

## *Community Services Block Grant – Legislative Hearing*

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The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is a dedicated funding source to help local communities combat poverty. The State of Utah partners with nine local community action agencies (CAA) that are designated to assess local needs and provide local solutions to addressing poverty in their unique communities. CSBG can be used within the context of this local needs and prioritization process so long as the funds are being used to serve individuals at or below 125% of the federal poverty level.

There are nine Community Action Agencies, with statewide coverage.

Bear River Association of Governments

Ogden Weber Community Action

Family Connection Center (Davis, Morgan)

Salt Lake Community Action Program

Community Action Services and Food Bank (Utah, Summit, Wasatch)

Uintah Basin Association of Governments

Six county Association of Governments

Southeastern Utah Association of Local Governments

Five County Association of Governments

These agencies operate the program under a tripartite board consisting of elected officials, business representatives, and low-income individuals. The boards are charged with identifying the specific problems in the community and developing work plans and structuring programs to address these issues. They consider other community resources and how to best utilize CSBG funding. Each agency conducts a needs assessment every three years to help prioritize funding and programming.

As required by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of Workforce Service's Housing and Community Development Division (HCD), prepares a state plan identifying the aggregate needs and proposed programming outlined for the state. In addition, a legislative hearing is required on the state plan once every three years.

The state plan is developed with input from all Community Action Agencies statewide and includes a public hearing. The plan follows the format and guidance from HHS. The following constitute the six goals of HHS in relation to the program:

1. Low-income people become more self-sufficient.
2. The conditions in which low-income peoples' lives are improved.
3. Low-income people own a stake in their community.
4. Partnerships among supporters and providers of service to low-income people are achieved.
5. Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results.
6. Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

In addition to these federal goals, our state plan includes the following goals and objectives:

Goal 1: HCD, through its State Community Services Office (SCSO) will administer the CSBG program in Utah in accordance with its mission and in compliance with all applicable statutes, rules, and regulations, in a manner which will increase management efficiency and program effectiveness.

Objective 1: SCSO will allocate and distribute funds in accordance with the CSBG Act and amendments.

Objective 2: SCSO will ensure fiscal accountability of CSBG grantees.

Objective 3: SCSO will support organizational best practices and strengthen organizational capacity, management efficiency, and program effectiveness of CSBG Organizational Standards as set forth by the Office of Community Services.

Goal 2: To advocate for the continuation of funds, community involvement and support, and the expansion of programs to provide services and activities having a measurable impact on the causes and conditions of poverty.

Objective 1: Conduct planning activities to promote the successful results of CSBG-funded activities that collaborate with all interested parties throughout the State with the greatest potential impact on poverty in Utah.

Objective 2: SCSO will monitor and evaluate grantee performance through data collection, program assessment, compliance with the organizational standards, and regular on-site visits.

Objective 3: Consistent with available resources, training and technical assistance will be provided through the SCSO to increase administrative and operational effectiveness, including compliance with the organizational standards

Objective 4: SCSO, in partnership with other state offices and organization funded by CSBG, will research and report on problems and conditions caused by poverty and results of antipoverty efforts in Utah.

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