

**COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT  
ALLOCATION PLAN**

Federal Fiscal Year 2019  
October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019

STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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Submitted by:  
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# The Community Services Block Grant Allocation Plan

FFY 2019

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
<b>I. Overview of the Community Services Block Grant</b> .....	1 - 8
A. Purpose.....	1
B. Major Use of Funds .....	2
C. Federal Allotment Process .....	2
D. Estimated Federal Funding .....	2
E. Total Available and Estimated Expenditures.....	3 - 4
F. Proposed Allocation Changes From Last Year.....	4
G. Contingency Plan .....	4
H. State Allocation Planning Process .....	4
I. Grant Provisions.....	5 - 8
<b>II. Tables</b> .....	9 - 13
A. Recommended Allocations .....	10
B. Summary of Program Expenditures.....	11
C. Summary of Service Objectives and Activities .....	12
D. Proposed Expenditures by Program Category .....	13

**THE COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT ALLOCATION PLAN**  
**For Federal Fiscal Year 2019**  
**October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019**

**I. OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT**

**A. Purpose**

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is administered by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through its administrative agency, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Community Services (OCS). The Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) is designated as the principal state agency for the allocation and administration of the block grant within the state of Connecticut.

The purposes of the Community Services Block Grant are:

1. To provide assistance to states and local communities, working through a network of Community Action Agencies for the reduction of poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities, and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals to become fully self-sufficient (particularly families who are attempting to transition off a state program carried out under part A of the Social Security Act (42 USC 601, et. Seq.); (the “Act”) and
2. To accomplish the goals described in paragraph (1) through:
  - a) the strengthening of community capabilities for planning and coordinating a broad range of federal, state, local, and private resources related to the elimination of poverty, so that these resources can be used in a manner responsive to local needs and conditions;
  - b) the coordination of a range of services to meet the needs of low-income families and individuals, so that these services have a measurable impact on the reduction of poverty in the community and in helping families and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency;
  - c) the promotion of innovative and effective community-based approaches to addressing the causes and effects of poverty and community breakdown;
  - d) the promotion of participation by the low-income residents and members of the groups served by programs funded through block grants made under this subtitle in planning and coordinating activities and programs designed to respond to the unique problems and needs within their communities; and
  - e) the broadening of the resource base for programs directed at the elimination of poverty so as to secure a more active role in the provision of services for:
    - (1) Private religious, charitable, and neighborhood-based organizations; and
    - (2) Individual citizens, business, labor, and professional groups, who are able to influence the quantity and quality of opportunities and services for the poor.

## **B. Major Use of Funds**

HHS requires that at least ninety percent (90%) of the funds made available to the state are administered through grants to Community Action Agencies (CAAs), Community Action Programs (CAPs), or Limited Purpose Agencies (LPAs) that performed the functions of a Community Action Agency in fiscal year 1981, or their successors. These funds must be used for purposes consistent with the federal goals identified above.

There are currently nine CAAs and one LPA that qualify for CSBG funding in Connecticut. Each CAA has a specified catchment area. In Connecticut, CSBG funds are primarily used by CAAs to provide planning and coordination, organize services, encourage innovative and effective approaches to addressing the causes of poverty, broaden the resource base for programs and services, and for core administrative expenses. With CSBG as base funding and additional assistance through other state agencies, municipalities and private donations; CAAs are able to operate a wide range of programs. These programs include, but are not limited to, Energy Assistance, Housing and Shelter programs, Child Care and Youth Development Services, Holistic Case Management Services, and Nutrition Services.

As required under the Economic Opportunity Act, CAAs also prepare annual Community Action Plans. Each CAA's plan addresses how the goals of the block grant will be furthered by the efforts of the programs administered by the Community Action Agency. Key components of the individual CAA's Plan include the following: community needs assessment; description of service delivery system, linkages, coordination of funds and innovative projects and performance measurement outcomes and measures. CSBG funds are required to be used to serve or improve the well-being of individuals with incomes at or below 125% of the federal poverty level and may not be used to support political activities or to pay for construction unless a specific waiver is obtained by the state from the federal government.

The state is permitted to retain up to five percent (5%) of the block grant for administration, and may use the remaining five percent (5%) of the funds allocated for a variety of purposes including, but not limited to, training, technical assistance, and capacity building for eligible entities, and innovative programs that further the purposes of the Act. The department utilizes the administration allotment to provide direct program monitoring, training, and oversight functions to ensure programmatic compliance.

## **C. Federal Allotment Process**

CSBG funds are allotted based on the national appropriation and the states' share of funds distributed under Sec. 221 of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 for federal fiscal year 1981.

## **D. Estimated Federal Funding**

During FFY 2018, the Community Services Block Grant was funded at a national level of \$703.8 million, which represents an approximate 1% increase from FFY 2017's national funding level. At the time of the development of this plan, federal funding for FFY 2019 has not yet been finalized.

For purposes of the development of this plan, the federal funding allocation for Connecticut for FFY 2019 is estimated to be \$8,580,324, which is equal to the state's final FFY 2018 allocation.

**E. Total Available and Estimated Expenditures**

In total, available funding for FFY 2019 is estimated at \$10,900,400, made up of \$8,580,324 in estimated federal block grant funding and \$2,320,076 in estimated carryforward. Of this amount, \$8,580,324 is proposed to be expended, with \$2,320,076 proposed to be carried forward as a contingency in case of a decrease of funding in future fiscal years or for one-time expenditures in future federal fiscal years to support identified needs of the CAA Network.

Each year the Department must complete the Center of Excellence Organizational Standard annual review to ensure compliance with all federal requirements. If the results of this review demonstrate there are training needs for the CAA Network in order to ensure adherence with federal standards, DSS must provide the necessary education to CAAs. For example, DSS utilized unobligated program carryforward from FFY 2018 as a one-time resource to continue its technical assistance related to full compliance with Organizational Standards, ROMA Next Generation and the CSBG Annual Report. Maintaining a carryforward amount will allow DSS the flexibility to engage in similar activities in the future if warranted.

Section 210 of the federal Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 requires that at least ninety percent (90%) of the CSBG funds made available to the state are to be used to make grants to CAAs or LPAs. Accordingly, the Department proposes that ninety percent (90%) or \$7,722,292 of the estimated FFY 2019 block grant funding will be distributed through grants to CAAs and LPAs in Connecticut.

Of the remaining ten percent (10%) of the FFY 2018 block grant funds or \$958,032, the state plans to retain \$429,016 for administration and \$429,016 for discretionary projects. The funds retained for administration will be used by the Department to support the necessary quality assurance and programmatic staffing to ensure sufficient programmatic and fiscal oversight, training and monitoring activities. The remaining five percent (5%) of the FFY 2018 block grant funds, or \$429,016, will be used for discretionary projects including training, technical assistance, technology support, statewide projects and innovative programs related to the purposes of the Act.

<b>PROGRAM CATEGORY</b>	<b>FFY 2019 Proposed Expenditure</b>
Grants to Eligible Entities	\$7,722,292
Discretionary Programs	429,016
Administration	429,016
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8,580,324</b>
Block Grant	<b>\$8,580,324</b>
Carry Forward from Previous Year	2,320,076
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>\$10,900,400</b>

The above chart delineates FFY 2019 proposed expenditures. Table A on page 10 provides program category detail for FFY 2017 (actual expenditures), FFY 2018 (estimated expenditures), and FFY 2019 (proposed expenditures).

The distribution of allocated funds is based on a formula referenced in Sec. 17b-888 of the Connecticut General Statutes and further described in Section H below.

## **F. Proposed Changes From Last Year**

Block grant regulations specify how funds will be allocated. In FFY 2019, a total of \$7,722,292 is proposed to be granted to CAAs or LPAs, which represents 90% of total block grant funding. Table D on page 13 documents FFY 2017 actual expenditures, FFY 2018 estimated expenditures, and FFY 2019 proposed expenditures for each of the CAAs. Proposed FFY 2019 allocations for Community Action Agencies were calculated utilizing the base amounts that entities should be receiving pursuant to the current agreement stipulated under §17b-888 of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Overall, administration costs are proposed to decrease in FFY 2019 from FFY 2018 levels. While personal services and fringe benefits are slightly increasing due to contractual agreements, the other expenses line item is significantly decreasing. This decrease is related to one-time costs for IT consulting services associated with a data system to assist with reporting compliance related to Organizational Standards and Triennial Review activity.

## **G. Contingency Plan**

The development of this allocation plan is based on the assumption that the FFY 2019 Community Services Block Grant for Connecticut will be funded at the level of \$8,580,324. In the event that anticipated funding is either increased or decreased, federal law, as noted above, specifies the proportion of funds allocated to Community Action Agencies, Discretionary Programs, and Administration. Should a significant decrease in federal funding occur as a result of sequestration, the Department, with input from Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA) and the CAAs, will develop a process to determine priorities for applying any reductions. If additional funds become available, they may be carried over into FFY 2020 in order to ensure ongoing programmatic coverage and to mitigate the potential for future reductions.

In accordance with section 4-28b of the Connecticut General Statutes, after recommended allocations have been approved or modified, any proposed transfer to or from any specific allocation of a sum or sums of over fifty thousand dollars or ten per cent of any such specific allocation, whichever is less, shall be submitted by the Governor to the speaker and the president pro tempore and approved, modified or rejected by the committees. Notification of all transfers made shall be sent to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to appropriations and the budgets of state agencies and to the committee or committees of cognizance, through the Office of Fiscal Analysis.

## **H. State Allocation Planning Process**

Sections 17b-885 through 17b-895 of the Connecticut General Statutes implement the federal requirements governing Community Action Agencies and further stipulate that allocated funds be distributed through an agreement negotiated between the Department and Community Action Agencies. Under the present agreement, negotiated and implemented in 1997, each CAA will receive a base amount that equals one-half of their FFY 1996 allocation. Remaining funds are allocated to CAAs based on the number of individuals in each CAA catchment area (as a proportion of the state total) at or below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines according to census data.

## I. Grant Provisions

In order to obtain CSBG funding, Connecticut must submit and obtain federal approval of the state plan that satisfies the requirements of Sec. 676 of the Reauthorization Act. Under these requirements, the state must:

- designate a state agency to serve as lead agency;
- hold a public hearing to provide the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed use of funds;
- conduct monitoring in accordance with Section 678B of the Reauthorization Act;
- hold a legislative hearing at least once every three (3) years in conjunction with the development of the state plan;
- use funds received to support activities which assist low-income families and individuals to:
  1. achieve self-sufficiency;
  2. secure and retain meaningful employment;
  3. attain an adequate education;
  4. make better use of available income;
  5. obtain and maintain adequate housing;
  6. obtain emergency assistance; and
  7. achieve greater participation in the affairs of the community;
- address the needs of youth in low-income communities;
- ensure that CSBG funds are used to coordinate with and make more effective use of other programs with related purposes;
- describe how it uses its discretionary funds;
- include information provided by eligible entities on how CSBG funds will be used;
- ensure that eligible entities provide emergency food, supplies and related services to combat hunger and malnutrition;
- ensure that the state and eligible entities coordinate with and establish linkages between governmental and other programs to avoid duplication;
- provide for coordination between programs to ensure that energy crisis intervention programs are conducted in each community;
- ensure that the state will cooperate with related federal investigations;

- ensure that funding for eligible entities will not be terminated or reduced below their proportional share without cause;
- provide opportunities for state and eligible entities to form partnerships with other organizations, including religious, charitable and community organizations;
- establish mechanisms for low-income individuals or organizations that feel they are under-represented on the board of a CAA to petition for representation;
- require that each CAA submit a Community Action Plan as a condition of funding;
- require that all eligible entities participate in the Results Oriented Management and Accountability system; and
- require that each eligible entity have a Board of Directors composed of equal numbers of low-income persons, local elected officials or their designees, and other individuals or organizations serving low-income people in the community.

Connecticut's most recent federal application for CSBG funding was approved for the period October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2018. Connecticut's next federal application for CSBG funding for the period October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2020 is due to ACF by September 1, 2018.

Additional Federal Requirements:

Starting in 2015, OCS and the CSBG Network – comprised of CSBG eligible entities, state CSBG Lead Agencies, state Community Action Agency Associations, national partners, and others – have collaborated to create a new Performance Management Framework for CSBG. This Framework includes:

- Organizational Standards for CSBG eligible entities;
- Federal and State Accountability Measures; and
- Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA).

These elements were designed to increase effectiveness and accountability across the CSBG network (federal, state, and local) and generate more robust results for the people and communities we serve.

On October 2, 2015, OCS issued an Information Memorandum Transmittal No. 144 regarding State and Federal Accountability Measures and Data Collection Modernization. Pursuant to the terms of



the memorandum, OCS required states, no later than FFY 2016, to collect data and analyze and report on CSBG Accountability Measures through their online State plan and annual reports.

The thirteen (13) State accountability measures address efficiency and effectiveness characteristics such as timeliness, accuracy, standards, and stakeholder satisfaction in the critical activities and functions listed below:

- Development of State plan, including involving the eligible entities
- Implementation of State plan including:
  - Distribution of funds
  - Use of remainder/discretionary funds
  - Grantee monitoring and corrective action
  - Data collection, analysis, and reporting
  - Organizational standards for eligible entities
  - State linkages and communication

The Department began successfully complying with the identified state accountability measures during FFY 2016 and shall continue to comply with these requirements during ongoing years.

In addition to accountability measures for states, on January 26, 2015, OCS issued Information Memorandum Transmittal No. 138 referencing the “State Establishment of Organizational Standards for CSBG Eligible Entities under 678B of the CSBG Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9901 et seq.” The categories associated with the Organization Standards for CAAs are as follows:

1. Maximum Feasible Participation
  - Consumer Input and Involvement
  - Community Engagement
  - Community Assessment
2. Vision and Direction
  - Organizational Leadership
  - Board Governance
  - Strategic Planning
3. Operations and Accountability
  - Human Resource Management
  - Financial Operations and Oversight
  - Data and Analysis

The Department and the CAA network are working collaboratively to develop and implement a system to ensure compliance with all federal requirements. The Department convened a workgroup comprised of members from the Community Services Block Grant office, as well as representatives from the CAA Network (e.g. senior management, fiscal, human resources, quality assurance, planning, etc.). It is the Department’s expectation that through this process of consistent communication, Connecticut CAAs will be informed of compliance requirements for each of the categories associated with the above mentioned organizational standards. The Department will also utilize this process to assist with the identification of training that is above and beyond the standard training.

Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA)

The Department and the CAA network are continuing activities related to ROMA Next Generation (ROMA NG). ROMA NG is the next level of ROMA principles, practices and resources that was implemented in FFY 2018. ROMA NG focuses on integrating information on the people served, services and strategies provided, and outcomes achieved by eligible entities on 3 levels: community, individual and family. The final stage of the development of the components of ROMA NG was the convening of a workgroup with representatives from state, local, national, and federal levels. The ROMA NG efforts are reflected in the proposed CSBG Annual Report, which was approved by the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on January 12, 2017. Implementation and reporting in the new format for the NPIs began during FFY 2018. The revised Annual Report format related to agency, community and individual/family indicators, services and strategies will be reported no later than March 31, 2019.

In closing, FFY 2019 holds great promise for the CAA Network as it aligns its functionality and organizational capacity with federal requirements to ensure that the national and local CAA discussion covers uniform topics: community level; individual and family level; and agency expenditures, capacity and resources.

## II. Tables

<b>TABLE # and TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE #</b>
Table A <b>Recommended Allocations</b>	<b>10</b>
Table B <b>Summary of Program Expenditures</b>	<b>11</b>
Table C <b>Summary of Service Objectives and Activities</b>	<b>12</b>
Table D <b>Proposed Expenditures by Program Category</b>	<b>13</b>

# Table A

## COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT RECOMMENDED ALLOCATIONS

<b>PROGRAM CATEGORY</b>	<b>FFY 17 Expenditures</b>	<b>FFY 18 Estimated Expenditures</b>	<b>FFY 19 Proposed Expenditures</b>	<b>Percentage Change from FFY 18 to FFY 19</b>
Grants to Eligible Entities	\$7,281,331	\$7,722,292	\$7,722,292	0%
Discretionary Programs	388,956	424,753	429,016	1%
Administration	634,800	517,519	429,016	-17%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8,305,087</b>	<b>\$8,664,564</b>	<b>\$8,580,324</b>	<b>-1%</b>
<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS</b>				
Block Grant	\$8,495,039	\$8,580,324	\$8,580,324	0%
Carry Forward from Previous Year	2,214,364	2,404,316	2,320,076	-4%
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>\$10,709,403</b>	<b>\$10,984,640</b>	<b>\$10,900,400</b>	<b>-1%</b>

**Table B**  
**COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT**  
**SUMMARY OF PROGRAM EXPENDITURES**

	<b>FFY 17 Expenditures</b>	<b>FFY 18 Estimated Expenditures</b>	<b>FFY 19 Proposed Expenditures</b>	<b>Percentage change from FFY 18 to FFY 19</b>
Number of Positions (FTE) <sup>1</sup>	2.75	2.75	2.75	
Personal Services	195,253	194,301	200,320	3%
Fringe Benefits	150,817	158,288	165,338	4%
Other Expenses <sup>2</sup>	288,730	164,930	63,358	-62%
Equipment				
Contracts				
Grants to:				
Local Government				
Other State Agencies				
Private Agencies	7,670,287	8,147,045	8,151,308	0%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$8,305,087</b>	<b>\$8,664,564</b>	<b>\$8,580,324</b>	<b>-1%</b>
	<b>Sources of FFY 17 Allocations</b>	<b>Sources of FFY 18 Allocations</b>	<b>Sources of FFY 19 Allocations</b>	<b>Percentage change from FFY 18 to FFY 19</b>
Carry Forward from Previous Year	2,214,364	2,404,316	2,320,076	-4%
Federal Block Grant Funds	8,495,039	8,580,324	8,580,324	0%
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>\$10,709,403</b>	<b>\$10,984,640</b>	<b>\$10,900,400</b>	<b>-1%</b>

**Notes:**

- <sup>1</sup> FFY 2019 Personal Services and Fringe costs are associated with 2.75 FTE dedicated to the CSBG program. These staff will provide appropriate oversight of the program consistent with federal requirements.
- <sup>2</sup> While personal services and fringe benefits are slightly increasing from FFY 2018 to FFY 2019 due to contractual agreements, the other expenses line item is significantly decreasing. This decrease is related to reduction of one-time costs for IT consulting services associated with a data system to assist with reporting compliance related to Organizational Standards and Triennial Review activity and accounting/auditing services to ensure compliance with CSBG regulatory and oversight responsibilities. This reduction will not negatively impact the program or result in any loss of services.

## Table C

### COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

#### SUMMARY OF SERVICE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Service Category	Objective	Service/Activity	Number Served FFY 17*	Performance Measures
Core Funding for Eligible Entities	Provide core administrative support for CAAs to organize services and coordinate funding for programs that serve individuals and families at or below 125% of the federal poverty level.	Provide planning, administrative, and financial management support to Community Action Agencies to coordinate grants and services to low-income residents.	293,840 persons served through 10 CAAs in FFY 2017	See below

\* As reported in Part I, Section G, Lines 3 and 4 of the annual federal CSBG MIS report for 2017.

#### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

##### AS REPORTED IN THE ANNUAL CT FFY 2017 COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT INFORMATION SYSTEM SURVEY

Conditions of poverty reduced or eliminated as measured by the # of clients who, as a result of CSBG assistance:

1. Obtained supports to reduce or eliminate barriers to employment [**Employment**]
2. Increased in financial assets or financial skills [**Income Management**]
3. Participated in education and self-improvement programs [**Education**]
4. Maintained adequate housing/ independent living situation [**Housing**]
5. Advanced towards or achieved self-sufficiency [**Self-Sufficiency**]
6. Obtained emergency assistance [**Emergency Services**]
7. Engaged in activities that support and promote their own well-being and that of their community [**Participation in Community**]

**Table D**  
**COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT**  
**PROPOSED EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM CATEGORY**

	<b>FFY 2017 Expenditures</b>	<b>FFY 2018 Estimated Expenditures<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>FFY 2019 Proposed Expenditures<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Major Program Categories</b>	<b>(including carry forward funds)</b>	<b>(including carry forward funds)</b>	<b>(including carry forward funds)</b>
<b>Grants to Eligible Entities</b>			
Action for Bridgeport Community Development, Inc. (ABCD)	936,183	1,119,374	1,119,374
ACCESS Agency, Inc.	439,443	466,004	466,004
Bristol Community Organization, Inc. (BCO) <sup>2</sup>	70,149	0	0
Community Action Agency of New Haven, Inc. (CAANH)	1,053,704	1,117,389	1,117,389
Community Action Agency of Western Connecticut, Inc. (CAAWC)	793,910	698,638	698,638
Community Renewal Team of Greater Hartford, Inc. (CRT)	1,732,309	1,837,013	1,837,013
Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA)	249,073	234,604	234,604
Human Resource Agency of New Britain, Inc. (HRANB) <sup>2</sup>	450,799	527,998	527,998
New Opportunities, Inc. (NOI)	919,624	1,033,881	1,033,881
TEAM, Inc.	201,684	226,679	226,679
Thames Valley Council for Community Action, Inc. (TVCCA)	434,453	460,712	460,712
<b>Formula Allocations – Total</b>	<b>\$7,281,331</b>	<b>\$7,722,292</b>	<b>\$7,722,292</b>
<b>Discretionary Programs <sup>3</sup></b>	388,956	424,753	429,016
<b>State Agency Administration <sup>4,5</sup></b>	634,800	517,519	429,016

**Notes:**

- <sup>1</sup> FFY 2019 proposed expenditures reflect the base award amounts each CAA receives per the current agreement stipulated under §17b-888 of the Connecticut General Statutes.
- <sup>2</sup> Bristol Community Organization, Inc. (BCO) and Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc. (HRA) merged on December 31, 2016 (HRA began providing services to the Greater Bristol catchment area effective January 1, 2017).
- <sup>3</sup> CSBG discretionary resources will be utilized as follows: 80% capacity building activities; 15% other CSBG purposes, and 5% other purposes to support the Connecticut’s compliance with the CSBG Act. Examples of services funded through discretionary resources include: training and technical assistance for ROMA training; CAA Network support; Implementation of Federal client count /service count reports; Board training; Conferences, Meetings, Annual Needs Assessments, etc.
- <sup>4</sup> FFY 2019 Personal Services and Fringe are associated with 2.75 FTE dedicated to the CSBG program. These staff will provide appropriate oversight of the program consistent with federal requirements.
- <sup>5</sup> In FFY 2018, the 5% allowed annual allocation amount for state agency administration was \$428,560. Any expenditures in FFY 2018 exceeding that amount were funded through prior year carryforward funding.