A SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR STATE CSBG OFFICES

NASCSP | NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR STATE COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMS

A SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR STATE CSBG OFFICES

INTRODUCTION: This assessment tool is designed to help State CSBG Offices assess themselves in the area of Regulatory Compliance, Program and Grant Management, Internal Controls, and much more. This tool will allow States to take an in-depth look at their internal policies and procedures and identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.

It consists of two assessment tools. Part 1 is a checklist covering regulations and management of a state office. Part 2 takes a somewhat broader viewpoint and is intended to provide the user with an assessment of his/her office's capacity to implement a high quality Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Program. Part 2 also includes resources, policies and practices that have proven to contribute to the implementation of a sound, performance-oriented program.

SELF-ASSESSEMENT TOOL FOR STATE CSBG OFFICES: PART 1 State Office Regulations and Management

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE AND MANAGEMENT	Links	Obtained Yes=Y	Comments
All state level staff should be familiar with and have easy access to the following:			
CSBG federal legislation	CSBG Statute		
Any state level CSBG legislation and other legislation or regulations governing non-profits.	State statutes, rules and codes.		
CSBG Organizational Standards: The standards are designed to ensure that CSBG Eligible Entities (CEEs) have the capacity to provide high-quality services to low income families and communities. Information Memorandum # 138 provides direction to States, the District of Columbia, U.S. Territories, and CEEs on establishing organizational standards.	IM 138 State Establishment of Organizational Standards		
State Accountability Measures: The State accountability measures capture performance data about the critical activities and functions performed at the State level. They indicate how efficiently and effectively a State implements the activities described in their State plan, and what impact the State's efforts have on the performance of local eligible entities.	IM 144 State and Federal Accountability Measures		

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REGULATORY COMPLIANCE AND MANAGEMENT	Links	Obtained Yes=Y No=N	Comments
American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI): Your state's results of the most recent ACSI survey. States are expected to share the survey results with their local agencies and use the survey information, in collaboration with CSBG Eligible Entities, to identify improvement strategies for meeting specific State Accountability Measures.	IM 150 Use of the American Customer Satisfaction Index		
Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Uniform Guidance: There are a few areas of conflict among the Uniform Guidance and the CSBG legislation. Legislative provisions generally take precedence over OMB guidance. However it is recommended that when such conflicts are noted, the OCS Information Memoranda or federal OCS staff should be consulted.	Uniform Guidance		

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Information Memoranda from the Office of Community Services (OCS): An Information Memoranda (IM) provides guidance to assist in implementing the CSBG legislation, program instruction and policy clarification, in addition to disseminating information and program practices to stakeholders. Some of the IMs are referenced in this document as appropriate. Other IMs to pay attention to are listed below and can be found in the link to the right. • IM # 152 CSBG Annual Report • IM # 151 CSBG Training and Technical Assistance • IM # 123 Reorganization of CSBG T/TA Resources – A New Strategy for Excellence • IM # 116 Corrective Action, Termination, or Reduction of Funding • IM # 102 CSBG Monitoring Checklist • IM # 82 Tripartite Boards • IM # 49 Program Challenges, Responsibilities and Strategies, FY 2001-2003 • IM # 37 Definition and Allowability of Direct and Administrative Cost Block Appropriation and Allocations	CSBG Information Memoranda		

REGULATORY COMPLIANCE AND MANAGEMENT	Resource Documents Location	Obtained Yes=Y No=N	Comments
The state's formula used to allocate the 90% CSBG funds among CAAs. This document should illustrate how allocations are calculated and include the current and prior year's allocation by CAA. Commonly, funds are allocated by states based upon the numbers of low-income persons or unemployed in the CAA service areas or other similar factors.	The formula may be identified in state statute. Information also may also be in the CSBG State Plan.		

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The approved CSBG state plan and assurances. The state plan is submitted either on an annual or biannual basis to HHS/OCS through the On-Line Data Collection (OLDC) by September 1st of each year.	OLDC CSBG Model State Plan CSBG Assurances		
Financial reports (SF425) and program reports submitted to OCS/HHS. SF425 is due annually after the end of the program year.	Form SF-425		
The most recent state submission of the NASCSP CSBG Information Survey (IS) submitted by the state to NASCSP each year by March 31. In 2017 and 2018 states submit Module 1 of the CSBG Annual Report in OLDC. In 2019, the IS will be replaced by the CSBG Annual Report.	CSBG IS Survey IM 152 Annual Report Annual Report Resources		
Copy of the state's "boilerplate" grant contract. This is the standard language the state uses in all of its CSBG contracts. These are usually based upon a standard set of administrative requirements set by each state and may vary from state to state.			

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COMMUNICATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE TO THE COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES AND OTHER CSBG GRANTEES		
Memorandums, Directives, Guidelines, and Procedures. Various standardized methods or tools are used by state offices for the purposes of communicating policies, procedures and similar information to CAAs. Memorandums or other tools should be prepared by state staff, however states may select to use OCS issued Information Memoranda. Compliance with these policies would be a standard provision in each CSBG grant contract. Individual memorandums should be issued on an as needed basis. The number and type of memorandums will vary from state to state depending on each state's policies, procedures and methodology for management of the CSBG. CSBG directives, memos, guidelines, procedures etc. may cover some of the following topics:		
COMMUNICATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE TO THE COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES AND OTHER CSBG GRANTEES	**Describe Current Practice**	**Comments**
A. Private CAA Board Composition: Non–profit CAA board composition requirements and board functions and responsibilities. Guidelines could address the policy role of the board and principles of care, loyalty and obedience and include requirements for meetings, written by-laws, conflicts of interest policies, orientation of new members and regular training of all members. (*See IM 82 Tripartite Boards and IM 138 State Establishment of Organizational Standards)		
B. Public CAA Board Composition: Public CAA board composition requirements and board functions and responsibilities. This should include the role of the board in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of local CSBG programs as specified in the federal CSBG legislation. (*See IM 82 Tripartite Boards and IM 138 State Establishment of Organizational Standards)		
C. Contract Modification Procedures: Provide and communicate procedures to secure approval of contract amendments, modifications or changes in budget line items. These procedures should cover any limitations on the number of changes during a contract period, the extent of line item flexibility, and any deadlines for submission and other procedural guidelines.		

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COMMUNICATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE TO THE COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES AND OTHER CSBG GRANTEES	Describe Current Practice	Comments
D. Invoicing and Requests for Payment instructions. Provide a process and policies for CAAs and other grantees to use to invoice for grant funds. Include requests for advance payments, deadlines for final invoices, allowable costs, line item flexibility, and recovery of costs after a contract is closed (if you want to allow this). Emphasize the timely submission of invoices and the need to allow adequate time to process the invoice.		
E. Funding Termination and Reductions. Establish and communicate procedures for termination or reduction of CSBG funding to eligible entities in accordance with the CSBG Act.		
F. Designation and Re-designation of Eligible Entities. Establish and communicate procedures for designating eligible entities in accordance with the CSBG Act.		
G. Administrative Costs. Define administrative costs and set limits on them. Consult the CSBG federal legislation and OCS IM 37. Some states link administrative cost ceilings to the amount of other funds leveraged with CSBG dollars. (*See IM 37 Definition and Allowability of Direct and Administrative Cost)		
H. Indirect Costs. Set procedures for the approval of indirect cost rates. Not all states approve indirect cost rates. Some states simply authorize the use of any federally approved rate that the CAA or other grantee may have secured. Bear in mind that indirect costs may or may not include administrative costs. Indirect cost rates are simply a means of apportioning shared costs among several programs. (*See OCS IM 20 A Discussion of Indirect Cost Rate Principles		

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COMMUNICATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE TO THE COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES AND OTHER CSBG GRANTEES	Describe Current Practice	Comments
I. Customer Privacy: Establish requirements to protect the privacy of CSBG customer information. This should be a written policy. It should state how access to customer information by unauthorized persons will be prevented. There are a variety of ways to do this depending on whether the information is stored in hard copy or electronically. An attorney should be consulted concerning the provisions of the Privacy Act that should be incorporated into this policy.		
J. Travel and Expense Reimbursement: If guidelines are set by the state for travel expense and cost reimbursement then written policies should be identified. Consult OMB Uniform Guidance. A suggested policy is to allow the CAA or other grantee to use its current policy, or if it is a public agency, the current state policy or a policy approved by the state. In any event this directive should require the CAAs to have written travel and expense reimbursement policies.		
K. Purchase or Permanent Improvement of Real Property: Discuss timing and under what circumstances the CAA or other grantee may request a waiver for the use of CSBG funds to purchase or undertake permanent improvements to real property. Discuss processing time required as you will need to get federal OCS approval to grant the request. It's suggested that you allow about 45 days for the federal response and add that to your own internal processing time. (* See IM 60 Duties and Interests with Respect to Property Purchased)		

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COMMUNICATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE TO THE COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES AND OTHER CSBG GRANTEES	Describe Current Practice	Comments
L. Personnel Policy: The Organizational Standards has requirements that private and public CAAs need to adhere to regarding personnel policy expectations. The state office can specify that the policies should also include such items as the rates of compensation for each staff position and other standard provisions such as equal employment, discipline, and grievance, job classifications, promotions, and similar provisions. (* See IM 138 State Establishment of Organizational Standards and the standards pertaining to Human Resources.)		
M. Client Eligibility Verification: Establish the client income eligibility level to be used statewide and what income eligibility documentation the state will accept to verify household income. The eligibility level must be based upon the federal poverty income guidelines. Many states use 125% of the federal poverty line, but the Act allows states discretionary to 100% FPL. Customer income eligibility should be updated yearly as the OMB poverty income levels are revised and released. (* See Client Eligibility by CAPLAW)		

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COMMUNICATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE TO THE COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES AND OTHER CSBG GRANTEES	Describe Current Practice	Comments
N. Conflict of Interest: The Organizational Standards require board members to sign a conflict of interest policy every two years. States can encourage CAAs to develop a similar policy for staff and volunteers. The policy should focus upon the prevention of self-dealing where an individual takes advantage of their position within the organization to enrich themselves or gain other advantage. (* See IM 138 State Establishment of Organizational Standards and the standards pertaining to Board Governance.)		
O. Political Activity: Establish an expectation that CAAs have a political activity policy that addresses partisan political activity and transporting voters to the polls. Consult Section 678F – (b) of the CSBG Act. (* See the CSBG Statute		
P. ROMA: Assist CAAs in incorporating the use of the full Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) cycle (assessment, planning, implementation, achievement of results, and evaluation). Identify the forms and reporting requirements the state has. State ROMA requirements should be based on the use of the National Indicators of Community Action Performance (NPI) and the reporting format states are required to use for the CSBG Annual Report. (* See IM 49 Program Challenges, Responsibilities and Strategies)		

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COMMUNICATING POLICY AND PROCEDURE TO THE COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES AND OTHER CSBG GRANTEES	Describe Current Practice	Comments
Q. Fidelity Bonds and Insurance: Establish requirements for fidelity bonds and liability insurance. This should include fidelity bonding for all persons involved with handling funds and executing financial transactions. Liability insurance should include directors and officers' insurance, volunteer and special event insurance, employment practices liability, and general liability at a minimum. Some agencies may want to carry other types of insurance that are specific to programs and activities. If there are CAAs in your state who self-insure, they should carry a policy to cover claims that exceed the funds set aside for such purposes. A general "rule of thumb" for health insurance is that self-insurance pools (one or a group of agencies) usually must encompass about 1,000 employees before substantial savings from self-insurance can be realized.		

INTERNAL CONTROL AND ACCOUNTABILITY	Current Practice	Comments
Progress Reports. The state should set a schedule for submission of progress reports. The reports should be based upon objectives set in the CAA's annual or multi-year Community Action Plan and describe the process leading to the achievement of ROMA outcomes.		
Outcome Reports. These reports should describe the ROMA based outcomes stated in the CAAs' annual or multi-year Community Action Plan. States will have varying requirements regarding how often the report should be submitted. These reports may be formatted to facilitate the preparation of a statewide outcomes report.		

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INTERNAL CONTROL AND ACCOUNTABILITY	Current	Comments
Monitoring: Monitoring should be seen as part of a process to strengthen CAAs. Monitoring should verify compliance with contracts and "directives", verify the validity of progress and outcome reports via review of source data. In assessing the health of an agency, state monitors should look at more than compliance with program rules and regulations. The monitoring process should include a system to document and inform the CAA of findings and deficiencies and identify and provide for training and technical assistance to CAAs and other grantees. Full on-site visits must be conducted at least once every three years at each CAA. Desk reviews may be conducted in between or in preparation for on-site reviews. A monitoring format should include basic procedures and forms plus a means for resolving findings and noting significant achievements. Monitoring findings from other programs should be utilized in the review of CAAs and other grantees The Organizational Standards can be used as a tool to inform the state monitoring process. (See NASCP [CSBG Monitoring Standards and Practices](#), [IM 138 State Establishment of Organizational Standards](#), and [IM 144 State and Federal Accountability Measures](#).)		
Monitoring Findings: Written procedures are in place and communicated to the network to resolve monitoring findings in a timely fashion. Generally, this should be regarded as achieving a resolution agreement within 90 days of the CAA receiving the monitoring report.		
Contractor Responsibility Checks: This is a check to make certain that the CAA or other CSBG grantee does not have unresolved audit findings, is not delinquent in paying state or local taxes and does not have other similar problems before a contract is executed. Some states have fully automated electronic systems that do this.		
Financial Audits: Generally speaking, these will fall under the Single Audit Act requirements. OMB Uniform Guidance should be consulted. A written procedure to resolve findings and disallowed costs should be transmitted to the CAAs. Procedures should generally include achieving a resolution within 90 days of written notice to the grantee.		

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It is recommended that the federal Government Accountability Office (GAO) publications entitled Standards for Internal Controls in the Federal Government GAO/AIMD-00-21.3.1 and Strategies to Manage Improper Payments"GAO-02-69G be reviewed. OMB Uniform Guidance should also be consulted. These documents, among other subjects, cover the following elements of internal control: creating a culture of accountability, assessing risks and their potential impacts, implementing oversight processes to insure that program objectives are met, using and sharing information stemming from oversight activities, tracking initiatives to improve programs and identifying steps to improve program efficiency and effectiveness. Basic accountability components used to implement these control elements include progress reporting, outcome reporting, on site monitoring, contractor responsibility checks and financial audits.

ALLOCATION OF CSBG FUNDS	Current Practice	Comments
Use of CSBG Funding: States must adhere to uses of CSBG funds established in the CSBG Act, not less than 90% of the funds made available to a state shall be used to make grants to eligible entities, the remainder can be used for statewide activities that may include training and technical assistance, coordination of services to low-income children and families, coordination and communication among eligible entities, support of asset-building programs, innovative programs, state charity tax credits and other activities consistent with the purposes of the CSBG Act. No state may spend more than the greater of $55,000 or 5% of the grant received for administrative expenses, including monitoring activities. (* See CSBG Statute)		
Public and Legislative Hearings. In accordance with CSBG Act requirements, conduct a public hearing to provide the public an opportunity for comment on the State CSBG Application and Plan and hold one legislative hearing every three - years in conjunction with development of the State Plan. (* See CSBG Statute and IM 144 State and Federal Accountability Measures.)		

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ALLOCATION OF CSBG FUNDS	Current Practice	Comments
Periodic Review of Allocation Procedures: A formal written procedure for the statewide allocation of CSBG funds to the CAAs should be periodically reviewed by the state level CSBG advisory committee or similar group. This procedure or formula should be committed to writing and kept as a permanent record in the state office.		
Timely Distribution of Funding: States should develop methods for allocating funds and contracts to CAAs within 30 calendar days after the federal award was provided, or consistently and without interruption. (* See IM 144 State and Federal Accountability Measures.)		
Timely Payments: Request for payment or invoices from CAAs are processed in a fashion that is reliable and predictable so that CAAs and other grantees can plan program activities.		

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Training and Technical Assistance
Section 678C of the Community Services Block Grant legislation requires that states provide technical assistance to CAAs to help in the correction of deficiencies before undertaking a reduction or termination of funding. Capacity for training and technical assistance is key to resolving monitoring and audit findings. It is recommended that this capacity be an ongoing part of the management of your state's CSBG program and not be something that is undertaken only in a time of crisis. Some useful approaches to implement capacity building efforts, include the following:

Training and Technical Assistance	Current Practice	Comments
Regular training of local CAA boards. Administrative and CSBG Discretionary Funds may be used for this.		
Training of selected state and CAA staff to serve as certified ROMA Trainers and Implementers.		
Development of a cadre of consultants that can be tapped to assist CAAs in trouble or undertaking significant agency improvement initiatives.		

Training and Technical Assistance	Current Practice	Comments
Annual statewide or regional training conferences hosted and/or supported by the state CSBG Offices.		
Scholarships for staff of small CAAs to attend statewide or national conferences.		
Support and collaboration for state Community Action associations to provide training, technical assistance, information, education, and advocacy on behalf of CAAs.		
Frequent informal meetings and discussions among the state CSBG manager and CAA executive directors, CAA boards, state Community Action association staff, and local stakeholders.		
Collaboration with national partners (NASCSP, CAP, CAPLAW, and NCAF) to provide training, technical assistance and resources.		

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State Partnerships/Linkages	Current Practice	Comments
Establish working relationships with other state agencies involved in complementary activities. This can involve serving on interdepartmental advisory or work groups, participating in professional associations and involving staff from other state agencies in a CSBG advisory group. In order to meet CSBG Legislative requirements, states should especially establish linkages with other low-income and anti-poverty governmental and social service programs. Consult Section 676.(b) (5) and (6) of the CSBG Act. CSBG Statute and IM 144 State and Federal Accountability Measures.)		

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SELF-ASSESSEMENT TOOL FOR STATE CSBG MANAGERS: PART 2

INTRODUCTION: The Community Services Block Grant with its fixed network of Community Action Agencies and program decisions vested in local boards poses some unique challenges for the state level management. Part 2 of this self-assessment focuses on resources and practices that can assist the CSBG offices in addressing those challenges in a way that **goes beyond compliance with federal regulatory requirements**. The objective here is to provide suggestions that will assist the **user in achieving not just compliance with regulations, but excellence**.

Six key areas are covered: Staff Resources, State Level Advisory Committee, Leadership Resources, Communication Tools and Resources, Information Technology Resources and Creating a Culture of Accountability and Performance. A list of recommended readings is also provided.

This self-assessment is not designed to provide a rating or score but rather to serve as a means of identifying those key management resources that may be strong, need improvement or missing. In the space provided after each category enter "S" if this is an area of strength, enter "I" if this resource is present but improvement is needed, and enter "M" if this resource is unavailable or not used. Upon completion those areas designated "M" should be your first priority for corrective action followed by those areas designated "I".

STAFF RESOURCES	S=Strength I=Improvement Needed M=Missing	Comments
Staffing Numbers. There is a sufficient number of staff to monitor all CAAs in the state adequately. Although federal requirements call for full on-site monitoring once every three years, such a long interval between site visits is generally not regarded as optimum for oversight and accountability. Many states monitor all of their CAAs once per year. The number, complexity and size of CAAs and the distances to be traveled for site visits vary greatly across the country. Further, the duties of staff assigned to monitor CAAs differ widely from state to state. This makes a single standard for how many staff are needed to monitor in a given state a bit difficult. However, one approach that may be useful is as follows:		

STAFF RESOURCES	S=Strength I=Improvement Needed M=Missing	Comments
1. Determine the average travel time to a CAA. 2. Estimate the average time needed to complete a monitoring site visit. 3. Determine the average time needed to prepare a monitoring report. 4. Estimate the average number of person hours devoted to resolving a monitoring finding and providing follow-up or technical assistance related to monitoring. 5. Add all these person hours up and multiply by the number of CAAs in your state to determine the number of full-time staff equivalents necessary to carry out the monitoring function. Additional staff may be needed to carry out other CSBG administrative functions. However, these vary so widely among the states that no specific standard is attempted here.		
Staff Hiring: Staff are recruited and employed via a system that complies with Uniform Guidance, Title 2 §200.430. Compensation—personal services: (f) "*Incentive compensation.* Incentive compensation to employees based on cost reduction, or efficient performance, suggestion awards, safety awards, etc., is allowable to the extent that the overall compensation is determined to be reasonable and such costs are paid or accrued pursuant to an agreement entered into in good faith between the non-Federal entity and the employees before the services were rendered, or pursuant to an established plan followed by the non-Federal entity so consistently as to imply, in effect, an agreement to make such payment."		

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STAFF RESOURCES	S=Strength I=Improvement Needed M=Missing	Comments
Staff Expertise: Staff working directly with CSBG have expertise in the following key areas: ▪ NASCSP Monitoring Standards or some equivalent set of policies and procedures. ▪ CSBG and state legislation and regulations. ▪ Basic non-profit board governance functions and board member roles and responsibilities. ▪ Knowledge of other common CAA programs outside of CSBG. These could include Head Start, Weatherization, The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). ▪ Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA). ▪ History and vision and values of Community Action. ▪ Grantsmanship, grant writing, grant review and funding resources. ▪ State and IRS regulations concerning fundraising by non-profits. ▪ State and federal regulations concerning lobbying and political activities by non-profits and local government agencies. ▪ Monitoring procedures established at the state level. ▪ Content of the state CSBG plan. ▪ Content of the CSBG Annual Report. ▪ Content of the state CSBG contract format. ▪ State CSBG processes and procedures related to contracts and reimbursement of costs.		

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STAFF RESOURCES	S=Strength I=Improvement Needed M=Missing	Comments
Staff Training: Staff working with CSBG receive training and information in the areas identified above. CSBG staff regularly attend local, state, regional and national conferences to stay current on issues related to CAAs and CSBG. State staff have opportunities to participate in local, statewide, regional and national activities including NASCSP, NCAF, CAP, and/or CAPLAW trainings and other job growth activities such as Certified ROMA Trainer or ROMA Implementer and Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP). State administrative dollars may be budgeted for professional development opportunities such as these.		
Poverty: Staff have access to and are knowledgeable about basic facts and statistics regarding poverty in the state. For example, such information as the number of low income households, the racial and ethnic make-up of those households, where there are concentrations of poverty and the common causes of poverty in the state. (*For an example of a resource, please see Census-Poverty)		
Fiscal Management: Staff have a basic understanding of the elements of internal fiscal controls and the budgeting process. Audits and procedures for resolving audit findings. Staff should be knowledgeable regarding the Uniform Guidance.		

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STATE LEVEL ADVISORY COMMITTEE	S=Strength I=Improvement Needed M=Missing	Comments
Advisory Committee: An advisory committee (or a similar group) has been formed that is composed of CAA staff, staff from other state or federal agencies, low-income persons and other stakeholders. Some states may select to use existing groups such as CAA directors association. Minimally this group reviews CSBG operations, proposed "directives", reviews the responses to the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), makes recommendations for the CSBG State Plan, and reviews and signs off on the final Plan to be submitted to OCS.		

LEADERSHIP RESOURCES		
Leadership Resources: These are assets and practices used primarily by the senior managers of the state CSBG office. Leadership is difficult to define but the following assets and practices are characteristic of effective CSBG managers:		

LEADERSHIP RESOURCES	S=Strength I=Improvement Needed M=Missing	Comments
• **Action Oriented:** The CSBG office has effective managers who actively seek out problems and facilitate solutions. These solutions may arise from formal procedures that the manager has established or from informal relationships he/she has worked out with other staff and managers in the bureaucracy. The end result is a capacity to respond to the unexpected effectively and efficiently.		

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LEADERSHIP RESOURCES	S=Strength I=Improvement Needed M=Missing	Comments
• **Communicate Effectively:** The state CSBG manager has an ability to frame both problems and solutions in such a way as to gain support from superiors and has the ability to convey information, policy changes and solicit feedback with internal staff members. Additionally, the manager has an ability to speak well before groups outside the agency and to explain the work of CAAs effectively to the public.		
• **CSBG Discretionary Funds are used to build the Capacity of the CAA network.** CAA funds are used to leverage other local, state and federal funds, to train CAA staff and board members, to provide training and technical assistance to CAAs and to help build the capacity of CAAs to address state priorities.		
• **Establish Goals:** The state office regularly sets outcome goals and communicates these goals to staff and to the CAAs where appropriate.		
• **Well Informed:** Staff are well informed and regularly visit key websites such as NASCSP, NCAF, CAP, CAPLAW, OCS and ROMA and are up-to-date on issues and concerns in the community, state and country.		
• **Experience:** The most effective managers often have a great deal of experience in the field. Community Action is complex and multi-disciplinary. Consequently, it has a long learning curve.		

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COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Information should move promptly within the state office and where appropriate out to the CAA network. This encompasses both informal and formal communication – that is discussion and consultation (informal) and transmission of policy, procedure and decisions (formal). Systems should be in place to facilitate and support communication. These systems should include:

COMMUNICATION TOOLS AND RESOURCES	S=Strength I=Improvement Needed M=Missing	Comments
• **Communication:** A variety of methods are used to keep state office staff informed and updated. Regular meetings of state office staff are held. If the state office has field offices where monitors or other staff are stationed, these staff are conferenced by phone not less than monthly and brought into the central office for face to face discussions three to four times per year. The use of consistent email communication is helpful to keep all state CSBG staff informed.		
• **Partnerships and Networks.** Senior state managers develop formal and informal discussion networks with CAAs and with managers of other state and federal programs to identify problems, prevent duplication and develop ways to improve program coordination. (See Part II Leadership Resources)		
• **State Memorandums/Directives**. A system of signed, dated and numbered policy memorandums, directives, policy manuals are issued as needed to transmit policy and procedure to CAAs and other grantee agencies. (See Part 1)		
• **Conferences**. State staff regularly attend statewide or regional (multi-state) training conferences. Generally these are held annually. (See Part II Staff Resources)		

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES	S=Strength I=Improvement Needed M=Missing	Comments
Hardware: All state staff is equipped with computers and internet access.		
Software: All state staff are trained and re-trained as necessary on the use of software used in the state office and commonly used among the CAAs.		
Electronic Reporting: Written minimum standards for computers and software have been issued to the CAAs to facilitate electronic program and fiscal reporting.		
Electronic Reporting: CAAs are able to complete and submit required reports to the state office electronically.		
Support for Use of Technology: CAA use of computers and electronic information technology is strongly encouraged by the state office and supported with special grants if necessary and training and technical assistance.		

CREATING A CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE		
All of the items listed above helps to create a culture of accountability and performance. Some additional steps that add to the development of such a culture are:		
CREATING A CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE	S=Strength I=Improvement Needed M=Missing	Comments

• **Recognition**. An awards program that publicly recognizes outstanding performance and achievement.		
• **Training and Technical Assistance:** There is an on-going and well-funded training and technical assistance effort to build the capacity of CAAs. This includes support for peer to peer technical assistance between CAAs, formal training and the use of national partners and consultants.		
• **Communication:** Informal meetings are held between senior state staff and local CAA staff where problems and expectations are discussed.		
• **Experienced and Trained Staff:** State staff are well trained and well informed. See Part II Staff Resources, Staff Expertise.		
• **Best Practices Dissemination:** There are opportunities for peer networking and sharing of best practices at conferences and meetings with CAAs.		
• **Feedback from CAAs:** State office staff utilize the results of the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) to improve and enhance services to CAAs. State offices also develop their own methods to solicit input from CAAs and other grantees.		
• **Speedy Resolution of Problems:** The state office staff promptly and decisively resolve monitoring and audit findings. Technical assistance and training is the first response, except where criminal behavior may be involved. Technical assistance should be followed by further interventions as necessary.		

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SUGGESTED READING:

Scarcity. Sendhil Mullainathan and Eldar Shafir

Good to Great. James C. Collins

Trying Hard Is Not Good Enough. Mark Friedman

The Leader Who Had No Title. Robin Sharma

Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis. Robert D. Putnam

Mindset: The New Psychology of Success. Carol S. Dweck

Managing the Non-Profit Organization, Principles and Practices. Peter F. Drucker,

Rules for Radicals, Saul D. Alinsky. Read chapter entitled "In the Beginning"

The Revolt of the Elites", Christopher Lasch. Read part 1 entitled "The Intensification of Social Divisions"

The End of Equality. Mickey Kaus Read chapters 3 and 4.

Democracy's Discontent. Michael Sandel. Read "Conclusion: In Search of a Public Philosophy."

The Wealth and Poverty of Nations. David S. Landes. Read chapter 29 "How Did We Get Here? Where Are We Going".

Banishing Bureaucracy. David Osborne and Peter Plastrik. Read Chapter 8 "The Culture Strategy".

Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities. Ruby K. Payne, Philip Devol, Terie Dreussi Smith.

Communication Across Barriers

The Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP)