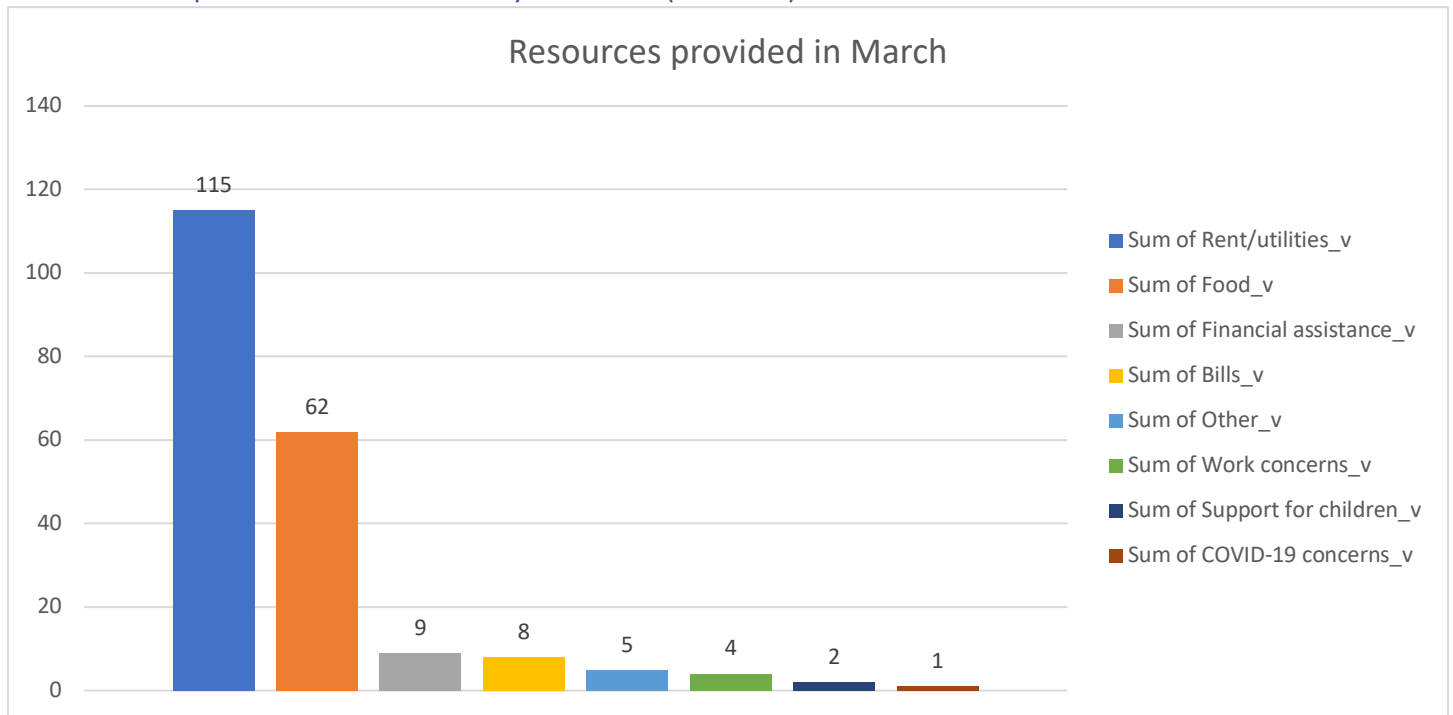


Figure 24. Frequency resources provided in March.

Resources provided- trends by month (April)

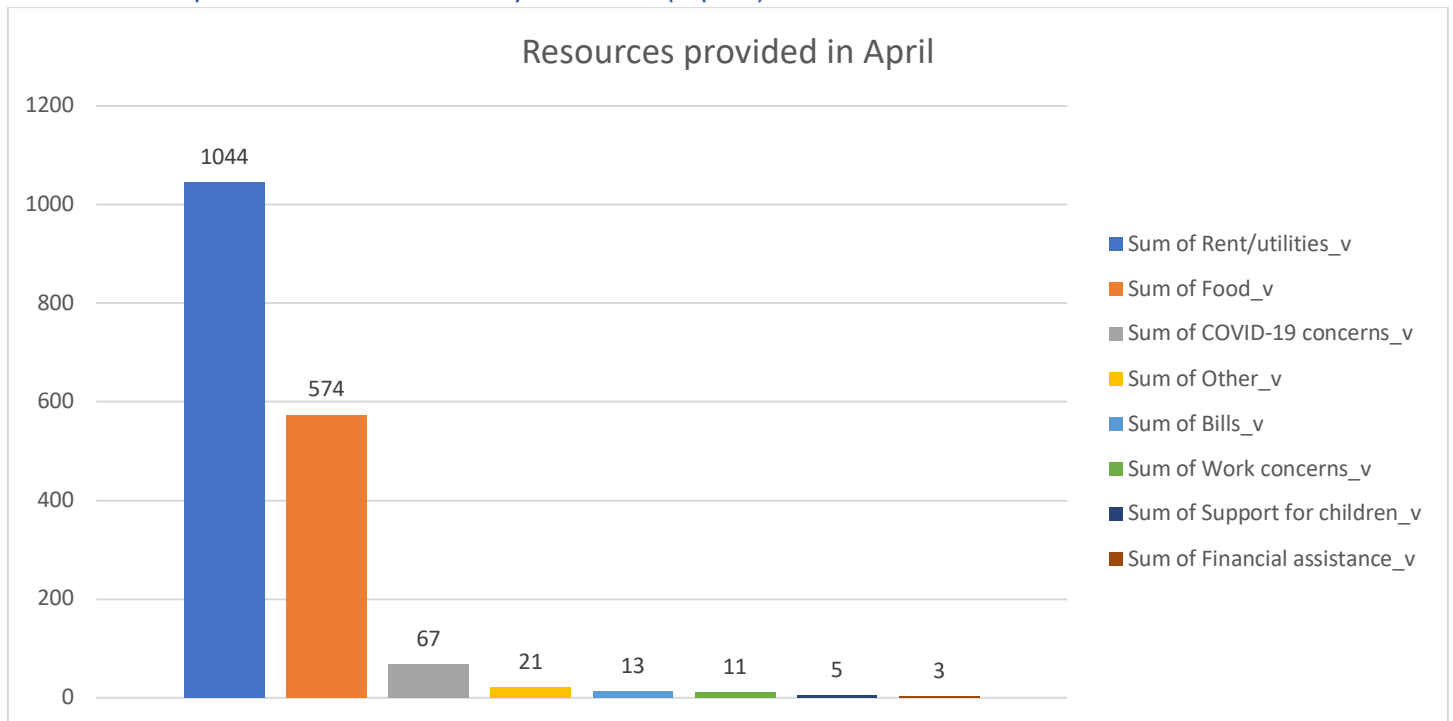


Figure 25. Frequency resources provided in April.

Resources provided- trends by month (May)

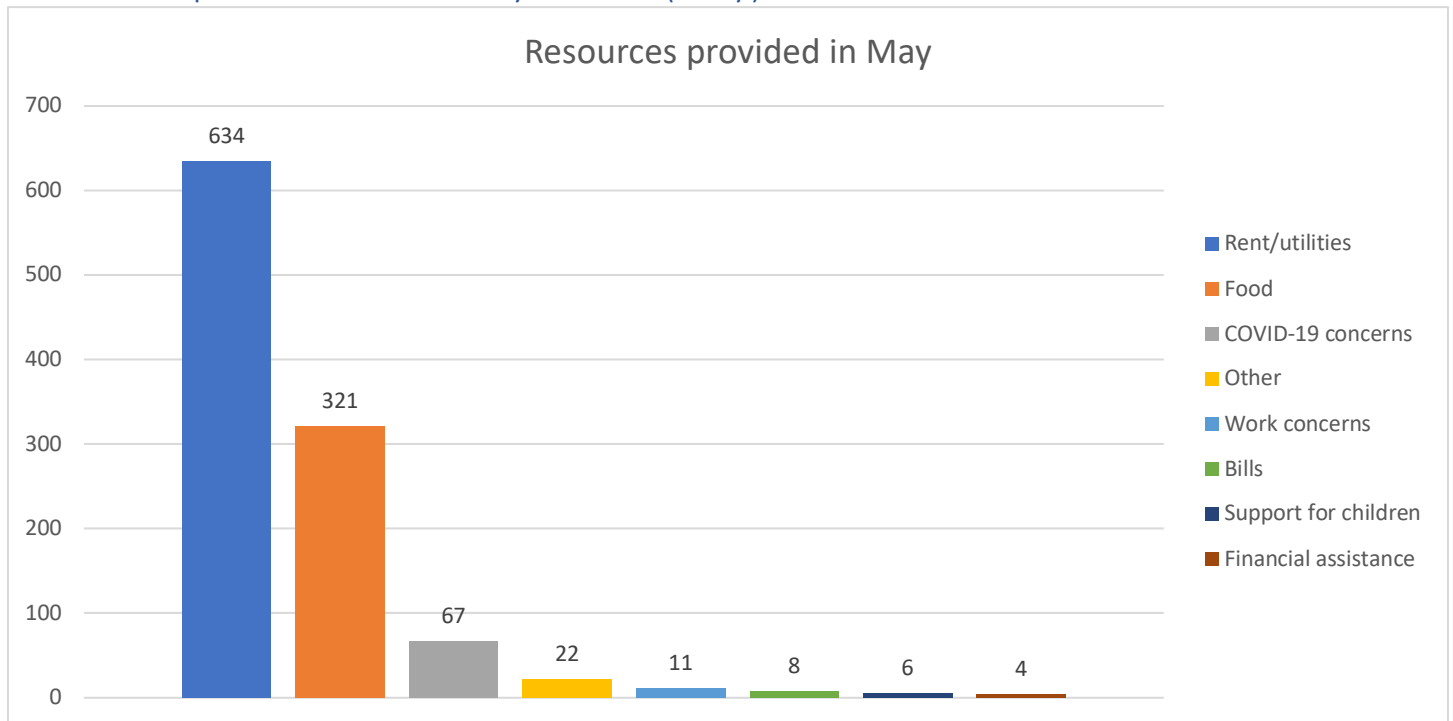


Figure 26. Frequency of resources provided in May.

Resources provided- trends by month (June)

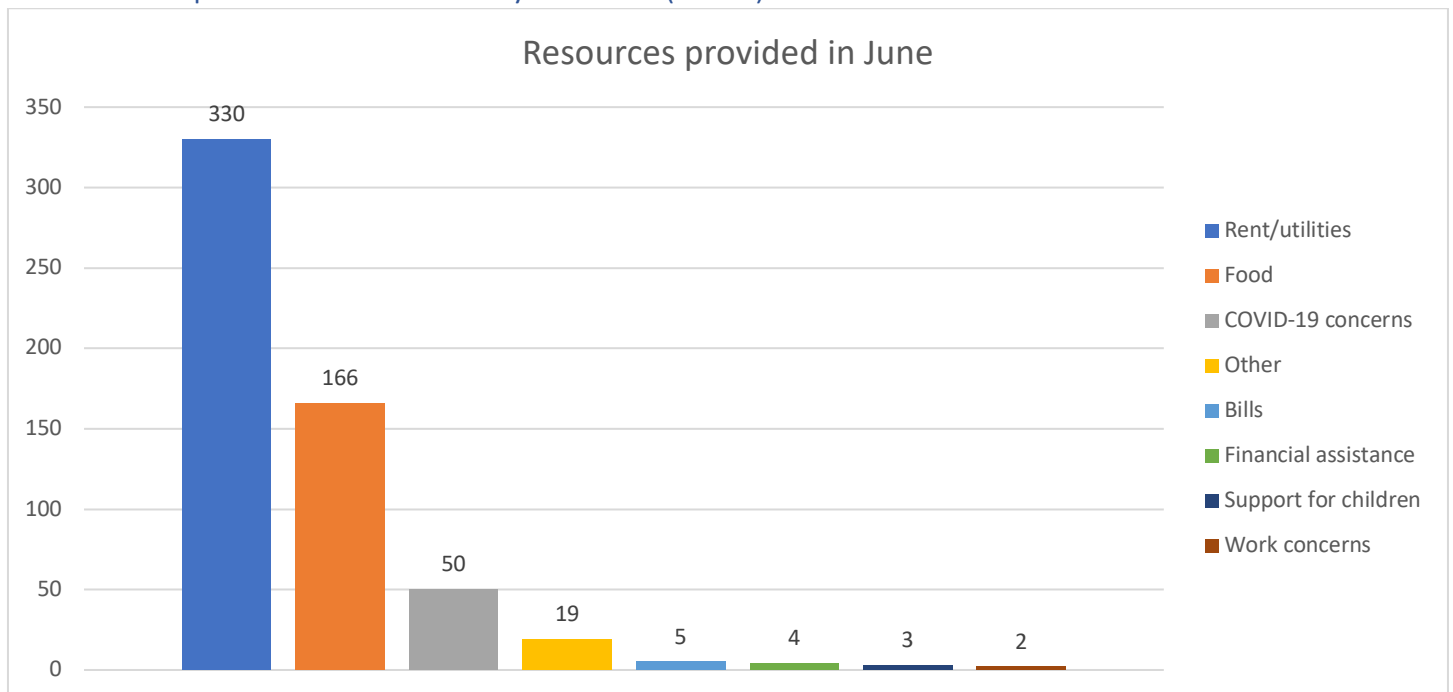


Figure 27. Frequency of resources provided in June.

Resources provided- trends by month (July)

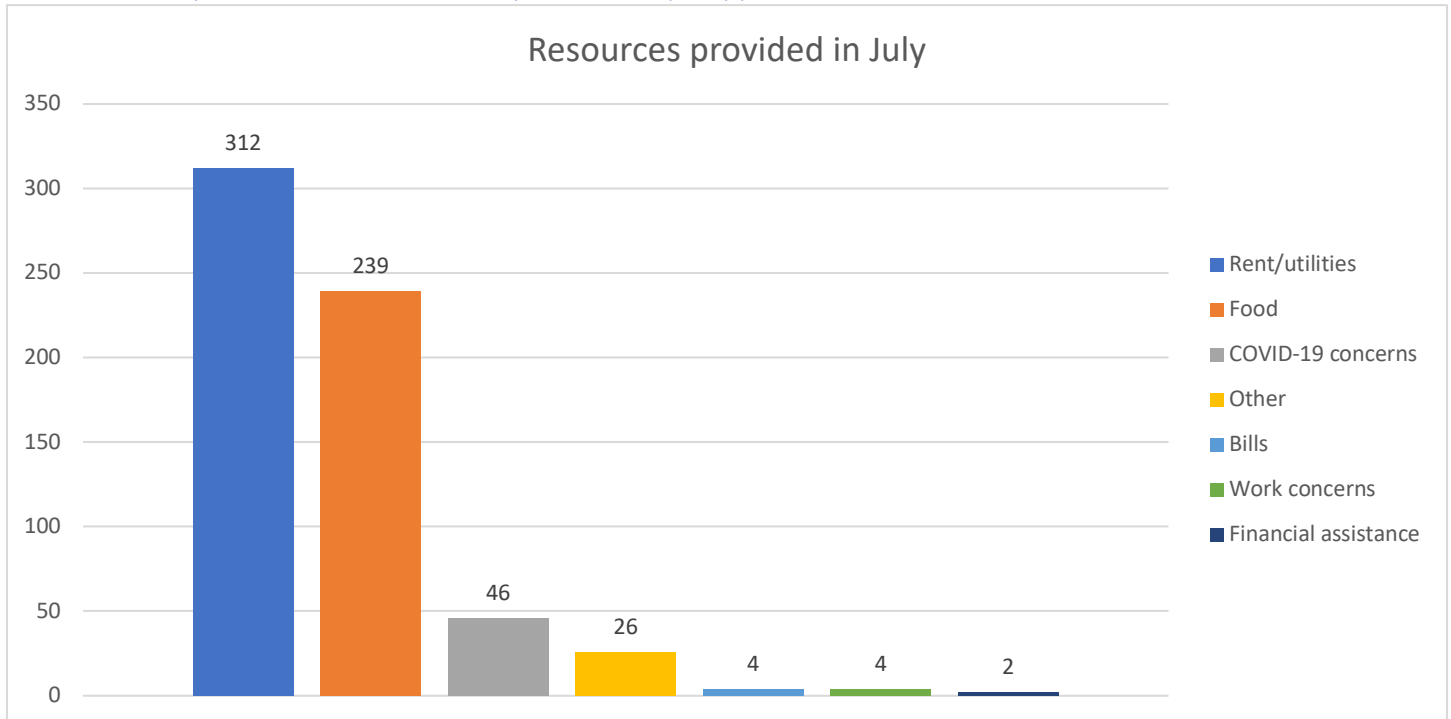


Figure 28. Frequency of resources provided in July.

Crosstabs- Resources provided by month and county

Resources provided by month and county - King County

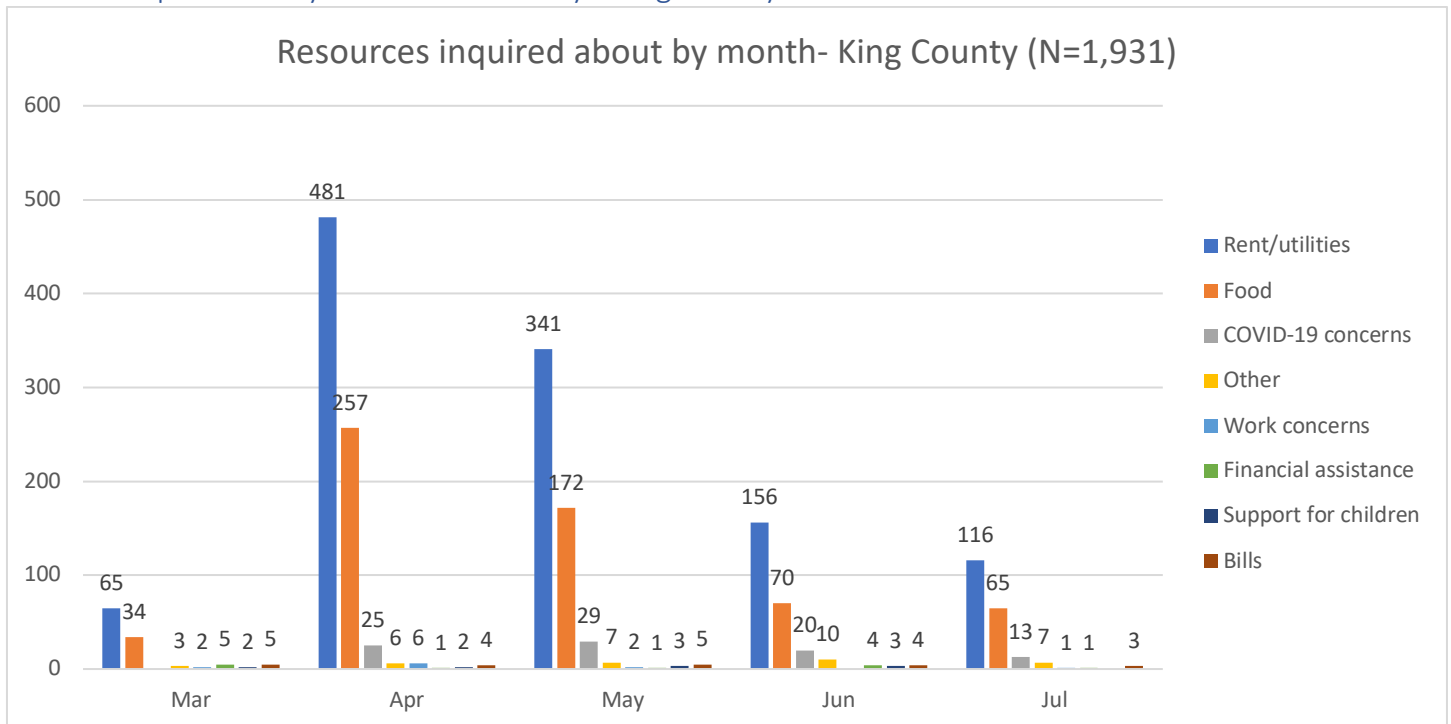


Figure 29. Frequency of resources provided by month and county- King.

Note: N=1,931, but this is the total number of resources requested and not necessarily the number of callers, considering most callers inquire about more than one resource.

Resources provided by month and county- Yakima County

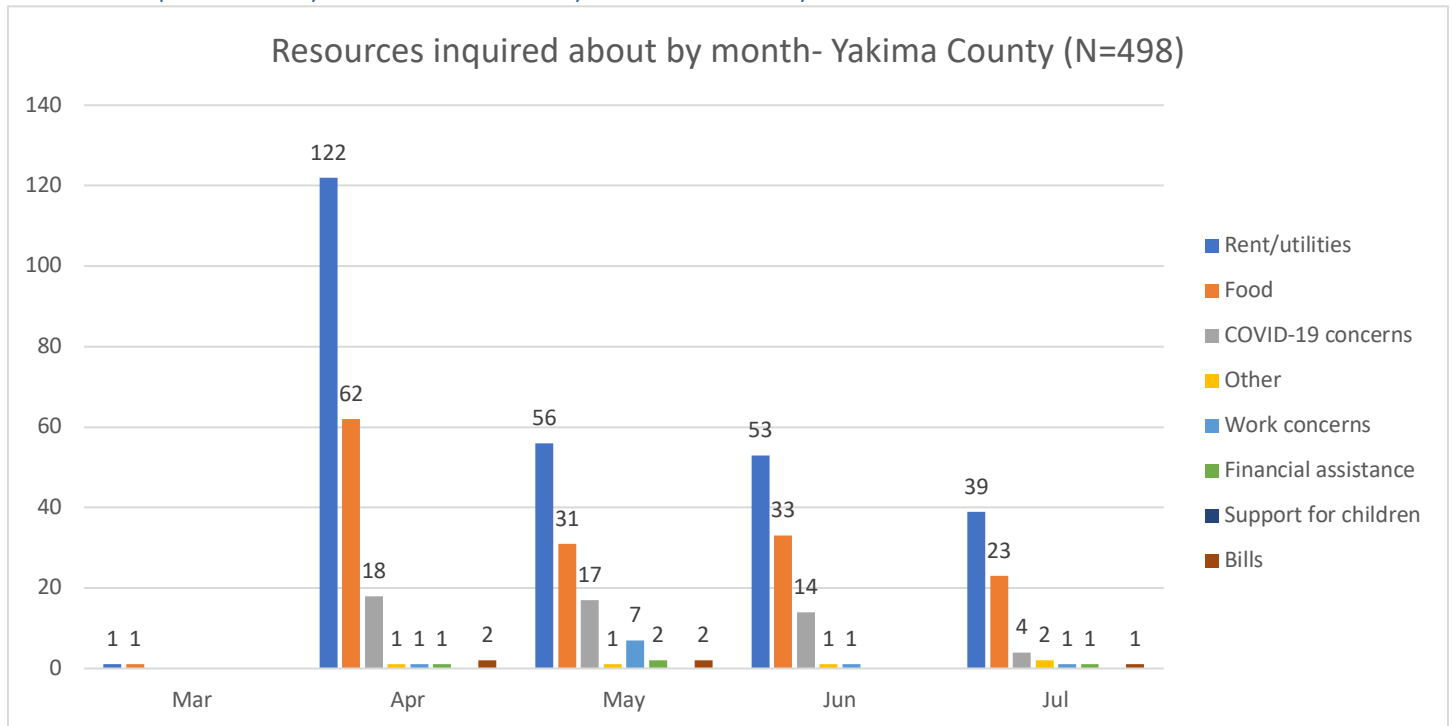


Figure 30. Frequency of resources provided by month and county- Yakima.

Note: N=498, but this is the total number of resources requested and not necessarily the number of callers, considering most callers inquire about more than one resource.

Resources provided by month and county- Snohomish County

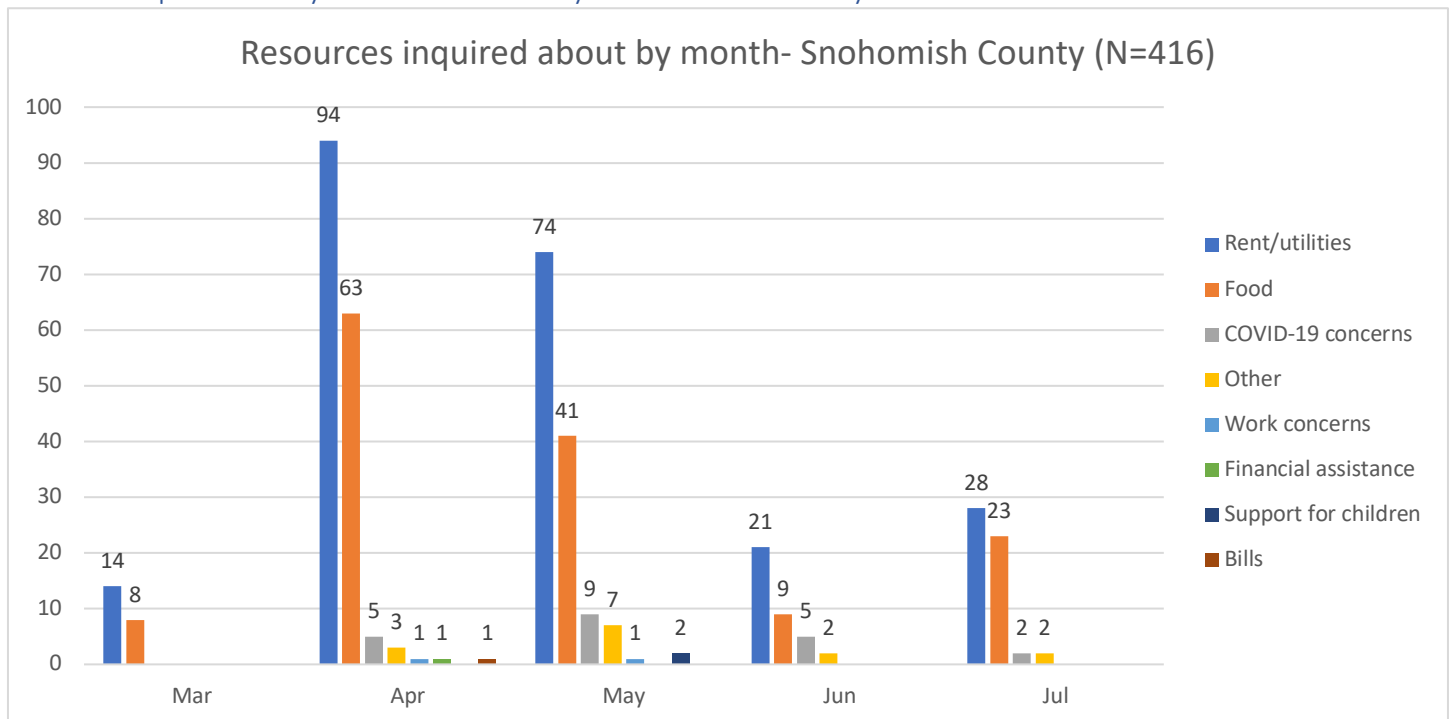


Figure 31. Frequency of resources provided by month and county- Snohomish.

Note: N=416, but this is the total number of resources requested and not necessarily the number of callers, considering most callers inquire about more than one resource.

Resources provided by month and county- Skagit County

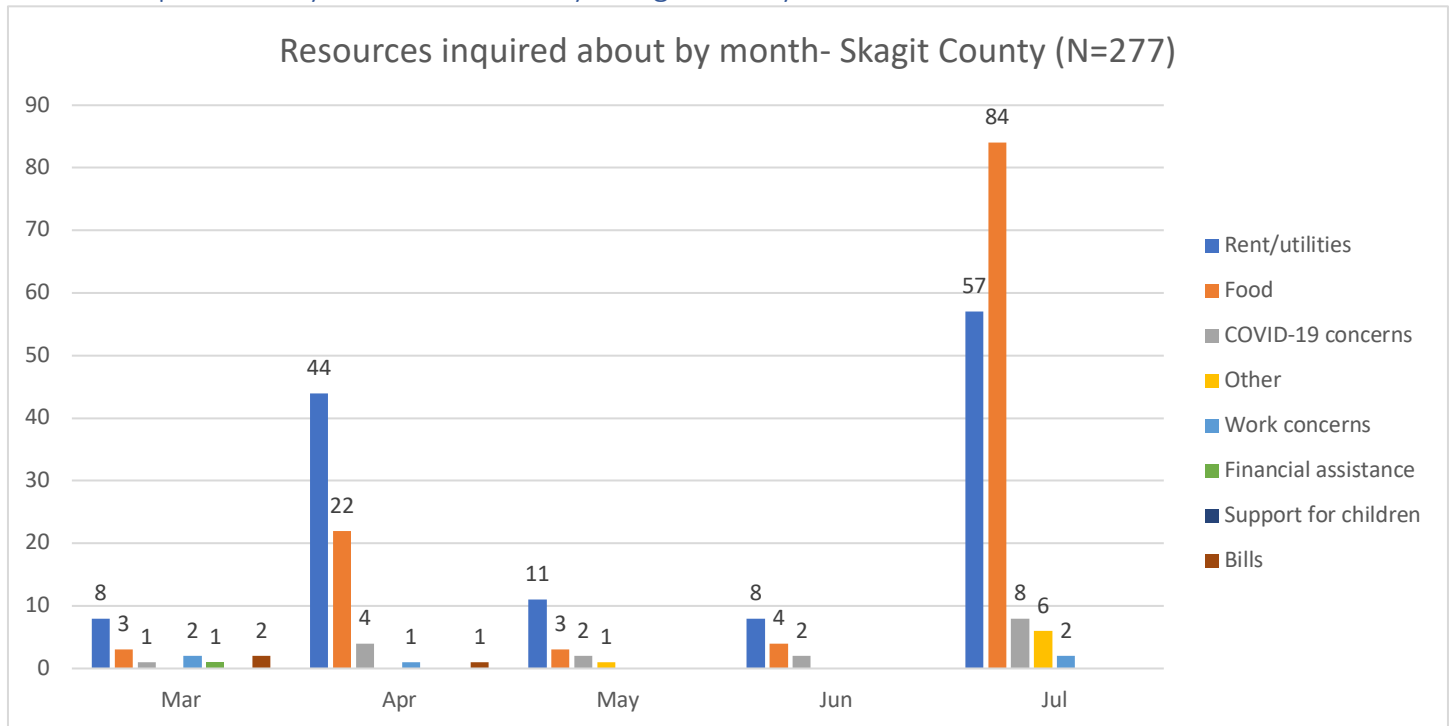


Figure 32. Frequency of resources provided by month and county- Skagit.

Note: N=277, but this is the total number of resources requested and not necessarily the number of callers, considering most callers inquire about more than one resource.

Resources provided by month and county- Pierce County

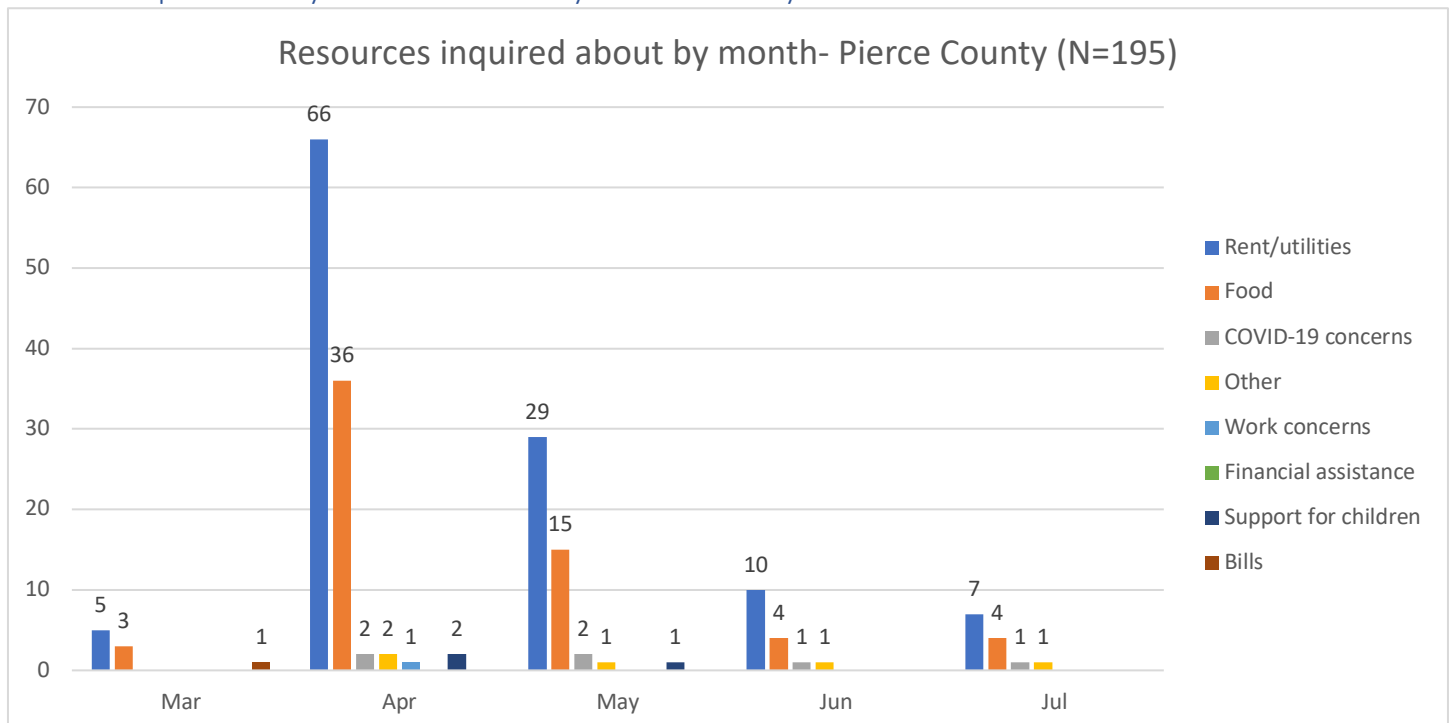


Figure 33. Frequency of resources provided by month and county- Pierce.

Note: N=195, but this is the total number of resources requested and not necessarily the number of callers, considering most callers inquire about more than one resource.

Circumstances that might impact or intersect with resources needed

An important factor to acknowledge is that in addition to resources folks are calling to inquire about, there are factors that can impact how or if individuals can access those resources. WAISN strives to not only acknowledge this about the population they serve but also to meet the needs of callers, despite the barriers they encounter. To further understand callers' concerns, one of the questions asked in the intake form is 'Do they have any other circumstances that might impact or intersect with this?' Out of 3,045 intake forms, 2,412 callers answered this question, and over half (1,392) had two or more factors that intersected with them receiving resources. For better understanding, below are descriptions of each category.

- Immigration status- anyone who mentioned their immigration status may impact their ability to receive resources needed.
- Work concerns- this includes callers that expressed concerns about work including, COVID-19 exposure due to work, laid off/reduced hours/out of work, work injury, workplace safety and health, heavily impacted profession, unemployment concerns/issues.
- Health- any health conditions or health-related concerns for themselves or their family, family members have COVID, children or other family members with disabilities, and callers living with health conditions (diabetes, cancer, injury, etc.).
- Income/financial limitations- fixed or no income or other income limitations.
- Children- babies or small children at home or providing for children outside the US.
- Legal status- in some cases, callers would specify their specific legal status in order to better determine resources they may be eligible for, this includes callers sharing they are citizens, have work permits or other legal statuses.
- Other- this category helps acknowledge other specific living situations that callers may be experiencing, like being retired, losing family members, living/house concerns, specific financial situations, or language barriers.

Circumstances	Count	Percentage of total circumstances reported
Immigration status	1810	41.6%
Work concerns	1673	38.5%
Health	460	10.6%
Children	377	8.7%
Legal status	13	0.29%
Other	12	0.28%
Financial limitations	4	0.09%
Total number of circumstances reported	4,349	100%

Table 4. Circumstances that might impact or intersect with resources needed by percentage

Note: Many participants reported more than one circumstance that may intersect with resources needed.

Circumstances that might impact or intersect with resources needed by percentage

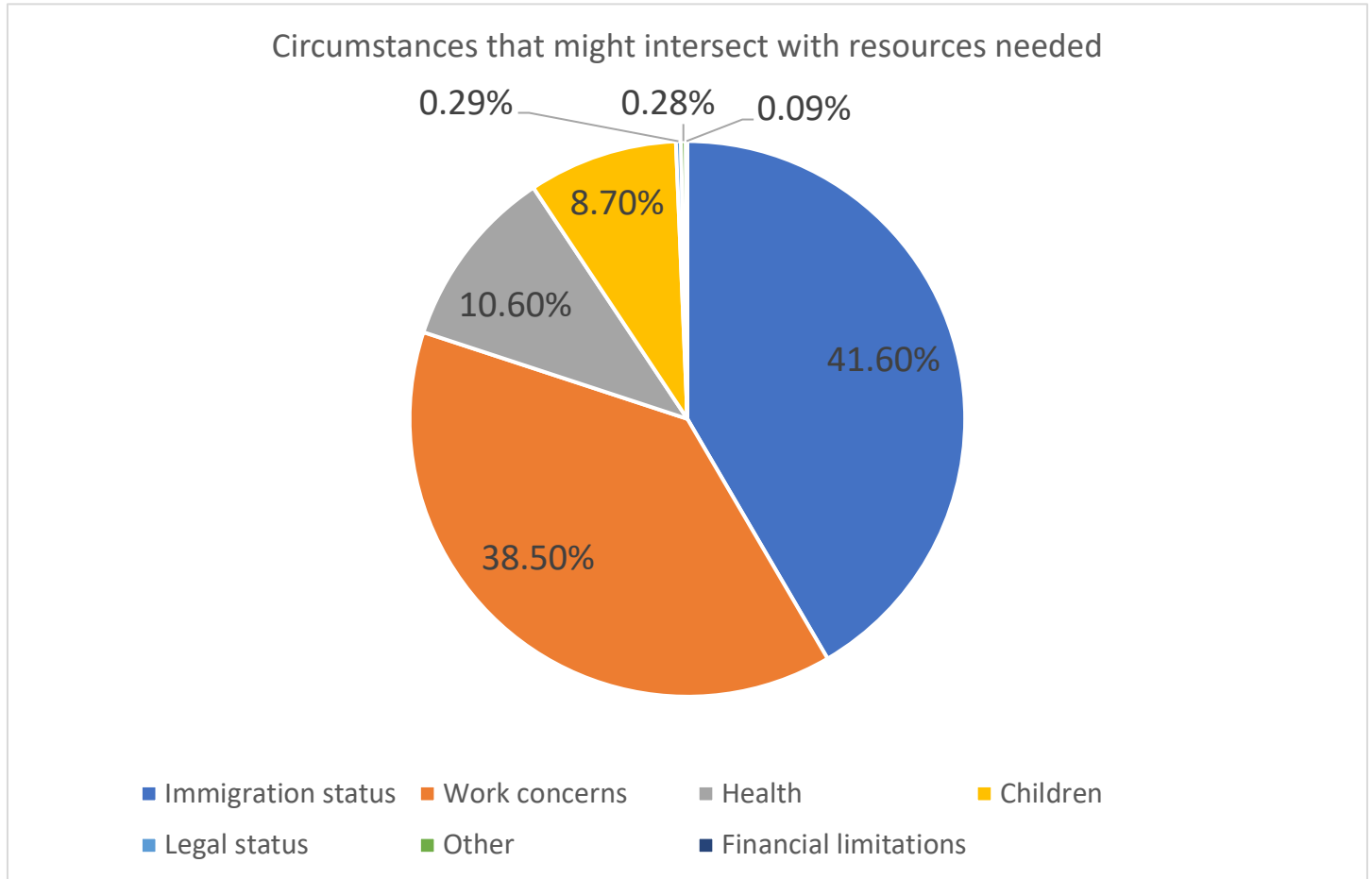


Figure 34. Circumstances that might impact or intersect with resources needed by percentage.

Circumstances that might impact or intersect with resources needed by count

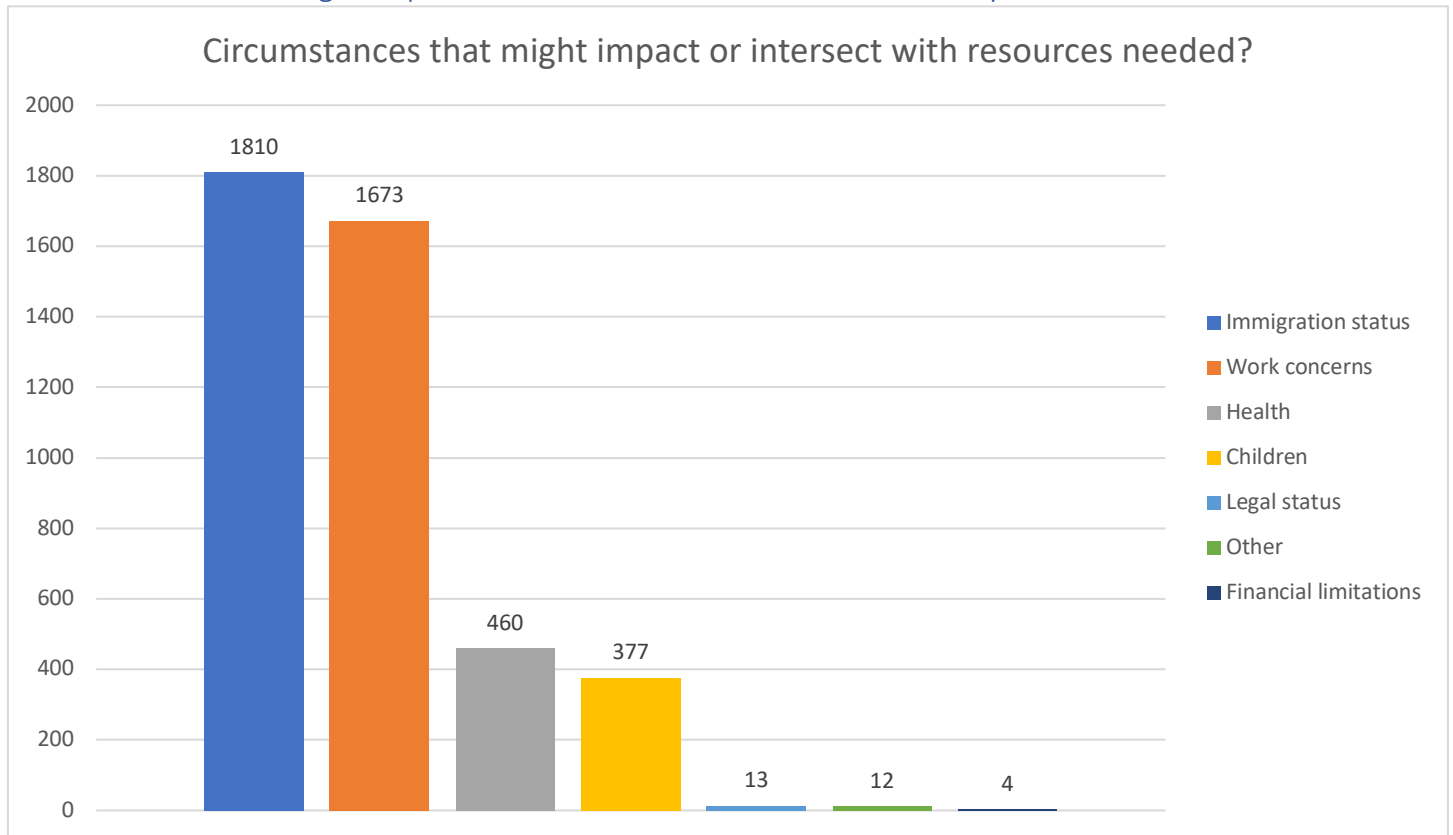


Figure 35. Frequency (count) of circumstances that might impact or intersect with resources needed

Number of circumstances that might impact or intersect with resources needed

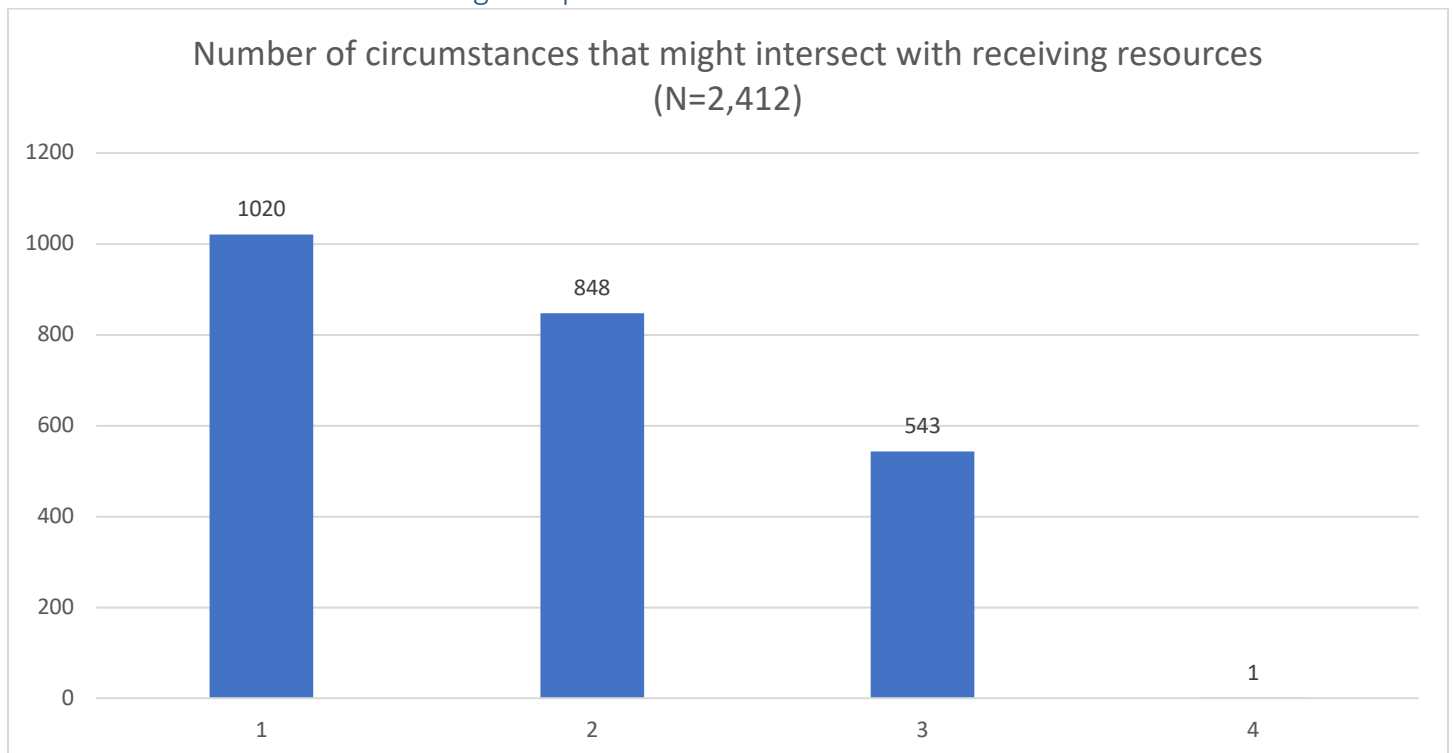


Figure 36. Frequency of number of factors that might impact or intersect with resources needed

Appendix

Table 5. Number of calls by city in WA State.

City	Number of calls
Seattle	372
Yakima	196
Burien	196
Mount Vernon	131
Federal Way	112
Kent	109
Everett	107
Renton	100
Auburn	83
Lynnwood	83
Tacoma	81
Pasco	78
Bellevue	61
Forks	57
Vancouver	56
Sunnyside	53
White Center	51
Burlington	48
Kennewick	45
Des Moines	44
SeaTac	42
Tukwila	37
Redmond	31
Kirkland	29
Shelton	29
Aberdeen	28
Grandview	28
Lakewood	26
Wenatchee	22
Sedro-Woolley	20
Olympia	19
Shoreline	18
Puyallup	17
Bellingham	16
Marysville	15
Othello	14
Centralia	14
Edmonds	14
West Seattle	14
Bothell	13
Wapato	12
Moses Lake	12
Prosser	12

Toppenish	11
Raymond	11
Mountlake Terrace	11
Mattawa	11
Mabton	11
Kenmore	9
Lacey	9
Stanwood	9
Mill Creek	9
Pacific	9
Spanaway	8
Spokane	8
Snohomish	8
Monroe	8
Granger	7
Lake Stevens	7
Lynden	7
Richland	7
Longview	6
Elma	6
Twisp	5
Belfair	5
Ferndale	5
Ephrata	4
Sumner	4
Benton City	4
Quincy	4
Bridgeport	4
Parker	4
Walla Walla	4
Skyway	4
Chehalis	4
Covington	4
Royal City	4
Anacortes	3
Hoquiam	3
Camas	3
North Bend	3
Union Gap	3
Oak Harbor	3
Woodland	3
Edgewood	3
South Bend	3
Harrah	3
Selah	2

Eatonville	2
East Wenatchee	2
Brewster	2
Burbank	2
Yelm	2
Fife	2
Lyle	2
Pullman	2
Duvall	2
Lummi Island	2
Port Orchard	2
Basin City	2
Algona-Pacific	2
Enumclaw	2
Issaquah	2
Bremerton	2
Tri-Cities	2
Ellensburg	2
Rochester	2
Zillah	1
Seaview	1
Omak	1
Mount Baker	1
Winlock	1
Prescott	1
Rock Island	1
Maple Valley	1
Belfast	1
Cashmere	1
Edison	1
Grays Harbor	1
Maltby	1
Spokane Valley	1
Milton	1
Moxee	1
Buckley	1
Sultan	1
Everson	1
Napavine	1
West Richland	1
Normandy Park	1
Westport	1
Chinook	1
White Salmon	1
Tieton	1
Sekiu	1

Kelso	1
Arlington	1
Connell	1
Port Angeles	1
Okanogan	1
Grand Total	2878

Note: The total count of cities is from data collected 03/16/2020-08/03/2020.

References

1. Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN). About Us Available: <https://www.waisn.org/>. Accessed September 2, 2020.
2. Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN). Hotline. 2019.