Nearly 3,000 people in Atchison County struggle to get enough food to eat. At times, they’re forced to make difficult choices between feeding their families and paying their rent.

Catholic Charities of Northeast Kansas is here to help. Our Atchison Emergency Assistance Center (EAC) is available to low-income individuals and families who need food or assistance with basic utility payments, housing, clothing or medical prescriptions.

The help goes beyond meeting immediate needs. An on-site case manager works to identify solutions and resources that will lead to long-term change.

GIVING HOPE. GIVING HELP.

Although Catholic Charities had been serving Atchison and the surrounding area, it was determined that an on-site EAC could more directly meet the communities’ needs. In November 2013, we opened an office in a small space, using a closet to serve as the food pantry. As the demand for services grew, so did the need for a larger place. In February 2016, the EAC moved locations. Still nestled in the downtown community, the EAC now occupies an office that allows for a walk-thru pantry and spacious meeting rooms.

This past fiscal year, our Atchison EAC experienced a **35% increase** in the number of unduplicated individuals served. Housing and food assistance **more than doubled**, while utility aid and financial education **quadrupled**.

We could not assist our neighbors in need without the support and generosity of individuals, businesses, parishes and foundations who step up to organize food drives, make gifts-in-kind, volunteer in our food pantry and make financial contributions. We are truly blessed.
Atchison Programs & Services

**FOOD PANTRY**
We value the dignity of those we serve, offering a self-shopping food pantry. Every 30 days, shoppers may pick items appropriate for their families’ dietary and cultural needs, choosing from a variety of high-quality, perishable and non-perishable foods including fresh fruits and vegetables. Every day, we offer bread to anyone who comes into our EAC in need of food. We also carry a limited selection of personal care items in our pantry including shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toilet paper, diapers, deodorant and laundry detergent.

**CLOTHING ASSISTANCE**
We provide gently used clothing through either an on-site clothing closet or vouchers to local thrift stores. Items may include pants, shirts and shoes to meet the needs of those who require an outfit for a job interview; back-to-school wear for their children; or seasonal items to stay warm or keep cool.

**FINANCIAL EDUCATION**
We provide basic financial education and offer budget coaching and guidance on topics including starting a debt reduction plan, establishing a relationship with a banking institution and applying for available resources. We also offer Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) to those who meet income qualifications or persons with disabilities. Volunteers are IRS-certified and provide free, basic tax preparation.

**CASE MANAGEMENT**
We resolve not only emergency needs, but have case managers who work one-on-one to identify long-term solutions that lead to self-sufficiency.

**NUTRITION EDUCATION**
We offer either a single or series of nutrition classes using ingredients available in our food pantry to assist families with meals that are nutritious and affordable. These on-site classes are taught by K-State Extension Services, Harvesters, Just Food or our case manager. Samples may be on-hand for taste tests following a cooking demonstration. Recipes are available to recreate the dish at home.

**EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT**
We post job openings, assist with job searches and access to transportation, as well as make direct referrals to hiring companies. We also offer interview tips and guidance about how to dress for success.

**HOUSING ASSISTANCE**
We assist those who may be, or who are at risk for, experiencing homelessness, directing them to community partners who can provide transitional and rapid rehousing support.

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**
We help with basic utility and rent payments; vital prescriptions; and medical supply expenses. Also, we screen for safety net programs such as SNAP (food stamps) and WIC (Women Infants Children).