



**Request for Applications to administer the Community Services Block Grant in Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Wharton counties**

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (the Department) is seeking interested organizations to submit applications in accordance with this Request for Applications (RFA) to potentially be designated as a Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Eligible Entity and administer CSBG in Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Wharton counties.

The Department is in the process of removing the Eligible Entity status and CSBG funds from the current provider<sup>1</sup> in these counties. That process is taking place simultaneously with the release of this RFA. The release of this RFA does not negate or limit the rights and opportunities of the existing provider to take steps to try to retain their programs. However, the RFA is being released at the same time so the Department can maintain continuity of coverage to CSBG clients while limiting gaps in assistance, in the event that the current provider's eligible entity status is terminated by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USHHS) based on the Department's actions to terminate CSBG funding.

An applicant can apply for one or more counties; however, if one or more of the counties is not requested by any respondents that currently administer CSBG or the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), one or more respondents that do administer CSBG or LIHEAP may be asked by the Department to accept one or more of the counties which was not applied for, as a condition of being awarded CSBG for the county for which they applied.

Interested applicants must meet the requirements set forth in this RFA and must submit a complete application through the established system described in the RFA by April 25, 2022, 5:00 p.m. Austin local time. Questions pertaining to the content of this application packet or eligible activities are to be submitted as instructed in the RFA.

---

<sup>1</sup> The provider may also be referred to as an administrator or subrecipient or Eligible Entity in various federal and state statutes, rules, and regulations, impacting the CSBG funding.

The application forms contained in this packet and submission instructions are available on the Department's web site at <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/community-affairs/nofas.htm>. The Department looks forward to receiving your completed application.

## Table of Contents

<b>I.</b>	<b>Application Instructions .....</b>	<b>5</b>
A.	Application Deadline.....	5
B.	Electronic Submission.....	5
C.	Application Questions .....	5
<b>II.</b>	<b>Proposed Timeline for RFA.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>General Information .....</b>	<b>5</b>
A.	Background .....	5
B.	Purpose of CSBG .....	6
C.	Eligible Use of Funds.....	6
D.	Funds Available and Allocation Amounts .....	7
E.	Eligible Applicant Organizations .....	7
F.	Ineligible Applicant Organizations .....	8
G.	Private Nonprofit Organizations .....	9
H.	Registration Requirements .....	9
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Federal and State Requirements .....</b>	<b>9</b>
A.	Service Area Coverage.....	9
B.	Tripartite Board or “Other Mechanism” Requirements .....	10
C.	Results Oriented Management and Accountability Systems and CSBG Organizational Standards.....	10
D.	Client Eligibility.....	10
E.	Program Administration.....	10
F.	Ineligible Use of Funds.....	11
G.	Reporting Requirements.....	11
1.	Monthly Reporting .....	11
2.	CSBG Community Needs Assessment, Strategic Plan, and Community Action Plan.....	11
3.	Transitioning Persons Out of Poverty .....	12
H.	Auditing Requirements .....	12
I.	Policies and Procedures .....	12
J.	Miscellaneous .....	12
<b>V.</b>	<b>Application Content .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Application Review Process .....</b>	<b>14</b>
A.	Eligibility Prescreening Review.....	14
B.	Scoring of Applications.....	15
C.	Evaluative Review and Deficiencies.....	16

D. Awards ..... 17

E. Appeals Process..... 17

**VII. Federal and State Requirements .....17**

**VIII. List of Attachments .....17**

## I. Application Instructions

### A. Application Deadline

All applications must be submitted before April 25, 2022, 5:00 p.m. Austin local time.

### B. Electronic Submission

All applications must be submitted electronically to be considered eligible applications. Applications are to be submitted through the Wufoo system using the following link:

[CSBG RFA for Counties of Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Wharton](#)

### C. Application Questions

Application questions may be submitted via electronic mail to [rita.garza@tdhca.state.tx.us](mailto:rita.garza@tdhca.state.tx.us). Answers will be provided in the order in which they are received. Please do not submit the same question twice as you await a response. Questions submitted after April 25, 2022, may go unanswered due to limited remaining time before the deadline.

## II. Proposed Timeline for RFA

Date	Action
April 1, 2022	The application will be available through the TDHCA Website: <a href="http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/community-affairs/nofas.htm">http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/community-affairs/nofas.htm</a>
April 21, 2022	Questions regarding the RFA and application submitted after this date may not be answered.
April 25, 2022 5:00 p.m. (Austin local)	Deadline for Applicants to submit applications in response to this RFA
June 16, 2022	Anticipated date the Department will present funding recommendations to its Board of Directors*
June 16, 2022	Anticipated Contract Start Date*
*An applicant decision to appeal may delay the Contract Start Date	

## III. General Information

### A. Background

The CSBG Program provides annual funding support through states to a network of eligible entities to maintain a local program service delivery system on behalf of low-income individuals and families. The CSBG Act requires that 90% of the annual CSBG funds received by the Department from USHHS be passed-through to this network of local organizations for administrative support, direct services to clients, and to facilitate the delivery of services for low-income population groups. Eligible entities, upon Department approval, are designated by the Governor to provide a broad range of services designed to eliminate poverty and foster self-sufficiency. Once such designation by the Governor is made the eligible entity retains the responsibilities under the CSBG Act, as well as the due process rights under that Act until and unless it either voluntarily relinquishes that status or is terminated in accordance with the requirements of the CSBG Act. CSBG is administered through eligible entities under contract with the Department, which collectively cover all 254 counties of the state.

The Department will give preference in awarding the CSBG funding to any local public or private nonprofit agency which is currently receiving LIHEAP and/or Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds. Applicants currently receiving LIHEAP or CSBG funds will be evaluated first, scored competitively against each other and evaluated for previous participation. Tex. Gov't Code §2306.097 requires energy services programs that serve low-income individuals, such as LIHEAP, to operate in conjunction with the CSBG. Only if no applicants apply that currently receive LIHEAP or CSBG funds, or if those that have applied are found ineligible by terms of this RFA, or are not approved for an award by the Department or are unable to meet conditions placed on the award by the Governing Board, will other applications from organizations that do not operate LIHEAP or CSBG be evaluated and scored. If one or more of the counties is not requested by any respondents that currently administer CSBG or the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), one or more respondents that do administer CSBG or LIHEAP may be asked by the Department to accept one or more of the counties which was not applied for, as a condition of being awarded CSBG for the county for which they applied.

### **B. Purpose of CSBG**

The purpose of the CSBG is to reduce poverty, revitalize low-income communities, and empower low-income individuals and families to become self-sufficient. This is accomplished by using CSBG funds to support local efforts to identify, reduce, or eliminate the causes of poverty and to help solve problems that block the achievement of self-sufficiency among individuals. While use of CSBG funds has broad latitude for creativity in addressing the specific needs of a community, there are specific requirements relating to assessing and identifying those needs; more information of the preparation of a Community Needs Assessment can be found at <https://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/community-affairs/csbg/additional-requirements.htm>. The program also has an extensive performance management and accountability framework. There are comprehensive National Performance Indicators (NPIs) that federally govern programming and success; more information on the NPIs can be found at <https://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/community-affairs/csbg/guidance.htm>.

### **C. Eligible Use of Funds**

CSBG funds are made available to local organizations under contract with the Department to provide administrative support, to provide direct services to eligible low-income clients, and/or to mobilize resources to provide an array of services to the low-income clientele in the designated service area.

Per requirements of the CSBG Act, CSBG funds are to be used locally to support activities that are designed to assist low-income families and individuals:

- to remove obstacles and solve problems that block the achievement of self-sufficiency;
- to secure and retain meaningful employment;
- to attain an adequate education, with particular attention toward improving literacy;
- to make better use of available income;
- to obtain and maintain adequate housing and a suitable living environment;

- to obtain emergency assistance through loans, grants, or other means to meet immediate and urgent needs;
- to achieve greater participation in the affairs of the communities involved;
- to address the needs of youth in low-income communities through youth development programs. Such programs may include, but are not limited to, after-school child care programs and youth mentoring, mediation, life skills training, and jobs programs; and
- to make more effective use of and to coordinate with other programs in the community.

Case management services must be provided to assist eligible low-income individuals to attain an income above the 125% level of poverty income guidelines. The provision of case management includes: an assessment of the household’s needs; a plan of action to meet the client’s needs; and regular follow-up to ensure that clients are making progress in meeting established goals.

CSBG funds can be utilized to collaborate with other entities on projects and/or to subcontract for client services. Through the use of subcontracts, a CSBG eligible entity can expand their ability to provide a wide array of services to meet the needs of low-income persons, especially those aimed at enabling families and individuals to work towards the achievement of self-sufficiency. The Department understands that with limited time to apply for funding, plans to subcontract for services may be limited at the time of application. All subcontracts will need to follow the Department’s procurement rules and Office of Management and Budget Regulations and Texas Grant Management Standards.

**D. Funds Available and Allocation Amounts**

The applicant organization(s) chosen through this competitive process may be offered CSBG contracts for all or some of the 2022 CSBG annual allocation for the region and for each year thereafter, as long as they remain in good standing. The estimated allocations for CSBG funding are indicated below by county.

The amounts represented in the table below reflect the estimated 2022 CSBG funds allotted for those counties. If the CSBG is removed from the current provider then the remainder of the funds that have not been expended by the current provider will be awarded to the successful applicant(s). Future allocation amounts will depend on funds received from USHHS.

<b>County</b>	<b>Estimated 2022 CSBG Allocation</b>
Brazoria	\$ 233,865
Fort Bend	\$ 407,380
Galveston	\$ 301,575
Wharton	\$ 51,317

**E. Eligible Applicant Organizations**

Organizations eligible to apply must be a private nonprofit organization or a Public Organization. Per the CSBG statute 42 USC §9909(c), *a political subdivision of the State will not be considered unless there is no qualified private nonprofit organization*, as defined in 10 TAC §6.2(b)(49). The successful applicant will

be designated as the eligible entity (as defined in 42 U.S.C. §9902(1)(A)) for the county in the service area. An organization that is eligible to be designated as a new CSBG eligible entity may be:

- a private nonprofit organization (which may include an existing Eligible Entity) that is geographically located in the unserved area, that is capable of providing a broad range of services designed to eliminate poverty and foster self-sufficiency, and that meets the requirements of the CSBG Act;
- a private nonprofit eligible entity that is geographically located in an area contiguous to or within reasonable proximity of the unserved area and that is already providing related services in the unserved area, and is willing to add additional board members to ensure adequate representation of the new service area;
- a Public Organization; or
- if no private nonprofit organization is identified or determined to be qualified to serve the unserved area as an eligible entity, under 42 USC §9909(e) the Governor may designate an appropriate political subdivision of the State to serve as an eligible entity for the area. In order to serve as the eligible entity for the area, the political subdivision shall have a board or other governing mechanism as required by 42 USC §9910(b), as approved by the Department in writing.

*Applications from organizations currently receiving LIHEAP or CSBG funds will be evaluated first.* Only if no organizations apply that currently receive LIHEAP or CSBG funds, or if those that have applied are found ineligible by terms of this RFA, are not approved for an award, or are unable to meet conditions placed on the award by the Governing Board, will other applications from organizations that do not operate LIHEAP or CSBG be evaluated and scored.

In order to be a qualified applicant, the applicant cannot owe the Department more than \$25,000. An applicant with funds owed less than \$25,000 must be in or agree to enter into an approved repayment plan with the Department. An applicant also cannot be delinquent in its submission of the Single Audit to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse (if required) at the time of application, or at the time of the award.

#### **F. Ineligible Applicant Organizations**

Organizations ineligible to apply for the competitive CSBG funds are:

- Organizations which have, within the past ten years, lost their Eligible Entity status or have had their CSBG funding reduced as a result of 42 U.S.C. §9915;
- Private Nonprofit Organizations that do not have a Certificate of Formation (or Articles of Incorporation);
- Private Nonprofit Organizations that the Texas Secretary of State's Office website states are not authorized to do business in Texas;
- Organizations with persons on the organization's governing body or employees who are debarred or suspended by the Department or another governmental agency;
- Organizations with persons on the organization's governing body or employees who are on the System for Award Management in accordance with 2 CFR Part 180; or
- Organizations that include proposed financial participation by a person who, during the five year period preceding the date of the application, has been convicted of violating a federal law in connection with a contract awarded by the federal government for relief, recovery, or



reconstruction efforts as a result of Hurricane Rita, as defined by Section 39.459, Utilities Code, Hurricane Katrina, or any other disaster occurring after September 24, 2005; or assessed a penalty in a federal, civil or administrative enforcement action in connection with a contract awarded by the federal government for relief, recovery, or reconstruction efforts as a result of Hurricane Rita, as defined by Section 39.459, Utilities Code, Hurricane Katrina, or any other disaster occurring after September 24, 2005.

#### **G. Private Nonprofit Organizations**

For Private Nonprofit organizations currently receiving Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program or Community Services Block Grant funds from the Department, the Department is not requiring that the organization submit a Certificate of Formation or proof of eligible status. However, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that its information including its Certificate of Formation (formally known as Articles of Incorporation) with the Texas Secretary of State's Office is correct and complete at the time of application. The Department will confirm proof of active status directly with the Texas Secretary of State. Other applicants must submit a Certificate of Formation or proof of eligible status. Failure to have the appropriate status and governing documents reflected on the Secretary of State's Office will cause the application to be terminated without further review.

#### **H. Registration Requirements**

Prior to contract execution, the successful applicant must provide the Department with the organization's Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and proof of registration with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR). If the organization is not registered, go to <https://www.sam.gov> to renew, update, or create a new registration.

### **IV. Federal and State Requirements**

Successful applicants shall comply with all provisions of the Federal and State laws and regulations including but not limited to:

#### **A. Service Area Coverage**

Organizations that submit an application can apply for and must be willing to administer CSBG in one or more of these counties: Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Wharton counties. If one or more of the counties is not requested by any respondents that currently administer CSBG or LIHEAP, one or more respondents that do administer CSBG or LIHEAP may be asked by the Department to accept one or more of the counties which was not applied for, as a condition of being awarded CSBG for the county for which they applied. The Department will offer the county for which no applicants applied first to the highest scoring applicant.

EXAMPLE: If the Department does not receive any applications for Wharton County or if the Department determines to not fund one of the applicants that applied for Wharton County, the Department may require as a condition of award for one of the funded applicants for the other three counties to serve Wharton County and accept the funds for that county. The Department will offer Wharton County first to the highest scoring applicant.

Per the requirements of the CSBG Act, a CSBG Eligible Entity must be able to accept applications for assistance at sites that are geographically accessible to all households in the service area. Furthermore, the eligible entity shall provide to low-income individuals who are physically infirm, the means to submit

applications without leaving their residences; or the means to travel to the geographically accessible sites at which such applications are accepted by the entity.

#### **B. Tripartite Board or “Other Mechanism” Requirements**

In order for a private nonprofit entity or Public Organization to be considered to be an eligible entity, the entity shall administer the CSBG through a tripartite board that fully participates in the development, planning, implementation, and evaluation of the program to serve low-income communities. The members of the Board shall be selected by the entity and the Board shall be composed so as to assure that: 1/3 of the members are elected public officials or their representatives; not fewer than 1/3 of the members are persons that are democratically selected to assure that these members are representative of low-income individuals and families in the neighborhood served; and, the remainder of the members are officials or members of business, industry, labor, religious, law enforcement, education, or other major groups and interests in the community served.

The rules governing the CSBG entity’s board requirements are found in 10 TAC Chapter 6, Subchapter B, §§6.209 – 6.214. An entity must be fully prepared to bring its board into compliance with these board requirements within 180 days of selection as the new Eligible Entity. Department staff will also be willing to provide the successful Applicant technical assistance on compliance with this and other requirements of the CSBG Act and the Department’s rules.

#### **C. Results Oriented Management and Accountability Systems and CSBG Organizational Standards**

The applicant awarded funds to serve as the CSBG eligible entity must participate in the Results Oriented Management and Accountability System to report performance to the Department and must meet the requirements of the CSBG Organizational Standards. Information regarding these requirements can be found on the Department’s website at <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/community-affairs/csbg/guidance.htm>. Department staff will also be willing to provide the successful Applicant technical assistance on compliance with this and other requirements of the CSBG Act and the Department’s rules.

#### **D. Client Eligibility**

Clients to be served with the support of CSBG must have an annualized income not to exceed 125% (temporarily 200% due to the pandemic) of the poverty income guidelines as provided by USHHS; to the extent this eligibility criteria is revised by USHHS, the CSBG awardee will be permitted to use the revised standard.

#### **E. Program Administration**

CSBG awardees must operate the program in accordance with the CSBG Act, the Texas Administrative Code regulations in Title 10, Part 1, Chapters 1 and 2; Title 10, Part 1, Chapter 6, Subchapters A and B; and in accordance with the Texas Grant Management Standards (TXGMS), except where preempted by 2 CFR Part 200.

Applicants should review each of these documents to fully understand all requirements for program administration before making the decision to submit an application. Department staff will also be willing to provide the successful Applicant technical assistance on compliance with this and other requirements of the CSBG Act and the Department’s rules.

## **F. Ineligible Use of Funds**

CSBG funds may not be used to purchase or improve land, or for the purchase, construction, or permanent improvement (other than low-cost weatherization or other energy-related home repairs) of any building or other facility. The funds shall not be used in the provision of services or the employment or assignment of personnel to support the following activities: any partisan or non-partisan political activity or any political activity in an election for public or party office; any activity to provide voters or prospective voters with transportation to the polls or similar assistance in connection with any such election; or any voter registration activity. Utility and rent deposit refunds from vendors must be reimbursed to the Subrecipient and not the customer. Refunds must be treated as program income, and returned to the Department within ten days of receipt. Any other prohibited uses or activities identified in state or federal statute or rule will also be ineligible.

Any entity that receives funds from this proposal and assumes responsibility for planning, developing, and coordinating CSBG activities shall be deemed a State or local agency for certain purposes. Any other uses or activities deemed ineligible by state or federal rule will also be ineligible.

## **G. Reporting Requirements**

### **1. Monthly Reporting**

Subrecipient must submit a monthly performance and expenditure report for each contract. CSBG monthly reports are due the 15th of the month following the month being reported. This is a monthly report submitted electronically to the Department and contains fiscal expenditures and programmatic performance information.

### **2. CSBG Community Needs Assessment, Strategic Plan, and Community Action Plan**

The Department requires that each CSBG eligible entity conduct and submit a Community Needs Assessment every three years. These assessments serve to redirect service delivery based on gaps in services and new needs for the low-income sector as determined by feedback from local officials, the low-income clientele, and other interest groups.

The Department requires that each CSBG eligible entity conduct and submit an agency strategic plan every five years. During the first year, the awardee must submit their strategic plan as part of documentation for meeting CSBG Organizational Standards. Among other things, the strategic plan serves to re-examine why the organization exists and its aspirations for the future, to produce decisions and actions that guide the organization's programs and operation, to help prioritize efforts and determine the allocation of resources, and to improve effectiveness and efficiency through agreed upon strategies and goals.

The Department requires that each CSBG eligible entity submit an annual Community Action Plan (CAP) for review and approval. Within 45 days of receipt of funding notification, a CAP must be submitted to the Department for approval and before contract execution. The CAP serves to inform the Department of each eligible entity's intent to use the CSBG funds in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations.

### **3. Transitioning Persons Out of Poverty**

The Department requires each eligible entity to transition persons out of poverty and annually assigns a goal to each CSBG eligible entity. CSBG awardees will be assigned a goal for transitioning persons out of poverty.

#### **H. Auditing Requirements**

The Department requires that each organization that expends \$750,000 or greater in total federal financial assistance during the organization's fiscal year arrange for the performance of an annual audit conducted in accordance with the State and Federal Single Audit Act provisions, as applicable. Applicant organizations expending less than \$750,000 in state/federal financial assistance shall arrange for a third-party audit of financial statements prepared by a Certified Public Accountant. Auditors must be procured and audits submitted in accordance with 10 TAC §1.403. However, applicants that are Private Nonprofit Organizations that have expended less than \$750,000 in Federal or State funds (respectively) and who have received LIHEAP or CSBG funds from the Department in the last fiscal year are not required to submit a separate audit with this RFA. For these organizations, the previous participation review will suffice as the measure to determine organizational financial health. Audits must be performed by a qualified, licensed, and properly procured auditor, and audits must be submitted to the Department within 30 days of the completion of the audit, but not more than nine (9) months after the end of the fiscal audit period.

#### **I. Policies and Procedures**

Each organization shall establish and maintain bylaws and policies and procedures on personnel, travel, financial/accounting, and procurement consistent with 10 TAC, Chapter 1, Subchapter D. The personnel policies and procedures document should include nondiscrimination assurances, grievance procedures, conflict of interest/nepotism provision, and time and leave policies. The organization's procurement procedures should include information for all purchasing activity, such as activities relating to equipment, supplies, services, facility rent, leases, etc. Fiscal accountability documentation, including current fidelity bond coverage and a complete copy of the last full fiscal audit for fiscal period indicated must also be maintained.

The organization shall also establish, maintain, and utilize systems and procedures to prevent, detect, and correct waste, fraud, and abuse in activities. The systems and procedures shall address possible waste, fraud, and abuse by the subrecipient organization, its employees, clients, vendors, subcontractors and administering agencies. The subrecipient organization's internal control systems and all transactions and other significant events are to be clearly documented and available for review by monitoring entities.

If the federal or state regulations change, the successful applicant agrees to adhere to the newest applicable regulations, and to amend its contract(s), if requested, to reflect these new mandatory requirements.

#### **J. Miscellaneous**

Organization shall comply with political activity prohibitions and shall not utilize CSBG funds to influence the outcome of any election, or the passage or defeat of any legislative measure, or to directly or indirectly hire employees or in any other way fund or support candidates for the legislative, executive, or judicial branches of government of subrecipients, the State of Texas, or the government of the United States. Organization shall comply with 45 CFR §87.2 and ensure that CSBG funds are not to be used for

sectarian or inherently religious activities such as worship, religious instruction or proselytization, and must be for the benefit of persons regardless of religious affiliation.

Organization shall comply with Chapter 2264 of the Texas Government Code and will not knowingly employ an undocumented worker, where “undocumented worker” means an individual who, at the time of employment, is not lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States or authorized under law to be employed in that manner in the United States.

Organization is not permitted to award any funds provided by this contract to any party that is debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in federal assistance programs under Executive Order 12549. The organization will be required to agree that prior to entering into any agreement with a potential subcontractor that the verification process to comply with this requirement will be accomplished by checking <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/pages/public/searchRecords/search.jsf>

## **V. Application Content**

The RFA and Attachments (Excel document) are posted on the TDHCA website at <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/community-affairs/nofas.htm>. Ensure all application documents are submitted.

All documents, including attachments, should clearly identify which application question to which the document pertains. If the response to an application question has an attachment, ensure that the separate document clearly identifies the question number. If the Department is unable to clearly determine which question the response belongs to, the applicant may not receive the correct number of points.

- Attachment A: Applicant Information Form: Form must be placed on the top of the application.
- Attachment B: Application Questions and Scoring: Complete the RFA Application Questions and Scoring document. Applications that do not include a completed document with responses to all RFA questions will be deemed ineligible. If applying for more than one county, a separate Attachment B Part 4, questions 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 must be submitted for each county. Please use the following format to provide any information which is requested in response to application questions which allow for a separate document to provide the response:
  - ✓ Minimum 11 font
  - ✓ Standard 8½ “ x 11” paper with 1” margins
  - ✓ Provide brief descriptions of requested information
- Attachment C: Financial Information: All applications must include the following documents relating to fiscal accountability, even if this information has been previously submitted to the Department.
  - ✓ An application must include a completed Audit Certification Form, found on the Department’s website at <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/pmcomp/forms.htm>.
  - ✓ An organization that is subject to the Federal Single Audit Act requirements must certify that the Single Audit for the latest fiscal year is available at the Federal Audit Clearinghouse. An Organization that is subject only to the State Single Audit Act must submit one copy of the organization’s most recent Single Audit report.
  - ✓ An organization not subject to either the Federal or the State Single Audit requirements must submit one copy of a third-party audit of financial statements prepared by a Certified Public Accountant, including any notes to the audit.

- ✓ A Private Nonprofit Organizations not subject to either the Federal or State Single Audit requirements and who have received LIHEAP or CSBG funds in the last fiscal year from the Department are not required to submit a separate audit. For these organizations, the previous participation review will suffice as the measure to determine organizational financial health
- Attachment D: Fidelity Bond Coverage. Complete the cover page and submit it along with proof of fidelity bond coverage. All applicants that are Private Nonprofit Organizations must provide evidence of fidelity bond coverage as required by 10 TAC, Ch. 1, Subchapter D, §1.406.
- Attachment E: Uniform Previous Participation Form for Single Family and Community Affairs.
- Attachment F: Certifications Regarding Legal Actions, Debarment & Compliance with Laws.
- Attachment G: Private Nonprofit Organization’s Tax-Exempt Status Documentation Existing Internal Revenue Service (IRS) ruling: All private nonprofit organizations must provide documentation of their status as a tax-exempt entity under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code. The ruling should be on IRS letterhead which is legible and signed by the IRS District Director. Expired advanced rulings from the IRS are not acceptable.
  - ✓ If an organization is a subsidiary of a parent organization, the organization must provide documentation of the parent organization’s IRS ruling and a copy of the page listing the affiliate organization in the documents filed with the IRS by the parent organization.
- Attachment H: Applicant Certifications
  - ✓ The certification must be signed by the organization’s Executive Director. If such cannot be attested, then attach a document explaining why.
- Attachment I – CSBG Budget Worksheets:
  - A. The proposed budget for CSBG is to be submitted utilizing the Attachment I form. There are several tabs within the spreadsheet to complete. Complete the budget based on the estimated funds available noted in Section III. D. Service Area Funding Estimates.
  - B. The Department strongly encourages applicants to budget no more than **20%** of the CSBG funds for **administrative costs** (overhead and staff costs related to administrative staff not involved in the direct delivery of services).
  - C. The CSBG does not have limitations on the amount of funds utilized for the provision of direct services or for the costs of staff assigned to provide the direct services.

## VI. Application Review Process

### A. Eligibility Prescreening Review

The Department will review applications to determine if they meet the following eligibility prescreening criteria.

The prescreening criteria are:

Attachments A through I must be received by the application deadline. If the Department identifies an Attachment to be missing, 25 points for each missing Attachment (A through I) will be automatically deducted from the final score. If an Attachment is identified as missing or substantially incomplete the Department will issue a deficiency notice to request the deficiency(ies) be resolved within three business days from the date the deficiency notice was issued. Deficiency notices will be e-mailed to the applicant’s chief executive and the person

specified as the “person to contact with application questions” in the applicant information form (i.e., Attachment A). If the applicant does not provide the requested information within three business days from the date the deficiency notice was issued, the applicant will be sent a notice indicating termination of the application and an opportunity to appeal.

Application documents must be submitted electronically by the deadline in Section II to be considered eligible applications. Applications are to be submitted through the Wufoo using the following link (you may use either link):

[CSBG RFA for Counties of Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Wharton](#)

- An Applicant must meet all requirements as set forth in Section III. General Information, C. Eligible Applicant Organizations.
- An Applicant must not be an ineligible applicant organization as set forth in Section III. General Information, D. Ineligible Applicant Organizations.
- Any applicant not meeting these criteria may be terminated. A notice of termination will be sent, and an applicant will have an opportunity to appeal the decision in accordance with 10 TAC §1.7, Appeals Process.

#### **B. Scoring of Applications**

As described in Section III, applications from organizations currently receiving LIHEAP or CSBG funds will be evaluated first. Applications from other applicants will only be evaluated and scored if no organizations apply that currently receive LIHEAP or CSBG funds, or if those that have applied are found ineligible by terms of this RFA, are not approved for an award, or are unable to meet conditions placed on the award by the Governing Board.

The Department will not consider any unsolicited information.

Applications received from eligible organizations that have satisfied the Eligibility Prescreening Review will be evaluated and scored by the Department. The Department will utilize a standard scoring instrument to evaluate, score, and rank each application. The scoring instrument will award points based on the applicant’s response to the requested information in Attachment B. Upon completion of scoring each application, applicants will be provided a scoring notice with an opportunity to appeal.

Applications will be scored for each county (i.e., Brazoria, Fort Bend, Galveston, and Wharton). For instance, if an applicant applies for two counties, the application will be reviewed and scored separately for each county. The scores will be calculated by totaling the points for Part 1 Experience, Part 2 Prior Performance, Part 3 Efficiency, Part 4 Governance, and Part 5 Proposed Service Plan for the county for which the applicant has applied (Part 5 will be scored separately for each county). There are four worksheets for Attachment B Part 5, one for each of the available counties. All applicants are to complete Attachment B, Parts 1, 2, 3, 4 and Part 5 worksheet for the county(ies) they are applying for. The cumulative score for Parts 1 thru 5 (per county) will be determined for each application submitted, and the highest ranking application per county will be recommended for funding.

The Self-Score column on Attachment B Parts 1-5 are to be completed by the Applicant; however, the Department may determine that the Applicant's self-score is not accurate and assign a different score.

Applications will be scored based on the response to the Application Questions in Attachment B and submission of requested documents. The Application Questions are designed to evaluate the applicant's capacity in the following areas:

Attachment B:

- Part 1: Experience
- Part 2: Prior Performance
- Part 3: Efficiency
- Part 4: Governance
- Part 5: Proposed Service Plan

The Department will consider and evaluate prior monitoring and/or audit issues during its application scoring. Additionally, other factors to be considered in the scoring of each application will include, but not be limited to:

- Eligibility Requirements set forth in Section III of this RFA;
- Compliance with RFA Instructions;
- Submission of requested information;
- Capacity to effectively administer federal funds and to ensure compliance with regulations;
- Ability to demonstrate staff and organizational capacity to deliver the proposed services; and
- Ability to demonstrate positive past performance with Department or other federally funded programs, including the results of Department monitoring reviews, timeliness of submission of reports, results of the last fiscal audit, CSBG expenditure rates, and other information deemed relevant to performance.

**C. Evaluative Review and Deficiencies**

Applications that meet all eligibility requirements will be reviewed for completeness and scored using a standard review instrument using the scoring structure found in the RFA Application Questions. If all applicants score below the minimum point threshold, the Department reserves the right to review the top scoring entity and if, in the Department's judgment, they can appropriately administer the CSBG, may recommend an award to its Governing Board.

After the application receipt deadline, the Department will not consider any unsolicited information that an applicant may want to provide. After the Department receives an application, however, the Department may contact the applicant to clarify items in its application or issue a deficiency notice.

Applicants may be issued a deficiency notice detailing any of the required application information that is unclear or that may have been omitted in error. Deficiency notices will be e-mailed to the applicant's chief executive and the person specified as the "person to contact with application questions" in the applicant information form (i.e., Attachment A). Applicants will have three business days from the date of issuance of the deficiency notice to provide the Department with



the requested information. If not provided in that time period, the applicant will be sent a notice of its elimination from the competition and an opportunity to appeal.

#### **D. Awards**

Applicants recommended for funding will be reviewed by the Department's Executive Award Review Advisory Committee (EARAC) in accordance with 10 TAC Chapter 1, Subchapter C and subsequently brought to the Department's Governing Board for consideration of an award.

EARAC may recommend an award, recommend with conditions, or recommend denial of an award.

#### **E. Appeals Process**

An appeal of a staff determination must be submitted in writing and in accordance with the Texas Administrative Rule Title 10, Part 1, Chapter 1, Subchapter A, §1.7 which can be found at the Secretary of State's website at:

[http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac\\_view=5&ti=10&pt=1&ch=1&sch=A&rl=Y](http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=10&pt=1&ch=1&sch=A&rl=Y).

### **VII. Federal and State Requirements**

Pertinent Federal and State requirements can be found at the following links:

Texas Administrative Code - 10 TAC Chapter 1, Administration, available at

[http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac\\_view=4&ti=10&pt=1&ch=1](http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=10&pt=1&ch=1)

Texas Administrative Code - 10 TAC Chapter 2, Enforcement, available at

[http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac\\_view=4&ti=10&pt=1&ch=2](http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=4&ti=10&pt=1&ch=2)

Texas Administrative Code - 10 TAC Chapter 6, Subchapter A, General Provisions, available at

[http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac\\_view=5&ti=10&pt=1&ch=6&sch=A&rl=Y](http://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=10&pt=1&ch=6&sch=A&rl=Y)

Texas Administrative Code - 10 TAC Chapter 6, Subchapter B, CSBG, available at

[https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac\\$ext.ViewTAC?tac\\_view=5&ti=10&pt=1&ch=6&sch=B&rl=Y](https://texreg.sos.state.tx.us/public/readtac$ext.ViewTAC?tac_view=5&ti=10&pt=1&ch=6&sch=B&rl=Y)

### **VIII. List of Attachments**

Attachments are posted separately on the TDHCA website as fillable MS Excel documents at

<http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us/community-affairs/nofas.htm>

- Attachment A: Applicant Information Form
- Attachment B: Application Questions and Scoring Parts 1-5
- Attachment C: Financial Information
- Attachment D: Fidelity Bond Coverage
- Attachment E: Uniform Previous Participation Information
- Attachment F: Certifications Regarding Legal Actions, Debarment & Compliance with Laws
- Attachment G: Private Nonprofit Organization's Tax-Exempt Status Documentation
- Attachment H: Applicant Certifications
- Attachment I – CSBG Budget Worksheets