



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR STATE COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMS

CSBG Supplemental: Processes & Plans

April 15, 2020

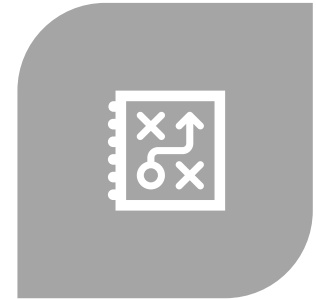
AGENDA



OCS GUIDANCE



**CARES ACT
SUPPLEMENTAL**



**PLANNING &
STRATEGIES**



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Office of Community Services | 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20201
www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs

**Community Services Block Grant
Information Memorandum**

IM#: [CSBG-IM-2020-157]
DATE: April 13, 2020
TO: [Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) State Officials and Program Contacts and other CSBG Stakeholders]
SUBJECT: [CSBG Immediate Guidance on COVID-19 Response]
ATTACHMENT(S): [None]

INTRODUCTION

This document provides emergency guidance for both state CSBG lead agencies and eligible entities providing community support as part of a national effort to address the public health and economic impacts of the coronavirus disease, known as COVID-19.

The Office of Community Services (OCS), within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), is committed to ongoing partnership with state CSBG lead agencies, eligible entities, and other agencies to address the unique and widespread impacts of this national emergency. CSBG eligible entities—more commonly known as Community Action Agencies (CAAs)—can play a critical role in serving low-income individuals and families in communities, but this will require rapid adaptation of service delivery approaches in close partnership with public health and emergency management professionals within communities. Because the public health response to COVID-19 requires physical and social distancing, an effective immediate response to COVID-19 will require new ways of organizing and delivering services while maintaining capacity to help communities in longer-term recovery efforts.


IMMEDIATE PRIORITIES

- ***Protecting the Health and Well-Being of Staff*** – OCS recognizes that state and local CSBG staff members responsible for planning and providing community services are also personally affected by the direct and indirect effects of the COVID-19 outbreak and efforts to slow transmission (such as physical and social distancing measures, temporary

CSBG IM #157

CSBG IM #157 Key Guidance:

- CSBG grantees can charge salaries and benefits to CSBG awards consistent with the recipients' policies
- Encourages State CSBG Lead Agencies to expedite reprogramming of existing CSBG funds and the release of both regular CSBG and CARES Act funding where possible;
- Encourages State CSBG Lead Agencies to reduce short-term administrative burden for themselves and eligible entities to ensure attention is focused on responding to immediate community needs; and
 - Postpone monitoring visits
 - Relax eligibility procedures
- Affirms that the federal poverty line amendment to 200% for eligibility determination applies to CSBG services provided in FFY 2020 and 2021- including regular and supplemental CSBG allocations.



Polling Question-
Will your state
increase the
eligibility
threshold to
200% FPL?

Upcoming Guidance

- OCS will release further guidance, including:
 - A DCL detailing CARES Act allocations and guidance on next steps for funding
 - Will include earliest date eligible for reimbursement
 - A Q&A Document
 - An IM providing more specific CSBG Guidance

CSBG CARES Act Supplemental: Funding

- CSBG is receiving a \$1 billion supplemental allocation from the CARES Act to “Help, prevent, prepare, and respond to Coronavirus”
- States should prepare to administer the CSBG Supplemental quickly, as funds are coming by the end of next week (April 24, 2020)
- OCS will distribute funds in a single lump-sum utilizing the normal allocation formula



CSBG CARES Act Supplemental: Requirements

- Regular CSBG Act requirements apply, except:
 - Increases eligibility threshold to 200% FPL; and
 - Funds can be carried forward and expended for an additional year.
 - All CARES Act funds must be obligated by agencies by September 30, 2022
- States should distribute funds utilizing their existing allocation formula
 - States must pass through 90% of funds to local entities
 - States can utilize up to 5% or \$55k for state administration
 - States may utilize the remainder for discretionary projects

CARES Act- State Plans

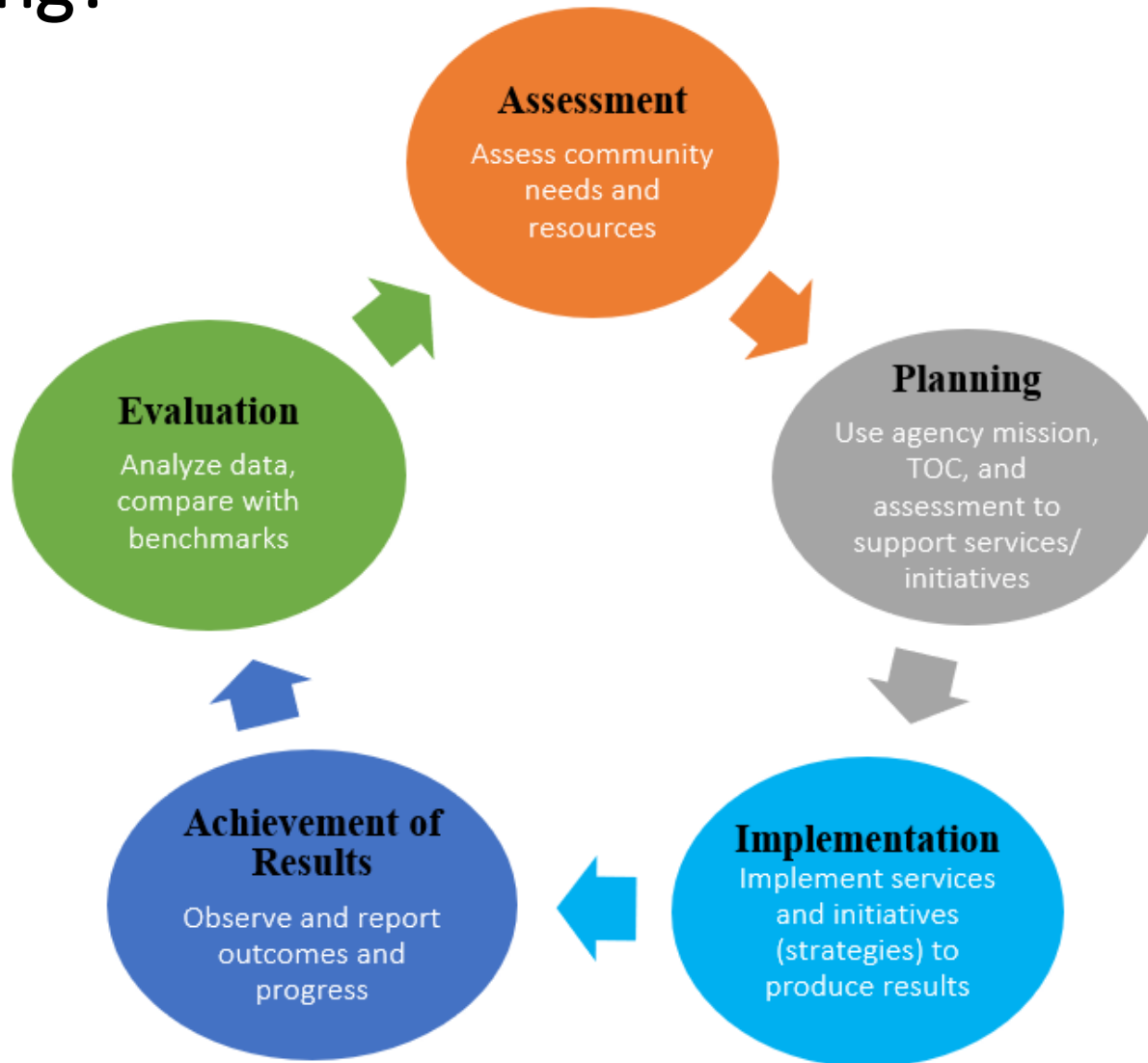
- States should expect to complete a streamlined state plan to receive CARES Act Funds.
 - States will not update their existing state plan unless changing their proportional share in their allocations.
- **States will receive funding prior to submitting the state plan.**
- Consider– how will you submit a state plan in OLDC in a remote environment?



Distributing Funds to Local Agencies

- **States will be expected to get funds to locals with 2 – 4 weeks of receipt.**
 - What will it take for this to happen?
- States should consider those processes necessary to allocate funds to local entities while assuring accountability, including:
 - Community Action Plans based on Needs Assessment priorities
 - Contract processes & requirements
- Funds must be tracked separately.

How Should Agencies Approach CARES Funding?



Needs Assessment: Potential Options

- Scaled-back assessment that focuses on readily-available sources:
 - Agency service data
 - Data on COVID Impacts
 - Data from 211 or other government sources
 - Additional Resources coming into the community from CARES or other COVID-related relief efforts
- Analyze & prioritize needs through lens of agency Mission, Strategic Plan, Theory of Change
- **Keep it Simple**



Community Assessment Tools

UPDATE TEMPLATE
& DATA RESOURCE GUIDE

APRIL 14, 2020

NATIONAL COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP
www.communityactionpartnership.com/HCCT

https://communityactionpartnership.com/publication_toolkit/covid-19-community-assessment-update-template-data-resource-guide/

The CSBG Act Requires Community Action Plans



- Per the CSBG Act, in order for an agency to receive 90% funds, they must submit a Community Action Plan.
- There is limited guidance in the Act on requirements for CAP plans. States develop their own requirements for these plans.
 - States do not have the authority to direct how agencies how to spend 90% funds. 90% funds should be allocated and spent in accordance with the Community Needs Assessment.

CAP Plans: What to Include

Description of programs funded with CARES Funds, based on needs

- Description of strategies, partners, program structure
- Description of how programs and services relate to the purpose of the funds: to help, prevent, prepare, and respond to Coronavirus

Budget for CARES funding

- Use existing format if appropriate to keep it simple for agencies.

Projections for services and outcomes



Flexibility is Key

- Focus on plan as an opportunity to think strategically about how agencies will respond
- Changes to the needs, plans, targets are likely
 - Develop a quick and easy process to allow for amendment that embraces a continuous learning process & documents lessons learned
 - IE, develop a check in process to update the plan

Strategies to Get Funds Moving Quickly

- **States will be expected to get funds to locals with 2 – 4 weeks of receipt.**
- Begin working through state administrative processes now, including:
 - Allocating funds in contracts
 - Governor or Legislature Acceptance/Approval
- Send out CAP plan templates now
- If possible, allocate funds in the contract prior to receipt of CAP plans and needs assessments
 - Require CAP plan/assessment to receive reimbursement or advance





Tools and Resources



ABOUT

Coronavirus Resources



Statement From NASCSPP on Coronavirus (COVID-19)

We understand that State CSBG and WAP Offices may be concerned with preparing for the coronavirus: as employers, service providers, and community leaders. NASCSPP is supporting state CSBG and WAP offices as they work to respond to the emerging needs of their state networks and follow state level directives coming out of governors' offices and state departments of health. NASCSPP is also in direct contact with federal staff at the Office of Community Services (OCS) and Department of Energy (DOE) in order to monitor and quickly disseminate federal guidance for state grantees. NASCSPP will continue to work closely with the national partners and state associations to ensure we provide the critical information and services needed in our network during this time. We are here to help – for anything related to WAP state offices please contact [Amy Klusmeier](#), and for CSBG state offices please contact [Maribeth Schneber-Rhemrev](#).

NASCSP COVID 19 FAQ

COVID-19 FAQ for CSBG

NASCSP is aware of the unique challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and is here to support your state and networks as you respond. NASCSP is working with OCS and the National Partners to develop tools, resources, guidance, and support for you. This document is one tool you can use to find answers to commonly asked questions about CSBG in relation to COVID-19. This document will be updated regularly as additional guidance and information become available.

Can the CSBG eligibility requirements be adjusted?

The 125% of the Federal Poverty Level is a statutory requirement and therefore cannot be waived by state offices. However, states may revise eligibility documentation requirements or calculation methodologies. See CAPLAW's [publication on client eligibility](#) for additional considerations. [CSBG IM #154](#) also provides guidance to states on revising eligibility criteria in times of crisis or disaster.

Will CSBG receive additional federal allocations to respond to COVID-19?

There is potential that CSBG may receive supplemental funding. While specific details and timelines are not yet available, typically supplemental funds are allocated by Congress with a clear intended purpose, and then the funds would be able to be used just like normal CSBG for that purpose. Typically, supplementals follow all normal funding rules unless Congress specifies otherwise. We will keep you posted as this unfolds.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING

CSBG

ABOUT CSBG

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) provides critical funding to combat the causes and conditions of poverty in every state and 99% of America's counties. This highly flexible and critical funding supports CSBG Eligible Entities (also known as Community Action Agencies) who are on the front lines of responding to America's COVID-19 pandemic.

CSBG FUNDS

CSBG Eligible Entities in your state use CSBG on critical poverty-fighting activities and to serve as conveners and leaders in community initiatives to address the root causes of poverty.

Community Action Agencies

- Hubs for diverse programs & services
- Tailored to local community needs
- Brought together under CSBG



CSBG COVID-19 SUPPLEMENTAL ALLOCATION

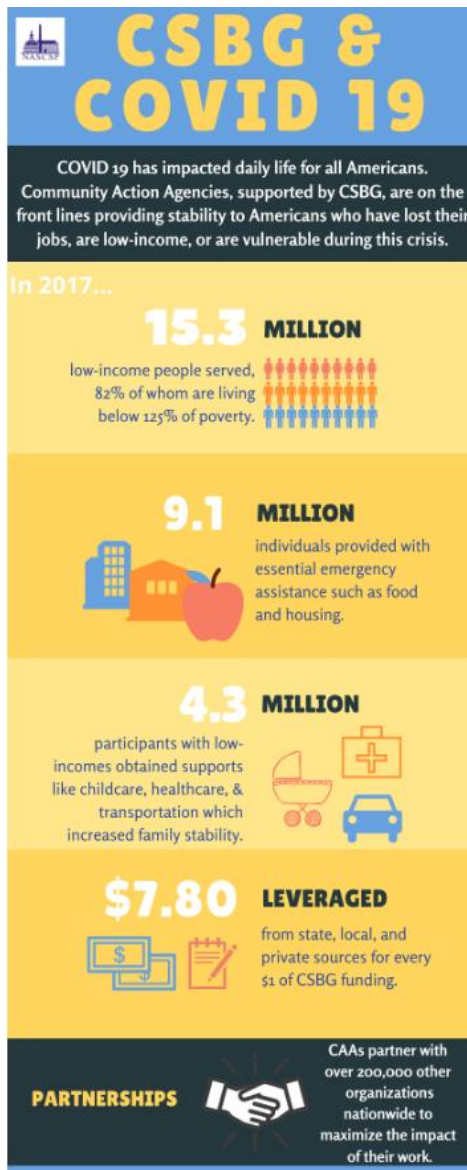
The CSBG Network received a \$1 billion supplemental appropriation in the CARES Act to enhance poverty-fighting efforts at this critical time. These funds will help your state respond to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on people with low incomes.

Per the CSBG Act, states are required to pass through 90% of their allocation to local CSBG Eligible Entities. States may retain up to 5% of their award for state administration costs and may use any remaining funds for discretionary projects that align with the purposes of CSBG.

Typically CSBG can serve individuals whose incomes are up to 125% of the federal poverty line. With the CSBG Supplemental Appropriation, agencies can serve individuals up to 200% of the federal poverty line.

CSBG Supplemental funds are available for expenditure through September 30, 2022.

NASCSP
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR STATE COMMUNITY SERVICES PROGRAMS



THE CSBG Program in 2017



Employment

6.5 million participants gained employment or work supports

The number of individuals experiencing greater income from employment **increased by 13%** from FFY 2016.



Community

41 million volunteer hours donated to CAAs, valued over \$1 billion of volunteers time

Over 300 thousand low income individuals were mobilized toward community empowerment through participating in decision-making and policy setting, business and home ownership, or other community involvement



Housing

180,515 low-income people obtained safe and affordable housing.

128,339 existing housing units improved or preserved through construction, weatherization, or rehabilitation, and **18,509** safe and affordable housing units were created



Education

114,228 Educational and training placement opportunities for low-income people created, expanded, or saved from elimination

13,109 low-income people completed Adult Basic Education (ABE) or General Educational Development (GED) coursework



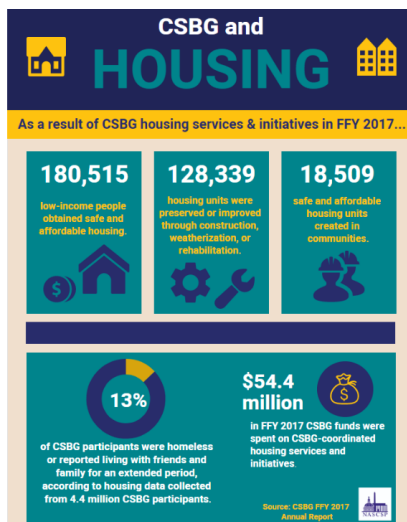
Health

425,445 low-income people obtained health care services for themselves or a family member

2.6 million low-income people obtained food assistance.



Source: CSBG FFY 2017 Annual Report



Discussion

