Overview of the Needs Assessment

A needs assessment is an essential tool for planning. It is a systematic process of determining the service needs of a defined population, and tells us what kinds of services different types of people need and when and where they need them. It should explore the perspectives of people living with HIV and their service providers. Information is typically collected through surveys, focus groups, interviews and/or public forums.

The purpose of the 2011 Houston Area HIV/AIDS Comprehensive Needs Assessment is to gather information on:

- Levels of access to core and supportive services;
- Experience of barriers;
- HIV testing histories;
- Entry to care;
- In-care and out-of-care status;
- Perceptions of health status;
- Mental health symptoms;
- Substance use and abuse;
- Housing status;
- Financial information; and
- Basic demographics of a sample of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the 10-county Houston HSDA.

This information is used by community-based planning bodies in order to:

- Prioritize fundable services from a consumer point-of-view, including needed services not currently offered;
- Determine funding allocations for those services based upon money available within the various partner organizations, and to inform other funding sources which pay for similar services;
- Make programmatic recommendations on how to best meet the needs of clients;
- Support efforts to plan a comprehensive system of HIV/AIDS care; and
- Provide the supporting documentation for annual Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and Department of State Health Services (DSHS) grant applications.

Houston Eligible Metropolitan Area & Health Services Delivery Area

The 2011 Houston Area HIV/AIDS Needs Assessment encompasses a 10-county planning area which includes both the Houston Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA) and Health Services Delivery Area (HSDA).

An Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA) is an area designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) – a division of the United States Department of Health and Human Services – as eligible to receive Ryan White CARE Act Part A funds. An EMA must have a population of at least 500,000 persons and a total of at least 2,000 cumulative AIDS cases (as reported by the Centers for Disease Control for the most recent 5-year period). The geographic boundaries of EMAs are defined by the US Census Bureau; some EMAs include just one city, some are composed of several cities and/or counties and others extend over more than one state. The Houston EMA is a 6-County area that consists of Chambers, Fort Bend, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery and Waller counties in southeast Texas.

The purpose of Part A funds is to provide emergency relief to metropolitan areas disproportionately affected by HV/AIDS. In Houston, Part A funds are awarded to the Harris County Judge's Office and administered by the HIV Services Division of the Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services Department. Each year, the EMA subcontracts approximately $17 million in Part A funds to local agencies providing medical and supportive services to PLWHA.

The Houston HIV Service Delivery Area (HSDA) is a 10-county area designated by the state to receive Ryan White Part B and DSHS State Services funds. The counties within the HSDA encompass the entire EMA with the addition of Austin, Colorado, Walker and Wharton counties. Part B and DSHS State Services funds are intended to improve the quality, availability and organization of health care and support services for PLWHA (with an emphasis on rural populations), and are administered by the Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group. In addition to Part B and State Services funds, the Resource Group administers other local HIV/AIDS funding streams such as Part C (funding to community-based organizations for outpatient early intervention services) and Part D (services for children, youth, women, and families).

The Houston HSDA, including the entire EMA, contains more than 4.3 million people across 9,415 square miles (population density = 459.3 people/square mile), with 98% of the population residing in Harris County (population density = 1,630 people/square mile). Harris County is the most populous county in Texas, the third most populous in the nation, and the home of approximately 95% of the HSDAs reported HIV/AIDS cases.

By population, Harris County is the largest county in Texas and the third largest in the United States. Houston is the fourth largest city in the United States, and is the least densely populated major metropolitan area in the nation; Philadelphia (135 sq miles), Chicago (227.1 sq miles), and Boston (49 sq miles) combined would fit within the city limits of Houston (539.6 sq miles) with room to spare.
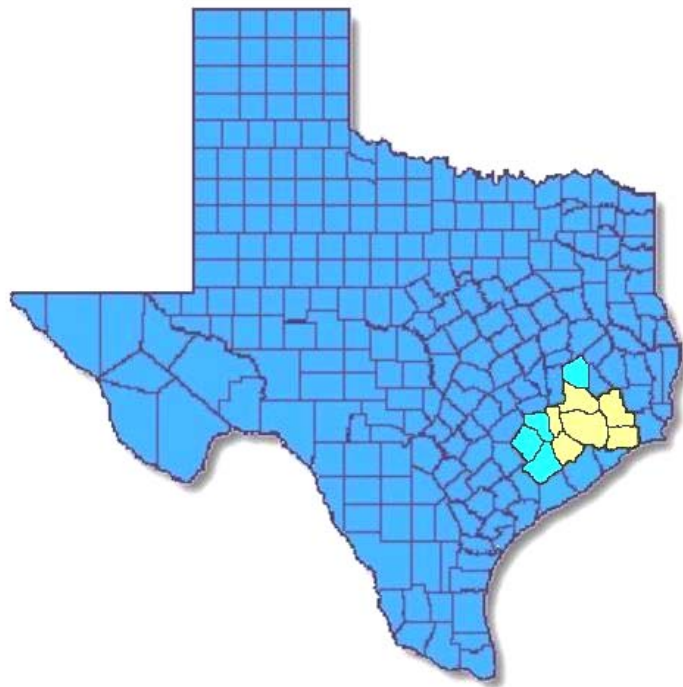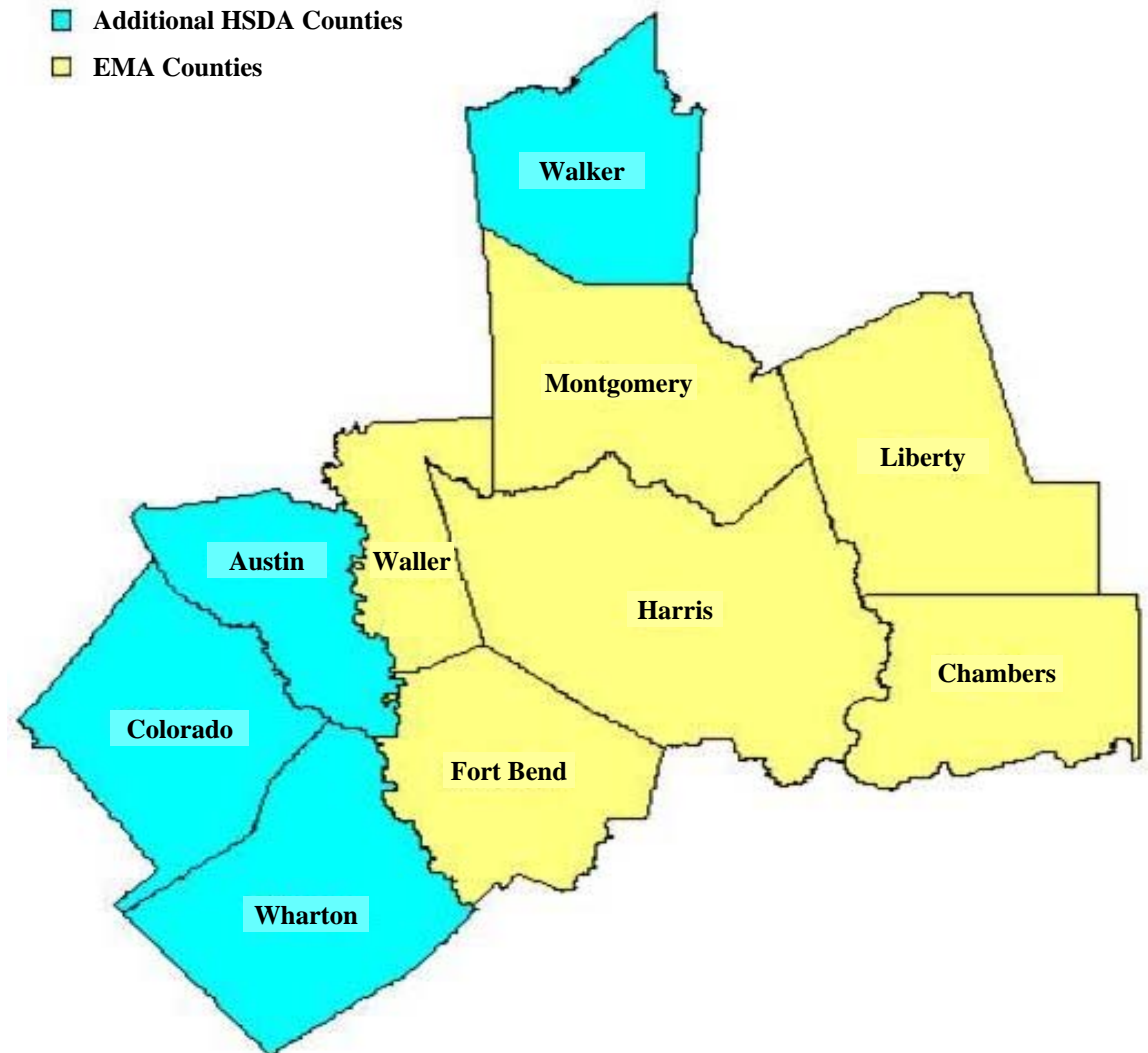
Figure 1: HSDA and EMA Counties

□ **Additional HSDA Counties**
□ **EMA Counties**

Demographics of the Houston HSDA

According to the 2000 U.S. Census report, there are 4,324,572 persons residing in the 10-county HSDA area.

- This is 20% of the population of Texas in the EMA and 21% in the HSDA.

- Over 81% of the people living in the EMA live in Harris County and nearly 79% of those in the HSDA live in Harris County.

- The second largest county is Fort Bend (9%) followed by Montgomery County (7%).

- The smallest counties by population include Colorado, Austin, and Chambers, each with less than 30,000 residents.

Table 1: Total Urban vs. Rural Areas and Population Density, Houston EMA/HSDA, 2000

County	Total Population	Urban Population	Rural Population	Land Area in square miles	Population Density per square mile of land area
Chambers	26,031	36%	64%	599.31	43.4
Fort Bend	354,452	90%	10%	874.64	405.3
Harris	3,400,578	98%	2%	1,728.83	1967.0
Liberty	70,154	36%	64%	1,159.68	60.5
Montgomery	293,768	64%	36%	1,044.03	281.4
Waller	32,663	37%	63%	513.63	63.6
EMA TOTAL	**4,177,646**	**93%**	**7%**	**5,920.12**	**470.2**
Austin	23,590	37%	63%	652.59	36.1
Colorado	20,390	40%	60%	962.95	21.2
Walker	61,758	64%	36%	787.45	78.4
Wharton	41,188	50%	50%	1,090.13	37.8
HSDA TOTAL	**4,324,572**	**92%**	**8%**	**9,413.24**	**299.47**
TEXAS TOTAL	**20,851,820**	**83%**	**17%**	**261,797.12**	**79.6**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 (www.census.gov). Retrieved on March 25, 2004

Both the EMA and the HSDA populations are projected to grow approximately 18% between 2000 and 2010. This is faster growth than the 16% that is projected for Texas overall.

- The fastest growing counties include Montgomery (29%), Fort Bend (27%) and Waller (26%).

- The slowest growing counties are the four outside the EMA, Colorado (4%), Wharton (6%), Austin (8%) and Walker (10%).

- The 45 to 64 age group is projecting the greatest growth in the EMA, HSDA and state, between 41% and 45%.

- This is followed by the 65+ group, but the EMA and HSDA are projected to grow at a faster rate than the state, 37% for the EMA, 35% for the HSDA compared to 22% for Texas.

- Youth, those 13 to 24 years, are projected to increase 15% in the EMA and 14% in the HSDA compared to 12% for the state.

- Relatively slow growth, 6.5%, is projected for the 25 to 44 year age group.

Table 2: Current and Projected Population Numbers, Houston EMA/HSDA 2000 and 2010

County	Population 2000 Number	Population 2000 Percent*	Population 2010 Number	Population 2010 Percent*	Percent Change 2000-2010
Chambers	26,031	0.6%	31,375	0.6%	21%
Fort Bend	354,452	8%	449,811	9%	27%
Harris	3,400,578	79%	3,951,682	78%	16%
Liberty	70,154	2%	81,930	2%	17%
Montgomery	293,768	7%	379,363	8%	29%
Waller	32,663	0.8%	41,137	0.8%	26%
EMA Total	**4,177,646**	**97%**	**4,935,298**	**97%**	**18%**
Austin	23,590	0.6%.	25,582	0.5%	8%
Colorado	20,390	0.5%	21,101	0.4%	4%
Walker	61,758	1%	67,664	1%	10%
Wharton	41,188	1%	43,560	0.9%	6%
HSDA Total	**4,324,572**	**100%**	**5,093,205**	**100%**	**18%**
Texas Total Population	**20,851,820**	**100%**	**24,178,507**	**100%**	**16%**

Source: Texas comptroller's winter 2001-2002 county forecast (www.window.state.tx.us). Retrieved on March 25, 2004.

*Reflects percent of total HSDA population

Table 3: Houston EMA, HSDA and Texas Projected Population Change by Age, 2000 – 2010

County	Population 2000		Population 2010		Percent Change 2000-2010
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
EMA COUNTIES					
Under 2 years	137,130	3%	149,476	3%	9%
2-12 years	755,031	18%	798,633	16%	6%
13-24 years	744,824	18%	857,075	17%	15%
25-44 years	1,379,256	33%	1,468,249	30%	7%
45-64 years	850,192	20%	1,236,403	25%	45%
65 and older	311,213	7%	425,462	9%	37%
EMA TOTAL	**4,177,646**	**100.0%**	**4,935,298**	**100.0%**	**18%**
HSDA COUNTIES					
Under 2 years	140,638	3%	153,444	3%	9%
2-12 years	775,471	18%	819,610	16%	6%
13-24 years	777,164	18%	889,303	18%	14%
25-44 years	1,420,468	33%	1,512,477	30%	7%
45-64 years	881,084	20%	1,273,478	25%	45%
65 and older	329,747	8%	444,893	9%	35%
HSDA TOTAL	**4,324,572**	**100%**	**5,093,205**	**100%**	**18%**
TEXAS					
Under 2 years	652,970	3%	730,538	3%	12%
2-12 years	3,608,917	17%	3,868,799	16%	7%
13-24 years	3,799,040	18%	4,256,960	18%	12%
25-44 years	6,537,409	31%	6,915,579	29%	6%
45-64 years	4,186,017	20%	5,892,533	24%	41%
65 and older	2,067,467	10%	2,514,098	10%	22%
TEXAS TOTAL	**20,851,820**	**100%**	**24,178,507**	**100%**	**16%**

Source: Texas comptroller's winter 2001-2002 county forecast. Retrieved on March 25, 2004.

Race and Ethnicity

While the EMA and the HSDA have similar racial and ethnic make ups, they differ from Texas overall.

- White, non-Latinos are the largest population group in the HSDA, comprising 46% of overall HSDA population.

- Latinos/Latinas are a somewhat smaller percentage in the EMA and HSDA than the state, 30% in the region and 32% in the state.

- Non-Latino Black/African-Americans are a larger percentage of the population in the EMA and HSDA than in the state, making up over 17% of the people in the region compared to 11% in Texas.

- Larger percentages of Asians also live in the EMA and HSDA than in the state overall. Asians are 5% of the regional population and less than 3% of those living in the state.

In Harris and Fort Bend Counties, minorities make up the "majority" of residents. White/Anglo are the majority in all other counties.

- By county, Harris County has the most racially and ethnically diverse population with 33% Latino/Latino, 18% Black/African-American and 5% Asian.

- The counties with the largest percentages of Black/African-American residents are Waller (29%), Walker (24%), and Fort Bend (20%).

- The counties with the largest percentage of Latino residents are Harris (33%), Wharton (31%) and Fort Bend (21%).

- Fort Bend County has the largest percentage of Asian residents with over 11%.

- In the EMA and HSDA, women make up a larger percentage of the Black/African-American population than men, and men are a larger percentage of the Latino population than women.

- Of the Latino population, the largest percentage is of Mexican heritage. Mexicans comprise 24% of Harris County residents and 22% of Wharton County residents.

- Twenty percent of EMA and HSDA residents were born outside the U.S. This compares to 14% in the state of Texas. In both the region and the state, these foreign born residents most frequently come from North, Central and South America. Mexico is the most frequent place of foreign birth, accounting for about half of those born outside the U.S.

- Approximately 4% of the EMA and HSDA populations were born in Asia.

Table 4: Total Population by Race, Ethnicity and Gender, Houston EMA/HSDA, 2000

County	Total Population	White, Non-Latino	Black/African-American, Non-Latino	Latino	Asian, Non-Latino	Other, Non-Latino
	N	%	%	%	%	%
Chambers	26,031	77.6%	9.7%	10.8%	0.7%	1.2%
Fort Bend	354,355	46.2%	19.6%	21.1%	11.2%	1.9%
Harris	3,399,186	42.1%	18.2%	32.9%	5.1%	1.6%
Liberty	70,136	74.6%	12.8%	10.9%	0.3%	1.5%
Montgomery	293,688	81.4%	3.4%	12.6%	1.1%	1.4%
Waller	32,660	49.9%	29.1%	19.4%	0.4%	1.3%
EMA - Female	2,098,020	46.5%	18.3%	28.5%	5.2%	1.6%
EMA - Male	2,079,626	45.6%	16.2%	31.3%	5.2%	1.7%
EMA TOTAL	**4,176,056**	**46.1%**	**17.2%**	**29.9%**	**5.2%**	**1.6%**
Austin	23,589	71.9%	10.5%	16.1%	0.3%	1.2%
Colorado	20,387	64.6%	14.5%	19.7%	0.2%	1.0%
Walker	61,733	60.1%	23.8%	14.1%	0.8%	1.3%
Wharton	41,170	53.0%	14.7%	31.3%	0.3%	0.7%
HSDA - Female	2,165,988	47.0%	18.2%	28.2%	5.0%	1.6%
HSDA - Male	2,158,584	46.1%	16.3%	31.0%	5.0%	1.7%
HSDA TOTAL	**4,322,935**	**46.6%**	**17.3%**	**29.6%**	**5.0%**	**1.6%**
TEXAS TOTAL	**20,851,820**	**52.4%**	**11.3%**	**32.0%**	**2.7%**	**1.6%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 (www.census.gov). Retrieved on March 25, 2004.

Percentage calculations are based on the total population of each gender

Linguistic Isolation

Approximately one-third of EMA and HSDA residents are "linguistically isolated," meaning they speak English less than "very well."

- More than one third of the people living in Harris County and 30% of those living in Fort Bend speak English less than "very well."
- The largest percentages of linguistically isolated people are Spanish speaking.
- More than one quarter of those who speak Indo-European languages (i.e., Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, German, Bengali, etc) are linguistically isolated.
- Very few of those speaking Asian and Pacific Islander languages report being linguistically isolated.

Table 5: Total Linguistic Isolation, Houston EMA/HSDA, 2000

County	Total Pop	English Only Pop	Speak other than English						
			Total Pop	Spanish		Indo-European		Asian/Pacific Island	
				Total Pop	LI	Total Pop	LI	Total Pop	LI
Chambers	24,205	88.3%	2,834	2,265	43.9%	460	29.1%	87	8.0%
Fort Bend	327,666	69.3%	100,596	57,612	40.0%	16,603	24.8%	22,409	4.4%
Harris	3,121,999	63.8%	1,129,856	898,885	52.9%	87,470	28.2%	116,285	4.5%
Liberty	65,425	87.7%	8,030	7,042	44.4%	733	13.4%	129	0.0%
Montgomery	271,298	86.2%	37,552	31,077	49.4%	4,258	18.3%	1,854	6.0%
Waller	30,397	81.9%	5,513	4,994	52.9%	364	25.0%	74	13.5%
EMA TOTAL	**3,840,990**	**66.6%**	**1,284,381**	**1,001,875**	**52.0%**	**109,888**	**27.2%**	**140,838**	**4.5%**
Austin	22,056	82.9%	3,770	2,967	46.6%	795	29.1%	87	8.0%
Colorado	19,150	80.1%	3,818	3,130	49.1%	626	26.0%	24	54.2%
Walker	58,854	85.7%	8,390	7,586	44.4%	455	18.2%	285	1.1%
Wharton	38,401	73.3%	10,239	9,145	35.7%	989	19.3%	74	5.4%
HSDA TOTAL	**3,979,451**	**67.1%**	**1,310,598**	**1,024,703**	**51.8%**	**112,753**	**27.1%**	**141,308**	**4.5%**
TEXAS TOTAL	**19,241,518**	**68.8%**	**6,010,753**	**5,195,182**	**45.6%**	**358,019**	**25.8%**	**374,330**	**4.6%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 (www.census.gov). Retrieved on March 25, 2004.
Linguistic Isolation = speaks English less than "very well." Total Pop reflects all speaking that language.
LI = Percentage of those speaking the language who are linguistically isolated/speak English less than "very well."

Socioeconomic Status

Median household income helps explain how much money people in the region earn. Since it is for "household," it is the combined amount of money earned by everyone living in a household. The "median income" means that half the people living in the region/county earn less than that amount and half earn more. While the higher median income is better for the region, it has to be considered against the cost of living in the area and the number of people in each household. Typically, the cost of living in urban areas is higher than in rural areas.

People living in the EMA and HSDA have higher median household incomes than people throughout the entire state of Texas. Within the EMA, the median income is nearly $47,000 per year which is $5,000 higher than in the HSDA and $7,000 higher than is found in the state.

- Fort Bend County residents have the highest median household income of all the counties in the HSDA with nearly $64,000 per year.

- The area with the second highest median income is Montgomery County with over $50,000 per year.

- Counties with the lowest median household income are three of the four HSDA counties outside the EMA—Colorado, Wharton and Walker.

Table 6: Total Median Household Income, Houston EMA/HSDA, 2000

County	Median Household Income
Chambers	$47,964
Fort Bend	$63,831
Harris	$42,598
Liberty	$38,361
Montgomery	$50,864
Waller	$38,136
EMA TOTAL	**$46,959**
Austin	$38,615
Colorado	$32,425
Walker	$31,468
Wharton	$32,208
HSDA TOTAL	**$41,647**
TEXAS TOTAL	**$39,927**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Employment Status

In 2009, the unemployment percentage for Texas was 7.63%. In the EMA, the unemployment percentage was 7.5% and in the four additional HSDA counties it was 7.10%.

- Liberty County had the highest unemployment rate at 10.1%.

- Colorado (6.5%), Walker (7.0%) and Waller (7.0%) had the lowest unemployment rates.

Table 7: Employment Status, Houston EMA/HSDA

County	Labor Force Population	Unemployed	Unemployed %
Chambers	14,771	1,385	9.4%
Fort Bend	272,021	19,706	7.2%
Harris	1,982,288	150,347	7.6%
Liberty	32,089	3,228	10.1%
Montgomery	217,384	15,157	7.0%
Waller	16,636	1,368	8.2%
EMA TOTAL	**2,535,189**	**191,191**	**7.5%**
Austin	13,382	985	7.4%
Colorado	10,832	700	6.5%
Walker	27,935	1,962	7.0%
Wharton	21,376	1,507	7.05%
HSDA TOTAL	**73,525**	**5,154**	**7.01%**
TEXAS TOTAL	**11,930,847**	**910,621**	**7.63%**

Source: Texas Workforce Commission's Labor Market Information Department (www.tracer2.com). Retrieved on 01/27/11.
Unemployed % is based on the number of in labor force.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment reflects each person in an area's highest grade in school. The EMA, HSDA and state are similar with 11% going through eighth grade or less, 13% going to high school, but not graduating, approximately half graduating from high school and possibly attending some college and roughly one quarter receiving a bachelor's degree in college or higher.

- Counties with the highest percentage getting their high school diploma or more include Fort Bend (84.3%), Montgomery (81.6%), Chambers (77.0%), Harris (74.6%) and Waller (73.9%).

- Counties with the highest percentage of residents who did not go beyond the eighth grade include Colorado, Wharton, Austin and Harris.

Table 8: Educational Attainment, Houston EMA/HSDA

County	Total Pop >25	Less than 9th grade	9th-12th grade, no diploma	High School Graduate, Some College, Associate	Bachelor or higher
Chambers	16,348	8.5%	14.5%	64.9%	12.1%
Fort Bend	214,461	7.2%	8.5%	47.4%	36.9%
Harris	2,067,399	12.1%	13.3%	47.7%	26.9%
Liberty	44,206	10.5%	19.9%	61.5%	8.1%
Montgomery	183,743	6.3%	12.1%	56.3%	25.3%
Waller	18,395	11.1%	15.1%	57.1%	16.8%
EMA TOTAL	**2,544,552**	**11.2%**	**12.9%**	**48.7%**	**27.2%**
Austin	15,280	12.2%	13.2%	57.2%	17.3%
Colorado	13,383	15.6%	15.3%	54.6%	14.4%
Walker	36,678	10.4%	16.6%	54.7%	18.3%
Wharton	25,567	15.5%	14.7%	55.4%	14.3%
HSDA TOTAL	**2,635,460**	**11.3%**	**13.0%**	**48.9%**	**26.8%**
TEXAS TOTAL	**12,790,893**	**11.5%**	**12.9%**	**52.4%**	**23.2%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 (www.census.gov). Retrieved on March 25, 2004.

Poverty Status

Both the EMA and the HSDA have lower rates of poverty than in Texas overall, with 13.9% and 14%, respectively, living in poverty compared to 15.4% for the state. Both the local and statewide percentages are larger than the 12.4% nationally who are living in poverty.

- Counties with the highest levels of poverty include Walker, Colorado and Wharton which are three of the four HSDA counties, and Waller and Harris in the EMA.

- Blacks/African-Americans in the EMA and HSDA make up a higher percentage of those living in poverty than is found throughout the state. Whites and Latinos in the EMA and HSDA represent smaller percentages when compared with the state overall.

- Children and others under 25 years of age are a large percentage of those living in poverty throughout the EMA, HSDA and state.

- Families with single females as head of household comprise a large percentage of families in poverty.

Table 9: Poverty Status by Race/Ethnicity, Houston EMA/HSDA, 2000

County	Total	Population below poverty level		White	Black/African-American	Other*	Latino*
	N	N	%	%**	%**	%**	%**
Chambers	25,719	2,833	11.0%	6.5%	2.5%	2.1%	2.6%
Fort Bend	349,010	24,953	7.1%	2.9%	1.7%	2.6%	3.3%
Harris	3,360,536	503,234	15.0%	6.0%	4.2%	4.8%	7.5%
Liberty	64,878	9,296	14.3%	9.5%	3.0%	1.8%	2.8%
Montgomery	291,519	27,376	9.4%	7.0%	0.9%	1.5%	2.4%
Waller	29,487	4,718	16.0%	6.0%	6.5%	3.5%	5.4%
EMA TOTAL	**4,121,149**	**572,410**	**13.9%**	**5.9%**	**3.7%**	**4.3%**	**6.7%**
Austin	23,345	2,814	12.1%	6.5%	2.6%	3.0%	4.7%
Colorado	19,543	3,171	16.2%	8.0%	4.9%	3.3%	5.0%
Walker	44,904	8,253	18.4%	10.6%	6.1%	1.6%	2.6%
Wharton	40,519	6,703	16.5%	8.1%	4.4%	4.0%	7.9%
HSDA TOTAL	**4,249,460**	**593,351**	**14.0%**	**6.0%**	**3.8%**	**4.2%**	**6.6%**
TEXAS TOTAL	**20,287,300**	**3,117,609**	**15.4%**	**8.9%**	**2.6%**	**3.9%**	**8.2%**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 (www.Census.gov). Retrieved on March 25, 2004.
*Latino and other races are not mutually exclusive. **All of the percentages are based on total population of whom population status is determined.

Health Insurance Status

In 2007, Texas had the highest percentage of uninsured residents (26.8%) and the second highest number of uninsured residents (5,765,132) of all U.S. states.   The percent uninsured for the EMA was 29.7% and 28.7% for the overall HSDA.

- Of all the EMA/HSDA counties, Chambers and Fort Bend counties had the lowest percentage of uninsured residents (22.8% each).

- Harris County (31.3%) and Waller County (31.0%) had the highest percentage of uninsured residents.

Table 10: Uninsured Residents, Houston EMA/HSDA, 2007

County	Population	Uninsured #	Uninsured %
Chambers	26,546	6,064	22.8%
Fort Bend	494,674	112,590	22.8%
Harris	3,650,262	1,141,903	31.3%
Liberty	62,700	16,102	25.7%
Montgomery	389,585	97,892	25.1%
Waller	29,550	9,167	31.0%
EMA Total	4,653,317	1,383,718	29.7%
Austin	22,985	6,248	27.2%
Colorado	16,276	4,709	28.9%
Walker	40,402	11,969	29.6%
Wharton	35,014	9,937	28.4%
HSDA Total	114,677	32,863	28.7%
Texas Total	21,504,681	5,765,132	26.8%
Source: SAHIE/State and County by Demographic and Income Characteristics/2007, released July 2010.			