

Request for Proposal



Community Services Block Grant Program Service Provider for Jefferson County

January 12, 2022

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) is soliciting a Request for Proposal (RFP) from interested parties to administer the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) in Jefferson County. The Community Services Block Grant is a stream of federal funding that works to eliminate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities through local community action agencies and other neighborhood-based organizations.

Funding is provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Eligible applicants include Community Action Agencies (CAA) or other public or nonprofit entities.

Proposals must be emailed to rhoda.talley@adeca.alabama.gov by **12:00 PM (Noon) CST on Friday, February 11, 2022**. Any proposals received after the deadline will not be considered. All proposals must be complete; however, ADECA reserves the right to contact applicants for additional information and/or clarifications.

A confirmation of receipt will be emailed after submittal. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit proposals in advance of the deadline.

Questions pertaining to this RFP may be emailed to rhoda.talley@adeca.alabama.gov by *5:00 PM CST on Friday, February 4, 2022* to allow sufficient time for a response.

This RFP does not indicate acceptance or approval of any proposal in response to this request. No grant or contract payment can be made until a grant agreement has been fully executed. Therefore, no work shall begin on projects selected for funding until an executed grant agreement has been received. All grant awards are contingent upon the State of Alabama's receipt of federal funds awarded.

A. Overview

The Community Services Block Grant is a stream of federal funding that works to eliminate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities. CSBG is the main infrastructure grant for community action agencies. This funding allows agencies to focus efforts on low-income individuals/families, the community, organizational change, and leverage resources from federal, state, local, and private entities to further anti-poverty work in communities.

Funds must be used to provide services and activities having a measurable and potentially major impact on the causes and effects of poverty, for the reduction of poverty, the revitalization of low-income communities, and/or the empowerment of low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas to become more self-sufficient.

CSBG funds cannot be used for the purchase or improvement of land or the purchase, construction, or permanent improvement of any building or other facility. In addition, the funds cannot be used to lease space and/or buildings not associated with a CSBG-allowable activity.

To qualify, households may have incomes at or below 125% of the federal poverty level.

B. Service Provider Duties

Duties expected of the selected service provider include:

1. Fully administer the CSBG Program in accordance with the CSBG State Plan, the CSBG Policies and Procedures Manual, and the CSBG Act available at the following links:
<https://adeca.alabama.gov/csbg-info-documents-and-reports/>
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/law-regulation/csbg-statute-community-services-block-grant>
2. Ensure that the agency's governing board consists of adequate representation in each of the three required categories:
 - 1/3 of the members are elected public officials, holding office on the date of selection, or their representatives
 - Not fewer than 1/3 of the members are persons chosen in accordance with democratic selection procedures adequate to assure that these members are representative of low-income individuals and families in the neighborhood served.
 - The remainder of the members are officials or members of business, industry, labor, religious, law enforcement, education, or other major groups and interests in the community served.

The board must consist of 15 to 51 members.

3. Provide support activities designed to assist low-income families and individuals. Such activities may include, but are not limited to:
 - Remove obstacles and solve problems that block the achievement of self-sufficiency
 - Secure and retain meaningful employment
 - Attain an adequate education, with emphasis toward improving literacy skills
 - Make better use of available income
 - Obtain and maintain adequate housing and a suitable living environment

- Obtain emergency assistance
 - Achieve greater participation in the affairs of the communities involved
 - Removing barriers to healthy living
 - Address the needs of children and youth in low-income communities through childcare provisions and youth development programs.
 - Make more effective use of and coordinate with other programs.
4. Adhere to Results Oriented Management and Accountability standards (ROMA). This system is intended to be implemented as the method by which agencies measure their performance in promoting self-sufficiency, family stability, and community revitalization. As part of ROMA, outcomes must be reported using CSBG National Performance Indicators available on ADECA's website: <https://adeca.alabama.gov/csbg-info-documents-and-reports/>
 5. Complete a comprehensive community-wide Needs Assessment for Jefferson County at least every three (3) years.
 6. Complete a Strategic Plan for the agency at least every five (5) years and updated as needed. The Plan must be approved by the governing board.
 7. Participate in programmatic reviews and monitoring conducted by ADECA. It is a requirement of the CSBG Act that CSBG entities are monitored by the state on-site at least once every three years. In addition, entities are monitored annually on Center of Excellence Developed Organizational Standards available on ADECA's website: <https://adeca.alabama.gov/csbg-info-documents-and-reports/>.

The categories of the standards are:

- Maximum Feasible Participation – Consumer Input and Involvement
 - Consumer Input and Involvement
 - Community Engagement
 - Community Assessment
 - Vision and Direction
 - Organizational Leadership
 - Board Governance
 - Strategic Planning
 - Operations and Accountability
 - Human Resource Management
 - Financial Operations and Oversight
 - Data and Analysis
8. Provide a local or toll-free number for inquiries such as how, when, and where to apply for services.
 9. Adequately publicize program availability to the low-income target population so that potential beneficiaries are reasonably informed of the program.

10. Submit timely financial and programmatic reports. Expenditure reports must be submitted by the 20th of the month following the month covered by the report. Entities must also submit quarterly performance reports that show services provided and outcomes achieved. In addition, an agency-wide annual report must be submitted. This report is generated through state-provided online data system that is provided to the entity.
11. Maintain an adequate accounting system to identify and support all expenditures reported. Conform to Office of Management and Budget Guidance Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.
12. Utilize the state-provided online data system for all programs that are partially or completely funded by CSBG funds. The data system is used for client eligibility information, services provided, outcome targets and achieved, organizational standards compliance, and board governance information (member roster, board meeting information, board meeting minutes).

C. Funding History for Jefferson County

The table below provides a breakdown of CSBG funds made available to administer the program in Jefferson County during the past three program years.

Jefferson County	Amount
2019 Program Year	\$1,575,763
2020 Program Year	\$1,624,439
2021 Program Year	\$1,635,452
Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act – funds must be expended by 9/30/2022	\$2,196,724

D. Criteria for Selection

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria; therefore, a concise discussion of each of these areas as they are applicable to the proposal is warranted.

1. Describe your agency, including purpose, history, structure, and current operations.
2. List the current federal grants managed by the agency and the length of time the agency has administered each program.
3. Provide a description of your agency's qualifications, including experience and performance in administering a broad range of services designed to eliminate poverty and foster self-sufficiency as well as qualifications to meet the requirements of the CSBG Act.
 - A. Applicants with past experience in providing CSBG services will also be evaluated on previous performance. Monitoring reports and other relevant documentation will be used in the evaluation process in addition to the extent to which the applicant responded in a timely manner to findings, corrective actions, high risk status, or other

actions as the result of monitoring visits, trainings, and technical assistance.

- B. Applicants without past CSBG experience will be evaluated on their experience in assisting low-income persons and capacity to implement an effective CSBG program in a timely manner.

Letters and other documents from administrators of funds for work-related matters may be submitted and used for this evaluation.

4. Describe how CSBG services would be provided in Jefferson County. Include how potential applicants will be identified, how and where applications will be taken, the location of outreach offices, and how the management of the office(s) will be addressed.
5. Describe how the agency will join with and encourage business, labor, and other private groups and organizations in Jefferson County to undertake activities which will result in the additional use of private resources and capabilities, and otherwise carry out its purposes as approved by its governing board.
6. Provide a brief narrative of the steps and associated timetable necessary to establish a timely and effective CSBG program in the new service territory. Include any ramp-up activities or staffing adjustments necessary.
7. Describe how your agency will ensure that all applicants have meaningful and equal access to benefits and services. This includes, but is not limited to, persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) and those who are disabled or impaired.
8. Provide your agency's two (2) most recent independent financial audits if they are not currently posted on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse website at the following link:
<https://facweb.census.gov/uploadpdf.aspx>

ADECA may investigate the qualifications of any agency under consideration, require confirmation of information furnished by agency, and require additional evidence of qualifications to perform the work described in this RFP. Poor performance implementing prior ADECA grants may disqualify potential service providers from this solicitation.

See the attached Proposal Rating Sheet for the scoring methodology.

ADECA reserves the right to:

- Reject any and all proposals or withdraw the RFP entirely.
- Remedy technical errors in the RFP process.
- Appoint an evaluation committee to review proposals.
- Negotiate with any, all, or none of the RFP respondents.
- Reject and replace one or more proposed subcontractors.
- Use any or all ideas and/or approaches presented in a proposal. Selection of the proposal does not affect this right.

E. Required Submittals

Proposals must be emailed in pdf format to rhoda.talley@adeca.alabama.gov no later than **12:00 PM (Noon) CST on Friday, February 11, 2022**. The following must be included in the agency's submission:

1. Applicant Agency Cover Sheet - Attachment A.
2. State of Alabama Disclosure Statement which can be found at the following link:
<https://adeca.alabama.gov/csbg-info-documents-and-reports/>
3. Responses to Criteria #1 through #7 listed in Section D - *Criteria for Selection*. **Please limit your narrative responses to Criteria #1 through #7 to no more than ten (10) pages total.**
4. For applicants without CSBG experience, letters and other documents from administrators of funds for work-related matters in response to Criteria #3.
5. Applicant agency's two (2) most recent independent financial audits in response to Criteria #8 in Section D - *Criteria for Selection* if they are not currently posted on the Federal Audit Clearinghouse.

F. Required Submittals After Selection

After the selection process is concluded and the successful agency has been notified, the following documents will be required prior to the grant agreement being issued:

1. Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act
2. Completed copy of the E-Verify Memorandum of Understanding
3. Program Implementation Plan
4. Signatory Authority Form
5. Copy of active status from www.sam.gov
6. Procurement Policy

Blank templates for required documents #1 - #5 can be found at the following link:
<https://adeca.alabama.gov/csbg-info-documents-and-reports/>

CSBG Proposal Rating Sheet

Category: CSBG Service Provider for Jefferson County

Reviewer:

Proposer:

Date:

Proposal adequately detailed the agency's purpose, history, structure, and current operations. (Criteria #1)	Scaled	0-10 pts	
Proposal detailed a history of managing federal grants. (Criteria #2)	>10 years	15 pts	
	5-9 years	10 pts	
	< 5years	5 pts	
Proposal detailed a history of experience administering programs to eliminate poverty and foster self-sufficiency. (Criteria #3)	>10 years	10 pts	
	5-9 years	5 pts	
	<5 years	1 pt	
Agency adequately demonstrates qualifications/capacity to effectively administer the program and meet the requirements of the CSBG Act (Criteria #3 and evaluation of previous performance/letters/supporting documents submitted)	Scaled	0-10 pts	
Proposal adequately identified how agency will join/encourage private groups resulting in additional private resources (Criteria #4)	Scaled	0-10 pts	
Proposal provided feasible explanation of client outreach, targeting, and access to serve eligible households across entire service territory (Criteria #5)	Scaled	0-10 pts	
Proposal provided obtainable steps and timetable necessary to establish a timely and effective program. (Criteria #6)	< 2 months	10 pts	
	3 - 4 months	5 pts	
	>5 months	1 pt	
Proposal adequately identified how agency will ensure equal access to benefits and services. (Criteria #7)	Scaled	0-10 pts	
Results of two (2) most recent independent financial audits. (Criteria #8)	Satisfactory, no findings	15 pts	
	Unrelated Findings	8 pts	
	Related Findings or Questioned Costs	0 pts	
Total Points (100 points available)			

NOTES:

Attachment A
Community Services Block Grant Program
Service Provider for Jefferson County
Applicant Agency Cover Sheet

Name of Applicant Agency: _____

Agency Address: _____

City/State/Zip+4: _____

Federal ID Number: _____

DUNS Number: _____

Contact Person for Matters
Related to This Application: _____

Contact's Phone Number: _____

Contact's Email Address: _____

This application, which seeks to provide Community Services Block Grant Program (CSBG) services to Jefferson County, has been authorized by the governing body. We certify we are a Community Action Agency or other public or nonprofit entity. We further certify that we have not been disbarred or suspended from doing business with the federal government. We further certify that, to the best of our knowledge, all representations made in this application are true and correct.

ATTEST:

Executive Director

Board Chair

Date

Date