



Rhode Island Department of Human Services

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

State Plan

State of Rhode Island

Federal Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027

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SECTION 1: CSBG Administrative Information

1.1. Provide the federal fiscal years this plan covers: **Year One:** 2026

Year Two: 2027

1.2. Lead agency:

1.2a. Cabinet or administrative department of this lead agency

- ☐ Community Affairs Department
- ☐ Community Services Department
- ☐ Governor's Office
- ☐ Health Department
- ☐ Housing Department
- ☒ Human Services Department
- ☐ Social Services Department
- ☐ Other, describe

1.2b. Cabinet or Administrative Department Name: Rhode Island Department of Human Services

1.2c. Authorized Official of the Lead Agency:

Name: Jessica Patroliia

Title: Administrator, Community Programs

Street Address: 41 West Rd. Building #74 Cranston, RI 02920

Telephone Number: (401)-462-6925

Email Address: Jessica.patroliia@dhs.ri.gov

1.2d. Lead Agency Website: <https://dhs.ri.gov/>

1.3. Is there currently a state Community Action Association within the state?

☒ Yes ☐ No

1.3a. Agency name: Rhode Island Community Action Association (RICAA)

1.3b. Executive Director or Point of Contact

Name: Estephany Matrilie

Title: Director of Community Engagement & Strategic Initiatives

Street Address: 487 Jefferson Blvd. Warwick, RI 02886

Telephone Number: (401) 921-4968

Fax Number: (401) 467-9030

Email Address: ematrilie@ricaa.org

1.3c. State Association Website: <https://www.ricommunityaction.org/>

1.3d. State Association currently serves as the Regional Performance Innovation Consortia (RPIC) lead? ☐ Yes ☒ No

SECTION 2: State Legislation and Regulation

- 2.1. CSBG State Legislation:** State has a statute authorizing CSBG. ☐ Yes ☒ No
- 2.2. CSBG State Regulation:** State has regulations for CSBG. ☐ Yes ☒ No
- 2.3. State Authority:**
- 2.3a. Authorizing Legislation:** State legislature enacted authorizing legislation or amendments to an existing authorizing statute last federal fiscal year.
☐ Yes ☒ No
- 2.3b. Regulation Amendments:** State established or amended regulations for CSBG last federal fiscal year.
☐ Yes ☒ No

SECTION 3: State Plan Development and Statewide Goals

3.1. CSBG Lead Agency Mission and Responsibilities: Briefly describe the mission and responsibilities of the state agency that serves as the CSBG lead agency.

The Rhode Island Department of Human Services (RI DHS) has been designated by the Governor as the State agency responsible for the planning and administration of the Community Service Block Grant. RI DHS is charged by state law to “provide public assistance to residents of the state who are in need and who meet the eligibility requirements of the various programs, which constitute public assistance.”

As an agency committed to access and achievement, the vision for the RI DHS is that all Rhode Islanders have the opportunity to thrive at home, work and in the community. DHS works hand-in-hand with community partners and resources throughout our great State to deliver critical benefits, supports and services to more than 300,000 families, adults, children, older adults, individuals with disabilities and veterans every year. We are part of the solution to end poverty and food insecurity, and we make a lasting, positive impact on the State’s health and future.

More specifically, DHS strives to guarantee:

- Families are strong, productive, healthy, and independent.
- Adults are healthy and reach their maximum potential.
- Children are safe, healthy, ready to learn and reach their full potential.
- Child Care providers deliver high quality education services.
- Older Adults and Seniors and individuals with disabilities receive all necessary services to enhance their quality of life.
- Veterans are cared for and honored.

DHS believes in continuous improvement. We have guiding principles and a strategic plan with strategies to help us operate as efficiently as possible and always support the whole family. The programs which DHS administers are: RIWorks (TANF); Child Care Assistance Program; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP); Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (SEBT); Long-Term Care; General Public Assistance; State Supplemental Payment; Low-Income Home Energy Assistance; Low-Income Household Water Assistance; Weatherization Assistance Program; Eligibility for Medicaid; Administration of Grants: Community Service Block Grant, Social Services Block Grant, Family Violence Prevention Services Grant; Refugee Resettlement Grants, Emergency Food Assistance Program grants, state Domestic Violence grants.

Additionally, the department administers programs and services for specific populations and needs through its: Office of Healthy Aging; Office of Veterans Affairs; Office of Child Support Services; Office of Rehabilitation Services.

3.2. State Plan Goals: Describe the state’s CSBG-specific goals for state administration of CSBG under this State Plan.

RI DHS is committed to partnering with our network of Community Action Agencies and the State Association (RICAA) to address and end poverty in Rhode Island. Accordingly, our goals for State administration under this Plan are to:

1. Provide CSBG Discretionary Funds annually to RICAA for activities that strengthen, connect, and support the network's anti-poverty work including priorities described below:
 - Meeting CSBG requirements, including managing tripartite boards, and preparing for Organizational Standard and Triennial Monitoring
 - Data analysis and using data in storytelling
 - Conducting the next statewide community needs assessment, which can be used as a tool to inform both the network and other stakeholders of the needs of Rhode Islanders and available supports
 - Facilitating ongoing Communities of Practice, roundtables, and/or other opportunities for collaboration between Community Action Agency staff and public and private partners in key focus areas
 - Raising awareness about poverty and position Community Action Agencies as leaders in economic opportunity and anti-poverty work in the state
2. Collaborate with the network, RICAA, and our software vendor to increase use and understanding of the Codect data tracking software to ensure full and consistent reporting of CSBG outcomes. Incorporate updates, as necessary, to meet requirements of the revised federal CSBG Annual Report and support training and technical assistance for the network, as needed.
3. Coordinate and establish linkages between governmental and other social services programs to assure the effective delivery of such services to individuals with low-income while avoiding duplication. This includes strengthening the partnership between RI DHS and the network to ensure that network staff are well-versed in not only what programs RI DHS administers, but also how to access them to ensure that under-resourced families can maximize available supports in a timely and efficient manner.
4. Attend CSBG-related training and conferences to stay informed on recent developments impacting our network. Training and conferences may include those hosted by organizations such as New England Community Action Partnership, National Community Action Partnership, CAPLAW, and National Association for State Community Service Programs.

3.3. State Plan Development: Indicate the information and input the state accessed to develop this State Plan.

3.3a. Analysis of state-level tools

- ☒ State Performance Indicators and/or National Performance Indicators (NPIs)
- ☒ U.S. Census data
- ☒ State Performance Management Data (e.g., accountability measures, ACSI survey information, and/or other information from annual reports)
- ☐ Monitoring Visits/Assessments
- ☒ Tools Not Identified Above: Consultation with Directors of the Community Action Agencies

3.3b. Analysis of local-level tools

- ☒ Eligible Entity Community Needs Assessments
- ☒ Eligible Entity Community Action Plans
- ☒ Public Hearings/Workshops
- ☐ Tools Not Identified Above (e.g., state required reports)

3.3c. Consultation with

- ☒ Eligible Entities (e.g., meetings, conferences, webinars; not including the public hearing)
- ☒ State Association
- ☐ National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCSPP)
- ☐ Community Action Partnership (NCAP)
- ☐ Community Action Program Legal Services (CAPLAW)
- ☐ CSBG Tribal Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) provider
- ☐ Regional Performance Innovation Consortium (RPIC)
- ☐ Association for Nationally Certified ROMA Trainers (ANCRT)
- ☐ Federal CSBG Office
- ☐ Organizations not identified above (specify)

3.4. Eligible Entity Involvement

3.4a. State Plan Development: Describe the specific steps the state took in developing the State Plan to involve the eligible entities.

RI DHS's Administrator of Community Program is in regular contact with each of the State's eligible entities and uses each interaction as an opportunity to solicit feedback related to the administration of the CSBG. Ahead of the submission of this year's CSBG State Plan, the state Administrator met individually with the management teams of each eligible entity to review the contents of the State's prior State Plan submission and discuss areas for improvements/updates. The results of individual conversations were then summarized for a broader planning conversation as part of the RI Community Action Association's monthly board meeting. Insights from these meetings provided the basis for this year's Plan, which was shared in draft form with each of the eligible entities for feedback prior to finalizing the draft for public hearing.

- 3.4b. Performance Management Adjustment:** Describe how the state has adjusted its State Plan development procedures under this State Plan, as compared to previous State Plans, in order to 1) encourage eligible entity participation and 2) ensure the State Plan reflects input from eligible entities?

While the CSBG Administrator and the eligible entities have enjoyed a long-standing partnership, strengthened by regular and open communication channels, this year's State Plan development process was adjusted to increase eligible entity participation and be more reflective of their feedback. This was accomplished by engaging eligible entities earlier in the State Plan development process and asking each entity specific questions related to the State Plan and how it informs their own operations. Approaching these conversations in both individual and group settings allowed for entities to engage candidly with the CSBG Administrator in a one-on-one setting while also allowing them to benefit from collective learning and reflection as part of the broader Association conversation.

- 3.5. Eligible Entity Overall Satisfaction:** Provide the state's target for eligible entity Overall Satisfaction during the performance period.

Year One 85.0%

Year Two 90.0%

SECTION 4: CSBG Eligible Entities

4.1. CSBG Eligible Entities:

Agency	Municipalities Served
Blackstone Valley Community Action Program	Central Falls, Cumberland, Lincoln, Pawtucket
Community Action Partnership of Providence County	Providence
Community Care Alliance	Woonsocket
Comprehensive Community Action Program	Coventry, Cranston, Foster, Scituate
Eastbay Community Action Program	Barrington, Bristol, East Providence, Jamestown, Little Compton, Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth, Tiverton, Warren
Tri-County Community Action Agency	Burrillville, Charlestown, Glocester, Exeter, Hopkinton, Johnston, Narragansett, New Shoreham, North Kingstown, North Providence, North Smithfield, Richmond, Smithfield, South Kingstown, Westerly, West Greenwich
Westbay Community Action Program	East Greenwich, Warwick, West Warwick

4.2. Total number of CSBG eligible entities: 7

4.3. Changes to Eligible Entities List:

- ☐ Designation and/or Re-Designation
- ☐ De-Designations and/or Voluntary Relinquishments
- ☐ Mergers
- ☒ No Changes to Eligible Entities List

SECTION 5: Organizational Standards for Eligible Entities

5.1. Choice of Standards: Confirm whether the state will implement the CSBG Organizational Standards Center of Excellence (COE) organizational standards (as described in IM 138) or an alternative set during the federal fiscal year(s) of this planning period.

- ☒ COE CSBG Organizational Standards
- ☐ Modified Version of COE CSBG Organizational Standards
- ☐ Alternative Set of organizational standards

5.2. Implementation: Check the box that best describes how the state officially adopted organizational standards for eligible entities in a manner consistent with the state's administrative procedures act.

- ☐ Regulation
- ☐ Policy
- ☒ Contracts with Eligible Entities
- ☐ Other, describe

5.3. Organizational Standards Assessment: Describe how the state will assess eligible entities against organizational standards this federal fiscal year(s).

- ☐ Peer-to-Peer Review (with validation by the state or state-authorized third party)
- ☒ Self-Assessment (with validation by the state or state-authorized third party)
- ☐ Self-Assessment/Peer Review with State Risk Analysis
- ☐ State-Authorized Third-Party Validation
- ☒ Regular On-Site CSBG monitoring
- ☐ Other

5.3a. Assessment Process:

Each year, eligible entities are required to submit a completed "Self-Assessment Tool for Private CEEs" to the CSBG Administrator. This tool was designed by the OCS-funded organizational standards Center of Excellence (COE) to assist State CSBG Offices in assessing compliance with CSBG organizational standards. The state's Community Action Association (RICAA) assists with the dissemination and collection of this tool and is also available to provide technical support to eligible entities, as needed. Upon submission, the CSBG Administrator reviews each entity's tool and meets with the eligible entity's management team to discuss the assessment. Additional documentation is collected and/or reviewed, as necessary, to confirm the results of each entity's self-assessment.

5.4. Eligible Entity Exemptions: Will the state make exceptions in applying the organizational standards for certain eligible entities due to special circumstances or organizational characteristics (as described in IM 138)? ☐ Yes ☒ No

5.5. Performance Target: Provide the percentage of eligible entities that the state expects to meet all the state-adopted organizational standards for the FFY(s) of this planning period.

Year One: 85.0 %

Year Two: 100.0 %

SECTION 6: State Use of Funds

Eligible Entity Allocation

6.1. Formula: Select the method (formula) that best describes the current practice for allocating CSBG funds to eligible entities.

- ☐ Historic
- ☒ Base + Formula
- ☐ Formula Alone
- ☐ Formula with Variables
- ☐ Hold Harmless + Formula
- ☐ Other

6.1a. Formula Description:

Five percent (5%) of Fiscal Year 2026 and 2027 CSBG funds allocated to Rhode Island will be available for statewide special projects that benefit CSBG and all eligible entities. No less than ninety percent (90%) of Fiscal Year 2026 and 2027 CSBG funds allocated to Rhode Island shall be distributed to eligible entities in order to maintain the statewide human service delivery network.

Distributions to eligible entities in Federal Fiscal Year 2026 and 2027 will be made on the following basis:

1. A baseline amount distributed equally to support essential administrative and managerial functions.
2. An amount based on the percentage of the incidence poverty in the service area of each agency as compared to the statewide incidence of poverty, derived from the United States Census Data.

6.1b. Statute: Does a state statutory or regulatory authority specify the formula for allocating “not less than 90 percent” funds among eligible entities?

☐ Yes ☒ No

7.3. Distribution Process:

The allocation for each eligible will be subject to the submission of an annual Community Action Plan/application for funding. This process is designed to promote the purposes of the Community Services Block Grant and ensure alignment to CSBG outcomes and indicators. All eligible entities (CAAs) requesting CSBG funds submit a CSBG application in the format prescribed by the state. The required documents and materials for the application are:

- a. An application narrative, including the following sections
 - i. Introduction and Agency Mission
 - ii. Summary of Needs Assessment
 - iii. Description of Gaps and Linkages

- b. A Workplan which describes the services/strategies to be implemented and the indicators that will be tracked as well as a description of the Service Delivery System and Coordination of Resources
- c. A detailed Budget and narrative Budget Justification
- d. Identification of Authorized Individuals
- e. Organizational Structure and Staff (Organizational Chart)
- f. Board of Directors with Addresses, phone numbers, organized by tri-partite groupings with start dates, end dates, and vacancy information
- g. Current By-laws with board approval date
- h. Current personnel policies with board approval date

Projected allocation amounts, program requirements, plan criteria, and other pertinent data are distributed annually in the spring and eligible entities are given 4-6 weeks to respond to the State CSBG Office with the required documentation.

Based on the submitted funding applications/Community Action Plans, RI DHS enters into contracts with each agency and invoices and reports are submitted according to those contracts. The whole contracting process takes approximately 8-12 weeks to complete and is initiated in or around July of each year to ensure that contracts are in place at the start of the performance period for newly obligated funding. Invoices are paid through electronic transfer by State Accounts and Control in the RI Department of Administration. All invoices are paid net thirty. Eligible entities submit monthly fiscal reports and annual program reports.

6.3a. Distribution Method: Select the option below that best describes the distribution method the state uses to issue CSBG funds to eligible entities:

- ☒ Reimbursement
- ☐ Advance
- ☐ Hybrid
- ☐ Other

6.4. Distribution Timeframe: Does the state intend to make funds available to eligible entities no later than 30 calendar days after OCS distributes the federal award?

☒ Yes ☐ No

6.5. Distribution of Funds Performance Management Adjustment: Describe the state's strategy for improving grant and/or contract administration procedures under this State Plan as compared to past plans.

The State uses a centralized Grant Management System (GMS) that streamlines both the contracting and invoicing process for eligible entities. This system receives continual updates and enhancements to meet the needs of the State and its subgrantees. In addition to improvements made through GMS, the CSBG Administrator will strive to continue to improve grant and contract administration through increased collaboration between the program and finance divisions at RI DHS. Collaborative efforts will include revising and strengthening

guidance included as part of the annual application for funding/Community Action Plan process, specifically as it pertains to the development of CSBG budgets; revising the current contracting process to align contract periods to the performance period of the funding source, which will minimize the need for contract revisions/amendments; and reviewing current fiscal and program monitoring procedures to identify opportunities to streamline requests to eligible entities and reduce redundancies.

Administrative Funds [Section 675C(b)(2) of the CSBG Act]

- 6.6. Allocated Funds:** Specify the percentage of your CSBG planned allocation for administrative activities for the FFY(s) covered by this State Plan.

Year One: 2.5 % **Year Two:** 2.5 %

- 6.7. State Staff:** Provide the number of state staff positions to be funded in whole or in part with CSBG funds for the FFY(s) covered by this State Plan.

Year One: 1.0 **Year Two:** 1.0

- 6.8. State FTEs:** Provide the number of state Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) to be funded with CSBG funds for the FFY(s) covered by this State Plan?

Year One: 0.10 **Year Two:** 0.10

Use of Remainder/Discretionary Funds [Section 675C(b) of the CSBG Act]

- 6.9. Remainder/Discretionary Funds Use:** Does the state have remainder/discretionary funds as described in Section 675C(b) of the CSBG Act? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, provide the allocated percentage and describe the use of the remainder/discretionary funds in the table below.

Year One: 7.5% **Year Two:** 7.5%

- 6.10. Remainder/Discretionary Funds Partnerships:** Select the types of organizations, if any, the state intends to work with (by grant or contract using remainder/discretionary funds) to carry out some or all of the planned activities

- ☐ The State Directly Carries Out All Activities (No Partnerships)
- ☐ The State Partially Carries Out Some Activities
- ☒ CSBG Eligible Entities
- ☒ Other Community-based Organizations
- ☒ State Community Action Association
- ☐ Regional CSBG Technical Assistance Provider(s)
- ☐ National Technical Assistance Provider(s)
- ☐ Individual Consultant(s)
- ☐ Tribes and Tribal Organizations
- ☐ Other

6.11. Use of Remainder/Discretionary Funds Performance Management Adjustment:

Describe any adjustments the state will make to the use of remainder/discretionary funds under this State Plan as compared to past State Plans.

Historically, the State has used discretionary CSBG funding to support a combination of statewide initiatives, as implemented through the RI Community Action Association (RICAA), and innovative programs and activities, as proposed by the eligible entities and other anti-poverty organizations within the state. RI DHS plans to continue this methodology for obligating discretionary funding and will continue to solicit feedback from both the eligible entities and RICAA to determine funding priorities. Already, the eligible entities have identified increased training, especially as it relates to ROMA and the CSBG organizational standards, as a need across entities for the upcoming plan years. RI DHS also plans to partner with RICAA to support the conducting of a statewide needs assessment, to improve data collection and reporting processes for CSBG, and to support CSBG collaborative learning and outreach efforts.

SECTION 7: State Training and Technical Assistance

- 7.1. Training and Technical Assistance Plan:** Describe the state's plan for delivering CSBG-funded training and technical assistance to eligible entities under this State Plan.

Training, Technical Assistance, or Both	Topic
Both	Organizational Standards - General
Both	ROMA
Both	Community Assessment
Both	Monitoring
Both	Technology

- 7.1a. Training and Technical Assistance Collaboration:** Describe how the state will collaborate with the State Association and other stakeholders in the planning and delivery of training and technical assistance.

Eligible entities plan the goals of training/technical assistance sessions at monthly meetings with the CSBG Administrator and the State Association, deciding on topics and presenters.

- 7.2. Organizational Standards Technical Assistance:** Does the state have Technical Assistance Plans (TAPs) in place for all eligible entities with unmet organizational standards, if appropriate? ☐ Yes ☒ No

- 7.2a. Address Unmet Organizational Standards:** Describe the state's plan to provide T/TA to eligible entities to ensure they address unmet Organizational Standards.

Training and technical assistance related to CSBG organizational standards for the upcoming plan years will leverage peer learning opportunities coupled with individualized technical assistance. RI DHS will partner with RICAA to facilitate peer learning opportunities for eligible entities to share best practices related to both complying with and documenting compliance with CSBG organizational standards. Following these peer learning sessions, the CSBG Administrator will determine additional training needs, in consultation with the eligible entities and RICAA, and will offer individualized technical assistance opportunities for those entities requesting additional support.

- 7.3. Training and Technical Assistance Organizations:** Indicate the types of organizations through which the state intends to provide training and/or technical assistance.

- ☐ All T/TA is conducted by the state
☐ CSBG eligible entities

- ☐ Other community-based organizations
- ☒ State Community Action Association
- ☒ Regional CSBG technical assistance provider(s)
- ☒ National technical assistance provider(s)
- ☒ Individual consultant(s)
- ☐ Tribes and Tribal Organizations
- ☐ Other

7.4. CSBG-Funded T/TA Performance Management Adjustment: Describe adjustments the state made to the training and technical assistance plan under this State Plan as compared to past plans.

Training and technical assistance provided under this plan will focus on more formal, State-facilitated opportunities with subject-matter to be determined based on the results of monitoring efforts and consultation with the eligible entities and RICAA. Where possible, training will include peer learning opportunities where eligible entities can share best practices and learn from each other's organizational challenges and successes. Technical assistance will be offered on an individualized basis, as requested by the eligible entities and/or as determined necessary based on the results of monitoring activities.

SECTION 8: State Linkages and Communication

8.1. State Linkages and Coordination at the State Level:

- ☒ State Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) office
- ☒ State Weatherization office
- ☒ State Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) office
- ☒ Head Start State Collaboration offices
- ☐ State public health office
- ☐ State education department
- ☒ State Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) agency
- ☐ State budget office
- ☒ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- ☐ State child welfare office
- ☒ State housing office
- ☐ Other

8.2. State Linkages and Coordination at the Local Level: Describe how the state is encouraging partnerships and collaborations at the state level with public and private sector organizations, to assure the effective delivery and coordination of CSBG services to transform low-income communities and avoid duplication of services.

The RI DHS is well positioned to evaluate the coordination and effectiveness of government and non-government public welfare programs because of the programs for which it is responsible.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program, the Weatherization Program, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, the state Head Start Office, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer Program, the Refugee Resettlement Program, the Social Services Block Grant, the Family Violence Prevention Services grant, the Emergency Food Assistance Program, the state Office of Veterans Affairs, the state Office of Rehabilitation Services, the Office of Elderly Affairs, and the Office of Child Support Services are all administered by the RI DHS. RI DHS leadership, including the Administrators for each of these programs, meet regularly to help promote a culture of continuous improvement and quality, which will result in efficient and equitable service delivery across all programs administered by the Department.

Also, the RI DHS is part of a larger state secretariat that coordinates the work of the RI DHS, the RI Department of Health, the RI Department of Children, Youth & Families, and the RI Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals. RI DHS also has working relationships with the RI Department of Labor & Training, the RI Department of Education, and the RI Department of Housing.

RI DHS also participates in the Governor's Workforce Board along with the Department of Labor and Training to implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Based on its scope of responsibility and position within the state, RI DHS can provide linkages with a variety of public and private partners, including the non-profit network throughout the state, to ensure that the mission of the eligible entities is supported and advanced.

8.3. Eligible Entity Linkages and Coordination

8.3a. State Assurance of Eligible Entity Linkages and Coordination: Describe how the state will assure that eligible entities will partner and collaborate with public and private sector organizations to assure the effective delivery and coordination of CSBG services to low-income people and communities and avoid duplication of services.

RI DHS communicates with nearly every human service provider in the state and the eligible entities maintain strong relationships with a wide spectrum of providers. The accessibility and provision of services is discussed at regular meetings with eligible entities and is a point of examination in the administration of federal and state funds through the contracting process across RI DHS programs. Ongoing efforts include areas such as participation in community-wide coordinating and planning councils, utilizing cross referrals among local human services agencies, and participating in electronic network groups.

8.3b. State Assurance of Eligible Entity Linkages to Fill Service Gaps: Describe how the eligible entities will develop linkages to fill identified gaps in the services, through the provision of information, referrals, case management, and follow-up consultations.

The seven Community Action Agencies operating in RI collectively service the entire state. Each eligible entity has developed a service delivery system unique to its community's needs and financial resources. However, common to all agencies is: their networking, coordination, and collaboration with local public and private emergency service providers in meeting clients' emergency needs; their assessment of client non-emergency needs and the effective coordination of eligible entity and local area services for maximum benefit to the client; and the delivery of services in such a way as to foster self-sufficiency rather than dependency. All eligible entities work closely with each other, local service providers, and a statewide 2-1-1 referral system that would enlist provision of services where there are gaps identified. Additionally eligible entities are required to evaluate service gaps and identify new or existing linkages that can be used to fill those gaps as part of the annual Community Action Plan/application for funding, which is the first step in the process of allocating CSBG funds.

8.4. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Employment and Training Activities: Does the state intend to include CSBG employment and training activities as

part of a WIOA Combined State Plan, as allowed under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (as required by the assurance under Section 676(b)(5) of the CSBG Act)?

☒ Yes ☐ No

8.4a. WIOA Combined Plan: Provide the CSBG-specific information included in the state's WIOA Combined Plan.

RI DHS links with the WIOA system through TANF and SNAP activities. Participation in WIOA by eligible entities takes place through local workforce boards that are, in turn, part of the Governor's Workforce Board.

8.5. Emergency Energy Crisis Intervention: Describe how the State will assure, where appropriate, that emergency energy crisis intervention programs under title XXVI (relating to Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) are conducted in each community in the State.

As part of its administration of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP), RI DHS partners with eligible entities throughout the state to deliver emergency energy crisis intervention. RI DHS contracts with eligible entities to do eligibility verification and enrollment for LIHEAP and LIHWAP for all communities in the state.

8.6. Faith-based Organizations, Charitable Groups, and Community Organizations: Describe how the state will assure local eligible entities will coordinate and form partnerships with other organizations, including faith-based organizations, charitable groups, and community organizations.

RI DHS and the CSBG eligible entities will continue, to the maximum extent possible, to coordinate and form partnerships with other organizations serving low-income residents and communities, including faith-based organizations, charitable groups, and community organizations. Eligible entities report their collaborations with these other organizations to RI DHS on a yearly basis as part of the annual Community Action Plan/application for CSBG funding.

8.7. Coordination of Eligible Entity 90 Percent Funds with Public/Private Resources:
Describe how the eligible entities will coordinate CSBG 90 percent funds with other public and private resources.

Many of the Community Action Agencies in RI use a portion of their CSBG funds to support central operational/administrative costs in addition to management costs of their direct service programs. The ability to deploy CSBG funds in this flexible manner is vital in allowing eligible entities to focus efforts on the coordination of public and private resources while continuing to administer a wide variety of direct service programs. Eligible entities coordinate the vast majority of their programs with public and private resources and have both formal and informal

agreements concerning coordination, referrals, exchange of information, specific services to be provided, funding, volunteers, etc. Examples of public resources include health care providers; housing development authorities; public utilities; One Stop centers; Federal grantors; etc. Examples of private resources include volunteers, mentoring and literacy coalitions; child and senior care providers; churches, food pantries, United Way, and local foundations.

8.8. Coordination among Eligible Entities and State Community Action Association:

Describe state activities for supporting coordination among the eligible entities and the State Community Action Association.

The State Community Action Association (RICAA) meets monthly with all eligible entities in the state. RICAA coordinates advocacy and legislative efforts, training, common projects, such as the development of a system of data warehouses in the eligible entities, and shared concerns. The state CSBG Administrator meets regularly with the group, which includes executives from each of the eligible entities, and also with the director of RICAA. Information and coordination of services and programs are shared at these meetings.

8.9. Communication with Eligible Entities and the State Community Action Association:

Communication Plan

Subject Matter	Expected Frequency	Format
Upcoming Public and/or Legislative Hearings	As needed	Meetings/Presentations
State Plan Development	Annually	Email; Meetings/Presentations
Organizational Standards Progress	As needed	1:1; Meetings/Presentations
State Accountability Measures Progress	Annually	Contract/application
Community Needs Assessments/Community Action Plans	Semi-Annually	Meetings/Presentations; Email; 1:1
State Monitoring Plans and Policies	Semi-Annually	Meetings/Presentations; Email; 1:1
Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) Plans	Semi-Annually	Meetings/Presentations
ROMA and Performance Management	As needed	Meetings/Presentations; 1:1
State Interagency Coordination	As needed	Meetings/Presentations; Email
CSBG Legislative/Programmatic Updates	As needed	Meetings/Presentations; Email
Tripartite Board Requirements	Annually	Contract/application

8.10. Feedback to Eligible Entities and State Community Action Association: Describe how the state will provide information to local entities and State Community Action Associations regarding performance on State Accountability Measures.

The CSBG Administrator will provide feedback the eligible entities and the State Association regarding performance on State Accountability Measures, as necessary, through a variety of formal and informal communication channels. Such communication may include verbal updates from the CSBG Administrator during monthly State Association or other meetings, or more formal communication channels (i.e. formal letter), when necessary.

8.11. Communication Plan Performance Management Adjustment: Describe any adjustments the state made to the Communication Plan in this State Plan as compared to past plans.

With the size of the state, it is possible for all eligible entities to meet in person with the CSBG Administrator and the statewide Association on a regular basis, making effective, direct communication the norm. In FFY25, the State restructured its management of the RI DHS Community Programs portfolio and has placed the CSBG under the responsibility of a new CSBG Administrator with a more focused program portfolio than in prior years. With this restructuring, the State's communication plan will not change in regard to communication methods and minimum points of contact, however, eligible entities can expect an even higher level of engagement from the CSBG Administrator than in previous years.

SECTION 9: Monitoring, Corrective Action, and Fiscal Controls

Monitoring of Eligible Entities (Section 678B(a) of the CSBG Act)

9.1. Monitoring Policies:

In order to determine whether eligible entities meet the performance goals, administrative standards, financial management requirements, and other requirements of the State and the Office of Community Services, RI DHS conducts the following reviews of eligible entities:

1. Full, on-site program and fiscal monitoring reviews of each eligible entity at least once every three years
2. Annual review of completed “Self-Assessment Tool for Private CEEs,” provided by the Community Action Partnership, facilitated by RICAA
3. Follow-up reviews including prompt return visits to eligible entities, and their programs, that fail to meet the goals, standards, and requirements
4. Review agencies’ Single Audits
5. Other reviews as appropriate, including reviews of entities with programs that have had other Federal, State, or local grants terminated for cause.

9.2. Initial Monitoring Reports: According to the state’s procedures, by how many calendar days must the state disseminate initial monitoring reports to local entities?

30 Days

Corrective Action, Termination and Reduction of Funding and Assurance Requirements

9.3. Closing Findings: Are state procedures for addressing eligible entity findings/deficiencies and the documenting closure of findings included in the state monitoring policies?

☒ Yes ☐ No

9.4. Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs): Provide the number of eligible entities currently on QIPs, if applicable.

0 entities

9.5. Reporting of QIPs: Describe the state’s process for reporting eligible entities on QIPs to the Office of Community Services within 30 calendar days of the state approving a QIP?

The State will maintain a list of eligible entities on QIPs at any given time and will update that list as changes occur. A copy of the State’s QIP tracking log will be shared with OCS upon update.

9.6. Assurance on Funding Reduction or Termination: The state assures that “any eligible entity that received CSBG funding the previous fiscal year will not have its funding terminated or reduced below the proportional share of funding the entity received in the previous fiscal year unless, after providing notice and an opportunity for a hearing on the record, the state determines that cause exists for such termination or such

reduction, subject to review by the Secretary as provided in Section 678C(b)” per Section 676(b)(8) of the CSBG Act.

☒ Yes ☐ No

Policies on Eligible Entity Designation, De-designation, and Re-designation

9.7. Eligible Entity Designation: Does the state CSBG statute and/or regulations provide for the designation of new eligible entities? ☐ Yes ☒ No

9.7a. New Designation Procedures:

If any area of the State ceases to be served by an eligible entity, the State may solicit applications and designate a private, nonprofit organization as a new eligible entity to meet the identified need. Any organization seeking designation as an eligible entity must be capable of providing a broad range of services designed to eliminate poverty and foster self-sufficiency and must meet the requirements of a CSBG eligible entity, which include, but are not limited to, the tripartite board. To be designated as an eligible entity an organization must demonstrate effectiveness in meeting the goals and purpose of the CSBG. Priority in granting designation will be giving to organizations that meet the previously stated requirements and are providing related services in the area.

9.8. Eligible Entity Termination: Does the state CSBG statute and/or regulations provide for termination of eligible entities? ☐ Yes ☒ No

9.8a. Termination Procedures:

If the State determines, based on a final decision in a review, that an eligible entity fails to comply with the terms of an agreement or the State Plan, to provide eligible services under this subtitle, or to meet appropriate standards, goals, and other requirements established by the State or Federal government (including performance objectives), the State shall:

1. Inform the entity of the deficiency to be corrected.
2. Require the entity to correct the deficiency.
3. If appropriate, offer training and technical assistance to help correct the deficiency and prepare and submit to OCS a report stating what was determined and why.
4. The State, taking into account the seriousness of the deficiency and the time reasonably required to correct the deficiency, can allow the entity to develop and implement, within 60 days after being informed of the deficiency, a quality improvement plan to correct such deficiency within a reasonable period, as determined by the State. The State has no more than 30 days after receiving an eligible entity's proposed quality improvement plan to either approve the proposed plan or specify the reasons why the proposed plan cannot be approved.
5. After providing adequate notice and an opportunity for a hearing, initiate proceedings to terminate the designation of or reduce the funding of the eligible entity unless the entity corrects the deficiency.

6. Any eligible entity having their funding suspended, terminated, or reduced will be informed in writing of their right to an appeal. The following procedures will be implemented:
- The State will notify the eligible entity in writing of the pending action.
 - The eligible entity will have 30 working days to request a hearing.
 - The State will conduct a hearing within 20 working days of the request to determine that cause existed.
 - The State will make a decision within 10 working days of the hearing.
 - The hearing will be conducted on the record and follow CSBG procedures.

Any determination made by the State shall be subject to review by OCS.

9.9. Eligible Entity Re-Designation: Do the state CSBG statute and/or regulations provide for re-designation of an existing eligible entity? ☐ Yes ☒ No

9.9a. Re-Designation Procedures:

For voluntary or involuntary relinquishment and re-designation of existing eligible entities, corrective action(s) would be requested by the CSBG Administrator prior to considering re-designation. The State will collaborate with the statewide Community Action Agency network to facilitate the best solution for the betterment of the program and the network.

Fiscal Controls and Audits and Cooperation Assurance

9.10. Fiscal Controls and Accounting: Describe how the state's fiscal controls and accounting procedures will a) permit preparation of the SF-425 Federal fiscal reports (FFR) and b) permit the tracing of expenditures adequate to ensure funds have been used appropriately under the block grant.

RI DHS will review each eligible entity's fiscal control and fund accounting procedures to ensure the proper use of and accounting of CSBG funds.

The State, through the contracting process, establishes that the CAAs are subject to the following:

1. cost and accounting standards of the Office of Management and Budget;
2. an annual independent audit; and
3. maintaining appropriate books, documents, papers, and records, which are available for review by State and/or Federal representatives.

In accordance with Section 678D of the CSBG Act, fiscal control and fund accounting procedures have been established which ensure the proper disbursement of and accounting for Federal funds paid to the State under this subtitle, including procedures for monitoring the assistance

provided under this subtitle. Monthly financial reports with attendant expenditure documentation are required of all CSBG Sub-recipients and are a condition of payment under the contract. All Sub-recipients are also required to have an annual agency audit conducted by independent auditing entity; the audits must be constructed in accordance with accepted accounting principles. DHS, as a state agency is subject to annual audits by the Office of the Auditor General, in accordance with the 2 CFR 200 and generally accepted government auditing standards. On-site program and fiscal monitoring will be conducted by DHS for all CSBG Sub-recipients at least every three years.

The purpose of CSBG monitoring is to provide a comprehensive review of each CAA that considers financial/administrative management, programs and services, strategic planning, evaluation and results, human resource management, linkages and collaborations, leadership and governance. In accordance with Subsection 678D, an audit of its expenditures of amounts received under this subtitle and amount transferred to carry out the purposes of this subtitle will be submitted to eligible entities, at no charge, to the legislature of the State, and to the secretary upon request. Also, contracts with CSBG Sub-recipients contain provisions regarding required fiscal procedures and addenda to the contract, which detail additional fiscal requirements.

If, in the monitoring process, expenditure is found not to comply with a Federal and/or State regulation or statute, that expenditure will be disallowed and will have to be repaid to the State.

9.11. Single Audit Management Decisions: Describe state procedures for issuing management decisions for eligible entity single audits.

All Sub-recipients are required to have an annual agency audit conducted by independent auditing entity; these audits must be constructed in accordance with accepted accounting principles. RI DHS, as a state agency is subject to annual audits by the Office of the Auditor General, in accordance with the 2 CFR 200 Subpart F. If eligible entities have findings in their annual audits, the State requires a statement of corrective action.

9.12. Assurance on Federal Investigations: The state will “permit and cooperate with Federal investigations undertaken in accordance with Section 678D” of the CSBG Act.

☒ Yes ☐ No

9.12a. Federal Investigations Policies: Are state procedures for permitting and cooperating with federal investigations included in the state monitoring policies?

☒ Yes ☐ No

9.13. Monitoring Procedures Performance Management Adjustment: Describe any adjustments the state made to monitoring procedures in this State Plan as compared to past plans.

No adjustments have been made to previously established monitoring policies and procedures. The frequent and regular communication between the CSBG Administrator and the directors of all eligible entities enables timely knowledge of and response to any concerns.

SECTION 10: Eligible Entity Tripartite Board

10.1. Tripartite Board Verification: Verify which of the following measures are taken to ensure that the state verifies CSBG eligible entities are meeting Tripartite Board requirements.

- ☐ Attend Board meetings
- ☒ Organizational Standards Assessment
- ☒ Monitoring
- ☒ Review copies of Board meeting minutes
- ☐ Track Board vacancies/composition
- ☐ Other

10.2. Tripartite Board Updates: Provide how often the state requires eligible entities (which are not on TAPs or QIPs) to provide updates regarding their Tripartite Boards. This includes but is not limited to copies of meeting minutes, vacancy alerts, changes to bylaws, low-income member selection process, etc.

- ☒ Annually
- ☐ Semiannually
- ☐ Quarterly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ As It Occurs
- ☐ Other

10.3. Tripartite Board Representation Assurance: Describe how the states will verify that eligible entities have policies and procedures by which individuals or organizations can petition for adequate representation on an eligible entity's Tripartite Board.

Bylaws, board minutes, and lists of board members of all eligible entities are required annually as part of the funding application/contract process. Documentation is also reviewed as part of the annual self-assessment of organizational standards and through routine monitoring activities.

10.4. Tripartite Board Alternative Representation: Does the state permit public eligible entities to use, as an alternative to a Tripartite Board, "another mechanism specified by the state to assure decision-making and participation by low-income individuals in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of programs" as allowed under Section 676B(b)(2) of the CSBG Act? ☐ Yes ☒ No

SECTION 11: Individual and Community Income Eligibility Requirements

11.1. Required Income Eligibility: Provide the income eligibility threshold for services in the state.

200% of the HHS poverty line

11.1a. Describe any state policy and/or procedures for income eligibility, such as treatment of income and family/household composition.

The income and asset eligibility for services and the definition of family/household composition depends on the specific program and funding source. For example, for the LIHEAP, LIHWAP, and Weatherization eligibility determination, the income standard is 60% of state median income. For services and programs for which there is no prescribed federal or state income, asset, or household composition standard, the eligible entities use the 200% FPL standard.

11.2. Income Eligibility for General/Short Term Services: Describe how the state ensures eligible entities generally verify income eligibility for those services with limited intake procedures (where individual income verification is not possible or practical).

Intake case records are required and are kept in client tracking systems that can be examined by the State.

11.3. Community-targeted Services: Describe how the state ensures eligible entities' services target and benefit low-income communities for those services that provide a community-wide benefit (e.g., development of community assets/facilities, building partnerships with other organizations).

The annual Community Action Plans submitted by the eligible entities are reviewed to ensure that location, access, and enrollment requirements are directed to low-income people.

SECTION 12: Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) System

12.1. Performance Measurement System: Identify the performance measurement system that the state and all eligible entities use.

- ☒ The Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) System
- ☐ Another performance management system that meets the requirements of Section 678E(b) of the CSBG Act
- ☐ An alternative system for measuring performance and results

12.1a. ROMA Description:

Through the application and contracting process, the State requires eligible entities to provide assurance of participation in the Results Oriented Management and Accountability System for measuring performance and results of CSBG services/interventions, and to provide information describing how these assurances will be carried out. As part of this process, eligible entities must describe the outcome measures that will be used to measure their performance in promoting self-sufficiency, family stability, and community revitalization.

12.2. Outcome Measures: Indicate and describe the outcome measures the state will use to measure eligible entity performance in promoting self-sufficiency, family stability, and community revitalization.

- ☒ CSBG National Performance Indicators (NPIs)
- ☐ NPIs and others
- ☐ Others

12.3. Eligible Entity Support: Describe how the state supports the eligible entities in using ROMA or an alternative performance management system.

RI DHS focuses the work of the eligible entities on the anti-poverty goals of CSBG, against which they can measure their organizations and the impact their services are having. The annual application for funding/contracting process requires eligible entities to submit a work plan tied to CSBG goals and National Performance Indicators. Regular needs assessments and strategic planning processes are also required, which help to define how the eligible entities will implement strategies to address poverty, in line with each of their respective missions.

12.4. Eligible Entity Use of Data: Describe how the state intends to validate that the eligible entities are using data to improve service delivery.

The State, along with the Community Action Association and the eligible entities, has created a data warehouse, which collects data from disparate databases to yield unduplicated counts that guide assessment and planning as part of the ROMA process. The State has also

supported, and will continue to support, ROMA training and certification for association and eligible entity staff.

Community Action Plans and Needs Assessments

12.5. Community Action Plan: Describe how the state will secure a Community Action Plan from each eligible entity, as a condition of receipt of CSBG funding by each entity.

Submission of a Community Action Plan is a required part of the annual application for funding/contracting process for CSBG. Documentation is collected from each eligible entity, reviewed by the CSBG Administrator, and incorporated into each entity's contractual agreement as part of this annual process. Required Community Action Plan elements include:

- a. An application narrative, including the following sections
 - i. Introduction and Agency Mission
 - ii. Summary of Needs Assessment
 - iii. Description of Gaps and Linkages
- b. A Workplan which describes the services/strategies to be implemented and the indicators that will be tracked as well as a description of the Service Delivery System and Coordination of Resources
- c. A detailed Budget and narrative Budget Justification
- d. Identification of Authorized Individuals
- e. Organizational Structure and Staff (Organizational Chart)
- f. Board of Directors with Addresses, phone numbers, organized by tri-partite groupings with start dates, end dates, and vacancy information
- g. Current By-laws with board approval date
- h. Current personnel policies with board approval date

12.6. Community Needs Assessment: Describe how the state will assure that each eligible entity includes a community needs assessment for the community served (which may be coordinated with community needs assessments conducted by other programs) in each entity's Community Action Plan.

A community needs assessment is a required component of each eligible entity's annual application for funding, as described above. As part of this process, entities are asked to: "Summarize on one or two pages an analysis of the critical and major community needs based on a Community Needs Assessment. Your summary should include a description of the qualitative and quantitative data used to support the identified needs, a description on how data was collected and analyzed, and a summary of how your community's needs have changed/evolved from prior assessments."

SECTION 13: CSBG Programmatic Assurance and Information Narrative
(Section 676(b) of the CSBG Act)

13.1. Describe how the State will comply with CSBG requirements, including required assurances related to:

- **Use of Funds Supporting Local Activities, including: *CSBG Services, Needs of Youth, Coordination of Other Programs.***
- **State use of discretionary funds**
- **Eligible entity service delivery, coordination, and innovation**
- **Eligible entity linkages – approach to filling service gaps**
- **Coordination of eligible entity allocation 90% funds with public/private resources**
- **Eligible entity innovative community and neighborhood initiatives, including fatherhood/parental responsibility**
- **Eligible entity emergency food and nutrition services**
- **State and eligible entity coordination/linkages and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act employment and training activities**
- **State coordination/linkages and low-income home energy assistance**
- **Federal investigations**
- **Funding reduction or termination**
- **Coordination with faith-based organizations, charitable groups, community organizations**
- **Eligible entity tripartite board representation**
- **Eligible entity community action plans and community needs assessments**
- **State and eligible entity performance measurement: ROMA or alternate system**
- **Validation for CSBG eligible entity programmatic narrative sections**

In order to receive funding, each eligible entity must submit, among other things, an annual work plan. Each work plan describes how the agency will meet the needs identified in its community needs assessment summary by offering services and measuring outcomes aligned to the service and indicator domains included in the OCS Annual Report 3.0. All activities must significantly contribute toward the goals and the purposes of the CSBG Act. Special program activities supported directly or indirectly by CSBG funds may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Employment services including vocational/career counseling, training, placement, youth and senior employment programs.
2. Education programs including Head Start, day care, other preschool programs, tutorial programs, and adult education programs.
3. Consumer education and information projects including nutritional education and counseling, energy conservation training program, consumer counseling and education programs, and consumer program for senior citizens.
4. Housing assistance programs including supportive activities for low-income energy

- assistance and weatherization programs, crisis intervention, and emergency shelter.
5. Emergency services including loans and grants to meet immediate and urgent individual and family needs such as health services, food, housing, and employment related assistance
 6. Nutrition services including senior meals and childcare feeding programs, emergency food programs, surplus commodity projects, and community food and nutrition programs.
 7. Projects that promote self-sufficiency, which may include vocational counseling and training programs, health and mental health services, alcohol and substance abuse, day care, and geriatric day care.
 8. Projects that promote community involvement and participation including coordination and training mechanisms designed to increase the skills and abilities of eligible programs participants.
 9. Projects that promote more effective use of programs and services including public safety, improving relationships with law enforcement, information and referral, community outreach, and transportation services.
 10. Health center services including general medical and dental clinics as well as testing and laboratory services.
 11. Services to older Americans including senior meals programs, geriatric day care, employment and recreational projects, consumer education, assistance to homebound older persons, low-income energy assistance, and nutritional programs including direct commodity distribution.

Given the size of our state and local resources, all eligible entities actively participate in local networking and planning organizations, including multi-purpose collaborative bodies, human service coordinating bodies, workforce development boards, etc. As participants, they take an active role in identifying gaps in services and join with community leaders and service providers in planning and developing methods of getting services where they are needed. This is articulated in their annual CSBG funding application/Community Action Plan. Depending on the menu of services and programming at each eligible entity, low-income individuals and families have many portals through which to access services including health centers, food pantries, education sessions, childcare elder care, community meetings, etc.

Additionally, the field offices of the RI DHS act as portals and referral points to eligible entity services. Eligible entities engage in community outreach and maintain a strong network of partnerships with social service, healthcare, government, and civic organizations through which they engage low-income families and individuals. Coordinated and structured assessments are done by all eligible entities for those who seek assistance in any way so that an informed referral can be made, or a suitable service provided. A description of the service delivery systems of the eligible entities is included in the annual funding application/Community Action Plan that is submitted to the State. Regular needs assessment, both by the individual eligible entities and statewide, consistently prompt the eligible entities to recognize and respond to emergent needs with new programming. Discussion between the state and the eligible entities about what assessments reveal builds the foundation for the establishment of appropriate

initiatives. These are shared and encouraged through the Community Action Association. Funds from this grant have been and can be used together with other revenue streams to make new initiatives possible.