

Plan with Purpose

March 19, 2026



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Agenda

- What is the State Plan
- Approach to the State Plan
- State Spotlights
- Wrap Up





What is the State Plan

The Goal of the CSBG State Plan



Serves as the state's strategic roadmap for CSBG



Aligns statewide priorities with network needs



Demonstrates how funds, monitoring, and T/TA support goals



Communicates direction to eligible entities and stakeholders



Drives impact — not just compliance

What the State Plan IS

The State Plan is our application for funding. This is a requirement of the CSBG Act.

The Plan is submitted to the Administration for Children & Families (ACF) and reviewed by the Office of Community Services (OCS).

The State Plan outlines key elements of CSBG administration for the period covered by the plan.

States can submit a one-year or a two-year plan.

There are 15 sections to the plan; Each section is specific to a Federal requirement.

The Plan is statutorily due September 1 in OLDC each year.

What the State Plan is NOT

- Copy and paste from the year before.
- Just *another* pointless task or *useless* document.
- Shouldn't be done and then put on a shelf to be forgotten.
- Just checking a box.

OMB Control No: 0970-0382

Expiration Date: XX/XX/XXXX



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Office of Community Services

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) State Plan

CSBG Cover Page (SF-424M)

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THE PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT OF 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13): Through this information collection, ACF is gathering information about planned activities related to and funded by CSBG for the upcoming fiscal year. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 31 hours per grantee, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. This is a mandatory collection of information (Sec. 676, Pub. L. 105-285, 112 Stat. 2735 (42 U.S.C. § 9908)). An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB # is 0970-0382 and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX. If you have any comments on this collection of information, please contact M. Monique Alcantara at melania.alcantara@acf.hhs.gov.



Determine Your Strategic Priorities

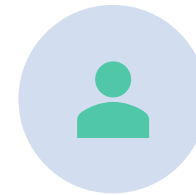
Where Do Strategic Priorities Come From?



Community Needs Assessment (CNA)



Community Action Plans (CAPs)



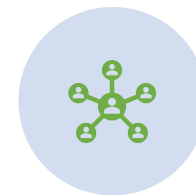
Administration directives



Legislative mandates



Performance data (Annual Report trends)



Network and Community input

Discussion: Strategic Priorities



- Where do YOUR state's priorities typically originate?
- Who are the stakeholders?
- How to you get their input?

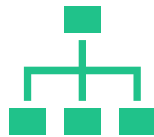


Approach to the State Plan

What are some things to consider when doing the State Plan?



Materials



People



Time



Miscellaneous

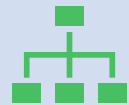
Establish Your Planning Framework



Clarify timeline and submission requirements



Identify internal lead and planning team



Map required sections vs. strategic sections



Develop a planning calendar

State Office Action Plan

| ACTION | WHO? | WHEN? | DEPENDENCY | NOTES / QUESTIONS | TOOLS/RESOURCES |
|---|------|-----------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| A.) CSBG STATE PLAN | | | | Determine if your state uses 1 or 2 year plan | SMWG Compendium |
| A1.) Develop a timeline map* | | | | | |
| A2.) State Plan Training for the Network* | | | | | |
| A3.) Gather Input Prior to Drafting* | | | | | |
| A3a.) Hold Roundtable Meeting with the Network* | | | | | |
| A3b.) Form a Workgroup* | | | | | |
| A3c.) Track all comments* | | Ongoing | | | |
| A3d.) Follow-up on all comments* | | | | | |
| A4.) Development of Draft Version of Plan | | | | | |
| A5.) Hearing | | | Post public notice; comment period? | *Legislative hearing required every 3 years. | |
| A5a.) Contact LIHEAP for joint hearing* | | | | | |
| A5b.) In-Person/Virtual* | | | | | |
| A5c.) Track all comments* | | | | | |
| A5d.) Follow-up on all comments* | | | | | |
| A6.) Finalize Plan based off of Comments | | | | | |
| A7.) Internal State Approval | | | | | |
| A8.) Submit via OLDC | | August 30 | | | |

CSBG State Office Action Plan

| |
|---|
| B.) CSBG STATE PLAN |
| B1.) Develop a timeline map* |
| B2.) State Plan Training for the Network* |
| B3.) Gather Input Prior to Drafting* |
| B3.a) Hold Roundtable Meeting with the Network* |
| B3.b) For a Workgroup* |
| B3.c) Track all comments* |
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| B8.) Submit via OLDC |

Other items included:

- Who
- When
- Dependency
- Notes or Questions
- Tool and Resources

Define Strategic Priorities

Now that priorities are identified, define them clearly:

1. State the Priority Clearly: Concise, plain language



2. Explain the Rationale: Link to CNA, data, and input



3. Define the State's Role: Funding, monitoring, T/TA, partnerships



4. Describe What Success Looks Like: Outcomes, capacity shifts, system improvements



5. Connect to Accountability: How progress will be tracked

Engage with Purpose

Why

- Builds shared ownership of priorities
- Strengthens plan credibility
- Improves alignment between state and network

How

- Engage before drafting begins
- Provide structured questions, not just open comment
- Offer multiple input methods (virtual, in-person, survey, etc.)
- Close the loop: show how feedback shaped the plan

The Value

- Surfaces practical implementation realities
- Identifies gaps early
- Increases buy-in and smoother implementation

Engage Stakeholders Intentionally

Engage Early

- Pre-draft listening sessions
- Targeted surveys
- Work with your State Association

Engage During

- Share summaries, not just full documents
- Use guiding questions

Close the Loop

- Document how feedback shaped revisions
- Explain why things cannot be included

Discussion: Engaging Your Network



- How do you engage your network?
- What strategies have increased participation?
- Have you had success with engagement at your public hearings? What did you do?

State Management Work Group State Plan

Promising Practices

1. Start Early: Timeline Mapping
2. Educate the Network: State Plan Training
3. Gather Input First: Prior to Drafting the State Plan
4. Close the Loop: Follow-up on All Comments
5. Modified Public Hearing
6. Complete a Two-Year State Plan

Key Takeaways



Lead with strategy, not compliance



Use data intentionally



Engage early and often



Make the plan usable internally



Use the researched backed promising practices

The slide features a large yellow spotlight beam originating from a projector in the top-left corner. The beam illuminates the central text. The background is white with several decorative elements: a purple circle at the top, a green triangle at the top-right, a green circle at the bottom-left, and several purple and blue dashed lines scattered around. A horizontal line with blue, green, and purple segments is positioned below the word 'Utah'.

Utah

Karen Quackenbush



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HOUSING & **Community** DEVELOPMENT

Utah CSBG State Plan Process

Presenter:

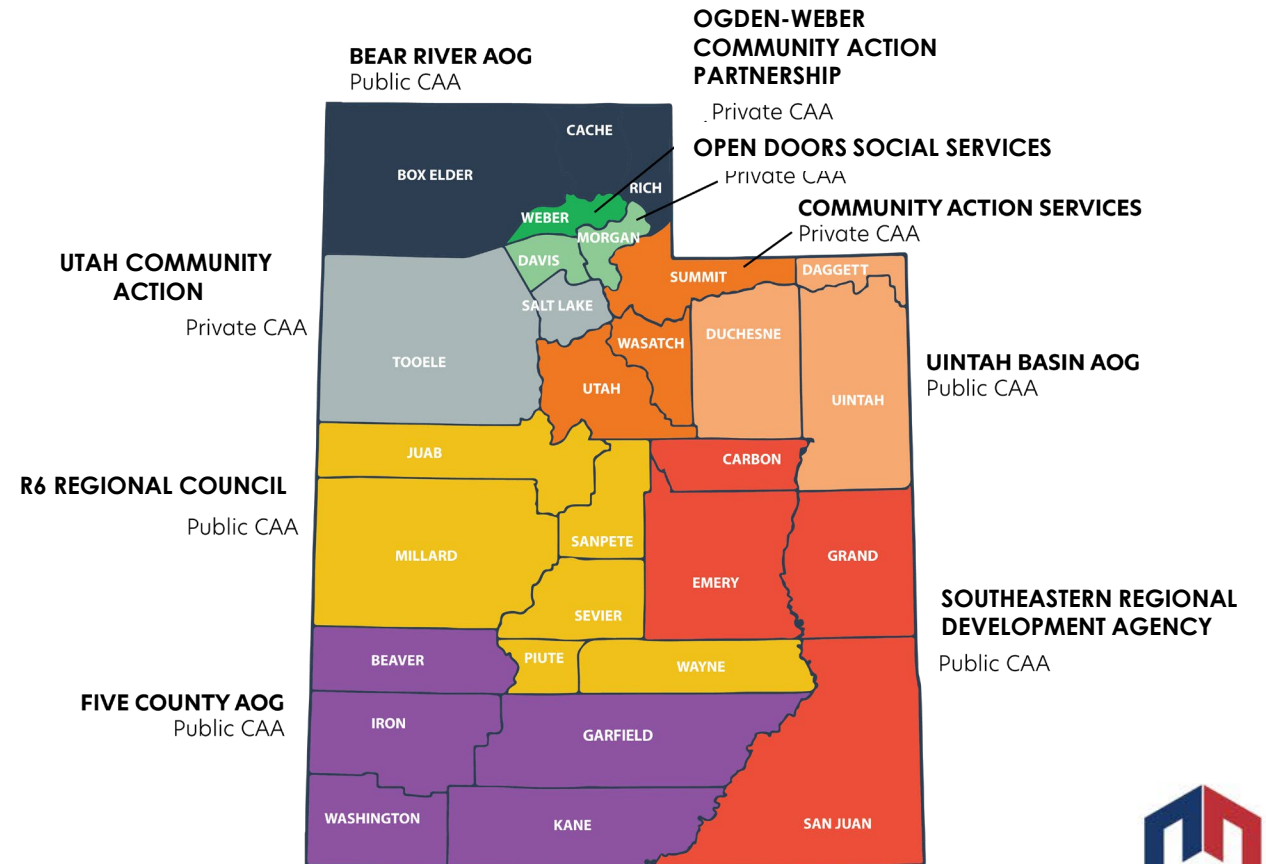
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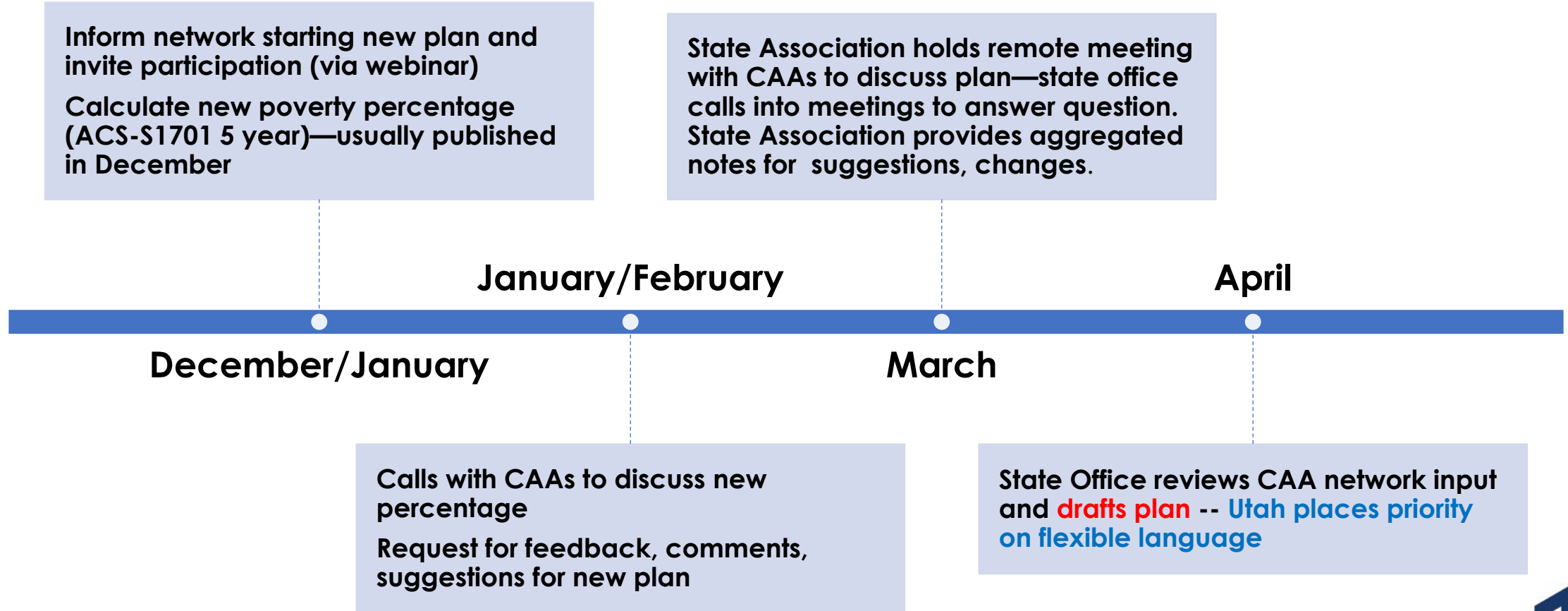


Utah: Who We Are

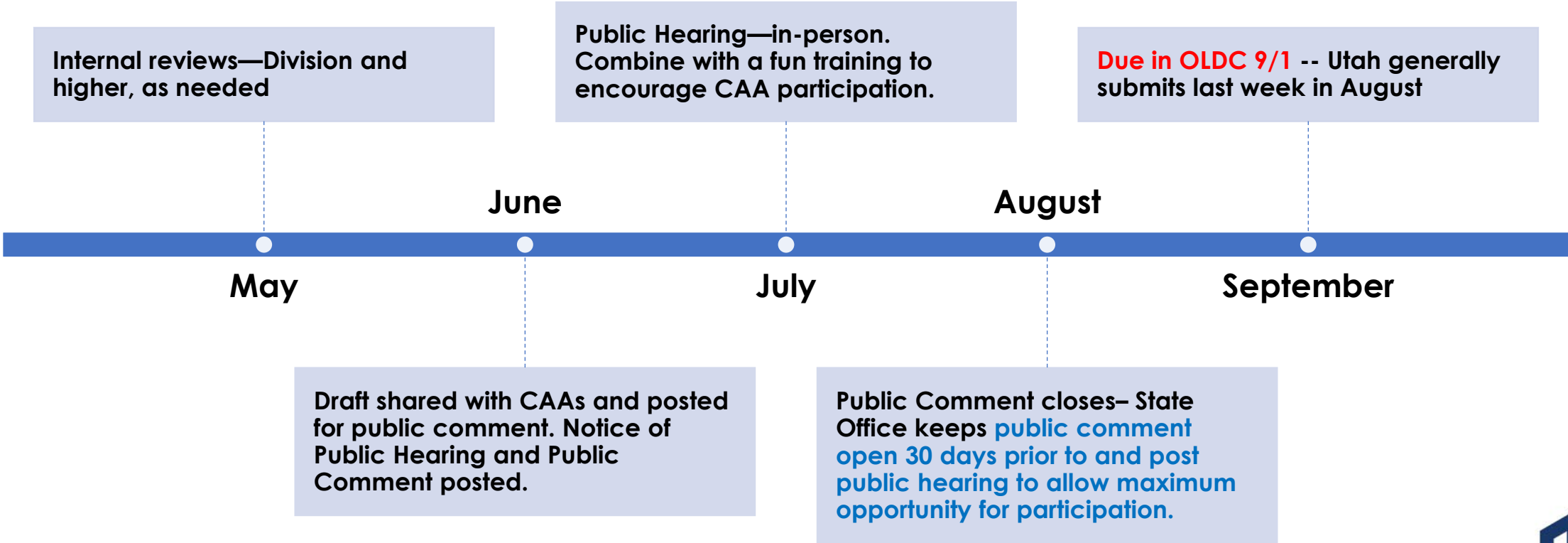
- “Small State”
 - \$3.9 million CSBG (FY25)
- CSBG staff:
 - 1 manager—multiple programs
- 9 CAAs—4 private/5 public
- Strong Partnership with State Association



Utah CSBG State Plan Process: 2-Year Plan



Utah CSBG State Plan Process



Lessons Learned

Timeline & Process Should Allow for:

- Challenges.....
 - Delay in ACS stat publication Dec. 11th to Jan. 29th
 - Staff changes (--no backfilling due to uncertainties)
 - May result in time needed for training or time for flexibility as the plan is worked in with projects for other programs
- Time for meaningful input from CAAs
 - Provide multiple settings/opportunities for input
- Transparency—provide source, formula and teach CAAs how to calculate their percentage so they can reproduce your result



Keep in Mind



Relationships with CAAs & State Association:

- Do CAAs/State Association feel they have the necessary support/tools/partnership from state office to meet the goals of the state plan?
- Do CAAs/State Association feel comfortable sharing?
 - Maybe staff are new?
 - Maybe CAA/State Association is struggling?
- Do CAAs/State Association feel heard?



What Do CAAs and State Association Programs Like?



Transparency:

Formula Update

CAAs contributed to the formula update policy—that formula updated every 2 years (with new state plan)

Links to the ACS website, instructions for report to pull and how to calculate percentage shared with network

CAAs can recreate the math

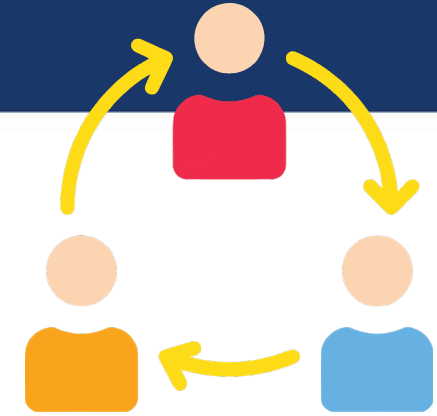
Impact of formula – One-on-one calls with each CAA to discuss impact of new percentage

Share timeline for plan development

Coordination with State Association openly shared



What Do CAAs Like?



Shared Ownership of the Plan

- Intentional messaging from state office—not just a state office deliverable
- Frequent invitation for voluntary input and feedback
- Formal meeting---State Association and CAAs—review all parts of plan
 - State Association facilitates review and works to get input from all CAAs
 - Aggregated comments are passed on to State Office – nothing identifiable unless requested by CAA
 - CAAs able to see their suggested edits in the draft plan
 - If a suggestion not adopted by State Office—explanation given to State Association to share with the CAA(s)
 - CAAs review (and may provide input for) all parts of plan—not just T/TA and Discretionary.
 - *Their input reshaped the State Office's mission for administering CSBG.*
- Encourage participation in public hearing (--combine with a fun training)
- Legislative hearing—if unable to attend, provide remote link





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DEVELOPMENT**





North Dakota

Ben Faul

NORTH DAKOTA CSBG STATE PLAN PROCESS

Presenter:

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CSBG Program Administrator
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ND Department of Commerce – Division of Community Services



North Dakota: Who We Are

"Small State"

\$3.7 million CSBG (FY25)

CSBG Staff:

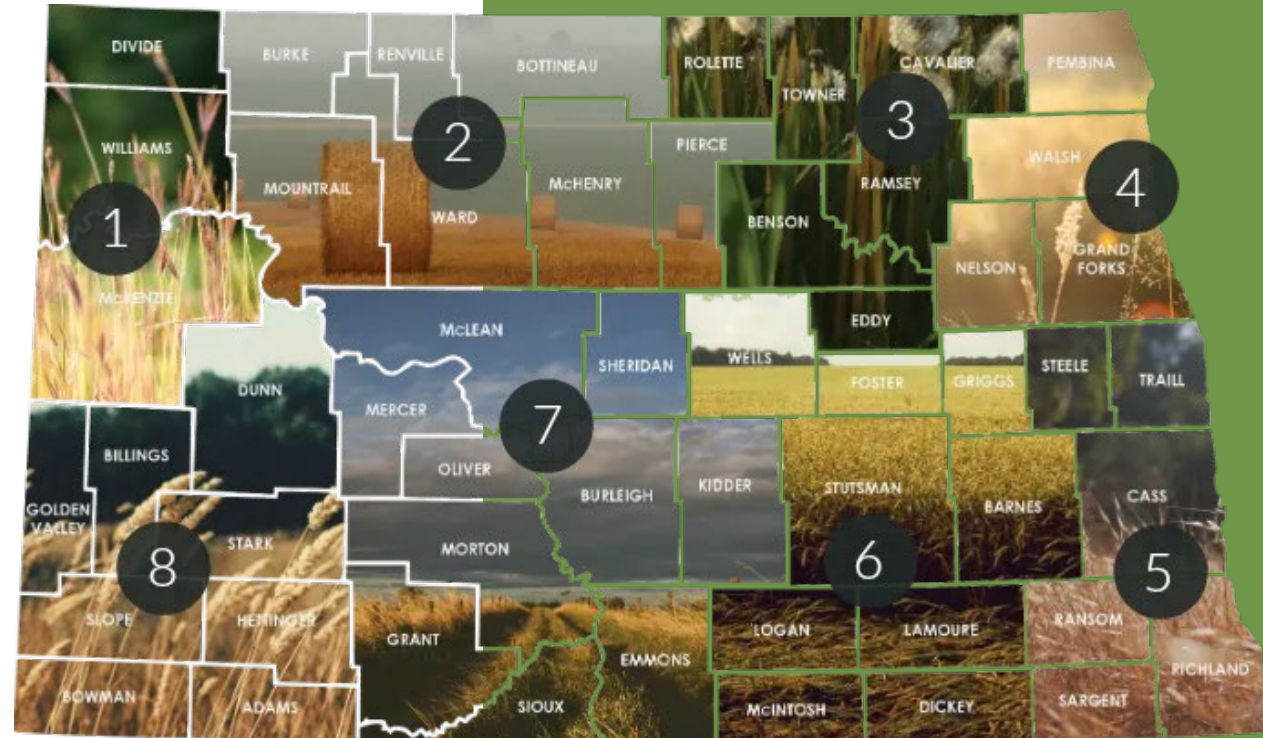
1 administrator

6 Private CAAs:

2 Combined Regions (1 & 8, 4 & 6)

Strong partnership with CAPND

(state association — Andrea Olson, ED)



ND CSBG State Plan Process: 2-Year Plan (FY2026-2027)

Legislative hearing on proposed use & distribution plan

January

State Office holds virtual meetings with all CAAs for comments and feedback of new State Plan draft.

June

First CAPND Meeting State provides state plan schedule to Executive Directors.
Draft Community Action Plans due in June.

April

EDs submit draft CAP Plans to state office. State Office conducts internal reviews and comments.

July

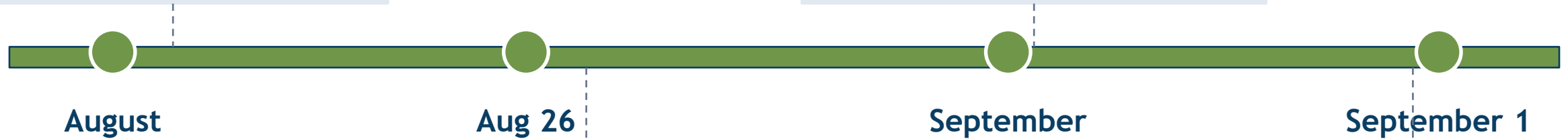
ND CSBG State Plan Process: 2-Year Plan (FY2026-2027)



Draft State Plan is posted online and with newspapers statewide.

Public hearing notice / public comment period

Public comment closes
State office final internal review. ED's review final draft prior to public release.



Public Hearing
(In-Person & Virtual)

Due in OLDC
ND submits at deadline

Lessons Learned

Future Funding Uncertainty

- What does the State Plan look like if our allocation changes?
- State Plan language must remain flexible to respond to the changing dynamics

Staff Capacity

- Keeping our plan process simple & efficient – providing good communication and keeping expectations known

Navigating a de-designation for the first time

- An entirely new process for the State to go through – relied heavily upon our federal and state partners for assistance. Submitting & re-submitting the State Plan after CAA changes.
- Required analyzing our state process and language surrounding de-designation and/or voluntary relinquishment of funds.



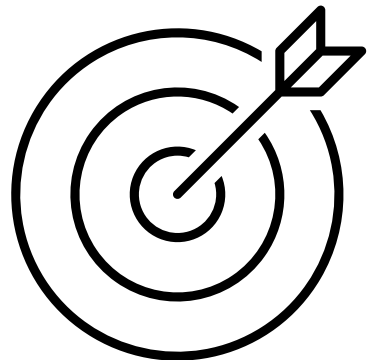
Simplified Method

Do CAAs / CAPND feel they have the necessary support, tools, and partnership from the State Office to meet the goals of the State Plan?

- Keep goals simple and attainable
- Long tenured and brand-new Executive Directors – New ideas, building trust, listening to the communities.

Do CAAs feel heard?

- Allowing time for agencies to submit ideas or changes they'd like to see on the plan
- All feedback is valuable and included in the new plan
- ED's engage with the state office through virtual meetings to discuss feedback and changes



What Do CAAs and State Associations Value?

Predictability of the Two-Year Cycle

- EDs know the timeline well in advance – reduces last-minute scrambles
- Allows CAAs to align their own Community Action Plans with the State Plan cycle

Meaningful Input Into the Plan

- Virtual feedback meetings – accessible format
- CAPND (state association) serves as a bridge – amplifies CAA voices statewide
- All submitted feedback is acknowledged and reflected in the final plan
- Needs Assessment results inform priority-setting and keep goals grounded in community data

Simple, Flexible Goals

- Goals are broad enough to adapt to funding changes or local priorities mid-cycle
- New and veteran EDs can both see themselves in the plan



What Do CAAs Like?

Trust Built Through Consistency

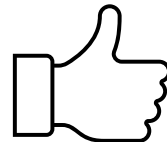
- Long-tenured EDs appreciate the continuity – familiar process
- Not changing the plan process year after year – expectations are known

Coordination with CAPND Reduces Duplication

- State association conveys collective feedback – CAAs don't need to repeat themselves across separate channels
- Partnership with CAPND ensures statewide perspective informs plan language

Advanced Notice Enables Better Planning

- Taking notes from Utah – Give early notification of due dates
- Trying to give CAAs months to prepare Community Action Plan drafts before June deadline
- CAAs in combined regions (1 & 8, 4 & 6) benefit most – coordination across larger service areas takes time



NORTH
Dakota Be Legendary.

**THANK
YOU**

Ben Faul
ND CSBG Program Administrator
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Resources

CSBG Member Resources

Login Credentials Required

State Plans



The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) State Plan is the application process that State Lead Agencies use to apply for CSBG federal funding from the Office of Community Services (OCS). The State Plan is used for planning purposes including, but not limited to, statewide goals, public hearing requirements, use of funds, training and technical assistance, state linkages, and communication.

The State Management Work Group (SMWG) conducted extensive research, using American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) data, on several high-impact management areas essential to the successful administration of CSBG. The State Plan was one of these high-impact areas and promising practices of high-scoring states were identified, as were associated tools, templates, and resources. We encourage you to visit the [SMWG](#) webpage to learn more about this work and access the [State Plan Compendium](#), tools/resources, and to check out the [Data Map](#). The Data Map acts as a quick and easy way to explore the promising practices and which states have employed them.



+ [2025 State Plans](#)

+ [2024 State Plans](#)

State Plan Compendium

The [Compendium of Promising Practices](#) includes:

- The promising practice
- Who employs the practice
- The purpose
- The method
- The challenges
- The benefits
- Tools/Templates/Resources

1. **Start Early: Timeline Mapping** – Develop a timeline, customized by the state, which outlines all the steps including completion dates needed to develop the State Plan

States Who Have Employed This Practice:

Maryland, Nebraska, North Dakota, Virginia, Utah

Purpose:

ACSI top-scoring states indicated they all started the state plan application process early in the fiscal year, engaged in conversations about the purpose of the State Plan, and held planned listening sessions for feedback. Developing an individualized timeline of these important tasks can help State Administrators execute the planning process to reduce workload burden, offer better Network engagement, and increase ACSI scores.

Method:

Establishing and maintaining a strong, collaborative relationship with the State Association and the Network is key in state planning. How State Administrators involve Eligible entities varies but the common thread is meeting with their Network early and frequently with in-person or one-on-one meetings to increase understanding of the State Plan with open feedback opportunities.

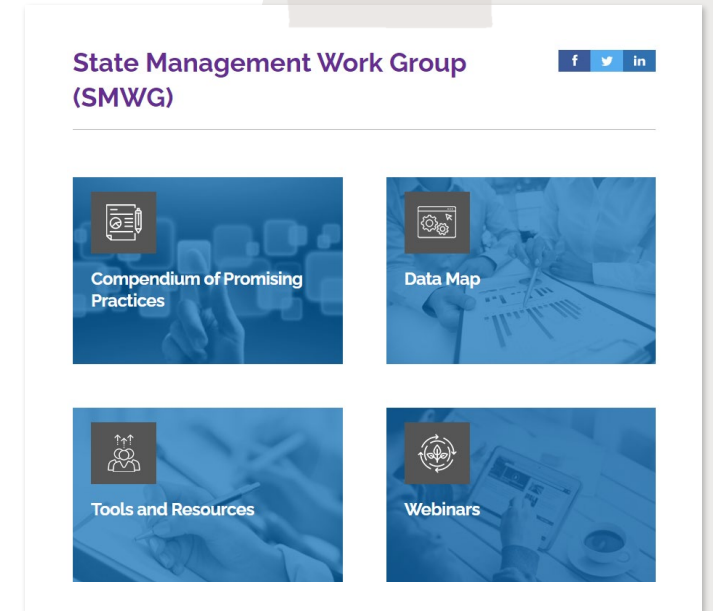
States must develop an outline specific to their needs, which includes state regulations related to CSBG, public hearings, and/or nonprofits, for example:

- Submission deadline
- Review of IMs/statutes for any relevant updates/requirements
- Ensure or establish user accounts in OLDC
- Obtain an updated Designation Letter (if applicable) - this can take longer in some states
- Collect ACSI survey information
- Collect monitoring information

SMWG Webpage

The webpage includes:

- [Compendium of Promising Practices](#)
- [Data Map](#)
 - Acts as a quick and easy way to explore the promising practices and which states have employed them.
- [Tools and Resources](#)
 - **Four tools** related to the State Plan can be found here!
- [Webinars](#)



THANK

YOU

Please scan
here to
complete the
evaluation for
this webinar!

