STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION OF ECONOMIC STABILITY

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Representative Mark Pearson, Chairman
Health and Human Services Oversight Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 205-207
Concord, NH 03301

Community Service Block Grant

- The Department has a responsibility to ensure access to quality community-based services for eligible individuals and protect and care for NH's most vulnerable citizens.

- The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is a federally funded block grant in the Office of Community Services, Administration for Children and Families, US DHHS (ACF), that provides funds to states, territories, and tribes to administer support services that alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in under-resourced communities.

- CSBG funds services and activities including housing, nutrition, utility, and transportation assistance; employment, education, and other income and asset building services; crisis and emergency services; and community asset building initiatives, and other activities to empower families with low incomes to become self-sufficient.

STATE PLAN

- NH is required to submit a state plan for CSBG to ACF every 2 years to receive funds
- The State plan must assure that the funds will be used to further the goals and purposes of the Act by:
    - Obtaining community assistance agencies' (CAA) action plans based on community needs assessments
    - Ensuring participation in the Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) system
    - Requiring CAA Boards of Directors are:
        - Tripartite Boards that are: Public Officials, Low-Income Sector and Private Sector
        - Tripartite Boards are fully engaged in CSBG development, planning, implementation and evaluation

- Standards are organized in three thematic groups
    - Maximum feasible consumer and community participation
    - Vision and Direction
    - Operations and Accountability

- Approximately 129,000 individuals are served each year.

- New Hampshire's goal for CSBG is to expand support to the CAAs to assist them in meeting all organizational standards, the reduction of poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities and the empowerment of low-income families and individuals to become self-sufficient. This support includes T/TA, regularly scheduled meetings with each of the entities to discuss progress, challenges and next steps as well as on-site reviews and random visits.

CONTRACT

- DHHS contracts with the 5 Community Action Programs located throughout the state to support activities that are designed to assist low-income families and individuals, including families and individuals receiving assistance under title IV of the Social Security Act, homeless families and individuals, seasonal farm workers, and elderly low-income individuals and families. Contracted activities are designed to enable the families and individuals
    - to remove obstacles and solve problems that block the achievement of self-sufficiency (particularly for families and individuals who are attempting to transition off a state program carried out under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act).
    - to secure and retain meaningful employment.
    - to attain an adequate education

- Another purpose of the contracts is to address the needs of youth in low-income communities through youth development programs that give priority to the prevention of youth problems and crime and promote increased community coordination and collaboration in meeting the needs of youth, and support development and expansion of innovative community-based youth development programs that have demonstrated success in preventing or reducing youth crime.

OPERATIONS

- CAPS work with the private sector, state, county and local governments, other nonprofits and the Community Action Network to reduce the causes of poverty. Through private donations, sub-contracts and Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), CAPS continue to coordinate services with agencies within their service delivery areas. The CAPS have representation on numerous boards and committees. They work in conjunction with other social service organizations.

- As required by law, each local agency must identify, organize and respond to the antipoverty needs of its own service area. Using different programs, funding sources and partnerships, agencies meet the broad statutory goals of the CSBG Act - family development, self-sufficiency and community revitalization.

- NH CAPs are the grantees for LIHEAP, Head Start, Weatherization, WIOA, and TANF work programs. Not all the CAPs work with housing and homeless, transportation, senior programs, etc. All Five NH CAPs have outreach staff, processes and procedures in place to serve families and individuals. For individuals that are homebound or are unable to visit an agency for programs and services, agencies assist by phone, mail, electronic communications, and/or home visits.

- Each CAP has conducted a community needs assessment to determine the top three needs in their communities. There are some trends across NH including substance use, employment, and housing, but each region has a unique top three. Each CAP is working with their local partners to create innovative community-based initiatives based on the top three needs.
    - Belknap-Merrimack CAP: dental services, housing, childcare.
    - Strafford County CAP: housing/homelessness, substance abuse, and transportation.
    - SNHS: dental services, food assistance, and utility/fuel assistance.
    - Southwestern Community Services: community mental health services, safe/affordable housing, and adequate employment.
    - Tri-County CAP: substance misuse, living wages, and affordable housing.

FUNDING

- The allocation formula for CSBG funds agreed upon by the CAPs and the State is based on population and poverty levels derived from Census figures, with consideration given to rural communities considering changing demographics, etc.

- The Annual Report includes the performance measurement system, an accounting of the expenditure of CSBG funds, including an accounting of funds spent on administrative costs, and funds spent by eligible entities on the direct delivery of local services, and includes information on the number of and characteristics of clients served by the network, based on data collected from the CAPs.

- The State of NH receives requests from the CAPs for use of any available discretionary funds. Criteria for approval considers opportunities for new initiatives which may develop because of community partnerships, focused state work or emerging situations. Community Needs Assessments and public feedback is also considered.