

# Arkansas Department of Human Services

## Request for Application

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### Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Discretionary Funds Solicitation

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#### IMPORTANT DATES

Release Date for Application      DATE xxx

**APPLICATION DUE DATE:**      September 26, 2019, no later than 4:30 pm

**Amount of Community Services Block Grant Discretionary Funds to be awarded:**  
**\$507,572.00**

**Project Start Date:** To be announced

**Questions must be posted to:** [www.http://humanservices.arkansas.gov](http://humanservices.arkansas.gov)

**Questions must be received by:** September 24, 2019

**FAQ will be updated daily**

General Program Information/Inquiry:	Application Submission:
ATTN: Beverly Buchanan, CSBG Manager Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of County Operations/Office of Community Services PO Box 1437, Slot S-330 Little Rock, AR 72203-1437  E-mail: <a href="mailto:Beverly.Buchanan@dhs.arkansas.gov">Beverly.Buchanan@dhs.arkansas.gov</a>	ATTN: Lorie Williams, Assistant Director Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of County Operations/Office of Community Services PO Box 1437, Slot S-330 Little Rock, AR 72203-1437  E-mail: <a href="mailto:lorie.williams@dhs.arkansas.gov">lorie.williams@dhs.arkansas.gov</a>

## I. Introduction and Background Information

### A. Overview and Statutory Authority

Pursuant to authority under §676A(a) of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Act, as amended, by the Community Opportunities, Accountability, and Training, and Educational Services (Coats) Human Services Reauthorization Act of 1998, (Public Law (PL) 105-285), the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of County Operations, Office of Community Services announces that competing applications will be accepted to award the Discretionary portion of FY 2019 and FY 2020 funds. These awards will commence during Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2020.

Community Services Block Grant is a federal block grant created by Congress in 1981 to alleviate poverty nationwide and empower low-income individuals and families to move from poverty to economic self-sufficiency. In the State of Arkansas, the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of County Operations, Office of Community Services (DHS/DCO/OCS) is responsible for CSBG administration, which includes allocation, distribution, and monitoring of funds.

Under the CSBG Act, the state may utilize five (5) percent of the federal allocation as discretionary funding to support a wide range of activities and programs conducted by community action agencies or other non-profit organizations to eliminate poverty, promote self-sufficiency, and promote community revitalization. Additionally, the funds may be used to provide training and technical assistance for and support coordination and communication among community action agencies.

DHS/DCO/OCS seeks applicants able to provide services that address the CSBG legislative assurances for low-income individuals, families, and communities in all seventy-five counties in Arkansas and will accept applications from organizations meeting the below qualifications.

#### **Eligible Applicants:**

Entities eligible to apply include Community Action Agencies, and other nonprofit organizations that serve or target individuals and families that have incomes at or below 125% of poverty. Other nonprofit organizations must also support and serve the Arkansas Community Action Agencies. The applicant's proposed program must display measurable outcomes which help families and individuals move toward self-sufficiency or the role that a request for technology upgrades will play in achieving those outcomes.

The applicant may propose creating new programs, expanding existing programs, or expanding programs in collaboration with other area providers to provide comprehensive services. **The total amount of Community Services Block Grant Discretionary funds expected to be allocated is \$ 507,572.00. The length of the proposed projects or activities can cover either 12 months, or 24 months.** Continued funding under this Solicitation is based on the allocation of Community Services Block Grant funding to the State of Arkansas, compliance with contractual requirements, and compliance with the terms of the CSBG Act (42 USC 9901, et seq).

## **B. Community Services Block Grant Purposes and Goals (§672)**

**Purpose:** CSBG funds are appropriated to provide assistance to States and local communities, working through a network of eligible entities), for the reduction of poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities, and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas to become fully self-sufficient (particularly families who are attempting to transition off a State program carried out under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 USC 601 et seq.)); and,

The goals are accomplished through:

- (A) *the strengthening of community capabilities for planning and coordinating the use of a broad range of Federal, State, local, and other assistance (including private resources) related to the elimination of poverty, so that this assistance can be used in a manner responsive to local needs and conditions;*
- (B) *the organization of a range of services related to the needs of low-income families and individuals, so that these services may have a measurable and potentially major impact on the causes of poverty in the community and may help the families and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency;*
- (C) *the greater use of innovative and effective community-based approaches to attacking the causes and effects of poverty and of community breakdown;*
- (D) *the maximum participation of residents of the low-income communities and members of the groups served by programs assisted through the block grants made under this subtitle to empower such residents and members to respond to the unique problems and needs within their communities; and*
- (E) *the broadening of the resource base of programs directed to the elimination of poverty so as to secure a more active role in the provision of services for—*
  - i. *private, religious, charitable, and neighborhood-based organizations; and*
  - ii. *Individual citizens, and business, labor, and professional groups, who are able to influence the quantity and quality of opportunities and services for the poor.*

## **C. CSBG Program Assurances (§676A(b)a-c, (4))**

(1)... funds made available through the grant or allotment will be used –

- (A) *to support activities that are designed to assist low-income families and individuals, including families and individuals receiving assistance under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 USC 601 et seq.), homeless families and individuals, migrant or seasonal farm workers, and elderly low-income individuals and families, and a description of how such activities will enable the families and individuals –*
  - i. *to remove obstacles and solve problems that block the achievement of self-sufficiency (including self-sufficiency for families and individuals who are attempting to transition off a State program carried out under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act);*
  - ii. *to secure and retain meaningful employment;*
  - iii. *to attain an adequate education, with attention toward improving literacy skills of the low-income families in the communities involved, which may include carrying out family literacy initiatives;*
  - iv. *to make better use of available income;*
  - v. *to obtain and maintain adequate housing and a suitable living environment;*
  - vi. *to obtain emergency assistance through loans, grants, or other means to meet immediate and urgent family and individual needs; and*
  - vii. *to achieve greater participation in the affairs of the communities involved, including the development of public and private grassroots partnerships with local law enforcement agencies, local housing authorities, private foundations, and other public and private partners to –*
    - (I) *document best practices based on successful grassroots intervention in urban areas, to develop methodologies for widespread replication; and,*
    - (II) *strengthen and improve relationships with local law enforcement agencies, which may include participation in activities such as neighborhood or community policing efforts;*

- (B) *to address the needs of youth in low-income communities through youth development programs that support the primary role of the family, give priority to the prevention of youth problems and crime, and promote increased community coordination and collaboration in meeting the needs of youth, and support development and expansion of innovative community-based youth development programs that have demonstrated success in preventing or reducing youth crime, such as –*
- i. *programs for the establishment of violence-free zones that would involve youth development and intervention models (such as models involving youth mediation, youth mentoring, life skills training, job creation, and entrepreneurship programs); and*
  - ii. *after-school child care programs*
- (C) *to make more effective use of, and to coordinate with, other programs related to the purposes of this subtitle (including State welfare reform efforts);*

## **Eligible Projects:**

### **1. Training**

Training and Technical Assistance Programs that provide Arkansas' Community Action Agencies with quality training, technical assistance, best practices, and tools to build capacity and strengthen the role of Community Action Agencies in the provision of anti-poverty initiatives.

- **Training Category One:** All training in this category must be performed by a Nationally Certified ROMA Trainer as defined by the National Peer to Peer Training Project.

Training and technical assistance in the below areas:

- Provide Local theory of Change training and follow-up implement to seven of the Community Action Agencies in a face-to-face training setting.
- Provide on site comprehensive training in conducting a Community Needs Assessment, including using the latest tools developed by the Community Action Partnership to ten of the Community Action Agencies. This would include the training on the tools and the creation of the final community needs assessment document.
- Host three on-site ROMA Work Group sessions and provide Comprehensive training in ROMA tools and concepts to all 15 Arkansas Community Action Agencies.
- Host a Cohort for 5 of the Arkansas Community Action Agencies to develop community level projects as defined by the CSBG Annual Report for FY 2020.
- Comprehensive technical assistance to link family and community level national performance indicators. This includes review of intake and other agency tracking forms to capture demographic and implement and enhance the use of results-orientated (ROMA) service and outcome tools.
- Mentor two NCRI classes to the certification level. Each class to consist of at least five persons.
- Mentor two NCRT recertification classes. Provide guidance on development of logic model and co-training necessary for recertification.
- Lead three classes on intensive case management and develop tools and concepts for implementation in ten of the community action agencies for a total of at least 20 persons over the 12-month time period.
- Lead two family development credentialing classes for 10 or more students per class.

- **Training Category Two:**

Provide Spring Annual Training Conference for the Community Action Agencies with sessions focused on ROMA, agency Governance and other relevant CSBG topics

- **Training Category Three:**

Training to build agency capacity

- Purchase training materials for use in agency staff development
- Poverty simulation materials and staff training

- On line Microsoft computer training for staff capacity building
- 2. **Asset Building/Volunteer Income Tax Preparation Program** (local or statewide) targeting innovative programs that provide asset building services as well as expanding the awareness and utilization of the EITC and other tax credits among working families.
- 3. **Asset Building/Individual Development Accounts** - An asset building tool designed to enable low-income families to save towards a targeted amount usually used for building assets in the form of home ownership, post-secondary education and small business ownership.
- 4. **Jobs Initiatives**, including green jobs and other targeted employment training.
- 5. **Innovative Programs** to address poverty on a community level.
- 6. **Technology upgrades** to assist in achieving agency outcomes to move families and individual toward self-sufficiency.
  - Accounting software upgrades
  - Data collection software upgrades
  - Computers and laptop upgrades for use of CSBG agency staff
- 7. **Educational Scholarships**
- 8. **Network Media and Communications**
  - Distribute Monthly newsletters
  - Develop multi-media communications campaigns for the community action agencies
  - Develop an agency annual report template for the community action agencies to present to stakeholders during fundraising efforts.
- 9. **Community Action Agencies case management and family development activities/Promotional outreach costs.**
  - This can include specialized training for Community Action Agency staff, training materials and specialized outreach activities.

## **II. Applicant Eligibility Criteria and Proposal Requirements**

Recipients of Community Services Block Grant funds are required to demonstrate that customers served by funded programs have an income at or below 125% of the current United States Department of Health and Human Services (US DHHS) Poverty Guidelines. §673(2).

### **A. Organizational Capacity**

Applicants are required to:

1. demonstrate the capacity and capability to administer a broad range of services designed to address issues of poverty and promote self - sufficiency;
2. demonstrate a successful track record in delivering outcome-based services; and
3. demonstrate management capacity to undertake the proposed services and activities.

### **B. Community Needs Assessment**

Applicants are required to:

1. document the geographic location and any boundaries of the proposed service area precisely and consistently;
2. describe the methodology used to assess the broad range of needs for services to the low-income community;
3. describe its efforts to include participation by low-income members of the community in the needs assessment process;
4. document the level of poverty in the area to be served and other conditions that were identified through the needs assessment process; and
5. demonstrate that the programs being proposed are consistent with the findings of the needs assessment process.

### **C. Program Services, Activities, and Outcomes**

CSBG funds shall be used to provide:

1. programs and services designed to reduce risk factors, build on individual and family strengths, provide prevention as well as intervention services, be culturally responsive, and flexible in responding to individual needs;
2. assessment of individual and family needs across a broad spectrum of domains providing services in a holistic manner to address growth and development, and supporting movement toward self-sufficiency;
3. programs may be coordinated with other entities which serve to address the needs of low income and vulnerable populations such as Workforce Investment Programs (One-Stop Centers), Family Literacy, Child Support Enforcement, Youth Development Programs, Service for the Elderly, Asset Development Programs, Domestic Violence Programs, etc.;
4. State-wide Data Collection System

**D. Collaborations and Partnerships**

Applicants are required to:

1. demonstrate capacity to work collaboratively with other local agencies to create programs or expand the scope of existing programs that provide services in such areas as employment, education, housing, emergency services, and self-sufficiency for local populations including children, youth, adults, and the elderly; and,
2. demonstrate ability to mobilize public and/or private resource and how those resources will directly benefit the project.

**E. Accountability and Reporting**

Applicants are required to:

1. comply with Results-Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA), the national system for Community Service Block Grant grantee operations and reporting. (refer to page 12 for definition)
2. identify the technology (software) currently being used for customer intake and assessment, recording/tracking customer outcome, and reporting to board/funding sources;
3. describe the process used to ensure customers receiving Community Service Block Grant-funded services do not exceed 125% of the federal poverty guidelines.

**F. Funding and Resource Mobilization (Budget)**

Applicants are required to demonstrate that:

1. costs are reasonable and necessary to carry out the work scope;
2. the use of Community Service Block Grant funds for administration is equitable in relation to total agency operations.

### III. How to apply

#### B. Proposal Requirements

All applicants are required to demonstrate that their organization:

- currently provides federally-funded or state-funded services to low-income persons;

#### C. Due Date and Time

All applications **MUST** be received by the date stated on the cover page of this Request for Application.

Applications which are received late will not be considered and will be returned to the applicant agency without review.

#### D. Application Submission

ONE signed and complete original application, plus **FOUR** exact copies of each application must be submitted, (for a total of 5). ALL submissions must contain the complete application including signature pages. All applications must be delivered to:

Lorie Williams, Assistant Director  
Arkansas Department of Human Services  
Division of County Operations/Office of Community Services  
PO Box 1437, Slot S-330  
Little Rock, AR 72203-1437

Electronic or fax copies will not be accepted. All applications must be complete to be considered for review. The RFA and application package is also available online at [www.http://humanservices.arkansas.gov](http://humanservices.arkansas.gov)

#### E. Questions and Updates

All questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted in writing and received on or before the *Questions Due* date as stated on the cover of this RFA, and addressed to: Beverly Buchanan, CSBG Manager, Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of County Operations/Office of Community Services; PO Box 1437, Slot S-330; Little Rock, AR 72203-1437.

Questions and answers will be posted on the RFA *Updates Posted* date as stated on the cover of this RFA at the following URL address: [www. www.http://humanservices.arkansas.gov](http://humanservices.arkansas.gov)

#### F. Funding

It is anticipated that \$ 507,572.00 in Community Services Block Grant Discretionary funds will be allocated for projects, and or activities of twelve months or twenty-four months in length as specified in application.

G. Approved applicants will receive a grant award with purchase order information and grant assurances and guidelines. **Please note that these grants will be monitored the same as the regular CSBG grant awards.**



## IV. Completing the Application

### Requirements for Submission

Applicants must apply using the Application and budget forms in the Request for Application. All sections should be completed. The narrative will be evaluated based on predetermined values described in Section V of this RFA. Additional pages may be attached where necessary.

### Application Cover Page and Project Summary

Applicant Identification and Certifications, Attestations, and Acknowledgements: applicants must submit an original signed copy. Failure to do so will disqualify the application from review.

### Project Summary and Proposal Information

Provide a summary that:

1. Describes the organization's capacity to deliver outcome-based services to the low-income residents of Arkansas.
2. Outlines the new programs or programs being expanded with CSBG funds;
3. Describes the basis for the programs being proposed for funding;
4. Describes the collaborations established with other area agencies to provide or expand services.

## V. Review and Rating Criteria

### Application Evaluation and Scoring

(Pass/Fail)

The following criteria must be met for applications to be qualified for consideration; failure to meet the criteria will result in disqualification of the Application.

1. Application MUST be received by the stated due date and time.
2. Application must include one signed original, and four (4) exact copies.
3. Applicant is either a Community Action Agency (CAA) or a non-profit organization that has a partnership and supports the Arkansas Community Action Agencies Network.
4. Applicant currently provides federally funded—or state-funded services to low-income persons.

Once an application is determined to pass the basic criteria noted above, it will be reviewed for content. The corresponding values indicate the importance that DHS/DCO/OCS places on each evaluation criterion. Competing applications will be reviewed and evaluated against the criteria below.

### Application Cover Page and Project Summary

(not scored)

#### A. Organizational Capacity:

(5 points)

1. Applicant must document the capacity and capability to administer a broad range of services designed to address issues of poverty and promote self - sufficiency. Identify programs currently or previously operated, dates of operation and primary source(s) of funding.
2. Based on the information in number 1, applicant must demonstrate a successful track record in delivering outcome-based services.
3. Applicant must document management capacity to undertake the proposed services and activities.
  - a. Applicant must attach its organizational chart and resume of CEO and CFO.
  - b. Applicant must attach a total agency budget for its current fiscal year.

Applicants may use additional pages for the summary if needed.

**B. Community Needs Assessment:****(15 points)**

Applicant must describe the geographic location and any boundaries of the proposed service area precisely and consistently.

1. Applicant documents the geographic location and any boundaries of the proposed service area precisely and consistently.
2. Applicant must describe methodology used to assess the broad range of needs for services to the low-income community. This may include sources of statistical information, use of surveys, use of community forums or focus groups with targeted populations, etc.
3. Applicant must describe its efforts to include participation by low-income members of the community in the needs assessment process.
4. Applicant must provide information concerning the level of poverty in the area to be served and other conditions that were identified through the needs assessment process.
5. Applicant must provide information to support the programs being proposed are consistent with the findings of the needs assessment process.

**C. Program Services, Activities and Outcomes:****(50 points)**

Applicant must provide a work plan that is outcome oriented for each category of funding requested.

1. Applicant must describe the connection between the community needs assessment findings and the need for each program being proposed
2. Applicant must demonstrate that programs relate to one or more of the CSBG program assurance areas (employment, education, income management, housing, health and social behavior, civic engagement and community involvement, emergency services, nutrition, self-sufficiency, and linkages with other community programs).
3. Applicant must demonstrate that the amount of CSBG and other resources identified for each program is reasonable.
4. Applicant must describe its collaboration with other entities which serve to address the needs of low income and vulnerable populations such as Workforce Investment Programs (One-Stop Centers), Family Literacy, Child Support Enforcement, Youth Development Programs, Service for the Elderly, Asset Development Programs, Domestic Violence Programs, etc.
5. Applicant must demonstrate that programs are outcome focused and measurable indicators. Outcomes must be reasonable for the resources being applied.

**D. Collaborations and Partnerships:****(10 points)**

1. Applicant must identify the other agencies who will work collaboratively to create new programs or expand existing services that are described in the work plan. Applicant must describe the nature and extent of the collaboration with each partner and how it will impact the proposed project.
2. If the collaboration is monetary, applicant must indicate the types and amounts of public and/or private resources it will mobilize, and how those resources will directly benefit the project. Agency must demonstrate its ability to mobilize public and/or private resource and how those resources will directly benefit the project.

**E. Accountability and Reporting:****(5 points)**

1. The applicant must describe current or prior experience with outcome-based program reporting, including knowledge of ROMA (as defined on page 12 of instructions) or demonstrate knowledge of other outcome-based program reporting.
2. Applicant must identify the technology (software) currently being used for customer intake and assessment, recording/tracking customer outcome, and reporting to board/funding sources. A sample report may be attached.
3. Applicant must describe the process used to ensure customers receiving CSBG funded services do not exceed 125% of the federal poverty guidelines.

**F. Budget: (Must use the attached form)****(15 points)**

1. Proposed use of CSBG and funds are reasonable and necessary to administer the agency and accomplish the programs.
2. Total costs are reasonable and consistent with anticipated results.
3. Administrative costs are equitable in relation to the total agency budget.
4. Attach agency cost allocation or Indirect Cost Plan
5. Include copy of most recent agency audit conducted by independent accounting firm

## VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Applications will be reviewed and all applicants will be notified of funding decisions. **Grant awards will have a start date of \_\_\_\_\_.** Successful applicants will be notified of funding decisions through issuance of a Notice of Award document that sets forth the amount of funds granted, and the terms and conditions of the grant award, which are subject to approval by the Office of the State Procurement.

Opportunity to be debriefed will be provided, upon request, to unsuccessful applicants. Requests must be made in writing within 15 days of notification to the same address to which applications are submitted.

## VII. Sub-Grant Requirements for Approved Applicants

### A. Federal Certifications

Applicant should be aware that if selected, it will be required to certify as part of the executed sub-grant award, that it will comply with Federal requirements concerning the drug-free workplace, and debarment regulations, and Certification Regarding Environmental Tobacco Smoke, and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities. The successful applicants will also be required to comply with provisions of the Hatch Act (5 USC § 1501-1508 and §7324-7328) which limit political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

### B. Prohibitions on Use of Funds

Community Services Block Grant funds may NOT be used to purchase or improve land, or for the purchase, construction, or permanent improvement of any building or facility, or for political activities.

### Definitions:

- 1. Results-Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA)** a performance-based initiative designed to preserve the anti-poverty focus of community action and to promote greater effectiveness among state and local agencies receiving Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds. It involves setting goals and strategies for developing plans and techniques that focus on a result-oriented performance-based model for management. ROMA also complies with the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (PL 103-62). ([www.ROMA1.org](http://www.ROMA1.org))

- 2. ROMA Goals and National Performance Indicators**

Applicants should have experience and have demonstrated capacity to report outcomes preferably using the ROMA framework. Familiarity with the CSBG National Performance Indicators (NPIs) is a requirement. Consistent with the requirements set forth in GPRA and NPIs, the State of Arkansas, Arkansas Department of Human Services, DCO/Office of Community Services requires all CSBG grantees to report progress toward achieving outcomes projected in their community action work plans based on the National Performance Indicators.

## VIII. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Applicants should check off each section to ensure submission of a complete application.

- ~ Applicant and Project Identification Cover Page
- ~ Applicant Certifications/Attestations
- ~ Federal ID Number
- ~ Application Narrative
- ~ Organizational Capacity
- ~ Community Needs Assessment
- ~ Accountability and Reporting
- ~ Program summary and information
- ~ Partnerships
- ~ Budget
- ~ Signed Budget Summary
- ~ Budget Support Data
- ~ Budget Narrative

**IX. APPLICATION PACKAGE**

These items are included in the application package

- Application Cover Sheet
- Project Funding Request Sheet
- Community Services Block Grant Assurances
- Budget Form Instructions
- Budget Form