



# City of San Antonio

## Agenda Memorandum

**File Number:**

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**Agenda Item Number:** 27

**Agenda Date:** December 5, 2024

**In Control:** City Council A Session

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**DEPARTMENT:** Department of Human Services

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:** Melody Woosley

**COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED:** Citywide

**SUBJECT:**

2025 Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

**SUMMARY:**

This ordinance authorizes the submission of the 2025 Community Action Plan grant application and acceptance of Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds upon award, of up to \$2,202,537.00 from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) for the period January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025, and authorizes a budget and personnel complement of 24 grant-funded positions. This includes reducing the personnel complement from 25 to 24 positions.

This ordinance also authorizes the Director of the Department of Human Services to initiate, negotiate, and execute any and all necessary documents and a grant contract to effectuate the acceptance of this grant, and to execute contract amendments pertaining to this contract, to include a) carry-over funds, when ascertained and approved by the funding agency through a revised notice of award; b) line item budget revisions authorized by the funding agency; c) modifications to the performance measures authorized by the funding agency and listed in the contract so long as the terms of the amendment stay within the general parameters of the intent of the grant; d) no cost extensions; e) amendments which will provide supplemental grant funds to the grant by the funding agency in an amount up to 20% of the total ordinance budget amount; f) reimbursement

increases of administrative funds for each participant served; g) amendments funding one time equipment purchases or defined program services; and h) changes in regulations mandated by the funding agency.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

The City of San Antonio Department of Human Services (DHS) is the designated Community Action Agency (CAA) and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) eligible entity for San Antonio and Bexar County. DHS has operated the Community Action Program since 1979. The Community Action Advisory Board (CAAB) acts in an advisory capacity regarding implementation of Community Action Programs. The CAAB is a tri-partite board consisting of 1) representatives of the low-income population by geographical area; 2) representatives of non-profit organizations in San Antonio; and 3) public officials.

The primary goal of the CSBG funding is to transition individuals and families out of poverty and promote financial self-sufficiency to reduce poverty in the Bexar County area for residents at or below 125% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). CSBG funding is provided by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) with oversight by the TDHCA. The CSBG grant funding supports several DHS programs and services, including:

- free one-on-one financial counseling and benefits navigating assistance through the City's Financial Empowerment Center,
- emergency assistance to low-income CPS ratepayers through the Utility Assistance program,
- the VITA free tax preparation program, and
- job training support to assist low-income residents to obtain a high demand occupation that significantly increases their household income through the Training for Job Success program.

The Utility Assistance program assisted more than 20,000 residents in FY 2024, and the Financial Empowerment Centers provided 4,000 residents with benefits navigating to other social service referrals, direct help completing and submitting social service applications, and more than 2,000 residents received financial counseling leading to reduced household debt and increased savings. The VITA tax prep program helped 24,000 low- and moderate-income taxpayers complete their tax return over the last year. The Training for Job Success program provided intensive case management, tuition assistance, textbooks, uniforms, rent and utility assistance to over 100 residents to reduce barriers to student success. In Calendar Year 2023, Training for Job Success (TFJS) program graduates' annual average income at time of entry was estimated at \$26,760.00 with an annual increase of \$56,338.00 post-TFJS program.

The proposed CSBG budget for 2025 reduces the personnel complement from 25 to 24 positions with no impact to services. In FY 2025, it is anticipated that the CSBG grant funding will help provide more than 4,000 households with one-on-one financial counseling assistance through the Financial Empowerment Center program; 13,000 households with up to \$500 to avoid electrical service disconnection through the Utility Assistance Program; 23,000 households with free tax preparation assistance through the VITA free tax prep program; and 40 households with tuition assistance and intensive case management to help them obtain a high demand occupation

certification and obtain employment that raises their annual income from below 125% of Federal Poverty Level to be higher than that level, more than doubling their average starting income, through the Training for Job Success program, a Ready to Work partner program.

**ISSUE:**

As part of the annual planning process required by TDHCA, CSBG eligible entities must conduct a public hearing prior to submitting a proposed 2025 budget and Community Action Plan. A public hearing was held on Thursday, August 22, 2024 at the Head Start Building on Brady Blvd. Also, on this date, the CAAB approved the Program Year 2025 Community Action Plan and budget that includes individual, family, and community National Performance Indicators and targets.

A final award amount from TDHCA will be provided upon authorization of the Fiscal Year 2024 Federal Budget. As requested by the state, DHS proposed a budget based on 2024 estimated CSBG allocations in the amount of \$2,202,537.00. The CSBG contract with TDHCA for Program Year 2025 will be executed once the federal budget is approved or a Continuing Resolution is authorized, and final award amount is received by the City of San Antonio.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The City of San Antonio is the only designated CSBG eligible entity for Bexar County and no other agency may apply for these funds. If the proposed ordinance is not approved, services provided by the City of San Antonio may be delayed while TDHCA undergoes a process to identify a new designated entity for Bexar County.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This ordinance authorizes the submission of the 2025 Community Action Plan grant application and acceptance of funds upon award, of \$2,202,537.00 in 2025 CSBG funding from TDHCA for the period January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025, and authorizes a budget and personnel complement of 24 grant-funded positions.

There is no fiscal impact to the City's General Fund in the form of a cash-match.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval.