

Maine Community Action Partnership ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL (EOC)

Background:

The Economic Opportunity Council (EOC) was pulled together well over 20 years ago. This council was brought together by the leadership figures of Maine's Community Action Agencies (CAA) in order to build linkages amongst themselves as well as with other important entities across the state, discuss roles and responsibilities as CAAs, and share best practices in all types of areas but mostly the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). This group has been the catalyst, the glue, of Maine's CSBG Network as a whole, allowing for optimal engagement at every level including peer-to-peer nurturing and encouragement.

The EOC is made up of all the CAAs in Maine's Network (10 in total), as well as the State Association. Agencies are usually represented by agency staff who oversee CSBG reporting, as well as program managers, and relevant staff as issues arise. Prior to COVID, the EOC met every other month in person for a full-day agenda, so it proved worth the commute for the agencies who drove farther. During COVID, the EOC met virtually on a weekly basis, then bi-weekly once COVID slowed. Post-COVID, the EOC now meets monthly for an hour and a half, virtually. An annual 2-day, in-person retreat is held where the EOC brings in training and technical assistance opportunities and discusses network needs and initiatives at length. The EOC also holds council-wide training to enhance CSBG reporting.

The EOC has become a group of individuals dedicated to CAA and CSBG in order to be the best stewards of their agencies and communities alike. Understanding the value, the EOC offers to the Network, the State's CSBG Administrative Office incorporated membership, including regular attendance, as part of the State's CSBG contract template.

Purpose:

The purpose of the EOC is to enhance peer support as well as to create consistency and uniformity across the state when reporting. The EOC is a place where agencies, the state association, and the CSBG State Office have come together to discuss and deliberate CSBG training and technical assistance, contract terms and changes, federal guidance, and CSBG Reporting. This group allows for ongoing back-and-forth engagement amongst the Network in a plethora of ways. It is a mechanism where best practices are shared, network-wide decisions are discussed and made, and a place where agencies can reach out to their neighbors for assistance and guidance.

BY-LAWS

Maine Community Action Partnership

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL (EOC)

ARTICLE I. ORGANIZATION

NAME: The name of the organization shall be the **Maine Community Action Partnership Economic Opportunity Council**, hereinafter referred to as the EOC.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

PURPOSE: The EOC, an ancillary to **Maine Community Action Partnership**, is bound and subject to its policies and procedures. The EOC is a statewide organization of Community Action representatives involved in, but not limited to, work with the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). The EOC will provide a statewide forum facilitating activities that alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities. CSBG funding can be used to lessen poverty in communities, address the needs of low-income individuals including the homeless, migrants and the elderly, and provide services and activities addressing employment, education, income, infrastructure, & asset building, housing, health/social/behavioral development, and civic engagement & community involvement.

These strategies align with the National Community Action Network services and strategies working to achieve the following goals:

- Goal 1:** Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.
- Goal 2:** Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity
- Goal 3:** People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

- A. MEMBERS:** Members shall be representatives of Community Action Agencies.
- B. VOTING:** Each **Maine Community Action Partnership** member agency shall be entitled to one vote.

BY-LAWS

Maine Community Action Partnership

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL (EOC)

ARTICLE IV. MEETINGS

- A. REGULAR MEETINGS:** The EOC will hold regular meetings throughout the year, generally on the second Wednesday of each month. The meeting dates, times, and places will be designated by the Chair.
- B. SPECIAL MEETINGS:** Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chair or at the request of any EOC member. Ideally, 48 hours' notice would be given in advance of a meeting.
- C. ANNUAL MEETING:** The EOC's Annual Meeting will be held in October, or as designated by a vote of the EOC.
- D. QUORUM:** A majority of member agencies in attendance shall constitute a quorum.
- E. NOTICES:** Notices for annual and regular meetings shall be scheduled at least 1 week prior to the meeting date and will specify time, date, and place.

ARTICLE V. OFFICERS

- A. CO - CHAIRPERSON(S):** A Co-Chairperson shall preside at all EOC meetings. If a Co-Chairperson anticipates their own absence, they will delegate their duties to the other Co-Chairperson. Co-Chairpersons may not be from the same agency.
- B. SECRETARY:** The Secretary shall record and keep minutes of all EOC, all correspondence to and from the EOC and will keep the EOC roll. The Secretary may mail notices to all EOC members and serve as parliamentarian to all EOC meetings. MeCAP will designate a person to fulfill this role.
- C. TERMS:** EOC Co-chairpersons will serve terms of two alternating years from the date of the Council's Annual Meeting. Staggered start dates will allow for consistency in leadership. Annually, one new co-chair will be elected. No Co-Chair can serve more than two consecutive terms.
- D. ELECTION:** One month prior to the EOC's Annual Meeting, the Co-Chairs will accept nominations for Co-Chair in the coming year. The group will discuss and vote on recommendations.

BY-LAWS

Maine Community Action Partnership

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL (EOC)

E. VACANCIES: All vacancies occurring in any of the elective offices shall be filled by vote of the membership at the first regular meeting following the date the vacancy occurred.

ARTICLE VI. COMMITTEES

A. AD HOC COMMITTEES: The EOC may create committees, as it deems necessary. The Chairpersons shall appoint a committee chairperson and members.

ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENT

The by-laws may be amended by using the following procedure: Any proposed amendment shall be presented at an EOC meeting for initial discussion. If additional information or thought is required, the amendment will be voted on at the following meeting. The proposed amendment will be voted on and requires a majority vote of those voting members present at the meeting.

UPDATED: October 13, 2021