

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG)

Note: Below is information about the employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.) that is included in the WIOA Combined State Plan. The complete CSBG State Plan is submitted directly to the Federal agency that administers that program and is collected under OMB Control Number: 0970-0382. Where CSBG is included in the Combined State Plan, the State CSBG Lead Agency (as designated by the chief executive of the State under the requirements of section 676(a) of the CSBG Act (42 U.S.C. 9908(a)) will coordinate plans for employment and training activities under CSBG as part of a larger antipoverty and workforce development strategy.

As part of the Combined State Plan, the State CSBG Lead Agency must:

- a. Describe how the State and the eligible entities will coordinate the provision of employment and training activities through Statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems; and may
- b. Provide examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by eligible entities or other neighborhood-based organizations as part of a community antipoverty strategy.
 - a. Describe how the State and the eligible entities will coordinate the provision of employment and training activities through Statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems

The Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program has established active partnerships to facilitate and encourage coordination between the twenty Community Action Agencies (CAAs) participating in the State's CSBG program and statewide and local workforce development systems. Each CAA executes an annual grant contract with TDHS, which requires the agency to "engage with community partners and align services with priority State initiatives" including "Education and employment initiatives in alignment with the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan that support early literacy, school, readiness, after school programs, and the Drive to 55". Several CAAs have executed memoranda of understanding with local workforce development agencies to foster greater workforce development coordination. Additional CAA practices supported by the State are co-locating the CAA with a workforce agency to provide stronger collaboration and maintaining the practice of dual case management with workforce agencies to monitor customer needs and goals across a variety of categories.

The usual role of a CAA in workforce development is to provide supplemental services that assist employment goals. Whereas a workforce agency provides assessment and job training, CAAs provide funding for job-related clothes and tools, and transportation to interviews or to a place of employment. Additionally, and explained in greater depth below, several agencies have developed innovative programs using CSBG funding for specific, regional employment initiatives.

Moving forward, TDHS sees room for growth in improving CAAs' intake processes to better identify employment needs and make targeted referrals to workforce agencies, and growing relationships with workforce agencies to provide supplemental services that can help customers obtain and maintain employment.

b. Provide examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by eligible entities or other neighborhood-based organizations as part of a community antipoverty strategy

MAC offers an entry level information technology credential, CompTIA A+ Certification, for adults interested in a career in IT. The certification includes an internship placement with local tech companies. Also, adults interested in early childhood education are able to enroll in the Child Development Associate (CDA) program. While enrolled in CDA classes, students are allowed to work part-time within the agency's Head Start early childhood education program as they pursue their certificate. Upon completion, students are offered full-time teaching positions by the agency.

The Self-sufficiency Training and Results (STAR) program is a partner referral program with the TDHS Workforce Board. The STAR program provides case management, education, childcare, budgeting, soft skills training, employment training, and daily living expenses. Recently, twenty-five participants have become employed and twenty have received certification/degrees in areas that include nursing and information Technology.

Creative Cuisine is a culinary arts education program that gives participants the skills and confidence to pursue a successful career in the culinary industry. In this fourteen-week program, students learn culinary skills, financial management, and career development from highly-qualified staff. Graduates leave the program with over forty hours of hands-on training from a head chef and an applied knowledge of culinary industry standards. Graduates also receive training in soft skills (preparation for the workforce) and customer service in this setting. This culinary training program is available to the parents of Head Start children, as well as income eligible clients.

There were three graduates from the inaugural class. Two started their own business, and one gained employment. There will be three graduates from the second class. Two of them have obtained employment and one is seeking employment.