



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

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**Community Services Block Grant  
Action Transmittal**

**AT#:** CSBG-AT-2020-01

**DATE:** November 26, 2019

**TO:** Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) State, Territory and Tribal Lead Agencies

**SUBJECT:** Application for CSBG Disaster Supplemental Fund for Planning and Needs Assessment and Cost Documentation

**ATTACHMENT(S):** Stage 1 Application Template, Naming Convention

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**GUIDANCE**

**INTENDED FOR:**  STATES  
 TRIBES/TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS  
 TERRITORIES  
 ELIGIBLE ENTITIES  
 CSBG TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTEES

**RELATED REFERENCES:** Community Services Block Grant Act, U.S.C. 9901 et seq.; Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019 (Public Law (P.L.) 116-20); Department of Health and Human Services Block Grant Regulations 45 C.F.R. Part 96; Current Poverty Income Guidelines, 84 FR 1167; and CSBG Information Memorandum No. 156.

**PURPOSE:** To announce to states, territories and tribes the application requirements for CSBG disaster supplement funds, planning, needs assessment and cost documentation. The first round of **applications are due December 17, 2019.**

**BACKGROUND**

The Office of Community Services (OCS), Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program was appropriated \$25 million in supplemental funds under the Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019 (P.L. 116-20). The funds are being made available to states, territories and tribes authorized under the CSBG Act that were directly affected by hurricanes Florence

and Michael, Typhoon Mangkhut, Super Typhoon Yutu, and wildfires and earthquakes occurring in calendar year 2018 and tornados and floods occurring in calendar year 2019, and which have been declared by the President as a major disaster under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

The Supplemental funds will be distributed to states and eligible entities based on need and should address necessary expenses directly related to the consequences of the disasters. CSBG state, territory and tribal lead agencies must allocate the funds to qualified locally-based nonprofit community antipoverty agencies and other eligible entities that provide services to individuals and families with low incomes. They may use the funds to document and reimburse any immediate costs incurred by eligible entities that were directly related to the Presidentially-declared disaster, provided that they fall within available grant resources under the CSBG Act and provided that states can verify that costs were not previously reimbursed through FEMA or private insurance.

OCS will be allocating the funds in a three-stage process: 1) initial planning, needs assessment and cost documentation grants; 2) interim recovery efforts; and 3) longer term recovery efforts. This three-stage process will allow for necessary adjustments during the implementation and for funds to be expended by eligible entities through the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2022. This Action Transmittal provides instructions specifically focused on the first stage of this process.

**For more information about the CSBG Disaster Relief Supplement Funds, see [Information Memorandum \(IM\) 2020-156](#).**

#### **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STAGE 1 INITIAL PLANNING, NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND COST DOCUMENTATION GRANTS**

The Office of Community Services (OCS) will award several Stage 1 grants with totals up to \$100,000 per state, territory or tribe for initial planning, needs assessment and cost documentation. The funds must be spent directly on administrative expenses, conducting needs assessments and planning activities directly related to the Presidentially-declared disasters. Please review the following actions to allow for timely submission and feedback on your application.

#### **Eligibility Criteria for States, Territories and Tribes:**

Applicants for CSBG Disaster Relief Supplemental must meet the following criteria in order to receive funds.

- **Designated Authority from Governor or Chief Executive** – States, territories and tribes must be designated by the governor or chief executive with the authority to apply for CSBG ((Section 676(a) of the CSBG Act (42 U.S.C. 9908(a)). This agency is referred to by

OCS as the “CSBG Lead Agency” and must be the same agency that administers the regular CSBG grant.

- **Presidential Disaster Declaration** – States, territories and tribes must have been affected by hurricanes Florence and Michael, Typhoon Mangkhut, Super Typhoon Yutu, and wildfires and earthquakes occurring in calendar year 2018 and tornados and floods occurring in calendar year 2019 and which have been declared by the President as a major disaster under section 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.
- **Individual Assistance Authorized** – States, territories and tribes must have received FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) authorization, for which households have registered for IA assistance. FEMA Individual Assistance registrant data is available for use by state/tribal governments at [FEMA Disasters](#).

### **Funding Allowances under the CSBG Disaster Supplement Stage 1 Grants:**

Applicants of the CSBG Disaster Relief Supplemental Funds must distribute the funds based on the following guidelines.

- States, territories and tribes must use the funds for any necessary administrative expenses, needs assessments and planning activities for interim and longer-term disaster recovery activities.
- In accordance with Section 675C(b)(2)) of the CSBG Act (42 U.S.C. 9907(b)(2)), states and territories must not spend more than the greater of \$55,000 or 5% for direct expenses at the state level to assess needs and conduct administrative and planning activities.
- States, territories and tribes must allocate all remaining funds to eligible entities to reimburse them for expenses for activities such as needs assessment conducted by eligible entities or expenses already incurred for disaster recovery.

### **Submission Groups:**

The final list of states, territories and tribes cannot be determined until about 90 days after the end of calendar year 2019. As a result, OCS will distribute funds in two phases for Stage 1.

1. **Group 1:** CSBG state, territory and tribal lead agencies who received a presidentially-declared disaster in calendar years 2018 and 2019 and have received a FEMA IA authorization **by November 11, 2019**.
2. **Group 2:** CSBG state, territory and tribal lead agencies who received a presidentially-declared disaster in calendar year 2019 and received a FEMA IA authorization **after November 11, 2019**.

## Deadlines:

OCS is encouraging states, territories and tribes who have met the eligibility criteria under the CSBG disaster supplemental to apply for Stage 1 funds within the following timelines.

1. **Group 1:** CSBG Grantees who received a presidentially-declared disaster and have received a FEMA IA authorization by **November 11, 2019** must submit an application for Stage 1 grants to OCS by **December 17, 2019**.
2. **Group 2:** Grantees who received a presidentially-declared disaster between **November 12, 2019** and **December 31, 2019** will be in Group 2 and they should submit an application within 90 days after they have received their FEMA IA authorization. OCS will alert State CSBG Offices in any instances in which such a declaration occurs.

## Submission Content and Requirements:

A full submission of your Stage 1 application includes the following: (1) Standard Form for Federal Assistance (SF-424M); 2) Statement of CSBG Assurances; 3) Narrative on state use of funds; and 4) Cost Documentation. OCS has provided with this Action Transmittal an application template that serves as a technical assistance tool that applicants may use to fulfill the requirements of the application. **Applicants are not required to use this form.** All applications must be converted to PDF prior to submission. **The application should include the following:**

1. **Standard Form for Federal Assistance (SF-424M)** – The form requires name and contact information for the state, territory or tribe’s authorizing official and the contact information for their point of contact.
2. **Statement of CSBG Assurances** – The application should include the specific programmatic, administrative, and fiscal assurances precisely as they appear in the CSBG Act (with the exception of the assurance related to Section 676(b)(8)).
  - **For Programmatic Assurances** – Subsections 676(b)(1)(A) – (C) of the CSBG Act.
  - **For Administrative and Fiscal Assurances** – Subsections 678D(a)(1)(A) through (B) of the CSBG Act, including certification that cost and accounting standards of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) shall apply (OMB Circulars A-110 and A-122). If the authorized official has delegated signature authority, a signed confirmation of such delegation by the authorized official must be submitted with the application.
3. **Implementation of CSBG Disaster Supplement Stage 1 Funds Narrative and Assurances** – The application narrative should include a description of the applicant’s approach to assess needs and conduct administrative and planning activities, including clear timelines for implementation and completion of grant activities, as well as an assurance that the state will:
  - Develop a plan to allocate funds to CSBG eligible entities based on needs directly related to the Presidential disaster declaration for which funds are awarded; and

- Require each eligible entity that receives funds to develop a disaster community action plan that outlines the services to be provided, a budget, and budget justification.
4. **Cost Documentation** – The application describes a focused, transparent and accountable approach that the applicant will take in allocating the CSBG Disaster Supplemental funds for administrative, needs assessment and planning activities.
- **Note: OCS will notify any state, territory or tribe who qualify only for Stage 1 funds (because the total share will be less than \$100,000). These states will not apply for Stage 2 funds, but will be required to provide an accounting of the expenditure of CSBG supplemental funds spent on administrative and needs assessment costs by the state and eligible entities, as well as an accounting of funds spent by the eligible entities on the direct delivery of local services, and information on the number of and characteristics of CSBG clients based on data collected from the eligible entities.**

#### **Submission of Application:**

The application materials for the CSBG Disaster Supplemental, Stage 1, Initial Planning and Needs Assessment Cost Documentation Grants, will be submitted through the Community Services Block Grant email system, [CSBGStates@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:CSBGStates@acf.hhs.gov). The documents should be in PDF format, not password protected and have the **Naming Convention** that is attached to this document.

OCS will review applications as they come in and we will notify you of any deficiencies and request a plan for remedial action. We will also work with the applicants to provide ongoing training and technical assistance in order to ensure that the applicants submit a timely and complete application.

#### **FUNDING APPROPRIATIONS**

1. **Group 1:** CSBG state, territory and tribal grantees whose applications were submitted to OCS by **December 17, 2019** and received approval from OCS will be appropriated their funds by the Office of Grants Management (OGM) **by mid-January 2020**.
2. **Group 2:** CSBG state, territory and tribal grantees whose applications were submitted to OCS after the **December 17, 2019** deadline and received approval from OCS will **receive their funds from OGM on a rolling basis**.

**Note: The Office of Grants Management will issue the Notice of Grant Award electronically via email distribution to the Authorized Official noted within OLDC on the SF-424M. Therefore, please ensure that the Authorized Official email contact information is accurate.**

## **TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (T/TA) AND SUPPORT**

OCS held a webinar on **Wednesday, November 20, 2019** on the CSBG Disaster Supplemental Funds. This T/TA provided information on the allowable uses of funds under CSBG Act and the supplemental appropriation, including waiver processes for any services or activities not allowed under the regular provisions of the CSBG Act. The slides and recording are available at [2019 CSBG Disaster Supplemental: Application Webinar](#).

## **FOR INQUIRIES**

Questions pertaining to the CSBG Supplemental Funds should be directed to the following:

For questions regarding accurate completion of the CSBG Disaster Supplemental, Stage 1 funds, contact:

**Seth Hassett**

Senior Advisor, Office of Community Services

Phone: 202-401-2333

Email: [Seth.Hassett@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:Seth.Hassett@acf.hhs.gov)

For questions regarding the fiscal reporting on the CSBG Disaster Supplemental Funds, and the SF 425, contact:

**Diane Bragdon**

ACF Grants Management Officer

Phone: 202-401-0933

Email: [Diane.Bragdon@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:Diane.Bragdon@acf.hhs.gov)

Thank you for your attention and OCS looks forward to continuing to provide high quality services to OCS grantees.

/s/

J. Janelle George

Acting Deputy Director

Office of Community Services