



Department of Community &  
Economic Development

## CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Title:** Income Eligibility Determination

**Directive #:** C2016-04

**Effective:** July 1, 2016

To: Community Action Agency/Limited Purpose Agency Directors

From: Lynette Praster, Director – Center for Community Services

### 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to clarify policy concerning the determination of an applicant's income eligibility for services funded with Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds

### 2.0 Policy

- A) This directive applies to all applicants for CSBG-funded services unless specifically exempted in writing by the Department of Community and Economic Development.
- B) If CSBG funds are used primarily to support agency administration, then the agency should follow income eligibility determination for the particular services a client receives.
- C) If CSBG funds are directly used to wholly support a program, then CSBG income eligibility determination should be used for the clients receiving those services.
- D) If CSBG funds are being used to partially support direct program expenses, an equal percentage of the clients being served must meet CSBG income eligibility. (Example if a program is being supported by 20% of CSBG funds, 20% of the clients receiving that service **must** meet CSBG eligibility requirements).
- E) It is advisable to set up CSBG and/or any other program income eligibility determination as part of the overall agency intake process with a client in order to clearly define client participation in agency services.
- F) An applicant's income in relation to family unit size may not exceed 125% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).
  - 1) (FPL) as determined by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and published annually at [www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov).
  - 2) The Federal Poverty Income Guidelines (FPIGs) are generally updated once a year at the beginning of the calendar year for the previous calendar year and should **not** be used to determine eligibility.
  - 3) Subgrantees are responsible for using the most recent published Federal Poverty Levels (FPL) and should update these levels as often as they are updated on the website of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

- G) Income eligibility determination shall be based on total family unit income for the thirty day (30) period immediately preceding the date of application for services. The federal poverty level is based on annual income. Annual income is derived by multiplying income for the past thirty (30) days by twelve (12).

Income Determination

A) Income Inclusions

- i) Income is the total of salaries,
  - a. wages,
  - b. dividends,
  - c. interest,
  - d. unemployment compensation or
  - e. other cash receipts of all family members and other individuals residing in the applicant's house/domicile.

B) Income Exclusions

- i) welfare payments
- ii) Social Security Disability
- iii) Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and training program stipends.
- iv) Unrelated persons such as lodgers, foster children, wards or employees who reside in the household are separate family units for purposes of CSBG eligibility.
- v) Emancipated minors are also considered as separate family units in calculating income.
- vi). Salary or wages earned by a child(ren) under the age of eighteen residing in the applicant's house/domicile.

C) Determining Income Eligibility for Wards of the Court, Foster Children and Handicapped Persons

- i) Wards of the Courts: Public funds used to support youths who are wards of the court should not be regarded as income. Certifying documentation may include letters or documents from the court, local family and children service agency or similar organizations stating that the youth is a ward of the court. No other eligibility documentation will be required unless the youth receives some other source of income that falls within the CSBG definition of income.
- ii) Foster Children: Neither public funds for the youth's support nor the foster family's income should be used for income eligibility determination of the foster child(ren). Public support for the youth should be regarded the same as welfare payments. Certification may be made by the foster parents, local family and youth services agencies, welfare office or similar organizations.

D) Accepted Documentation of Income

- i) Salary or wage statements or W-2 forms
- ii) A case number with at least phone verification or a signed statement from the

County Assistance Office or Social Security Office stating that the family unit is receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), General Assistance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability(SSDI)payment or Social Security Retirement payments.

- iii) Verification of income received from an agency providing subsidized day care services or subsidized housing.
- iv) A statement, signed and dated by the applicant, or in the case of a minor his/her parent or guardian, certifying that the family unit income does not exceed 125% of poverty (self-declaration). A statement should be in the client file explaining why a self-declaration was used. This method of documentation should only be used for the first 90 days of service. If an applicant does not produce proof of income within 90 days of initial service, a redetermination must be performed or service may be terminated at the discretion of the Agency.
- v) The only exception to income documentation requirements is for services provided by outreach and referral programs.

E) Frequency of Determination

- i) Following the initial determination of income eligibility, redetermination must be made every three hundred and sixty five (365) days in order to insure that any major life events such as employment status, birth of a child, divorce, etc. are reflected in the family's eligibility for persons receiving continuous service. Should the agency become aware of a change in the income status of the family/individual (i.e. increase in salary) a redetermination should be performed as soon as is feasible to ascertain eligibility.
- ii) Redetermination is necessary if ninety (90) days elapse before the first or any service is provided.

### **3.0 Notations**

This directive shall supersede and replace in its entirety the following directives:

- *Directive C2014-04 , Income Eligibility Determination*

### **4.0 Effective Date**

This directive shall take effect immediately and replaces Directive #C2014-04. It shall remain in effect, in its entirety, until such time as it is amended, replaced, superseded, or nullified. Only a directive from the Center for Community Services or equivalent office may countermand any statement herein contained.

cc: Center for Community Services Staff