



ADMINISTRATION FOR
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Office of Community Services | 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20201
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Community Services Block Grant

Dear Colleague Letter

DCL#: CSBG-DCL-2020-07
DATE: December 20, 2019
TO: State CSBG Officials and State CSBG Contacts in States Eligible for CSBG Disaster Supplemental Funds
SUBJECT: CSBG Disaster Supplemental Update
ATTACHMENT(S): N/A

Dear Colleagues,

The purpose of this message is to provide a status update and a timeline of activities for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Disaster Relief Supplemental Funds.

Per guidance issued in [CSBG AT 2020-01 Disaster Supplemental Fund Application](#), on Tuesday, December 17, 2019, the Office of Community Services (OCS) received applications from eligible states for the CSBG Disaster Supplemental Stage 1 funds, authorized and funded under the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019 [Public Law 116-20].

OCS thanks for the states for their hard work in preparing these applications for this unique opportunity! As noted in prior communications, this effort presents some unique challenges, but it is also an important opportunity to support CSBG eligible entities who provide services to low-income people affected by major disasters and whose needs may not have been addressed with other resources.

Our goal is to assure that states and eligible entities are successful in meeting community needs in response to this unique opportunity. To support the eligible states in their application process, to date, OCS has conducted one national webinar, meetings and individualized consultations with all 18 states and territories, as well as a host of other communications via emails and phone calls to provide technical assistance.

TIMELINE OF UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

I've submitted my Stage 1 application. What is the next step?

OCS is currently reviewing applications and preparing for the next stage of this important effort. Applicants with critical technical issues (e.g. missing signatures or missing documents) will be notified by December 20, 2019.

When will reviews be completed and how will states be notified?

OCS will be completing its review over the next few weeks. States will receive written feedback containing the status of their application such as its approval status or a request to provide clarification on items. In some cases, OCS may provide comments or recommendations for issues that should be addressed in the Stage 2 application. Our goal is to provide each state with a written checklist by **Wednesday, January 8, 2020**. If OCS is not able to meet that deadline, we will contact the state with additional information.

When will the CSBG Disaster Supplemental Stage 1 grants be awarded?

OCS is working with the ACF's Office of Grants Management (OGM) to issue Stage 1 awards for states with accepted applications by **Friday, January 17, 2020**. If OCS is not able to meet that deadline, we will contact with additional information.

When will an Action Transmittal (AT) with requirements for Stage 2 applications be available and what is the expected due date for Stage 2 applications?

OCS plans to issue an AT for Stage 2 applications at the same time Stage 1 awards are made (**by Friday January 17, 2020**). The AT and attachments will include the following:

- guidance on application requirements and deadlines;
- a technical assistance template (fillable PDF) to assist states in providing the necessary information); and
- an updated Preliminary Allocation Formula with planning amounts for each state eligible to submit a Stage 2 application.

The current expected deadline for Stage 2 applications will be **Thursday, March 5, 2020**. However, please note that the deadline will be formally communicated in the Action Transmittal and OCS may have additional guidance or instructions based on additional disaster declarations or other unexpected circumstances.

What additional information will states need to provide in Stage 2 applications?

Guidance for the Stage 2 AT is being finalized. However, at minimum, states should expect to be asked to provide the following:

- a more detailed needs assessment identifying which areas and eligible entities will provide disaster supplemental services;

- *a distribution plan (e.g. percentages and planning amounts based on the assessment of need) that will be allocated to each eligible entity (including amounts allocated from the stage 1 award);*
- *an update on any funds allocated to eligible entities during stage 1;*
- *a description of the state process for receiving and approving plans from eligible entities; and*
- *a state monitoring plan for the disaster supplemental.*

OCS plans to provide a webinar at the time of the Stage 2 application process and will be available to arrange individual state consultations.

When will OCS conduct monitoring visits?

OCS is still completing a schedule for monitoring. It is expected that not all states will be visited due to limited resources. OCS will conduct a prioritization process after completing the review of Stage 1 applications. We expect that issues considered in prioritization of monitoring visits will include the size of potential allocations (grantees with the largest potential allocations will receive priority) and assessment of special disaster circumstances or risks indicating that a state or its eligible entities may benefit from early review and technical assistance.

What are the reporting requirements and when will OCS issue guidance on reporting?

Instructions will be issued early in calendar year 2020 and the first report will be due in March of 2021 (at the time of submission of the regular CSBG annual report). OCS will consult with affected states before issuing any special instructions for an annual report on CSBG Disaster Supplemental funds. Although the report on CSBG supplemental funds will be separate from the regular CSBG annual report, our goal will be to receive only necessary disaster expenditure and service data in a comparable format to the regular CSBG report (without duplicating information provided in the regular annual report). OCS will also consult with affected states about progress information/updates that may be needed to inform Congress or other federal offices about overall accomplishments.

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