

**OCS Issues Dear Colleague Letter**  
**CSBG State and Federal Accountability Measures**  
**February 28, 2014**

**From the Community Action Partnership eNewsletter March 4, 2014:**

As you may have seen, the Office of Community Services issued a [Dear Colleague letter](#) on February 28th regarding State and Federal Draft Performance Measures. Over the past year, OCS Director Jeannie Chaffin has shared with the Network that Organizational Standards would be accompanied by performance measures for States and the Federal office and we are pleased to see these draft measures be put out to the Network for review. We hope that you will take a close read of this letter and its [attached draft measures](#) and provide feedback by emailing [CSBG-Feedback@Urban.org](mailto:CSBG-Feedback@Urban.org).

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**Community Services**  
**Block Grant**  
**Dear Colleague Letter**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Community Services  
Division of State Assistance  
370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20447

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/programs/csbg>

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Re: CSBG State and Federal Accountability Measures

Date: February 28, 2014

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Dear Colleagues:

The purpose of this letter is to give you an update on the new State and Federal accountability measures for the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Network. These proposed measures are intended to ensure that both State and Federal administrators of CSBG are accountable to high standards of performance management. It is our expectation that these State and Federal accountability measures will be implemented alongside the new organizational standards for Community Action Agencies. In addition, as new Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) next generation tools and protocols are completed in the next several months, the new State and Federal accountability measures we are proposing will help assure accountability and high quality at all levels.

Over the past year, the Urban Institute (UI) has worked with OCS, a group of experts, and representatives from the Network, including the National Association for State Community Services Programs (NASCSPP) and the Community Action Partnership to develop these measures. Our efforts included input and consultation with diverse stakeholders from within the CSBG Network

(such as State CSBG administrators, leaders of State Associations of Community Action Agencies (CAAs), local CAA leaders, and national technical assistance providers, as well as experts from outside the CSBG Network such as academics and performance management specialists. UI conducted six in-person meetings with our advisors and experts, held several telephone conference calls, and received feedback by phone and email from many CSBG stakeholders. Through these sessions, we received thoughtful input and invaluable feedback.

The State and Federal accountability measures are now sufficiently shaped to share with you in draft form. We are requesting that any comments on the clarity, appropriateness, and feasibility of these measures be sent to [CSBG-Feedback@Urban.org](mailto:CSBG-Feedback@Urban.org), by Friday, April 4, 2014. Although final guidance and determination of these measures will be provided by OCS all input will be considered.

The following instructions will help you read and understand the matrix. After finalizing the measures, OCS will ask UI to prepare a written guide on how to use the measures.

### **Instructions for Reading the Matrix:**

1. The matrix is divided into State-level measures and Federal measures. It has three columns which correspond to upcoming fiscal years (FY2015, FY2016, and FY2017).
2. FY2015 will be the first year in which the Network will begin to collect data. It is the baseline year against which future progress will be measured.
3. Measures that appear in red signify the first year that data for a specific measure will be collected. The same measure is listed in black in subsequent years to indicate that the measure will continue to be collected over time.
4. For some measures, such as Distribution of Funds, there is only one measure. For others, such as Community Engagement, there is more than one way that this concept will be measured.
5. State-level measures are noted with an S (for State) and a lower case letter to indicate the unique number of ways that the concept will be measured. Federal-level measures are noted with an F (for Federal) and a lower case letter.

6. The matrix also indicates the anticipated source of the data. (The next version of the matrix will include the appropriate authority for collecting the data.)

**Next Steps:**

OCS plans to continue to work to help the CSBG network move toward universal implementation of accountability measures over the next two years. We anticipate a series of webinars and workshops to make the transition a smooth one. We will also provide guidance and time lines for the incorporation of accountability measures into our regular State and Federal administration of CSBG. We appreciate your partnership in these efforts and are committed to an ongoing consultative process. Our ultimate goal is to assure high quality services and robust results for low-income people in all communities served by CSBG. We appreciate your review and input on these measures.

Sincerely,  
Jeannie L. Chaffin  
Director  
Office of Community Services

Seth Hassett  
Director, Division of State Assistance  
Office of Community Services