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# **COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Community Services  
Division of State Assistance  
370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20447

## **Information Memorandum**

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**Transmittal No. 138**

**Date: January 26, 2015**

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**TO:** State Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Administrators, U. S. Territory CSBG Administrators, Eligible Entities, and State Community Action Associations

**SUBJECT:** State Establishment of Organizational Standards for CSBG Eligible Entities under 678B of the CSBG Act, 42 U.S.C. § 9914

**RELATED REFERENCES:** Community Services Block Grant Act 42 U.S.C. § 9901 *et seq.*, hereafter referred to as “the CSBG Act.”

This information memorandum (IM) provides guidance and describes State and Federal roles and responsibilities for the establishment of organizational standards as a component of a larger performance management and accountability system for CSBG. Consistent with the authority and responsibilities the CSBG Act establishes for the Federal office and States, OCS is requiring States, no later than FY 2016, to establish and report on their organizational standards for CSBG eligible entities as part of an enhanced system for accountability and performance management across the CSBG Network.

While States have discretion on the set of standards they may use, OCS recommends States use the organizational standards (Appendices 2 and 3) developed by the OCS-supported CSBG Organizational Standards Center of Excellence (COE), which reflect the requirements of the CSBG Act, good management practices, and the values of Community Action. These standards will ensure CSBG eligible entities have appropriate organizational capacity to deliver services to low-income individuals and communities.

The guidance in this IM applies to States, the District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories that support CSBG eligible entities. Tribal governments and organizations that receive CSBG directly from the Federal government are not included in this guidance, but will receive future guidance on a separate accountability and reporting process.

### **State Authority and Responsibility to Establish Organizational Standards**

Under the block grant framework established in the CSBG Act, States have both the authority and the responsibility for effective oversight of eligible entities that receive CSBG funds. Section 678B of the CSBG Act (42 U.S.C. § 9914) requires State CSBG Lead Agencies to establish “performance goals, administrative standards, financial management requirements, and other requirements” that ensure an appropriate level of accountability and quality among the State’s eligible entities. In order for States to meet these responsibilities under the CSBG Act,

States must establish and communicate clear and comprehensive standards and hold eligible entities accountable according to the standards as part of their oversight duties.

### **Federal Authority and Responsibility for Organizational Standards**

As the Federal office responsible for oversight of CSBG, the Office of Community Services (OCS) is responsible for monitoring to assure State compliance with the requirements of the CSBG Act and for providing training and technical assistance to help States carry out the requirements of the CSBG Act. Section 678B(c) (42 U.S.C. § 9914(c)) directs the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to conduct evaluations of the use of CSBG funds received by the States. Section 678A(a) (42 U.S.C. 9913(a)) requires HHS to support training and technical assistance activities to assist States in monitoring activities to correct programmatic deficiencies of eligible entities, and for reporting and data collection activities.

Several sections of the CSBG Act provide authority or require OCS to collect information from States as part of the State plan or annual report regarding how the State will meet requirements of the CSBG Act. Section 676(b) (42 U.S.C. § 9908(b)) outlines authority for the collection of necessary information as part of a State application and plan. The statute provides the authority to collect “such information as the Secretary shall require,” including a series of detailed assurances based on the requirements of the CSBG Act. To assure effective use of funds to meet the purposes of the statute, section 676(d) (42 U.S.C. § 9908(d)) states that the “Secretary may prescribe procedures for the purpose of assessing effectiveness of the eligible entities in carrying out the purpose of [the CSBG Act].”

### **Performance Management for CSBG**

Budget constraints, high poverty levels, changing demographics, and income inequality demand that the CSBG Network remain vigilant in our shared mission of creating opportunity and security for all Americans. We must look at all levels of the CSBG Network – local, State, and Federal – to assess and increase CSBG’s impact. The CSBG Network is far-reaching and nationwide. Together, we have the potential to achieve even greater results, in every community, by improving our accountability to one another, our customers, and our communities.

In an effort to help the CSBG Network increase accountability and achieve results, OCS launched several initiatives in 2012. One focused on establishing organizational standards for eligible entities. Under this effort, CSBG Network leaders developed and recommended a set of organizational standards to strengthen the capacity of the more than 1,000 eligible entities providing services across the country.

A second performance management initiative focused on enhancing the CSBG Network’s performance and outcomes measurement system for local eligible entities – identified in the CSBG Act as Results Oriented Management and Accountability System (ROMA). Finally, a third initiative focused on creating State and Federal-level accountability measures to track and measure organizational performance by State CSBG Lead Agencies and OCS.

These three efforts are complementary and integrated; together they comprise a network-wide accountability and management system for CSBG. They will ensure eligible entities, States, and OCS operate within Federal law and regulation and will build accountability and continuous management improvement into all three levels of the network (local, State and Federal). As shown in Appendix 1, *Measuring the Success of Community Action and CSBG*, these efforts will help us answer the questions, ‘How well did the Network perform?’ and ‘What difference did the Network make?’ Ultimately, using these new and enhanced tools and information, the CSBG Network will make better program decisions and generate stronger results for low-income families and communities.

### **Organizational Standards for CSBG Eligible Entities - Background**

In 2012, OCS funded a cooperative agreement for the CSBG Organizational Standards Center of Excellence (COE). The two-year cooperative agreement coordinated – with input from local, State, and national partners – the development and dissemination of a set of organizational standards for eligible entities for the purpose of ensuring that all CSBG eligible entities have the capacity to provide high-quality services to low-income individuals and communities.

To begin the project, the COE expanded an existing CSBG Working Group from its original 20 members to over 50 individuals. The expanded working group included a balanced representation from eligible entities, State CSBG Lead Agencies, Community Action State Associations, national partners, technical assistance providers, and external content experts.

The working group’s first task was a thorough environmental scan and analysis of existing organizational oversight tools and resources, internal and external to the CSBG Network. The group found that while there are many similarities across States in how State CSBG Lead Agencies monitor eligible entities, substantial differences also exist.

The project continued through a nine-month development process that provided numerous opportunities for input by the CSBG Network, including financial and legal experts, on draft organizational standards. All together, the network invested over 3,500 documented hours in Working Group and committee meetings and in national and regional listening sessions. The final phase included a pilot that engaged a subset of State CSBG Lead Agencies and eligible entities in a field test of draft organizational standards and tools.

In March, 2014, OCS published a draft information memorandum with the draft organizational standards. OCS received 29 sets of comments (approximately 160 individual comments) from a broad range of individuals and organizations, including six CAAs; 12 states; five state associations; and six national organizations and individuals, and integrated all of this feedback into the final set of organizational standards.

The final result of the COE and OCS efforts is a comprehensive set of organizational standards developed by the CSBG Network for the CSBG Network. The CSBG Network is to be commended for its commitment to ongoing performance improvement and strengthening accountability.

## The COE-developed Organizational Standards

The COE-developed standards are organized in three thematic groups comprising nine categories and totals of 58 standards for private, nonprofit eligible entities and 50 for public entities.

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

In order to be widely applicable across the CSBG Network, the standards are defined differently for private and public eligible entities. The complete description and list of private and public organizational standards are attached as Appendices 2 and 3, respectively.

All of the COE-developed organizational standards work together to characterize an effective and healthy organization. Some of the standards have direct links to the CSBG Act, such as the standards on the tripartite board structure and the democratic selection process. Some standards link with U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance, such as the standards on audits. As a whole, the standards reflect many of the requirements of the CSBG Act, applicable Federal laws and regulations, good management practices, and the values of Community Action.

The purpose of the organizational standards is to ensure that all eligible entities have appropriate organizational capacity, not only in the critical financial and administrative areas important to all nonprofit and public human service agencies, but also in areas of unique importance for CSBG-funded eligible entities. To fulfill the promise of the standards, States must provide consistent and high-quality oversight and technical assistance related to organizational standards. In addition, based on information about organizational capacity, States must work with the eligible entities to make informed programmatic decisions about how the agencies can best meet the needs of local low-income families and communities.

States and eligible entities that implement the COE standards will benefit from COE-developed tools, training, and technical assistance, and from the collective wisdom and scale of having many States using common standards (detailed tools and materials on the standards are available on the COE web page on the [Community Action Partnership](#) website). States using the COE standards will also benefit from a streamlined State plan process.

## State Oversight

Section 678B of the CSBG Act (42 U.S.C. § 9914) requires State CSBG Lead Agencies to establish “performance goals, administrative standards, financial management requirements, and other requirements” that ensure an appropriate level of accountability and quality among the State’s eligible entities. The purpose of States using the organizational standards is to ensure each eligible entity has appropriate organizational capacity to fulfill the purposes of the CSBG Act. As noted below, States have discretion to determine how organizational standards will be implemented as part of their overall oversight strategy.

### *Assessment of Standards*

Once the expectations for organizational standards are established and communicated to the eligible entities across a State, the State CSBG Lead Agency is responsible for assessing the status of standards among all of the eligible entities annually and for reporting to OCS on the standards in the CSBG Annual Report. States may design an approach for assessing organizational standards that fits within the oversight framework in their State. Many States may integrate standards assessment into their regular CSBG monitoring procedures, while other States may choose different oversight approaches, such as peer-review, assessment by a consultant or third party, or self-assessment. Some States may also choose a hybrid approach involving two or more strategies. Regardless of the approach, States must ensure the assessment of standards is independently verified by the State or a third party.

For example, a State on a triennial monitoring cycle may decide to assess the standards as part of their full onsite financial, administrative, and programmatic monitoring protocol. In the years between monitoring visits, the State may require entities to do self-assessments that are independently verified by a third party. In another example, a State may develop a process that includes peer review assessment that is then verified annually during regular State monitoring visits or a State desk review process.

States will describe their approach for assessing standards in their State plans, which will be subject to OCS review. Promising practices and other tools on integrating such assessment into a State’s oversight strategy will be available on the COE web page on the [Community Action Partnership](#) website.

States are responsible for ensuring that the eligible entities meet all State-established organizational standards. Some standards (i.e., strategic planning, developing an agency-wide budget, etc.) may take several years for eligible entities to meet, but every entity must make steady progress toward the goal of meeting all standards.

### *Corrective Action*

During the assessment process, if a State finds an eligible entity is not meeting a standard or set of standards, the State’s response will depend on the circumstances. In cases where the eligible entity may be able to meet the standard in a reasonable time frame contingent on some targeted technical assistance, the State and entity may develop a technical assistance plan to target

training and technical assistance resources and outline a time frame for the entity to meet the standard(s). If appropriate in other situations, the State may initiate action in accordance with section 678C of the CSBG Act (42 U.S.C. § 9915), including the establishment of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) with clear timelines and benchmarks for progress.

As long as the State is confident that the eligible entity is moving toward meeting standards, under a technical assistance plan, QIP, or other oversight mechanism, the State should not initiate action to terminate or reduce funding.

The failure of an eligible entity to meet multiple standards may reflect deeper organizational challenges and risk. In those cases, a State must determine whether it may be necessary to take additional actions, including reducing or terminating funding, in accordance with [CSBG IM 116](#) (*Corrective Action, Termination, or Reduction of Funding*), issued May 1, 2012. OCS and States do not have the authority under the CSBG Act to bypass the process described in CSBG IM 116 in order to re-compete CSBG funding based on failure to meet organizational standards.

### **Implementation of Organizational Standards**

The roll-out of organizational standards for eligible entities is a significant development in the history of CSBG and marks a new phase in our ability to strengthen accountability and results. While we expect States to move expeditiously in integrating organizational standards into their plans in FY 2016, we also recognize that States must manage this process thoughtfully so as to minimize unintended impact on their operations and those of the eligible entities.

#### *State Considerations for an Effective Roll-out Process*

As States establish new organizational standards for their eligible entities, they must follow a process that is consistent with State rules and is as fair and reasonable as possible. States should allow for input from the boards and leadership of eligible entities on the timing and procedures for implementing, documenting, and reporting on the standards. States should consistently integrate the organizational standards in State CSBG plans, contracts with eligible entities, funding documents, and oversight and monitoring instruments and reports. In particular, States should clearly communicate expectations around organizational standards prior to State oversight and monitoring activities. Once established, a State should only modify organizational standards based on established State rules and procedures that are publicly communicated and transparent (see Appendix 4: State Implementation of Organizational Standards – Key Considerations).

#### *Process and Timing for Planning and Roll-out*

States are expected to use organizational standards for assessing eligible entities starting in FY 2016. In order to do this, States must include information about organizational standards in their FY 2016 application and State plan, due September 1, 2015.

OCS encourages States to start planning for this process now, in FY 2015, particularly if State procedures for establishing official organizational standards may require a lengthy implementation period. For example, if a State uses regulation to establish official CSBG policy

for the eligible entities, the State may want to begin that process in advance of the FY 2016 CSBG application cycle. The timelines for any necessary rulemaking, including any potential obstacles that would prevent full implementation by FY 2016, must be described in the State plan. OCS will work with States that may need additional time due to rulemaking issues.

Any State that submitted a two-year plan for FY 2015 (due September 1, 2014) that did not include organizational standards for FY 2016 will have to submit a supplemental application for FY 2016 that includes organizational standards. This submission will be incorporated into the process for the FY 2016 submission of the State's 424-M application, which States must submit annually online in order to receive CSBG funding.

### *CSBG Model State Plan and Annual Report*

The CSBG Model State Plan and CSBG Annual Report are interconnected and work together to provide critical information to OCS, Congress, and other stakeholders. The CSBG Model State Plan establishes the plans and goals for the performance period, and the annual report cycle provides information on the State's progress toward fulfilling those goals. OCS envisions the Model State Plan to work together with the annual report to provide critical performance management information – including that of organizational standards – to be used by all three levels of the CSBG Network.

In accordance with authorities outlined in Section 676(b) of the CSBG Act (42 U.S.C. § 9908(b)), OCS is revising the Model State Plan for the FY 2016 application cycle (for applications due September 1, 2015) to incorporate items related to organizational standards. OCS will review these elements during the usual State plan review process. Because the COE standards are designed as a comprehensive and complete set, any State that proposes making a minor modification to the standards must document the rationale for the change in their State plan and reports; and any modification to the COE standards will be subject to OCS review.

The revised Model State Plan will require the State to describe:

- whether the State is using the COE-developed organizational standards (and any modifications, if applicable);
- alternative organizational standards, if applicable;
- the process for establishing organizational standards officially in the State (e.g., through State regulation, contract terms and conditions, or other official policy documents), including a timeline;
- the approach for assessing eligible entities against standards;
- procedures for corrective action activities based on organizational standards; and
- exceptions for limited purpose or very small eligible entities, if applicable.

States will report on the status of eligible entities based on organizational standards through the required CSBG Annual Report. In past years, States may have fulfilled their annual reporting requirements, under section 678E(a)(2) of the CSBG Act (42 U.S.C. § 9917(a)(2)), by providing data for the CSBG Information Survey. In the future, OCS will provide new instructions for States regarding annual reporting.

OCS will be revising the Annual Report forms to include information on organizational standards, such as a comparison of the State's actual activities and performance on organizational standards to the planned activities and performance in the State plan. The Annual Report forms will also include data on the new State CSBG Accountability Measures.

#### *Alternative Organizational Standards*

Some States may already have highly developed standards in place that may function well in fulfillment of State oversight requirements under the CSBG Act. In these cases, a State may establish and communicate organizational standards for its eligible entities that are different from the COE-developed standards.

However, a State that uses an alternative set of standards must demonstrate that the standards are at least as rigorous and comprehensive as the organizational standards developed by the COE. If a State establishes a different set of organizational standards, the alternative standards must encompass requirements of the CSBG Act and other Federal requirements, such as those found in the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 C.F.R. Part 200), and should address the nine categories listed in the description of the COE-developed standards (e.g., consumer input and involvement, community engagement, etc.). OCS will review alternative standards during the application and State plan review process.

#### *Exceptions for Limited-purpose Agencies and Special Circumstances*

While the COE-developed organizational standards and related tools and materials are applicable to the vast majority of public and private CSBG eligible entities across the network, OCS recognizes that some States, according to their historical CSBG structure or other factors, may provide CSBG funds to certain entities for which the organizational standards may not be appropriate. These entities may include limited purpose agencies, State-funded tribal organizations, and migrant and seasonal farmworker organizations. In addition, organizational standards may not be applicable to entities with very small overall budgets (e.g., under \$50,000) or entities that receive very minor CSBG allocations (e.g., \$15,000).

In these special circumstances, States should assess both the applicability of the standards and the administrative burden for very small entities. States should also assess whether these agencies that are unable to meet the organizational standards are otherwise equipped to meet the purposes and goals of the CSBG Act, and whether alternative approaches, such as shared administrative supports or mergers, should be considered in order to assure appropriate capacity.

States may describe the rationale for not implementing the COE-developed or alternative organizational standards for these specific entities in their State plan, which will be subject to OCS review. However, as appropriate, States should describe other types of appropriate standards for excepted entities in order to ensure performance and accountability appropriate to the specific purpose and scope of the Federal support.



### *State Accountability Measures on Organizational Standards*

States will report on organizational standards in part by using the new CSBG State Accountability Measures. These new accountability measures will require States to track data such as the percentage of eligible entities that met 100 percent of the organizational standards during the performance period and information on technical assistance plans and Quality Improvement Plans for eligible entities not meeting the standards during the performance period.

OCS is incorporating the State Accountability Measures into the CSBG Model State Plan and CSBG Annual Report forms and will clear them through the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). For more information on the CSBG State and Federal Accountability Measures, including the specific measures related to organizational standards, see the draft IM, *State and Federal Accountability Measures and Data Collection Modernization*.

### *CSBG Network Review and OMB Paperwork Reduction Act Clearance Process*

As noted earlier, OCS is currently revising the Model State Plan and the CSBG Annual Report forms to incorporate performance management elements, as well as to create forms that are better integrated, web-based, and streamlined. OCS has and will continue to seek input from States and other CSBG Network stakeholders on the clarity, usability, and effectiveness of the revised documents.

As a part of this effort, OCS must clear the revised forms through OMB, as required under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA). The PRA requires agencies and OMB to ensure that information collected from the public minimizes burden and maximizes practical utility. The OMB/PRA review and approval process includes a 60-day and a 30-day public comment period. For more information about the OMB/PRA clearance process, please see the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website.

The COE-developed organizational standards themselves will not go through a formal OMB/PRA clearance process. Rather, OCS will clear elements related to the organizational standards (such as implementation plans, data collection for the accountability measures, etc.) that are incorporated in the CSBG Model State Plan and the CSBG Annual Report forms.

OCS expects to initiate the OMB/PRA clearance process for the CSBG Model State Plan in early 2015. Concurrently, we will begin automating the Model State Plan so that States can access it through the ACF Online Data Collection (OLDC) system. We anticipate States will use the online version of the revised Model State Plan for the FY 2016 application cycle (for applications due September 1, 2015).

Below is information on implementation timing and roll-out of the organizational standards for OCS, States, and eligible entities. If you have questions, please contact an OCS CSBG specialist. The list of OCS staff and contact information is posted on the OCS website at [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/csbg-staff-assignments-by-region](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/resource/csbg-staff-assignments-by-region).

### OCS Responsibilities

<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
<i>CSBG Model State Plan</i> : Complete the first revision with CSBG Network input	Fall 2014
<i>Final IM on Organizational Standards</i> : Publish	January 2015
<i>CSBG Model State Plan</i> : Program into the ACF Online Data Collection (OLDC) system	Approximately 6 months winter 2015 – spring 2015
<i>CSBG Model State Plan</i> : Request public comments; get HHS and OMB approval	Approximately 6 months winter 2015 – spring 2015
<i>CSBG Model State Plan</i> : Publish and provide training and technical assistance	Spring/summer 2015
<i>Annual Report</i> : Revise, automate, and get OMB approval; with the National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCSPP)	2015 - 2016

Note: Dates above are contingent on the time frame for final OMB/PRA clearance.

### State Responsibilities

<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
<i>Organizational Standards</i> : Establish, communicate, and implement	2015
<i>CSBG Model State Plan</i> : Include organizational standards (States will submit State Plans through the OLDC system)	Due by September 1, 2015
<i>Organizational Standards</i> : Assess through established oversight procedures	Starting Federal Fiscal Year 2016
<i>Annual Report</i> : Report performance on organizational standards (State accountability measures)	End of 2016 performance period, by March 2017, as appropriate

### CSBG Eligible Entity Responsibilities

<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
<i>Organizational Standards</i> : Self-assessment and planning for adoption of standards	2015
<i>Organizational Standards</i> : Assess through established State oversight procedures; Address identified weaknesses and share exceptional practices, with State and technical assistance providers	Starting Federal Fiscal Year 2016

## Conclusion

Together we must insist upon accountability and performance management across the CSBG Network. The COE-developed organizational standards have the potential to protect and enhance the structural integrity of this national network by assuring that all entities that annually receive CSBG funds have the capacity to organize and support a comprehensive community response to the complex social problems that contribute to poverty.

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## Appendices:

**Appendix 1:** Measuring the Success of Community Action and CSBG

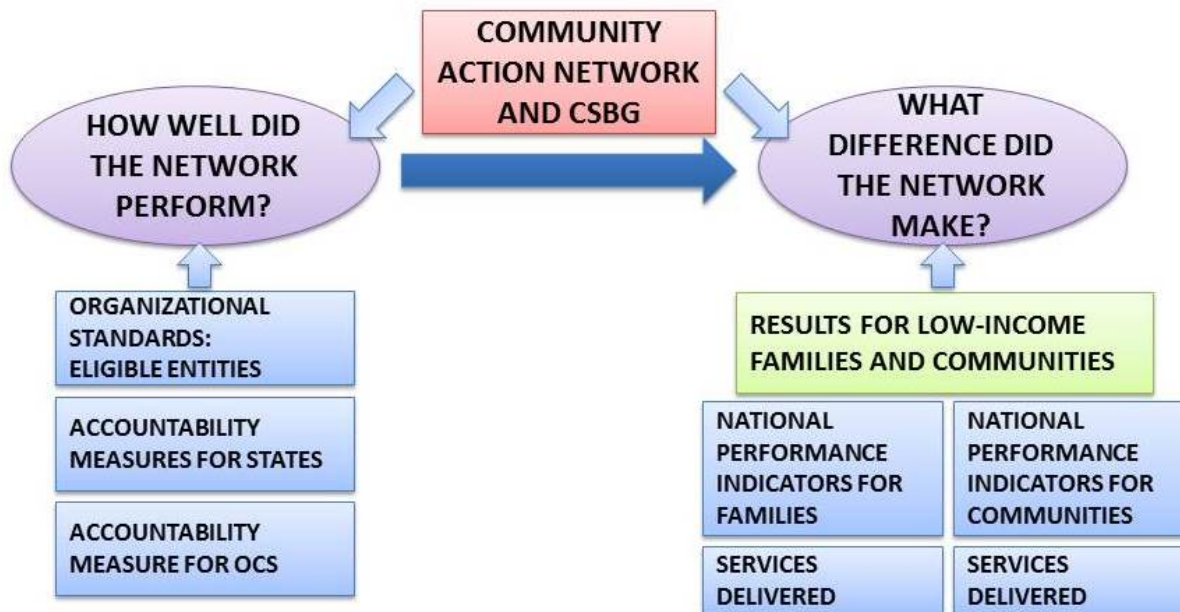
**Appendix 2:** COE-developed Organizational Standards for Private, Nonprofit CSBG Eligible Entities

**Appendix 3:** COE-developed Organizational Standards for Public CSBG Eligible Entities

**Appendix 4:** State Implementation of Organizational Standards – Key Considerations

Appendix 1: Measuring the Success of Community Action and CSBG

## MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF COMMUNITY ACTION AND CSBG



## Appendix 2: COE-developed Organizational Standards for Private, Nonprofit CSBG Eligible Entities

# ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS FOR PRIVATE, NONPROFIT CSBG ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

## MAXIMUM FEASIBLE PARTICIPATION

### Category one: Consumer Input and Involvement

Community Action is rooted in the belief that people with low incomes are in the best position to express what they need to make a difference in their lives. CSBG eligible entities work in partnership with the people and communities they serve. Community Action works in a coordinated and comprehensive manner to develop programs and services that will make a critical difference in the lives of participants. Individuals and families are well attuned to what they need, and when Community Action taps into that knowledge, it informs our ability to implement high-impact programs and services.

Research shows that through engagement in community activities such as board governance, peer to peer leadership, advisory bodies, volunteering, and other participatory means, the poor build personal networks and increase their social capital so that they are able to move themselves and their families out of poverty. Community Action is grounded in helping families and communities build this social capital for movement to self-sufficiency.

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| <b>Standard 1.1 • private</b> | The organization demonstrates low-income individuals' participation in its activities.   |
| <b>Standard 1.2 • private</b> | The organization analyzes information collected directly from low-income individuals as part of the community assessment.              |
| <b>Standard 1.3 • private</b> | The organization has a systematic approach for collecting, analyzing, and reporting customer satisfaction data to the governing board. |

## Category two: Community Engagement

No CSBG eligible entity can meet all of a community's needs independently. Through formal and informal partnerships, ongoing community planning, advocacy, and engagement of people with low incomes, partners ranging from community and faith-based organizations, educational institutions, government, and business work together with Community Action Agencies and other CSBG eligible entities to successfully move families out of poverty and revitalize communities.

Community Action is often the backbone organization of community efforts to address poverty and community revitalization: leveraging funds, convening key partners, adding the voice of the underrepresented, and being the central coordinator of efforts. It is not an easy role to play, but a vital one for families and communities.

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|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Standard 2.1 • private</b> | The organization has documented or demonstrated partnerships across the community, for specifically identified purposes; partnerships include other anti-poverty organizations in the area.   |
| <b>Standard 2.2 • private</b> | The organization utilizes information gathered from key sectors of the community in assessing needs and resources, during the community assessment process or other times. These sectors would include at minimum: community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, public sector, and educational institutions. |
| <b>Standard 2.3 • private</b> | The organization communicates its activities and its results to the community.  |
| <b>Standard 2.4 • private</b> | The organization documents the number of volunteers and hours mobilized in support of its activities.   |

### Category three: Community Assessment

Local control of Federal CSBG resources is predicated on regular comprehensive community assessments that take into account the breadth of community needs as well as the partners and resources available in a community to meet these needs. Regular assessment of needs and resources at the community level is the foundation of Community Action and a vital management and leadership tool that is used across the organization and utilized by the community to set the course for both CSBG and all agency resources.

**Standard 3.1 • private**      The organization conducted a community assessment and issued a report within the past 3 years.

**Standard 3.2 • private**      As part of the community assessment, the organization collects and includes current data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age, and race/ethnicity for their service area(s).

**Standard 3.3 • private**      The organization collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data on its geographic service area(s) in the community assessment.

**Standard 3.4 • private**      The community assessment includes key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of the communities assessed.

**Standard 3.5 • private**      The governing board formally accepts the completed community assessment.

## VISION AND DIRECTION

### Category four: Organizational Leadership

Community Action leadership is exemplified at all levels across the organization and starts with a mission that clarifies Community Action's work on poverty. A well-functioning board, a focused chief executive officer (CEO)/executive director, well-trained and dedicated staff, and volunteers giving of themselves to help others will establish Community Action as the cornerstone and leverage point to address poverty across the community. Ensuring strong leadership both for today and into the future is critical.

This category addresses the foundational elements of mission as well as the implementation of the Network's model of good performance management (ROMA). It ensures CAAs have taken steps to plan thoughtfully for today's work and tomorrow's leadership.

<b>Standard 4.1 • private</b>	The governing board has reviewed the organization's mission statement within the past 5 years and assured that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The mission addresses poverty; and</li> <li>2. The organization's programs and services are in alignment with the mission.</li> </ol>
<b>Standard 4.2 • private</b>	The organization's Community Action plan is outcome-based, anti-poverty focused, and ties directly to the community assessment.
<b>Standard 4.3 • private</b>	The organization's Community Action plan and strategic plan document the continuous use of the full Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) cycle or comparable system (assessment, planning, implementation, achievement of results, and evaluation). In addition, the organization documents having used the services of a ROMA-certified trainer (or equivalent) to assist in implementation.
<b>Standard 4.4 • private</b>	The governing board receives an annual update on the success of specific strategies included in the Community Action plan.
<b>Standard 4.5 • private</b>	The organization has a written succession plan in place for the CEO/executive director, approved by the governing board, which contains procedures for covering an emergency/unplanned, short-term absence of 3 months or less, as well as outlines the process for filling a permanent vacancy.
<b>Standard 4.6 • private</b>	An organization-wide, comprehensive risk assessment has been completed within the past 2 years and reported to the governing board.



## Category five: Board Governance

Community Action boards are uniquely structured to ensure maximum feasible participation by the entire community, including those the network serves. By law, Community Action boards are comprised of at least 1/3 low-income consumers (or their representatives), 1/3 elected officials (or their appointees), and the remainder private-sector community members. To make this structure work as intended, CAAs must recruit board members thoughtfully, work within communities to promote opportunities for board service, and orient, train, and support them in their oversight role. Boards are foundational to good organizational performance and the time invested to keep them healthy and active is significant, but necessary.

- Standard 5.1 • private** The organization's governing board is structured in compliance with the CSBG Act:
1. At least one third democratically-selected representatives of the low-income community;
  2. One-third local elected officials (or their representatives); and
  3. The remaining membership from major groups and interests in the community.
- Standard 5.2 • private** The organization's governing board has written procedures that document a democratic selection process for low-income board members adequate to assure that they are representative of the low-income community.
- Standard 5.3 • private** The organization's bylaws have been reviewed by an attorney within the past 5 years.
- Standard 5.4 • private** The organization documents that each governing board member has received a copy of the bylaws within the past 2 years.
- Standard 5.5 • private** The organization's governing board meets in accordance with the frequency and quorum requirements and fills board vacancies as set out in its bylaws.
- Standard 5.6 • private** Each governing board member has signed a conflict of interest policy within the past 2 years.
- Standard 5.7 • private** The organization has a process to provide a structured orientation for governing board members within 6 months of being seated.
- Standard 5.8 • private** Governing board members have been provided with training on their duties and responsibilities within the past 2 years.
- Standard 5.9 • private** The organization's governing board receives programmatic reports at each regular board meeting.

## Category six: Strategic Planning

Establishing the vision for a Community Action Agency is a big task and setting the course to reach it through strategic planning is serious business. CSBG eligible entities take on this task by looking both at internal functioning and at the community's needs. An efficient organization knows where it is headed, how the board and staff fit into that future, and how it will measure its success in achieving what it has set out to do. This agency-wide process is board-led and ongoing. A "living, breathing" strategic plan with measurable outcomes is the goal, rather than a plan that gets written but sits on a shelf and stagnates. Often set with an ambitious vision, strategic plans set the tone for the staff and board and are a key leadership and management tool for the organization.

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| <b>Standard 6.1 • private</b> | The organization has an agency-wide strategic plan in place that has been approved by the governing board within the past 5 years.  |
| <b>Standard 6.2 • private</b> | The approved strategic plan addresses reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient. |
| <b>Standard 6.3 • private</b> | The approved strategic plan contains family, agency, and/or community goals.  |
| <b>Standard 6.4 • private</b> | Customer satisfaction data and customer input, collected as part of the community assessment, is included in the strategic planning process.  |
| <b>Standard 6.5 • private</b> | The governing board has received an update(s) on progress meeting the goals of the strategic plan within the past 12 months.  |

## OPERATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### Category seven: Human Resource Management

The human element of Community Action's work is evident at all levels of the organization and the relationship an organization has with its staff often reflects the organization's values and mission. Oversight of the chief executive officer (CEO)/executive director and maintaining a strong human resources infrastructure are key responsibilities of board oversight. Attention to organizational elements such as policies and procedures, performance appraisals, and training lead to strong organizations with the capacity to deliver high-quality services in low-income communities.

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| <b>Standard 7.1 • private</b> | The organization has written personnel policies that have been reviewed by an attorney and approved by the governing board within the past 5 years.        |
| <b>Standard 7.2 • private</b> | The organization makes available the employee handbook (or personnel policies in cases without a handbook) to all staff and notifies staff of any changes. |
| <b>Standard 7.3 • private</b> | The organization has written job descriptions for all positions, which have been updated within the past 5 years.  |
| <b>Standard 7.4 • private</b> | The governing board conducts a performance appraisal of the CEO/executive director within each calendar year.  |
| <b>Standard 7.5 • private</b> | The governing board reviews and approves CEO/executive director compensation within every calendar year.   |
| <b>Standard 7.6 • private</b> | The organization has a policy in place for regular written evaluation of employees by their supervisors.   |
| <b>Standard 7.7 • private</b> | The organization has a whistleblower policy that has been approved by the governing board.   |
| <b>Standard 7.8 • private</b> | All staff participate in a new employee orientation within 60 days of hire.  |
| <b>Standard 7.9 • private</b> | The organization conducts or makes available staff development/training (including ROMA) on an ongoing basis.  |

## Category eight: Financial Operations and Oversight

The fiscal bottom line of Community Action is not isolated from the mission, it is a joint consideration. Community Action boards and staff maintain a high level of fiscal accountability through audits, monitoring by State and Federal agencies, and compliance with Federal Office of Management Budget circulars. The management of Federal funds is taken seriously by CSBG eligible entities and the Standards specifically reflect the board's oversight role as well as the day-to-day operational functions.

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| <b>Standard 8.1 • private</b>  | The organization's annual audit (or audited financial statements) is completed by a Certified Public Accountant on time in accordance with Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirement (if applicable) and/or State audit threshold requirements.       |
| <b>Standard 8.2 • private</b>  | All findings from the prior year's annual audit have been assessed by the organization and addressed where the governing board has deemed it appropriate.   |
| <b>Standard 8.3 • private</b>  | The organization's auditor presents the audit to the governing board.   |
| <b>Standard 8.4 • private</b>  | The governing board formally receives and accepts the audit.  |
| <b>Standard 8.5 • private</b>  | The organization has solicited bids for its audit within the past 5 years.  |
| <b>Standard 8.6 • private</b>  | The IRS Form 990 is completed annually and made available to the governing board for review.  |
| <b>Standard 8.7 • private</b>  | The governing board receives financial reports at each regular meeting that include the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organization-wide report on revenue and expenditures that compares budget to actual, categorized by program; and</li> <li>2. Balance sheet/statement of financial position.</li> </ol> |
| <b>Standard 8.8 • private</b>  | All required filings and payments related to payroll withholdings are completed on time.  |
| <b>Standard 8.9 • private</b>  | The governing board annually approves an organization-wide budget.  |
| <b>Standard 8.10 • private</b> | The fiscal policies have been reviewed by staff within the past 2 years, updated as necessary, with changes approved by the governing board.  |

- Standard 8.11 • private** A written procurement policy is in place and has been reviewed by the governing board within the past 5 years.
- Standard 8.12 • private** The organization documents how it allocates shared costs through an indirect cost rate or through a written cost allocation plan.
- Standard 8.13 • private** The organization has a written policy in place for record retention and destruction.

### Category nine: Data and Analysis

The Community Action Network moves families out of poverty every day across this country and needs to produce data that reflect the collective impact of these efforts. Individual stories are compelling when combined with quantitative data: *no data without stories and no stories without data*. Community Action needs to better document the outcomes families, agencies, and communities achieve. The Community Services Block Grant funding confers the obligation and opportunity to tell the story of agency-wide impact and community change, and in turn the impact of the Network as a whole.

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| <b>Standard 9.1 • private</b> | The organization has a system or systems in place to track and report client demographics and services customers receive.   |
| <b>Standard 9.2 • private</b> | The organization has a system or systems in place to track family, agency, and/or community outcomes.   |
| <b>Standard 9.3 • private</b> | The organization has presented to the governing board for review or action, at least within the past 12 months, an analysis of the agency's outcomes and any operational or strategic program adjustments and improvements identified as necessary. |
| <b>Standard 9.4 • private</b> | The organization submits its annual CSBG Information Survey data report and it reflects client demographics and organization-wide outcomes.   |

## Appendix 3: COE-developed Organizational Standards for Public CSBG Eligible Entities

# ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC CSBG ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

## MAXIMUM FEASIBLE PARTICIPATION

### Category one: Consumer Input and Involvement

Community Action is rooted in the belief that people with low incomes are in the best position to express what they need to make a difference in their lives. CSBG eligible entities work in partnership with the people and communities they serve. Community Action works in a coordinated and comprehensive manner to develop programs and services that will make a critical difference in the lives of participants. Individuals and families are well attuned to what they need, and when Community Action taps into that knowledge, it informs our ability to implement high impact programs and services.

Research shows that through engagement in community activities such as board governance, peer to peer leadership, advisory bodies, volunteering, and other participatory means, the poor build personal networks and increase their social capital so that they are able to move themselves and their families out of poverty. Community Action is grounded in helping families and communities build this social capital for movement to self-sufficiency.

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| <b>Standard 1.1 • public</b> | The department demonstrates low-income individuals' participation in its activities.   |
| <b>Standard 1.2 • public</b> | The department analyzes information collected directly from low-income individuals as part of the community assessment.  |
| <b>Standard 1.3 • public</b> | The department has a systematic approach for collecting, analyzing, and reporting customer satisfaction data to the tripartite board/advisory body, which may be met through broader local government processes. |

## Category two: Community Engagement

No CSBG eligible entity can meet all of a community's needs independently. Through formal and informal partnerships, ongoing community planning, advocacy, and engagement of people with low incomes, partners ranging from community and faith-based organizations, educational institutions, government, and business can work together with Community Action agencies and other CSBG eligible entities to successfully move families out of poverty and revitalize communities.

Community Action is often the backbone organization of community efforts to address poverty and community revitalization: leveraging funds, convening key partners, adding the voice of the underrepresented, and being the central coordinator of efforts. It is not an easy role to play, but a vital one for families and communities.

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| <b>Standard 2.1 • public</b> | The department has documented or demonstrated partnerships across the community, for specifically identified purposes; partnerships include other anti-poverty organizations in the area.   |
| <b>Standard 2.2 • public</b> | The department utilizes information gathered from key sectors of the community in assessing needs and resources, during the community assessment process or other times. These sectors would include at minimum: community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, public sector, and educational institutions. |
| <b>Standard 2.3 • public</b> | The department communicates its activities and its results to the community.  |
| <b>Standard 2.4 • public</b> | The department documents the number of volunteers and hours mobilized in support of its activities.   |



### Category three: Community Assessment

Local control of Federal CSBG resources is predicated on regular comprehensive community assessments that take into account the breadth of community needs as well as the partners and resources available in a community to meet these needs. Regular assessment of needs and resources at the community level is the foundation of Community Action and a vital management and leadership tool that is used across the organization and utilized by the community to set the course for both CSBG and all agency resources.

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| <b>Standard 3.1 • public</b> | The department conducted or was engaged in a community assessment and issued a report within the past 3 years, if no other report exists.   |
| <b>Standard 3.2 • public</b> | As part of the community assessment, the department collects and includes current data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age, and race/ethnicity for their service area(s). |
| <b>Standard 3.3 • public</b> | The department collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data on its geographic service area(s) in the community assessment.  |
| <b>Standard 3.4 • public</b> | The community assessment includes key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of the communities assessed.   |
| <b>Standard 3.5 • public</b> | The tripartite board/advisory body formally accepts the completed community assessment.   |

## VISION AND DIRECTION

### Category four: Organizational Leadership

Community Action leadership is exemplified at all levels across the organization and starts with a mission that clarifies Community Action's work on poverty. A well-functioning board, a focused department head, well-trained and dedicated staff, and volunteers giving of themselves to help others will establish Community Action as the cornerstone and leverage point to address poverty across the community. Ensuring strong leadership both for today and into the future is critical.

This category addresses the foundational elements of mission as well as the implementation of the Network's model of good performance management (ROMA). It ensures CAAs have taken steps to plan thoughtfully for today's work and tomorrow's leadership.

<b>Standard 4.1 • public</b>	The tripartite board/advisory body has reviewed the department's mission statement within the past 5 years and assured that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The mission addresses poverty; and</li> <li>2. The CSBG programs and services are in alignment with the mission.</li> </ol>
<b>Standard 4.2 • public</b>	The department's Community Action plan is outcome-based, anti-poverty focused, and ties directly to the community assessment.
<b>Standard 4.3 • public</b>	The department's Community Action plan and strategic plan document the continuous use of the full Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) cycle or comparable system (assessment, planning, implementation, achievement of results, and evaluation). In addition, the department documents having used the services of a ROMA-certified trainer (or equivalent) to assist in implementation.
<b>Standard 4.4 • public</b>	The tripartite board/advisory body receives an annual update on the success of specific strategies included in the Community Action plan.
<b>Standard 4.5 • public</b>	The department adheres to its local government's policies and procedures around interim appointments and processes for filling a permanent vacancy.
<b>Standard 4.6 • public</b>	The department complies with its local government's risk assessment policies and procedures.

## Category five: Board Governance

Community Action boards are uniquely structured to ensure maximum feasible participation by the entire community, including those the Network serves. By law, Community Action boards are comprised of at least 1/3 low-income consumers (or their representatives), 1/3 elected officials (or their appointees), and the remainder private-sector community members. To make this structure work as intended, CAAs must recruit board members thoughtfully, work within communities to promote opportunities for board service, and orient, train, and support them in their oversight role. Boards are foundational to good organizational performance and the time invested to keep them healthy and active is significant, but necessary.

- Standard 5.1 • public** The department's tripartite board/advisory body is structured in compliance with the CSBG Act, by either:
1. Selecting the board members as follows:
    - At least one third are democratically-selected representatives of the low-income community;
    - One-third are local elected officials (or their representatives); and
    - The remaining members are from major groups and interests in the community; or
  2. Selecting the board through another mechanism specified by the State to assure decision-making and participation by low-income individuals in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs.

- Standard 5.2 • public** The department's tripartite board/advisory body either has:
1. Written procedures that document a democratic selection process for low-income board members adequate to assure that they are representative of the low-income community, or
  2. Another mechanism specified by the State to assure decision-making and participation by low-income individuals in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs.

*Please note under [IM 82](#) for Public Entities the law also requires that a minimum of 1/3 of tripartite board membership be comprised of representatives of low-income individuals and families who reside in areas served.*

- Standard 5.3 • public** Not applicable: Review of bylaws by an attorney is outside of the purview of the department and the tripartite board/advisory body, therefore this standard does not apply to public entities.

- Standard 5.4 • public** The department documents that each tripartite board/advisory body member has received a copy of the governing documents, within the past 2 years.

- Standard 5.5 • public** The department's tripartite board/advisory body meets in accordance with the frequency and quorum requirements and fills board vacancies as set out in its governing documents.
- Standard 5.6 • public** Each tripartite board/advisory body member has signed a conflict of interest policy, or comparable local government document, within the past 2 years.
- Standard 5.7 • public** The department has a process to provide a structured orientation for tripartite board/advisory body members within 6 months of being seated.
- Standard 5.8 • public** Tripartite board/advisory body members have been provided with training on their duties and responsibilities within the past 2 years.
- Standard 5.9 • public** The department's tripartite board/advisory body receives programmatic reports at each regular board/advisory meeting.

## Category six: Strategic Planning

Establishing the vision for a Community Action agency is a big task and setting the course to reach it through strategic planning is serious business. CSBG eligible entities take on this task by looking both at internal functioning and at the community's needs. An efficient organization knows where it is headed, how the board and staff fit into that future, and how it will measure its success in achieving what it has set out to do. This agency-wide process is board-led and ongoing. A "living, breathing" strategic plan with measurable outcomes is the goal, rather than a plan that gets written but sits on a shelf and stagnates. Often set with an ambitious vision, strategic plans set the tone for the staff and board and are a key leadership and management tool for the organization.

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| <b>Standard 6.1 • public</b> | The department has a strategic plan, or comparable planning document, in place that has been reviewed and accepted by the tripartite board/advisory body within the past 5 years. If the department does not have a plan, the tripartite board/advisory body will develop the plan. |
| <b>Standard 6.2 • public</b> | The approved strategic plan, or comparable planning document, addresses reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and/or empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient.   |
| <b>Standard 6.3 • public</b> | The approved strategic plan, or comparable planning document, contains family, agency, and/or community goals.  |
| <b>Standard 6.4 • public</b> | Customer satisfaction data and customer input, collected as part of the community assessment, is included in the strategic planning process, or comparable planning process.  |
| <b>Standard 6.5 • public</b> | The tripartite board/advisory body has received an update(s) on progress meeting the goals of the strategic plan/comparable planning document within the past 12 months.  |

## OPERATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### Category seven: Human Resource Management

The human element of Community Action's work is evident at all levels of the organization and the relationship an organization has with its staff often reflects the organization's values and mission. Oversight of the department head and maintaining a strong human resources infrastructure are key responsibilities of board oversight. Attention to organizational elements such as policies and procedures, performance appraisals, and training lead to strong organizations with the capacity to deliver high-quality services in low-income communities.

<b>Standard 7.1 • public</b>	Not applicable: Local governmental personnel policies are outside of the purview of the department and the tripartite board/advisory body, therefore this standard does not apply to public entities.
<b>Standard 7.2 • public</b>	The department follows local governmental policies in making available the employee handbook (or personnel policies in cases without a handbook) to all staff and in notifying staff of any changes.
<b>Standard 7.3 • public</b>	The department has written job descriptions for all positions. Updates may be outside of the purview of the department.
<b>Standard 7.4 • public</b>	The department follows local government procedures for performance appraisal of the department head.
<b>Standard 7.5 • public</b>	The compensation of the department head is made available according to local government procedure.
<b>Standard 7.6 • public</b>	The department follows local governmental policies for regular written evaluation of employees by their supervisors.
<b>Standard 7.7 • public</b>	The department provides a copy of any existing local government whistleblower policy to members of the tripartite board/advisory body at the time of orientation.
<b>Standard 7.8 • public</b>	The department follows local governmental policies for new employee orientation.
<b>Standard 7.9 • public</b>	The department conducts or makes available staff development/training (including ROMA training) on an ongoing basis.

## Category eight: Financial Operations and Oversight

The fiscal bottom line of Community Action is not isolated from the mission; it is a joint consideration. Community Action boards and staff maintain a high level of fiscal accountability through audits, monitoring by State and Federal agencies, and compliance with Federal Office of Management Budget circulars. The management of Federal funds is taken seriously by CSBG eligible entities and the Standards specifically reflect the board's oversight role as well as the day-to-day operational functions.

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| <b>Standard 8.1 • public</b> | The department's annual audit is completed through the local governmental process in accordance with Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirement (if applicable) and/or State audit threshold requirements. This may be included in the municipal entity's full audit. |
| <b>Standard 8.2 • public</b> | The department follows local government procedures in addressing any audit findings related to CSBG funding.   |
| <b>Standard 8.3 • public</b> | The department's tripartite board/advisory body is notified of the availability of the local government audit.   |
| <b>Standard 8.4 • public</b> | The department's tripartite board/advisory body is notified of any findings related to CSBG funding.   |
| <b>Standard 8.5 • public</b> | Not applicable: The audit bid process is outside of the purview of tripartite board/advisory body therefore this standard does not apply to public entities.   |
| <b>Standard 8.6 • public</b> | Not applicable: The Federal tax reporting process for local governments is outside of the purview of tripartite board/advisory body therefore this standard does not apply to public entities.   |
| <b>Standard 8.7 • public</b> | The tripartite board/advisory body receives financial reports at each regular meeting, for those program(s) the body advises, as allowed by local government procedure.  |
| <b>Standard 8.8 • public</b> | Not applicable: The payroll withholding process for local governments is outside of the purview of the department, therefore this standard does not apply to public entities.  |
| <b>Standard 8.9 • public</b> | The tripartite board/advisory body has input as allowed by local governmental procedure into the CSBG budget process.  |

- Standard 8.10 • public** Not applicable: The fiscal policies for local governments are outside of the purview of the department and the tripartite board/advisory body, therefore this standard does not apply to public entities.
- Standard 8.11 • public** Not applicable: Local governmental procurement policies are outside of the purview of the department and the tripartite board/advisory body, therefore this standard does not apply to public entities.
- Standard 8.12 • public** Not applicable: A written cost allocation plan is outside of the purview of the department and the tripartite board/advisory body, therefore this standard does not apply to public entities.
- Standard 8.13 • public** The department follows local governmental policies for document retention and destruction.



### Category nine: Data and Analysis

The Community Action Network moves families out of poverty every day across this country and needs to produce data that reflect the collective impact of these efforts. Individual stories are compelling when combined with quantitative data: *no data without stories and no stories without data*. Community Action needs to better document the outcomes families, agencies, and communities achieve. The Community Services Block Grant funding confers the obligation and opportunity to tell the story of agency-wide impact and community change, and in turn the impact of the Network as a whole.

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| <b>Standard 9.1 • public</b> | The department has a system or systems in place to track and report client demographics and services customers receive.  |
| <b>Standard 9.2 • public</b> | The department has a system or systems in place to track family, agency, and/or community outcomes.  |
| <b>Standard 9.3 • public</b> | The department has presented to the tripartite board/advisory body for review or action, at least within the past 12 months, an analysis of the agency's outcomes and any operational or strategic program adjustments and improvements identified as necessary. |
| <b>Standard 9.4 • public</b> | The department submits its annual CSBG Information Survey data report and it reflects client demographics and CSBG-funded outcomes.  |

## Appendix 4: State Implementation of Organizational Standards – Key Considerations

Critical Action Area	Description	Critical Partners and Available Resources
<b>Initial discussions with key partners in the State</b>	<i>State convenes discussions with eligible entities, State CAA Association, and other partners to discuss process and timeline for adopting COE-developed organizational standards.</i>	State CSBG Lead Agency, eligible entities, State CAA Association
<b>Assessment of State laws and rulemaking requirements</b>	<i>State CSBG officials, legal counsel, and contracting officials review existing State laws, regulations, and contracting procedures for necessary actions or venues for communication of standards (e.g. State register).</i>	State procurement office, State agency counsel, National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCS), Community Action Program Legal Services, Inc.
<b>Development and public notification of State standards</b>	<i>After review of current rules, standards and requirements, State CSBG officials identify and communicate anticipated organizational standards for CSBG eligible entities. Standards are communicated in writing through State register notice, website publication, or other public notice consistent with State procedures and rulemaking requirements.</i>	CSBG Organizational Standards Center of Excellence
<b>Opportunities for input on timelines and procedures</b>	<i>Through public meetings, consultations, hearings, and written input processes, States provide opportunities for input from CSBG eligible entities and other stakeholders on the timelines and procedures for implementation of organizational standards, including processes for incorporating into State monitoring procedures and organizational bylaws, as appropriate.</i>	CSBG Regional Performance and Innovation Consortia (RPIC), State CAA Association
<b>Development and communication of technical assistance strategies</b>	<i>In partnership with State and national technical assistance partners, the State establishes and communicates a technical assistance strategy to help assure that all CSBG eligible entities have access to technical assistance to meet required standards. Assistance in agency self-assessment may be provided. Technical assistance may be funded through State discretionary resources, may be sponsored federally, or may be paid for by affected organizations, as appropriate.</i>	CSBG Organizational Standards Center of Excellence, CSBG Learning Communities Resource Center, CSBG Risk Mitigation Training and Technical Assistance Center, CSBG RPIC, State CSBG Associations, Office of Community Services (OCS) State Liaison staff
<b>Incorporation of standards in State CSBG Plan</b>	<i>State CSBG officials incorporate organizational standards and procedures for implementation into annual State CSBG Plans. These plans are made available for</i>	NASCS, CSBG Organizational Standards Center of Excellence, OCS State Liaison staff

Critical Action Area	Description	Critical Partners and Available Resources
	<i>public inspection consistent with requirements in the CSBG Act and are submitted for Federal review as part of the application for CSBG funds.</i>	
<b>Incorporation of standards in local CSBG Plans and agency procedures</b>	<i>Eligible entity boards and leadership incorporate organizational standards into agency procedures and practices, as appropriate, to assure compliance with all standards and procedures. Compliance with organizational standards is incorporated into board oversight and executive performance plans as appropriate.</i>	CSBG Organizational Standards of Excellence, Community Action Program Legal Services, Inc., State CAA Associations
<b>Assessment and communication of results</b>	<i>State organizational standards are incorporated into State oversight procedures. As required under the CSBG Act, a full onsite review is conducted at least once every three years and ad hoc monitoring is conducted as necessary.</i>	NASCSP, CSBG Organizational Standards Center of Excellence, OCS State Liaison staff
<b>Corrective action cycle</b>	<i>When State identifies non-compliance through State monitoring, it clearly communicates specific deficiencies and requirements for corrective action and offers technical assistance as appropriate. As necessary, States may initiate further procedures or funding actions consistent with the CSBG Act. In situations in which an eligible entity does not correct significant deficiencies within required deadlines, or in which widespread or systemic issues are identified that cannot feasibly be corrected in a reasonable timeframe, a State may initiate action to terminate eligible entity status consistent with the CSBG Act. Conversely, agencies that are identified as having best practices related to State standards may be identified as exemplars and assist in quality improvement efforts as appropriate.</i>	CSBG Learning Communities Resource Center, CSBG Risk Mitigation Training and Technical Assistance Center, State CSBG Associations, OCS State Liaison staff  Note: For detailed guidance on CSBG requirements, see <a href="#">IM 116</a> .