

The Community Services Block Grant Allocation Plan

FFY 2014

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014

**Submitted by:**  
**Commissioner Roderick L. Bremby**  
**Connecticut Department of Social Services**  
**July 31, 2013**

# The Community Services Block Grant Allocation Plan

FFY 2014

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
<b>I. Overview of the Community Services Block Grant</b> .....	1
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
F. Proposed Allocation Changes From Last Year .....	3
G. Contingency Plan .....	3
H. State Allocation Planning Process .....	3
I. Grant Provisions.....	3
<b>II. Tables</b> .....	6
A. Summary of Appropriations and Expenditures.....	7
B. Summary of Program Expenditures .....	8
C. Summary of Service Objectives and Activities .....	9
<b>III. Allocations by Program Category</b> .....	10-11

# THE COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT ALLOCATION PLAN FFY 2014

October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014

## 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 through its administrative agency, the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services. 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.)); 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**

As federally mandated, at least ninety percent (90%) of the funds made available to the state must be used to make 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 eleven CAAs and one LPA that qualify for CSBG funding in Connecticut. Each CAA has a specified service 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, broadening the resource base for programs and services, and for core administrative expenses. With CSBG as base funding, CAAs operate a wide range of programs with other funds from DSS (including, but not limited to, Energy Assistance, Domestic Violence Shelters and Transitional Living programs, Youth Services and Nutrition Services), other state agencies, federal agencies and municipalities, as well as private donations.

CAAs also prepare annual Community Action Plans, as required under the Act, which address how the goals of the block grant will be furthered by the efforts of the entire Community Action Agency, rather than just those programs funded directly or indirectly by CSBG. CSBG funds must be used to serve or improve the wellbeing of individuals with incomes at or below 125% of the federal poverty level. CSBG funds 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 remainder 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 shall utilize the administration allotment to provide direct program monitoring 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**

For purposes of this plan, the federal funding allocation for Connecticut for FFY 2014 is estimated to be \$7,627,480, which is equal to the state's final post-sequestration FFY 2013 allocation.

## **E. Estimated Expenditures and Proposed Allocations**

Provisions of Section 210 of the federal Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 include requirements that at least ninety percent (90%) of the funds made available to the state must be used to make

grants to CAAs or LPAs. Accordingly, the state proposes approximately ninety percent (90%) or \$6,864,732 of the 2014 block grant be granted to CAAs and LPAs in Connecticut. The state plans to retain five percent (5%) of the FFY 2014 funds or \$381,374 for administration. Through the administration allotment, the department shall provide appropriate staffing levels via quality assurance and programmatic staff to ensure sufficient programmatic and fiscal oversight and monitoring activities. The balance of the allocation, 381,374 (5%) will be used for discretionary projects that may include training, technical assistance, technology support, statewide projects and innovative programs related to the purposes of the Act. Carry forward of any previous year CSBG funds (currently estimated at \$628,600 will be utilized in Grants to Eligible Entities, Discretionary and Administrative Costs depending upon the allocable categories. The distribution of funds to eligible entities is based on a formula referenced in Sec. 17b-888 of the Connecticut General Statutes and further described in Section H below.

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

Block grant regulations specify how funds will be allocated and, as such, the Department does not propose any significant changes in the allocation plan for FFY 2014.

#### **G. Contingency Plan**

This allocation plan has been prepared under the assumption that the FFY 2014 Community Services Block Grant for Connecticut will be funded at the level of \$7,627,480. In the event that anticipated funding is either increased or reduced, federal law, as noted above, specifies the proportion of funds allocated to Community Action Agencies, Discretionary Programs and Administration. Should significant federal funding reductions occur as a result of sequestration, the Department, with input from CAFCA and the CAAs, will develop a process to determine priorities for allocating the reductions.

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

Sections 17b-885 through 17b-895 of the Connecticut General Statutes reflect the federal requirements and further stipulate that 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 service area (as a proportion of the state total) at or below 125% of the federal poverty guideline 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;
- assure 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;
- assure that eligible entities provide emergency food, supplies and related services to combat hunger and malnutrition;
- assure 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;
- assure that the state will cooperate with related federal investigations;
- assure 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 CSBG plan was approved for the period October 1, 2012 to September 30, 2014. Connecticut's next federal CSBG plan for the period October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2016 is due August 31, 2014.

## II. Tables

<b>TABLE # and TITLE</b>		<b>PAGE #</b>
Table A	Summary of Appropriations and Expenditures	7
Table B	Summary of Program Expenditures	8
Table C	Summary of Service Objectives and Activities	9

**Table A**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT**

**SUMMARY OF APPROPRIATIONS AND EXPENDITURES**

<b>PROGRAM CATEGORY</b>	<b>FFY '12 Expenditure</b>	<b>FFY '13 Estimated Expenditure</b>	<b>FFY '14 Proposed Expenditure</b>	<b>Percentage<sup>1</sup> change from FFY13 to FFY14</b>
Grants to Eligible Entities	7,018,419	\$7,646,667	\$6,864,732	-10%
Discretionary Programs	393,976	543,363	636,468	-17%
Administration	197,292	263,009	499,648	90%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,609,687</b>	<b>\$8,453,039</b>	<b>\$8,000,848</b>	-5%
<b>SOURCE OF FUNDS</b>				
Block Grant	\$8,132,631	\$7,627,480	\$7,627,480	0%
Carry Forward from Previous Year*	931,215	1,454,159	628,600	-57%
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>\$9,063,846</b>	<b>\$9,081,639</b>	<b>\$8,256,080</b>	-9%

**Notes:**

1. FFY 2013 Carry Forward amount of \$1,454,159 included funds incurred for contractor payments due to eligible entities but not issued by 9/30/12.
2. Sequestration affected all eligible categories.
3. FFY 2013 Administration does not reflect full CSBG staffing levels, but in FFY 2014 it is projected that all resources will be utilized to ensure comprehensive staffing.
4. For FFY 2013, carry forward for discretionary programs is obligated but not encumbered, thus identified as carry forward.

**Table B**

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

	<b>FFY '12 Expenditure</b>	<b>FFY '13 Estimated Expenditure<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>FFY '14 Proposed Expenditure<sup>2,3</sup></b>	<b>Percentage change from FFY 13 to FFY14</b>
Number of Positions (FTE)	1.4	2.2	2.8	
Personal Services	93,465	123,308	199,396	62%
Fringe Benefits	59,264	90,231	135,662	50%
Other Expenses	44,563	49,470	164,590	233%
Equipment				
Contracts				
Grants to:				
Local Government				
Other State Agencies				
Private agencies	7,412,395	8,190,030	7,501,200	-8%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>7,609,687</b>	<b>8,453,039</b>	<b>8,000,848</b>	<b>-5%</b>
	<b>Sources of FFY '11 Allocations</b>	<b>Sources of FFY '12 Allocations</b>	<b>Sources of FFY '13 Allocations</b>	
Carry Forward from Previous Year*	931,215	1,454,159	628,600	-57%
Federal Block Grant Funds	8,132,631	7,627,480	7,627,480	0%
<b>TOTAL SOURCES OF FUNDS</b>	<b>9,063,846</b>	<b>9,081,639</b>	<b>8,256,080</b>	<b>-9%</b>

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup>FFY 2013 Carry Forward amount included funds incurred for contractor payments but not issued by 9/30/12.

<sup>2</sup>FFY 2014 Personal Services, Fringe and Other Services are increasing due to the projected hiring of two full time employees within the Office of Community Services dedicated to the CSBG program to ensure CSBG oversight responsibilities associated with federal requirements.

<sup>3</sup>FFY 2014 Other Expenses are increasing due to projected additional Indirect Charges associated to staff levels budgeted for fiscal year, as well as indirect costs not posted during FFY 2013. In addition, Other Expenses includes Admin carry forward from FFY 2013 that accumulated due to staffing decreases as CSBG program transitioned to the Office of Community Services. Other expenses will be utilized to cover full staff necessary to ensure CSBG oversight responsibilities and next year's plan will identify the staffing costs under Personnel and Fringe.

**Table C**

**COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT**

**SUMMARY OF SERVICE OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

Service Category	Objective	Service/Activity	Number Served FFY '12	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.	363,554 persons served through 11 CAAs in FFY 12*.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See below</li> </ul>

\* As reported in Part I, Section G, Lines 3 and 4 of the annual federal CSBG MIS report for 2012.

**Performance Measures  
as reported in the annual federal CSBG-IS report  
for FY 2013 State Allocation Plan**

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. Advancing 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]**

### III. ALLOCATIONS BY PROGRAM CATEGORY

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT FFY 13 ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES AND FFY 14 PROPOSED EXPENDITURES

Major Program Categories	FFY 2012 Expenditures  (including carry forward funds)	FFY 2013 Estimated Expenditures  (including carry forward funds)	FFY 2014 Proposed Expenditures  (including carry forward funds)
<b>Grants to Eligible Entities</b>			
Action for Bridgeport Community Development, Inc. (ABCD)	852,029	\$834,187	\$806,669
ACCESS Agency, Inc.	437,587	440,504	417,846
Bristol Community Organization, Inc. (BCO)	195,363	183,337	180,034
Community Action Agency of New Haven, Inc. (CAANH)	988,821	1,036,195	1,006,110
Community Action for Committee of Danbury, Inc. (CACD)	299,081	286,828	273,089
Community Renewal Team of Greater Hartford, Inc. (CRT)	1,740,395	1,534,557	1,648,000
Human Resource Agency of New Britain, Inc. (HRANB)	277,332	303,629	295,373
Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now, Inc. (NEON)	410,242	990,918	555,420
New Opportunities, Inc. (NO)	909,650	1,260,377	927,711
TEAM, Inc.	221,880	207,095	203,960
Thames Valley Council for Community Action, Inc. (TVCCA)	452,049	422,653	413,225
Connecticut Association for Community Action, Inc. (CAFCA)	233,990	146,387	137,295
<b>Formula Allocations – Total</b>	<b>7,018,419</b>	<b>7,646,667</b>	<b>6,864,732</b>
<b>Discretionary Programs</b>	<b>393,976</b>	<b>543,363</b>	<b>636,468</b>
<b>State Agency Administration</b>	<b>197,292</b>	<b>263,009</b>	<b>499,648</b>
<b>TOTAL CSBG</b>	<b>7,609,687</b>	<b>8,453,039</b>	<b>8,000,848</b>

Notes:

1. FFY 2012 CSBG contracts were issued on a calendar year and payments appear to have been made over and under to contractors due to payments being issued on a Federal Fiscal Year timeframe.
2. FFY 2012 Expenditure amounts include FFY 2011 carry forward dollars which were incurred for contractor payments but not issued by 9/30/11. The FFY 2011 carry forward payments were issued in the following federal fiscal year along with the corresponding FFY 2012 contractor payments.
3. The CSBG total funding levels in FFY 2013 were affected by Sequestration but due to available carry forward funds, contractors were not impacted by the reduction.

4. For FFY 2013, carry forward for discretionary programs is obligated but not encumbered, thus identified as carry forward.
5. FFY 2013 Administration does not reflect full CSBG staffing levels, but in FFY 2014 Personal Services, Fringe and Other Services are increasing due to the projected hiring of two full time employees within the Office of Community Services. The use of FFY 2013 Administration carry forward funds will be used to assist to support the funding of the two new staff who will be dedicated solely to the CSBG program to ensure that CSBG Contractor monitoring and Federal requirements are being followed as directed by HHS to DSS.