

FAQ



Community Services Block Grant, Community Action Agencies and CARES Act Funds

Q: WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT?

A: The Community Services Block Grant provides funds to CSBG eligible entities called community action agencies to address the causes and conditions of poverty in 99% of the nation's counties.

Q: WHAT DO COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES DO?

A: Community action agencies administer a wide array of programs and services that are specific to locally identified community needs to help individuals/families transition out of poverty.

Q: DO COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES PROVIDE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE?

A: While community action agencies do provide some emergency assistance, that assistance is limited. CAAs were created to provide programs, services and supports that help stabilize families so they can move out of poverty.

Q: HOW BIG IS THE COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK?

A: There are 34 community action agencies in North Carolina and 1,100 across America.

Q: WHAT IS THE CARES ACT?

A: The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES), was passed by the 116th Congress of the United States in response to the COVID-19 public health pandemic. This economic stimulus package provides \$2.2 trillion to help stabilize the economy.

Q: HOW MUCH CARES ACT FUNDING DID COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES RECEIVE?

A: The CSBG network received a \$1 billion supplemental appropriation in CARES Act Funds to address poverty efforts in local communities across America, as low-income families are faced with the impact of COVID-19.

Q: How much did North Carolina receive from the supplemental appropriation?

A: North Carolina received \$26 million of this supplemental appropriation to address poverty and the conditions that foster poverty, that were identified in each CAAs community needs assessment submitted to the state.

The CSBG Act requires that 90% of this appropriation be passed through to CSBG eligible entities, 5% used to administer the program and another 5% is discretionary. Discretionary funds should be used to address CSBG eligible proposes.

Q: DO COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES HAVE A PLAN FOR HOW THEY WILL SPEND CARES ACT FUNDS?

A: Local community needs identified through surveys, focus groups and agency customers are used by community action agencies to develop a plan of action. Each agency's plan is then submitted to the NC Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Economic Opportunity.

Community action agencies are required by federal legislation to conduct a community needs assessment at least every three years to address local needs.

Q: ARE THERE INCOME GUIDELINES FOR WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM THESE FUNDS?

A: Individuals/families up to 200% of the federal poverty guideline are eligible.

Q: HOW LONG WILL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES ADMINISTER CARES ACT FUNDS?

A: All CARES Act funds should be spent by CAAs on later than September 30, 2022.

We hope this helps you better understand the role and work of community action agencies across North Carolina. Should you have additional questions, please contact your local community action agency. A list can be found at www.nccaa.net.