**WIOA Plan Modifications – CSBG Presentation – 2021**

**TITLE SLIDE: Requirements for Consideration for WIOA Combined State Plans that include Optional Partner Programs.**

**SLIDE 2: TODAY’S SPEAKER**

My name is Jessica Cain, Program Specialist in the Community Services Block Grant office.

This Webinar will focus on the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) in the Division of Community Assistance with the Office of Community Services. The CSBG office is responsible for the administration of the Community Services Black Grant Act.

**SLIDE 3: TODAY’s OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this training are to:

* Provide background on the CSBG
* Describe CSBG as a part of the Workforce Development System
* Discuss requirements for the CSBG State plan and the WIOA Combined State Plan
* Provide resources

**SLIDE 4: CSBG**

The Community Service Block Grant came out of the “War on Poverty” and the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The EOA established the Community Action Program, where public and private agencies, called Community Action Agencies, were formed to promote self-sufficiency and to respond to the immediate social and economic needs within their communities. In 1981, the Community Action Program and several other funding streams were consolidated into the Community Services Block Grant through the Community Services Block Grant Act of 1981, shifting a substantial amount of responsibility for administering CSBG from the Federal government to the states. The Community Services Block Grant Act of 1981 was reauthorized in 1998 with the Community Opportunities, Accountability, and Trainings and Educational Services Reauthorization Act of 1998, also known as the COATES Act.

The purpose of the roughly $745 million in annual federal funding for CSBG is to support services and activities that alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities. The major goals of the CSBG include: 1) increased self-sufficiency; 2) improved living Conditions 3) fostering ownership and pride of communities; and 4) strengthening family and support systems.

To receive federal funding, eligible states, territories, and tribes are required to complete a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) every three years to identify and prioritize the needs specific to their local communities. Once completed, the CNA is utilized to develop a one- or two-year Plan. If accepted, the grant recipients receive an allocated amount of money, of which 90% or more is dispersed across a local network of eligible entities. These include Community Action Agencies and Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Agencies, as well as any other organization deemed elgible by the grant recipient. The remaining 10% is divided up between administrative and discretionary costs, including the funding of innovative neighborhood programs. States submit an annual report on CSBG activities and spending to improve performance, track results from year-to-year, and maintain accountability for critical activities and outcomes at each level of the CSBG Network (Federal, State, and local).

As a block grant, the CSBG is purposefully flexible, allowing local communities to use the funding in a way that addresses the specific needs found in the CNA. Areas that CSBG local entities can utilize funding include employment, education, income management, adequate housing, health and nutrition services, emergency assistance, youth development, community engagement and partnerships, and linkages and coordination services.

**SLIDE 5: CSBG AS A PART OF THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

As WIOA encourages state and local leaders to work together to reimagine and reshape the workforce system, the CSBG network is a natural and important partner within this system and has a long history of collaborating with public and private workforce partners to better support the needs of people living in high poverty areas. CSBG funding is uniquely able to foster partnerships with community-based organizations and strengthen linkages between anti-poverty programs to improve outreach and to support equitable recovery.

CSBG is more specifically incorporated into WIOA in two significant ways:

1. CSBG employment and training activities are included as a “required partner” for WIOA’s one-stop service delivery system, the **American Job Centers;** and
2. CSBG employment and training activities may be included, at the option of the State, in a WIOA Combined State Plan.

**SLIDE 6: CSBG AS A PART OF THE WIOA COMBINED STATE PLAN**

Although states are highly encouraged to include CSBG in a WIOA Combined State Plan, CSBG is considered a “partner program” not a “core program”. Therefore, WIOA authorizes states to submit a Unified State Plan, which would not include a CSBG response, or to exclude CSBG in the submission of a Combined State Plan if one other “partner program” is included instead.

By choosing to include CSBG into a WIOA Combined State Plan, states are further able to elaborate on how they are creating a more efficient, effective, and comprehensive workforce development system. Many CSBG eligible entities are already engaged with local workforce partners and American Job Centers, and this combined plan provides an opportunity to demonstrate how. It also continues to encourage linkages between anti-poverty programs through collaboration and coordination, asking states, “How can I better leverage CSBG funding to support the meaningful inclusion of individuals, families, and communities in the workforce and encourage financial well-being and self-sufficiency?”

The requirements for adding CSBG as a “partner program” in the WIOA Combined State Plan are the same for all states. If a state chooses to include CSBG as a “partner program” in their WIOA Combined State Plan, the WIOA guidance requires the state CSBG office be meaningfully included in the strategic planning and coordination with the State Board, the core programs, and any other “partner programs”. As such, CSBG will be appropriately integrated throughout the common elements of the WIOA Combined State Plan. Even if CSBG is not included as a “partner program”, the state CSBG office should participate in the strategic thinking around how the Workforce Developments system can better provide comprehensive, and high-quality services, as CSBG remains a “required partner” of the one-stop centers.

**SLIDE 7: CSBG AS A PART OF THE WIOA COMBINED STATE PLAN CONTINUED**

Beyond integration into the common elements, both plans have a section specific to CSBGs role as a “partner program”, asking for the same information. The information would be submitted in section 9.4 and 14.5 of the CSBG State Plan and Section VII of the WIOA Combined State Plan (as seen in this comparison). As noted, on the right side, from Section VII of the WIOA Combined State Plan, if a state chooses to include CSBG as a “partner program”, they are still required to complete the separate, stand-alone CSBG State Plan for submission to the DCA. If CSBG is added to a WIOA Combined State Plan as a “partner program” or that information is modified, states will reflect those changes during the next opportunity for submission of a full CSBG State Plan.

The information that the CSBG State Plan and the WIOA Combined State Plan are specifically focusing on, is the following:

* A description on how the State and eligible entities will coordinate the provision of employment and training activities through statewide and local WIOA workforce development systems; and
* Examples of innovative employment and training programs and activities conducted by eligible entities or other neighborhood-based organizations as a part of a community antipoverty strategy.

**SLIDE 8: RESOURCES**

In closing, we hope that you have found this information helpful. If you have any questions, we encourage you to reach out to the State CSBG administering office and/or the Federal CSBG program specialist assigned to your region. Please refer to the following resources for contact information and assistance in the development of the CSBG State plan and the WIOA Combined State Plan.