

# PUBLIC CAA CASE STUDY



## The Power of a Tripartite Board

September 2016

### INTRODUCTION: The Board's Role in the CSBG Organizational Standards

This case study focuses on how the tripartite board of a public Community Action Agency (CAA) fulfills its responsibilities with respect to the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Organizational Standards set forth in the federal Office of Community Services' (OCS) Information Memorandum (IM) No. 138. Because a public CAA and its tripartite board are usually operating under the auspices of an established local government framework, the applicability of the CSBG Organizational Standards (Standards) is markedly different from their applicability to a nonprofit CAA.

While the federal CSBG Act requires the board to “participate actively in the development, planning, implementation and evaluation”<sup>1</sup> of Community Action programs, the reality of how to fulfill this role in an impactful way is not always clear. A public CAA tripartite board often perceives its ability to act on behalf of the public CAA as limited by the level of authority delegated to it by the local governing body. Even though establishing a delegation of authority arrangement is necessary and important, doing so does not lessen the impact and role the board plays. As you will see in this case study, defining and establishing the role of your public CAA tripartite board helps to foster a positive relationship between the board and the local governing officials and results in more engaged and effective board members.

After spending time speaking with representatives of Montgomery County Community Action Agency (MCCAA), a public CAA in Maryland, we were impressed by the ways in which its tripartite board helps the CAA achieve compliance with the Standards. Two key characteristics stand out with MCCAA's board – they understand the vital role they play and they embrace that role. Even though MCCAA's delegation of authority arrangement does not often place the tripartite board in a decision-making position, the board continually manages to effect change. This case study highlights many of the ways in which the board does so. The board not only takes very seriously the recommendations it is asked to make but it is also constantly advocating on behalf of MCCAA and the low-income community. A few of the ways in which the board fulfills its responsibilities include: developing and implementing initiatives to engage the community served; regularly meeting with local government officials; participating in county-wide hearings and meetings; and collaborating with other county groups to ensure the community's needs are met.



MCCAA acknowledges that it is not yet 100% in compliance with the Standards but the ongoing efforts of its tripartite board to reach that goal are inspiring and, we hope, informative, especially for those public CAA tripartite boards that are struggling with challenges related to compliance with the Standards. Throughout the case study, we identify Standards that we believe MCCAA's tripartite board is either addressing or attempting to address through its actions. Our goal with this case study is not to identify all of the Standards that may be met through the board's efforts; but rather, to highlight key characteristics of the board that contribute to its effectiveness and compliance with CSBG Organizational Standards.

<sup>1</sup> 42 U.S.C. § 9910 (b)(1)(C).

## MCCAA Overview

<b>MAIN OFFICE LOCATION:</b>	Division of the county’s Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS or Health and Human Services) in Montgomery County, Maryland
<b>STAFF SIZE:</b>	15 employees (2 part-time), 7 contractors (3 part-time)
<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE:</b>	Sharon Strauss
<b>SERVICE AREA:</b>	1 county, 500 square miles, 1 million total population
<b>ANNUAL REVENUE:</b>	\$9,000,000
<b>BOARD SIZE:</b>	18
<b>DIRECT SERVICES SITES:</b>	Takoma East Silver Spring Center (TESS) Center and administrative office
<b>MAJOR PROGRAMS:</b>	Head Start, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, summer meals program, legal clinics, benefits application assistance, interpretation and translation services, senior services programs, play groups for young children, monitoring of approximately 30 grant recipients that receive funding from the county (not from MCCAA)

## BACKGROUND

Tackling the Standards is a team effort that involves not only a CAA’s staff and tripartite board but also ongoing support from the state CSBG office. A CAA’s success in implementing the Standards hinges on fostering a healthy collaboration between CAAs and their state oversight agency. Public CAAs are often in a good position to develop and maintain a positive relationship with their state CSBG office because public CAAs are more likely to understand, from first-hand experience, general government operations. Public CAAs and their tripartite boards also derive additional benefits from being a part of their local governments that can assist them in meeting the Standards.

### State CSBG Office Support

According to MCCAA’s Executive Director, Sharon Strauss, the positive relationship that MCCAA (and, she believes, most Maryland CAAs), has with the state CSBG office, the Department of Housing and Community Development, has made implementation of the Standards more manageable. Ms. Strauss explained that the state office has “gone ahead and used the network standards, they’ve adopted them. This year they showed up in our grant. Everything we had to complete in the grant was referenced with the...Standards.” Even though the board was involved in the development of the CAA’s CSBG grant application, MCCAA’s executive team took the lead on a line-by-line review of the Standards for purposes of integrating them into the CAA’s systems, processes, and procedures. Doing so helped MCCAA’s staff educate the board on its role and responsibilities with respect to the Standards.

Ms. Strauss also explained that the state office is “very supportive” and “understands how we work in different ways.” The state, for example, recognizes that MCCAA’s board “is a public board that is appointed by the executive

and confirmed by our County Council and there is a process of how...different kinds of positions are suggested or approved by the board.” Communicating these differences to the state office in its application, Ms. Strauss believes, has helped the state CSBG office develop a good understanding of how MCCAAs operate as a public CAA.

## Benefits of Being a Public CAA

“Our framework is a lot different than the nonprofits’ but I think there are supportive aspects to being in a public agency,” Ms. Strauss says. For one, MCCAAs’ Program Manager, Leah Goldfine, who supports the CAA’s communications needs and data assessment obligations, also acts as the board liaison. Ms. Goldfine works with the tripartite board to ensure that it has the information and support it needs to excel. The local government supports this staff role and, while the role “is not unique to our community action board,” according to Ms. Strauss, the role is just “another strength of being a public community action agency.”

The political leadership also works to ensure that the different county groups are working together. The groups include commissions on aging, childcare, veterans, people with disabilities, and those groups with a human service interest meet collectively on a quarterly basis with the tripartite board leaders. As Ms. Strauss explains, “so if affordable housing...is an issue across populations...there may be unique concerns, let’s say with seniors and people can go very deep into their particular niche.” These efforts help in meeting:

**STANDARD 2.1: The department has documented or demonstrated partnerships across the community, for specifically identified purposes; partnerships include other anti-poverty organizations in the area.**

Ms. Strauss believes that these collaborations “really also support governance” because training by the county, such as ethics training, is available to these groups, including the tripartite board.

The collaborations “help coordinate and keep people from tripping over each other with policy priorities.” Tripartite board members will participate in the different hearings which allow for a deeper discussion of the issues and enable the tripartite board to connect with groups that may not fall directly within the human

services area. For example, Ms. Strauss explains “if we are talking about the earned income tax credit, EITC, we might also be talking to the commission for women, they’re not part of health and human services, but our board chair would be able to bring that into a conversation in a group of other leaders.” These conversations, often led by tripartite board members, help MCCAAs to understand what other groups are operating in the space where MCCAAs are trying to work and to identify its own policy priorities. These actions help in meeting:

**STANDARD 2.2: The department utilizes information gathered from key sectors of the community in assessing needs and resources during the community assessment process or other times. These sectors would include at minimum: community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, public sector and educational institutions.**

## MCCAAs’ TRIPARTITE BOARD

It is hard to pin down exactly why MCCAAs’ tripartite board is so successful at not only specifically meeting the CSBG Organizational Standards but also generally engaging the community and supporting the CAA. Understanding the way in which the board recruits its members, as well as orients and educates them, offers some insight into the board’s strengths and high level of engagement. Currently, the board consists of eighteen members who meet nine times each year which equates to monthly board meetings except for the months of July, August, and December. The executive committee of the board meets every month and *ad hoc* committees meet on an as-needed basis. The executive committee consists of seven members and reflects the three different sectors of the tripartite board.

### Recruitment

Several factors have influenced board member recruitment. The board’s visibility in the community through its programs and initiatives has resulted in increased interest by the community in serving on the board. According to Ms. Goldfine, the community sees “the work that the board is doing and people who are interested in these issues would want to be a part of that.” MCCAAs count themselves as lucky in terms of outreach because of its wide network, “both through our current board members but also just through our

partner programs and agencies that we work with here in our office.” This outreach enables MCCA to effectively get the word out about tripartite board opportunities to a wide range of people. Ms. Goldfine also explained that MCCA’s tripartite board, through an *ad hoc* committee, holds “interviews when there are vacancies on the board and that provides a really great opportunity to share more detailed information...about the board’s role.” The board members take the lead on those interviews and use them as an opportunity to speak with potential board members about what is expected of them.

### Orientation, Education and Training

Board member orientation is led by both board members and staff who use a PowerPoint presentation that Ms. Goldfine updates with current information for each new orientation session. *See Appendix I: MCCA Board Orientation PowerPoint.* The PowerPoint provides an overview of the board structure, the agency structure, where MCCA sits within the county government, some Community Action history, and the tripartite board’s role within MCCA and the county. The orientation session also always includes current information about what the board is working on at that particular time, such as advocacy issues, programs and initiatives. These actions help in meeting:

**STANDARD 5.7:** The department has a process to provide a structured orientation for tripartite board/advisory members within 6 months of being seated.

MCCA staff also continually educates the tripartite board through their interactions with the board. As Ms. Strauss explains, “we are trying to infuse that language in meetings and other kinds of work that we do so that, again, they have this vocabulary and they start to have the orientation which I think our board chair would say, probably took her five years to really get the whole thing because it is pretty complicated, it takes a long time.”

While board members will attend national and state conferences, participate in trainings that come up along the way, and learn from guest speakers at meetings, the board is constantly looking into additional training opportunities and is considering devoting a part of every meeting to training, as discussed in the

Challenges section below. In particular, the board is interested in obtaining more training focused on the board’s role and responsibilities with respect to the Standards. These actions help in meeting:

**STANDARD 5.8:** Tripartite board/advisory members have been provided with training on their duties and responsibilities within the past 2 years.

### Role and Authority

The main function of the board is summed up simply by Ms. Goldfine – “to serve as advocates” – and they embrace that role. She explains that they “advocate to the local elected local officials but also at the state and federal level as well.” She elaborates further that “most of their work, I would say, is at the local level...meetings with County Council members, meetings with the County Executive and then also other officials within



county government.” The board has developed and nurtures a “really good relationship” with the county and “with the local elected officials in particular.” The relationship between the tripartite board

and county government is further facilitated by the representatives of the County Executive office and the County Council both of whom serve on the tripartite board and act as liaisons between the groups.

The specific powers of the tripartite board are established in the bylaws as well as the enabling legislation for MCCA. *See Appendix II: Bylaws and Enabling Legislation.* The enabling legislation, in particular, lists in detail the actions the tripartite board may take. It is interesting to note that most of the actions involve the tripartite board providing recommendations and advice on a number of matters specific to MCCA’s Community Action program. Even though the delegation of authority arrangement does not often place the board in a decision-making role, MCCA manages to effect change through its collaborations and its advocacy efforts on behalf of the CAA and its clients.



## Strengths

Ms. Goldfine believes that the board particularly excels in three critical areas. The first is program planning. In addition to its oversight role with regards to Head Start and CSBG programs, the board has taken the lead on developing and implementing poverty forums and is now working on a new initiative, the *Leadership Development Institute*.

The second is advocacy. They have been “very, very engaged in different advocacy efforts” — from small actions, like adding the board’s name to sign-on letters,



to bigger actions, such as testifying in person at County Council hearings and before the County Executive and submitting written testimony for different bills that impact the low-income residents. Ms. Goldfine explains that when legislation

arises that is relevant to issues identified by the board through its community involvement, “the board really wants to make sure that they address it because those were the issues that the residents came to them and talked about.” Also, she stated that “the board has done a great job of advocating for the agency.” The board visits the TESS center (MCCAA’s main direct service site) and gets a “first-hand perspective on what actually takes place through our agency on a daily basis and really understands what the agency does.” Ms. Goldfine exclaims that “our board members are really great about that...they really do have an excellent understanding of all the different services that our agency offers and they’re really very much aware of those services. I think that helps them to advocate for the agency.”

The third is collaboration. She explained that “the board has done a really great job of working with other boards and commissions in the county but also a lot of our partner organizations and other groups to really advocate for issues and plan programs...They’ve just done a really great job, especially in the last couple years in developing those relationships.” These efforts help in meeting:

**STANDARD 2.1:** The department has documented or demonstrated partnerships across the community, for specifically identified purposes; partnerships include other anti-poverty organizations in the area.

## Challenges

Ms. Goldfine described several challenges that the tripartite board is currently addressing. One is the need for more training. The board currently has some opportunities to participate in training such as attending the Maryland Community Action Partnership annual conference, traveling to national partner conferences when they are within driving distance, and listening to guest speakers invited to board meetings. However, the board feels as if more needs to be done, especially with regard to the Standards and the board’s involvement with them. To this end, the board is hoping to incorporate more training into its regular meetings. The board chair proposed this idea to the board, which is now considering including a brief training as part of the agenda at every meeting. MCCAA also sometimes faces challenges recruiting new members for the low-income representative sector of the board. The board hopes that its new *Leadership Development Institute* initiative to train the low-income community on being effective advocates will also stimulate interest in serving on the board.

## Engagement

MCCAA is overflowing with board engagement and Ms. Goldfine accredits this partly to the fact that their “board members come from a lot of different backgrounds and areas of expertise...[and] are involved in a lot of different organizations and different local initiatives.” Even though the tripartite board members mostly have full-time jobs, they remain “very, very involved in the community...so they were really engaged residents to begin with and really care about these issues.”

The board orientation session for newly appointed members, Ms. Goldfine also believes, helps with the board engagement. The orientation goes into more detail than what the new board members might have received at their interview. As discussed earlier, the board uses a PowerPoint as part of its orientation process. The PowerPoint provides an overview of the

board structure, the agency structure, where MCCAAs sit in terms of county government, some community action history, and the tripartite board's role within MCCAAs and the county. Furthermore, all board members are required to participate in at least one committee. Both Ms. Goldfine and the board see this commitment as "a really a great way for them to get more involved, especially for the new board members." The board is exploring other ways to engage, in particular, its new members and is considering a mentoring program for the future.

Lastly, the structure of the board meetings has resulted in an increased level of engagement. Ms. Goldfine sends the meeting materials to the board members ahead of time, including the reports and other items that will be discussed at the meeting so that everyone has a chance to review them before the meeting. After



every meeting, the board completes a brief evaluation of that meeting. The results of these evaluations have helped to improve the board's

cohesiveness and member satisfaction. The board has also started using the consent agenda format for its meetings. Generally, a consent agenda is used to expedite routine business during board meetings, such as approval of the minutes from the prior meeting, so that more time can be spent educating and discussing substantive, action-oriented issues. Most of the materials that Ms. Goldfine sends in advance to the board are included on the consent agenda and this enables the board to review those matters more quickly at the meeting. Typically the consent agenda includes the prior meeting's minutes and meeting evaluation form, written reports from executive and key program staff, recent testimony given by the board at various hearings, and committee reports. The consent agenda enables the board to move on to discussions about current issues and guest speakers. According to Ms. Goldfine, the consent agenda format has "actually been really helpful in terms of making the best use of their time during the monthly board meetings" and "it's

been quite effective." Board meetings usually range in length between one and a half to two hours.

Ultimately, Ms. Goldfine feels that the tripartite board is "a very committed group of individuals who are very engaged in the community and very active and really, really want to participate. They come to the meetings but they do so much more than that. They are constantly engaged in these other committees, planning programs and everything. We just have a really excellent group."

## MEETING ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

MCCAAs's tripartite board is not always making a conscious effort to meet a specific Standard. Rather, the way in which the board operates and the passion that drives its members, many times results in its achieving compliance with individual Standards in a non-taxing and seemingly effortless way.

### Board Organizational Standards Survey

One specific step MCCAAs's board took to begin incorporating the Standards was to assess individual board members' understanding and knowledge of the Standards. When the state required CAAs to do a self-assessment on the Standards, MCCAAs engaged its board in a parallel process. The board established a committee to review the Standards in relation to the board's work and the committee developed an online survey that fifteen out of the eighteen members completed. *See Appendix III: Board Organizational Standards Survey.* The survey included questions that focused on the Standards specific to the board. The board used the results to help the board and staff determine what training was needed and what areas required further attention. Ms. Goldfine explained that the survey "was definitely a successful initiative in terms of addressing the...Standards...It was a really helpful tool in terms of figuring out where the board is right now, what areas do they need to learn more about." After the survey, MCCAAs reached out to the national Community Action Partnership for a training on the Standards specific to the board's role and focused on the differences between nonprofit and Public CAAs.

## Community Involvement

The board excels in its advocacy role by regularly engaging the community and receiving its feedback.

One way the board recently did this was through poverty forums that it developed and conducted at different venues around the county. The idea for the forums began with the board and involved inviting members of the low-income community to come out, discuss their concerns, and share ideas and recommendations for how to address those



issues. Some board members were involved in the planning of the forums, others in the implementation by serving as

facilitators for the forums, while others participated by attending the forums. One forum occurred in early 2015 and a second one took place in Spring 2016. The board partnered with another county service provider, East County Regional Services Center, to host the forum which was, according to Ms. Goldfine, “a huge success...we had over 150 people there.” The forums provided the community with the opportunity to share their concerns and ideas about four important issues: child care, housing, jobs and transportation. Feedback received ranged from asking the county and other providers to “consider innovative ideas such as ‘tiny houses’ and shared housing options” to requesting that they “post job information at bus stops and Metro stations.” The board also hosted a few different sessions specifically at MCCA’s TESS center so the board could talk to clients coming to the center for different services. Ms. Goldfine explained that “those were also incredibly helpful because we were hearing directly from the community that our service site is working with each day.”

Additionally, the board receives information from partner organizations such as Montgomery College, Montgomery County Public Schools and organizations that the CAA monitors on behalf of the county. The information received is shared with board members through e-mails, a monthly newsletter, and written reports at meetings and helps the board better understand what resources are available in the

community. Board members and staff also attend community events where critical issues impacting the low-income community are discussed such as the community policing forum, youth and law enforcement forum, food security meetings, and public forums about early childhood issues. The tripartite board has a formal relationship with the Advisory Committee on Consumer Protection and the Human Rights Commission that is reflected in each groups’ enabling legislation. Representatives of each group serve as members of the tripartite board and, along with staff, attend committee and commission meetings and report back to the board. These efforts help in meeting:

**STANDARD 2.2: The department utilizes information gathered from key sectors of the community in assessing needs and resources during the community assessment process or other times. These sectors would include at minimum: community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, public sector and educational institutions.**

Information gathered by the board, especially from the different forums, was used to create reports and advocacy tools that the board shares with the local elected officials to provide them with a sense of what the community is feeling right now, what are their main concerns, and what are the primary issues they are facing. The report also included statistical information such as “Nearly 70,000 County Residents Live in Poverty” and 10.4% of African Americans are unemployed. According to Ms. Goldfine, the forums in particular have helped board members “to connect even more with local elected officials” because they are “arranging meetings with them, specifically discussing the findings of these programs and really highlight the information, make sure that its on their radar.” See *Appendix IV: Poverty Forum Report*. These actions help in meeting:

**STANDARD 3.2: As part of the community assessment, the department collects and includes current data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age, and race/ethnicity for their service area.**

**STANDARD 3.4: The community assessment includes key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of the communities assessed.**

Another new program the board is starting this upcoming fall is the *Leadership Development Institute*. Ms. Goldfine sees this program “in some ways...[as]



a continuation of the poverty forums, and in some ways kind of a separate initiative.” The program will consist of a series of workshops where the participants learn about advocacy skills, and then they will have the opportunity to testify before the County Council. One-third of the tripartite board members are involved in the planning of this new initiative. One benefit the board hopes to derive from this new program is to increase the low-income representation on the board. These actions help in meeting:

**STANDARD 1.1: The department demonstrates low-income individuals’ participation in its activities.**

These activities that the board develops and facilitates also feed into the active role the board plays in the community needs assessment. The staff prepares a report called the *Faces of Poverty* that includes statistics about the low-income community in the county and is constantly updated. The board members are given copies of the report and they use it in developing the community needs assessment, in board testimony at public hearings, and to highlight the needs of the low-income residents by sharing it with partner organizations and elected officials. The report is also used by county leaders to explain the extent of poverty in the county. See *Appendix V: Faces of Poverty Report*. These efforts help in meeting:

**STANDARD 3.3: The department collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data on its geographic service area(s) in the community assessment.**

Lastly, the direct services programs through both the TESS center and the VITA program include customer satisfaction and evaluation forms. Data from these forms is used to compile a report that is reviewed by the board before being submitted to DHHS for the CSBG Information System (IS) Survey. These actions help in meeting:

**STANDARD 1.3: The department has a systematic approach for collecting, analyzing and reporting customer satisfaction data to the tripartite board/advisory body . . .**

## Conflicts of Interest

MCCAA has a conflicts of interest policy that is part of the county’s ethics rules for boards and commissions. All new tripartite board members have an opportunity to review the policy and their receipt of the policy is documented. The county also offers annual ethics

training led by the county attorney’s office for boards and commissions. New board members are required to attend the trainings which cover conflicts of interest and other issues that are part of the county’s rules about ethics. These actions help in meeting:

**STANDARD 5.6: Each tripartite board/advisory body member has signed a conflict of interest policy or comparable local government document, within the past 2 years.**

## Mission Statement

While there is a county-wide mission statement and one for DHHS, MCCA, a division of DHHS, has its own mission statement. Recently, the staff took the lead on crafting a simpler mission statement for the CAA which was brought to the tripartite board for review. The board, desiring to make the mission statement as clear and understandable as possible, recommended language to add and words to use. The combined efforts of staff and the board resulted in taking MCCA’s old mission statement: “To conduct and promote programs that create an awareness of poverty, to promote coordination among agencies and better use of resources, to develop leadership among low-income residents of the County, and to develop community strategies to attack the basic causes of poverty” and streamlining it. Doing so resulted in the following, more succinct version: “To reduce poverty and increase self-sufficiency among County residents through services, partnerships, and advocacy.” These actions help in meeting:

**STANDARD 4.1: Each tripartite board/advisory body has reviewed the department’s mission statement with the past 5 years and assured that: 1. The mission addresses poverty; and 2. The CSBG programs and services are in alignment with the mission**

## Community Action Plan and Strategic Plan

The tripartite board has an opportunity at its annual retreat to review MCCA’s community action plan and add its input. The board also receives regular programmatic reports that include information about specific strategies laid out in the plan.

As to involvement in a strategic plan, DHHS has its own action plan and all the boards and commissions that are a part of DHHS have the opportunity to review that document. DHHS provides for quarterly meetings with



the DHHS Director which the tripartite board leadership participates in to provide feedback. The board also has the opportunity at its retreat to review DHHS's plan and see where the department as a whole is headed. These actions help in meeting:

**STANDARD 6.1:** The department has a strategic plan, or comparable planning document, in place that has been reviewed and accepted by the tripartite board/advisory body within the past 5 years . . .

Ms. Goldfine explained that the board takes “an active role in reviewing these things and providing their input and we like to make sure that they have the opportunity to do it and have enough time to review the documents and put some thought into it.” Further, she elaborated that staff “have tried really hard to make sure that the board is knowledgeable and aware of issues going on at the agency...[which] really helps them to be better advocates, actually, both for the agency and for the different issues they are working on.”

## Programmatic and Financial Reports

The board and its executive committee receive written program reports at every meeting and almost always in-person updates and/or written reports from staff who attend the meeting. The reports include updates on the agency as a whole, as well as Head Start and the contracts for county funding (not from MCCA) that MCCA monitors for the county. The board will make recommendations in response to the reports and many times they have questions about the report. The board always has an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification about anything that seems confusing. These efforts help in meeting:

**STANDARD 5.9:** The department's tripartite board/advisory body receives programmatic reports at each regular board/advisory meeting.

The board also has an opportunity to review financial information and the annual budget. MCCA has a fiscal person on staff in its office who is charged with compiling the data for the financial reports. The board receives updates on MCCA's budget throughout the year. Ms. Goldfine explains that the board's receipt of this information “helps them to monitor how the agency is doing throughout the year.” These actions help in meeting:

**STANDARD 8.7:** The tripartite board/advisory body receives financial reports each regular meeting, for those program(s) the body advises, as allowed by local government procedure.

In addition to providing input on MCCA's budget, the tripartite board also provides input on the county-wide budget. The board leadership and MCCA's executive staff always participate in public hearings on the budget that the County Council holds. Ms. Goldfine explains that the board will “testify about key issues that they want the council to focus on, certain programs that they strongly encourage the county to fund, things like that so they do have an advocacy role in the county's budget as well.” There is also an opportunity, around the time that the budget is being finalized, for the board and MCCA's executive staff to attend an annual meeting with County Executive. These efforts help in meeting:

**STANDARD 8.9:** The tripartite board/advisory body has input as allowed by local governmental procedure into the CSBG budget process.

## CONCLUSION

Even though the decision-making power of MCCA's tripartite board is limited, the board excels at effecting change for the CAA and the community it serves. The ongoing support provided by MCCA staff, especially by the board liaison, is key to helping the board successfully fulfill its responsibilities. The board's active role in understanding the CAA's and community's needs, developing relationships with key stakeholders and regularly advocating on behalf of the CAA and its clients places MCCA on the path to achieving excellence, specifically with regards to the Standards and generally as a sustainable and highly impactful Community Action Agency.



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# APPENDICES

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# APPENDIX I

## MCCAA BOARD ORIENTATION POWERPOINT

# Montgomery County COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD ORIENTATION

Updated: September 2016





# Agenda

Part 1: Overview of the Community Action Agency

Part 2: History of Community Action

Part 3: Board Structure, Functions & Operations

Part 4: Board Member Roles and Relationships

Part 5: Ethics

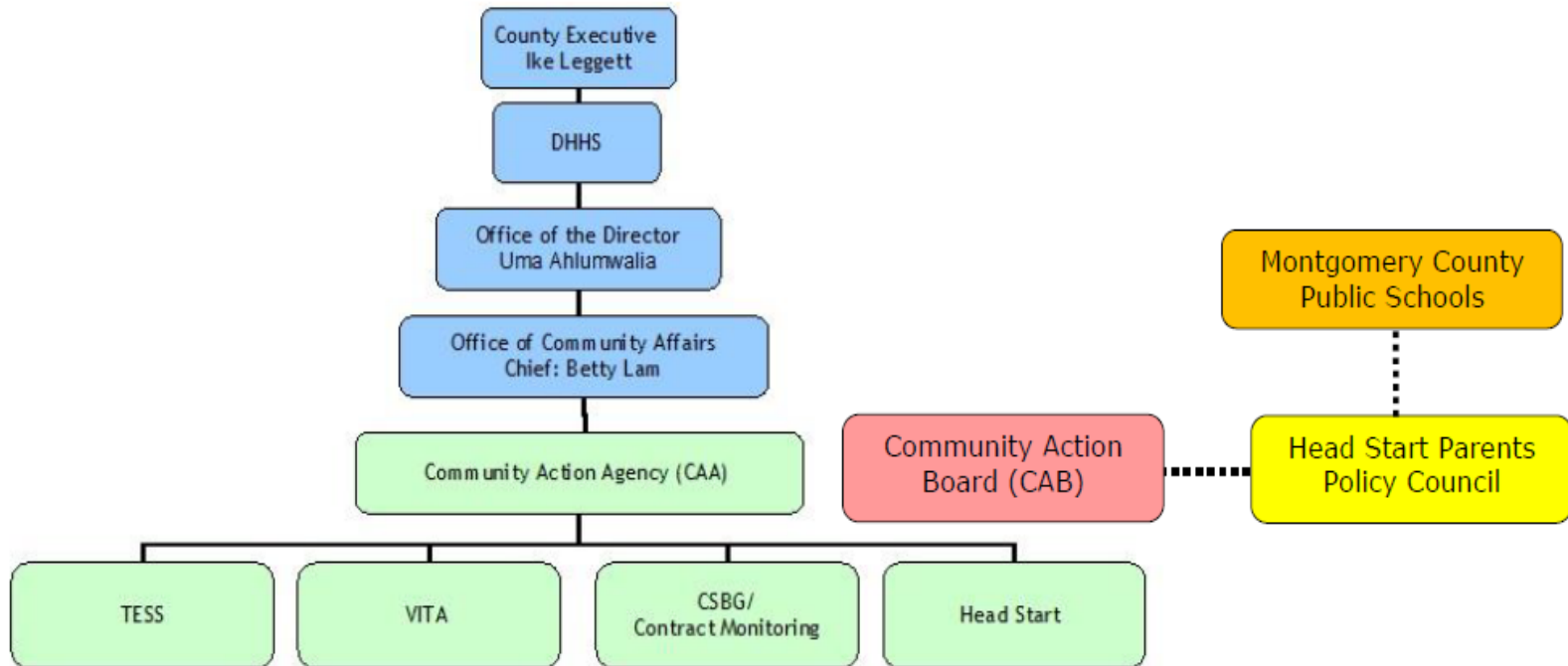


# PART 1: OVERVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

- Manages \$5 million in federal and state Head Start and Community Services Block Grant funding.
- Provides comprehensive early childhood services through Head Start.
- Manages the Takoma-East Silver Spring Center (TESS) Center, which provides direct services and referrals to low-income residents.
- Operates a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Partnership, which provides free tax preparation services and EITC outreach to low-income residents
- Monitors over \$3 million in County grants to nonprofits, which deliver emergency food, clothing, and social services; legal assistance; employment training; and education.

The Community Action Agency is part of Montgomery County Government. The CAA is part of the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Affairs.

Community Action Agency and Board Structural Chart



## The Office of Community Affairs Includes:

- Community Action Agency and Board
- Minority Health Programs (African American Health Program, Asian American Health Initiative, and Latino Health Initiative) and Disparities Reduction
- Language Access Compliance
- Equity Initiative



# CAA Funding Structure

## CSBG Funding and Administration

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:** Federal funding agency that administers the CSBG



**Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development:**  
Administers the CSBG within the state



**Montgomery County DHHS Community Action Agency:** CAA is an agency of the County's Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Affairs.



**Executive Director & Staff – Community Action Board**

# PART 2: HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION

- 1964: The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 was passed as part of President Johnson's "War on Poverty" which created a federal Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO).
- 1967: Amendments were passed that required local government designation of CAA's and created the tri-partite Community Action Board structure that still exists today.
- 1974: Community Services Amendments were passed that replaced the OEO with the Community Services Administration (CSA).

# History of Community Action cont.

- 1981: The Economic Opportunity Act was rescinded and the CSA abolished. It was replaced by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) which delegated responsibility for the administration of community action agencies to the states.
  - Maryland's CSBG is administered through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Division of Neighborhood Revitalization.
- 1993: The Government Performance and Results Act mandated that all Federally-funded programs be able to establish performance goals and measureable results. The 6 national goals were developed, along with a performance-based system of management and accountability called ROMA.

## Montgomery County CAB:

- 1960's: CAB enabling legislation allowed for no more than 39 members and no less than 27.
- 2013: CAB enabling legislation was changed to reduce the size of the Board to 15-24 members.



# PART 3: BOARD STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONS & OPERATIONS

## Tripartite Board Composition

This structure is federally mandated in the operation of  
CSBG-funded programs

- 1/3 – Public Official Members
- 1/3 – Private/Non-Profit Organization Members
- 1/3 – Low-Income Representatives

# Government Representatives/ Public Official Members

- Include officials of the County government/ other public agencies in the County, or voting representatives of the officials.
- CE appoints these members and Council confirms appointments.

# Private Organization Members

- Represent local non-profit organizations.
- The Board may interview applicants in this sector of the Board and make recommendations for who it believes should be appointed to CAB.
- The CE has the final say by making the appointments. The Council confirms the appointments.

# Low-Income Representatives

- The Board may interview applicants in this sector of the Board and make recommendations for who it believes should be appointed to CAB. CE appoints and CC confirms these Board members.
- Low-income representatives **must be democratically elected.**
  - Individuals participating in the selection of a candidate must be at least 18 years old, reside in a specific geographic area of the County, and have income that does not exceed amounts set by Executive Order after considering the recommendations of the Board.



# Term Limits

- In general, the County allows members of its Boards, Committees, and Commissions to serve 2 terms (up to 6 years total).
- The Community Action Board differs, due to its federal guidance for CSBG-funded tripartite governing bodies:
  - Representatives from the public sector do not have term limits
  - Representatives from the private and low-income sectors have a **5 year term limit**.

# Board Meetings

- CAB Meetings: 4th Tuesday of the month at 7 PM at the Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe St, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, Rockville (except July, August & December)
- Executive Committee Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 4 PM at the MidCounty Center, 2424 Reddie Dr, Room 101, Wheaton
- Other committee meetings are scheduled by the committee members.

*\*Mileage and Dependent Care reimbursement is available for all Board meetings and activities.*



# Attendance Policy

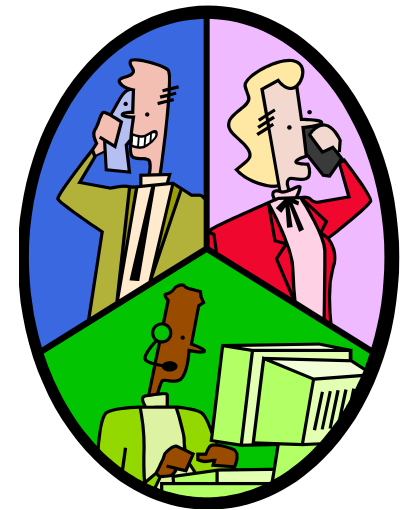
- The County has established an attendance policy for B/C/C members depending on the number of meetings held in a one-year period.
- **Based on CAB's 9 meetings per year, Board members are not allowed to miss 3 Board meetings in a 12-month period.**
- Board members who miss 3 meetings for good cause and wish to remain on the Board, may submit a letter explaining their circumstances requesting an exception.

# Standing Board Committee: **Executive Committee**

- ❑ Includes a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Executive Committee Members at-large. Chair may appoint a Parliamentarian.
- ❑ Formulates general policies, assumes public accountability, acts on behalf of the Board between regular meetings, makes decisions not clearly assigned to other committees.

# Ad Hoc Committees

1. Leadership Development Institute Committee (current Committee)
2. Community Action Awards Committee (Every year January – May)
3. Public Forums Committee
4. Nominating/Recruitment Committee



# PART 4: BOARD MEMBER ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

## Community Action Board Roles

- **Advocacy** – advise County Council and County Executive on the needs of the poor and low-income residents of Montgomery County, advocate on their behalf.
- **Support** – support the efforts of the Community Action agency, strive to ensure the success of the organization.
- **Governance** – review plans & Community Action Agency’s work, “governing” body for the agency and Head Start.

### REMEMBER:

- The Board is advisory.
- The Board is voluntary & part-time.



# CAB Members Should:

- Prepare for and attend all Board meetings.
- Have a thorough knowledge of the CAB bylaws and pertinent documents.
- Ensure that legal requirements are met.

## ■ Relationship with CAA Staff:

- The **Executive Director** is a full-time County employee with leadership responsibility for the CSBG, Head Start, DHHS-assigned grants, VITA Program, and TESS Center
- The **Staff Liaison** supports the Board with work necessary to perform its duties, including research, drafting testimony, submitting reports, program plans, and organizing meeting materials.
- **Contract Monitors** provide oversight for County grants assigned to the CAA. Contract Monitors submit reports to the Board about the status of these grants.
- Other staff members support CAA operations, Head Start, VITA, and the TESS Center.

## ■ Relationship with Funding Agencies (Federal, State & County)

- **Reporting:** The Agency reports the CAA's outcomes for CSBG and Head Start, showing that its goals are being accomplished.
- **Review:** The Board reviews CAA programs and advises the CAA.
- **Governance:** The Board is the governing body for the agency and Head Start.

## ■ Relationship with the Community:

- **Public Education:** Board members work to increase the public's awareness of poverty, the CAA, and Board priorities.
- **Collaboration:** Board members work with other groups to promote the goals and programs of the CAA and CAB.

# PART 5: ETHICS

- Board members are prohibited from participating in matters that involve an economic or fiduciary interest with the Community Action Agency. This includes accepting gifts from persons doing business with the CAA.
- Board members should avoid *ANY* conflict of interest (i.e. voting on decisions from which they may receive possible personal gain). Board members should abstain from any vote that might benefit them or a relative.
- Federal performance standards require that CAB members review and sign a statement acknowledging the County's Ethics guidance.

# Duties of Care and Loyalty

Federal guidance requires CAB members to conduct its duties in a prudent manner, and to work together as a body to ensure the agency meets its responsibilities.

- **Duty of care:** do what an ordinarily prudent person would do in a like position and under similar circumstances; review the Agency's activities and reports; participate in the Board's governance processes
- **Duty of loyalty:** provide undivided allegiance when making decisions affecting the organization, act in the best interest of the organization, and do not use information from the Board for personal gain



# The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.



# APPENDIX II

## BYLAWS AND ENABLING LEGISLATION

## **MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD**

### **BYLAWS**

#### **ARTICLE I - NAME**

**SECTION 1.** This organization will be named the Montgomery County Community Action Board of the Community Action Agency, Department of Health and Human Services. This organization will also be known, and is hereinafter referred to, as the “Community Action Board” or “the Board.”

#### **ARTICLE II - AUTHORITY**

**SECTION 1.** These Bylaws are adopted under the provisions of Section 27 - 42(j) of the Montgomery County Code.

#### **ARTICLE III - COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP**

##### **SECTION 1. *Composition***

- a. The Community Action Board consists of 15 -24 members appointed by the County Executive, subject to confirmation by the County Council.
- b. Every member of the Board who is selected to represent a specific geographic area within the community must reside in that area.
- c. As is permitted by Section 27-41 of the Code, the membership of the Board will be composed of one-third representation from each of the following three sectors: public officials or their representatives; persons of low-income; and private interest groups, including business, labor, faith/religious, health and welfare, education, minority, and civic groups interested in the activities of the Community Action Agency.

**SECTION 2. *Selection of Candidates.*** Candidates for appointment to the Community Action Board will be selected from the following sectors:

- a. Low-income representatives:
  1. Members of the Board who represent low-income persons are appointed by the County Executive, subject to confirmation by the County Council, as stated in Section 27 - 41 (d)(3) of the Code. The Board may recommend candidates to the County Executive. The Board must consider for recommendation candidates selected by persons of low-income residing in the county, provided that the selection is made in a democratic manner approved by the Board and in a manner which seeks to assure the maximum participation of that population.

To participate in the selection process, a person must be at least eighteen (18) years of age, live in the county, and be a person whose income does not exceed the amounts set by Executive order after considering the recommendations of the Board.

2. Low-income representatives need not be low-income persons themselves, but the selection process must assure that they represent low-income persons and that they live within the communities that they represent.

3. One candidate will be selected by the Head Start Parent Policy Council pursuant to the same democratic process that is used to select the other candidates.

4. The Community Action Agency is responsible for the design and implementation of the selection procedures.

5. The Community Action Board will submit to the County Executive a list of recommended candidates for appointment.

6. Upon confirmation by the County Council, each low-income representative will serve either a 1-, 2-, or 3-year term, as designated by the County Executive. The low-income representative may serve no more than five (5) years consecutively and ten (10) years total as required by Article 83B, paragraph 12-101 of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

7. The low-income representatives will represent the various geographic areas of the County . At least one of the low-income representatives may represent participants in the Head Start program.

b. Public Official Members:

1. Officials of the County government and other public agencies in the County, or voting representatives of the officials, will be appointed in compliance with Section 27-41 (d)(1) of the Code subject to confirmation by the County Council.

2. The Council may, in its discretion, recommend a Councilmember or other Council representative to serve on the Board.

c. Private Organization Members:

1. Private groups must be represented by officials or members of community groups that are concerned about eliminating poverty, including business, labor, faith, health, human service, community, and civic groups who reflect the diversity among the County's population, and especially those most impacted by poverty.

2. Private groups that express an interest in participating on the Community Action Board may be asked to designate a representative whom the Board may recommend to the County Executive for appointment to the Board. .

3. The Community Action Board will solicit interest from various private organizations through the use of the media and mailings to encourage participation and broad community involvement in its activities.

4. Upon confirmation by the County Council, each private organization member will serve either a 1-,2-, or 3-year term, as designated by the County Executive. The private organization member may serve no more than five (5) years consecutively and ten (10) years total as required by Article 83B, paragraph 12-101 of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

### **SECTION 3. *Petitions for Membership***

a. Community agencies and representative groups of low-income persons that feel that they are not adequately represented may file a petition for membership. The petition for membership should be addressed to the Community Action Board and should include a written statement of approval by the governing body of that group. In the case of a group which would represent the low-income, the petition along with the recommendation of the Board will be forwarded to the County Executive for his/her consideration. In the case of private organization members, if the membership is approved by the Board, that group would fill the next available vacancy in the private organization sector of the Board membership

### **SECTION 4. *Removal.***

a. Public Officials or their representatives, may be removed from the Board only by the County Executive. Representatives of the low-income and of private organizations may be removed for a lack of attendance at Board meetings as described in Article 7, Section 8.

### **SECTION 5. *Vacancies and Term of Membership***

a. All vacancies on the Board will be filled as soon as it is reasonably possible.

b. There is a vacancy on the Board when a member has been notified of his/her official removal by action of the Board for cause; when a member notifies the Board of his/her resignation, when the designating Officials remove a Public Official, or when a Public Official leaves office.

c. When the seat of a Public Official is vacant, the Board will ask the designating Official to fill the seat. When the seat of a private organization representative or of a low-income representative is vacant, the Board will move to fill the vacancy.

d. The terms of all members representing either low-income residents or public organizations end October 1 of the appropriate year.

**SECTION 6. *Abstention.***

a. Any person sitting on the Board who is a member of or an employee of an organization contracting to perform a component of the Work Plan which is funded by the State of Maryland's Office of Community Services, will abstain from voting on issues relating to their program.

**SECTION 7. *Compensation.***

a. Regular compensation to members of the Board or its Committees is not permitted. However, members may be reimbursed for their child care and travel expenses as permitted under Section 2-145 of the Montgomery County Code.

**SECTION 8. *Executive Secretary.***

a. The Executive Director of the Community Action Agency will appoint from his/her staff, a person to perform those duties of an Executive Secretary as identified in these By-laws and such other duties as he/she determines to be necessary for the effective operation of the Board.

**SECTION 9. *Responsibilities of the Executive Director.***

a. The Executive Director of the Agency will be responsible for the day to day Administration of the Programs recommended by the Board, for the supervision and direction of staff members, and for supporting the Board with work necessary to perform its duties, including the submission to it of reports, program plans, and other decision making documents.

**ARTICLE IV - ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD**

**SECTION 1.** The Board will consist of the following offices and committees:

- a. Officers: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary
- b. Parliamentarian: May be appointed by the Chairperson
- c. Committees: Executive Committee and such Committees as are determined to be necessary for the effective operation of the Board.

**SECTION 2.** The Officers of this Board will have the following duties:

- a. Chairperson will preside at all meetings, will have the right to vote on all

questions, and will represent the Board in public unless others are so designated. The Chairperson will also be Chairperson of the Executive Committee and will be an ex-officio, non-voting member of all Committees.

b. The Vice-Chairperson will assist the Chairperson in the performance of the duties of the office, and will act as Chairperson in case of absence or incapacity of the latter.

c. The Secretary will be responsible for reviewing records of the Board.

**SECTION 3.** Standing Committees of the Board will be as follows:

a. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will consist of the Officers of the Board. "Ex-officio" members and Chairs of other Committees may be non voting members of the Executive Committee, unless they are also elected members of the Executive Committee.

The powers of the Executive Committee will be delegated to it by the Board. The rules governing the operation of the Executive Committee will be those which govern the Board. Between meetings of the Board, the Executive Committee will conduct the routine and ordinary business of the Board, and will formulate plans for presentation to, and action by, the Board. The Executive Committee will report on the actions it takes between meetings at the next meeting of the full Board.

Vacancies which occur on the Executive Committee will be filled by individuals appointed by the Chairperson.

c. Members of all Standing Committees must be members of the Board who have been duly appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council, and should fairly reflect the composition of the Board.

**PROGRAM COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD WILL BE AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 4.** The Board may establish Committees in the area such as Program Development, Evaluation, Education, Employment/Training, Health, Housing, Legal Assistance, Recreation, Transportation and Welfare to identify problems relating to the Community Action Agency constituency in their respective areas. Committees will also observe agencies working in those fields and make proposals and recommendations for action to the Board. At the discretion of the Chairperson, non-members of the Board may be appointed to a Program Committee by the Board Chairperson.

The Board Chairperson may appoint conveners for Committees. Each Committee will elect its own Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from among the Committee members. Either the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson must be a member of the Board.



Members of the Program Committees may include members of public and private agencies in appropriate fields and interested volunteers.

Members of all Committees will reflect the composition of the Board.

**SECTION 5.** Ad Hoc And Advisory Committees. The Chairperson of the Board may establish, subject to approval by the Board, Ad Hoc Committees and Advisory Committees as are needed at any time. The members of these Committees need not be members of the Board.

**SECTION 6.** All Committees will carry out such tasks as are assigned by the Board.

**SECTION 7.** All Board members will hold at least one (1) Committee appointment.

**SECTION 8.** Any Committee member who is absent from three (3) consecutive meetings is deemed to have resigned from the respective Committee.

#### **ARTICLE V - ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**SECTION 1.** The Officers of the Board will consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary who will be elected by the Board from its members in accordance with procedures established by the Board. The terms of the Officers so elected will be for one year or until their successors have qualified and have assumed office.

**SECTION 2.** The Chairperson will appoint a Nominating Committee, subject to approval by the Board, at the regular meeting in February. The nominations reported by said Committees will be included in the notice of the March meeting provided, however, that nothing contained in this Article will operate to prevent the acceptance of nominations from the floor at the regular meeting in March. Individuals must give consent to be eligible for election.

**SECTION 3.** Election of candidates for all offices, including at-large members of the Executive Committee as provided for in these By-laws, will be held at the regular meeting in March. Voting will be by secret ballot - a majority of those present and voting being required to elect.

**SECTION 4.** Officer elected at the meeting in March will serve until their successors are duly elected and qualified under these Bylaws. In the event an office becomes vacant, the Executive Committee will appoint a member to fill the vacancy.

**SECTION 5.** In the event the State Government requires, as a condition of its grant of funds, that a new election be held, such election may be permitted without regard to the provisions of this Article to the contrary.

#### **ARTICLE VI - POWERS OF THE BOARD**

**SECTION 1.** The Community Action Board will have the following powers:

- a. To exercise all powers which the designating Officials choose to delegate to the Community Action Board.
- b. To deliberate upon the following and submit its written recommendations to the designating Officials, before they render their final decision in such cases where the designating officials have not specifically designated the following powers:
  1. Recommendation subject to policies, of major personnel, organization, fiscal and program policies;
  2. Recommendation of all program plans and priorities;
  3. Recommendation of all program proposals;
  4. Recommendation of all evaluation and assessment studies and reports; and
  5. Recommendation of all arrangements for delegating the planning, conducting or evaluating a component of the Work Plan.

**ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS**

**SECTION 1.** Meetings will be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

**SECTION 2.** The Board will meet 9 times a year, on a day and at a time set by the Board prior to the start of the Board year. Additional meetings may be called by the Chairperson or upon petition by ten members, provided that no less than five days notice from the date of mailing will be given in writing. Committees meet at the call of the Chairperson.

**SECTION 3.** The Community Action Board will meet at least once a year with the County Executive for the purpose of reviewing its activities, and to discuss issues of mutual concern.

**SECTION 4.** The Executive Secretary, or an appointed representative, will be responsible for sending out notices of all meetings of the Board. This service will be provided to a Committee Chairperson upon request.

**SECTION 5.** Agendas will be prepared by the Chairperson, Committee Chairperson, Executive Director and Project Director(s). Board members may discuss any issues at the Board meeting whether or not on the Agenda. Other individuals or groups wishing to present items to the Board, are required to give prior notice to the Chairperson for inclusion on the Agenda. This requirement may be waived by the Chairperson.

**SECTION 6.** All actions of the Board will be by the affirmative vote of a majority of those present, taken in sessions open to the public and press, provided that closed meetings may be conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. as codified in paragraphs 10-501, et seq. of the State Government Article of the Maryland Code.

**SECTION 7.** *Quorum.* A majority of the members of the Board is a Quorum for the transaction of business, and a majority vote of those present at any meeting is sufficient for any official action taken by the Board.

**SECTION 8.** *Attendance.* Any Board member who misses more scheduled meetings than the allowed absences, or who misses 3 consecutive meetings, is automatically removed from his/her position on the Board.

**SECTION 9.** *Minutes.* The Board will keep for each meeting, written Minutes which include a record of votes on all motions. Minutes of the previous meeting will be distributed to all members before the next meeting, and will be made available to the public upon request. The Board will also make available to the public upon request, translations of the Minutes in areas where a significant portion of the low-income population does not speak English.

**SECTION 10.** *Proxy Voting.* Voting by proxy is not permitted at meetings of the Board or of its Committees. This prohibition applies equally to all members of the Board.

## **ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS**

**SECTION 1.** These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at any regular meeting, provided that any amendment voted upon will: (1) have been submitted in writing and read at the previous regular meeting, and (2) that notice and text of the proposal to amend these Bylaws have been included in the notice of the meeting at which the amendment is to be voted upon.

## **ARTICLE IX - ADOPTION**

**SECTION 1.** These Bylaws will be effective when approved by a majority of the votes cast at a meeting for such purpose.

## **ADOPTED**

Adopted December 20, 2005, revised and adopted- October 22, 2013.

## **Article IV. Community Action Agency.**

### **Sec. 27-40. Statement of policy.**

It is the public policy of the County to promote programs to create an awareness of poverty; promote coordination among private and public agencies concerned with poverty; promote better use of existing resources and develop leadership among poor citizens to solve community problems; and develop broad community strategies to attack the basic causes of poverty. (1976 L.M.C., ch. 1, § 1; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 28, § 10; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 30, § 15; 1997 L.M.C., ch. 25, §1.)

### **Sec. 27-41. Creation and organization.**

(a) *Established; purpose.* There is a Community Action Agency within the Executive branch of the County government. The Agency creates and maintains community action programs to encourage the use of public and private resources to enable low-income people to become self-sufficient; to reduce poverty in the County; to involve the low-income population in developing and carrying out anti-poverty programs in the County; and to make government more responsive to the needs of low-income people.

(b) *Governing board and staff.* The community action agency consists of:

- (1) the Community Action Board; and
- (2) merit system employees of the County government, including an executive director and other staff necessary to assist the Board. The Board generally directs and supervises the staff.

(c) *Board-Composition; membership.*

- (1) The Community Action Board consists of not more than 39 nor less than 27 members.
- (2) At least one-third of the members must be representatives of low-income persons in the county, and one-third must be public officials or their representatives. The balance of the Board must be composed of officials or members of business, industry, labor, religious, private welfare, private education, minority, civic, and other major private organizations interested in activities of the agency.

(d) *Appointment; term of office.*

(1) Public Official Members. The County Executive must appoint, subject to confirmation by the County Council, officials of the County government and other public agencies in the County, or voting representatives of the officials, to serve on the Board. The Executive must consider for appointment public officials recommended by the Board. The Executive (who is not subject to confirmation), or the Executive's designee, is a public member of the Board. Public-official members, or their representatives:

(A) collectively must comprise at least one-third of the membership of the Board; and

(B) serve at the pleasure of the Executive..

(2) (A) Private Organization Members. The County Executive must appoint, subject to confirmation by the County Council, representatives of the private organizations to serve on the Board. These members serve a 4-year term. In appointing members under this subparagraph, the Executive must consider individuals and organizations recommended by the Board. The terms of private organization members end October 1 of the appropriate year.

(B) Alternates. The County Executive may appoint, subject to confirmation by the County Council, an alternate for each private organization member to vote at meetings when the member is absent. The alternate serves for the same term as the member. The alternate succeeds to the position of the member for the balance of the unexpired term if the member resigns or fails to serve as specified in the bylaws.

(3) Low-Income Representatives.

(A) The County Executive must appoint, subject to confirmation by the County Council, members who represent low-income County residents. In making an appointment under this subparagraph, the Executive must consider the recommendation of the Community Action Board regarding a candidate selected by low-income County residents. Low-income representative members serve a term of 4 years. The Board must recommend to the County Executive an individual to fill any vacancy on the Board. The terms of all members representing low-income residents end October 1 of the appropriate year.

(B) The Board must establish a democratic procedure for low-income residents to select candidates for nomination, each of whom must live in a specific geographic area of the County. Individuals participating in the selection of a candidate must be at least 18 years old, reside in the specific geographic area of the County, and have income that does not exceed the limits established under subparagraph (D).

## Article IV. Community Action Agency

(C) The County Executive may appoint, subject to confirmation by the County Council, an alternate for each low-income member. The alternate may vote at meetings in the absence of the member. The alternate serves for the same term as the member. The alternate must live in the area that the alternate represents. The alternate succeeds to the position of the member for the remainder of the unexpired term if the member resigns or fails to serve as specified in the Agency by-laws. If the alternate succeeds to the member's term, the County Executive may appoint, subject to confirmation by the County Council, a new alternate recommended by the Board.

(D) For each person nominated as a member or alternate member of the Board under this paragraph, the Executive must explain in writing to the Council how the nominee was selected by a democratic method designed to ensure that the nominee is representative of the poor in the area the nominee would represent.

(E) A low-income person, for the purpose of this article, is a person whose income does not exceed amounts established by the County Executive after considering the recommendations of the Board.

(4) Vacancies. Except as provided in paragraph (5), each member of the Board continues to serve after the member's term expires until the Council confirms a successor, who serves the remainder of the member's term.

(5) A private-organization member or alternate selected under paragraph (2) or a low-income representative or alternate selected under paragraph (3) must not serve on the Board for more than 5 consecutive or 10 total years. A person's service on the Board includes service as either a member or alternate member of the Board.

(e) *Officers of the Board.* The officers of the Board are the chair, vice-chair, and secretary, elected annually by the Board according to procedures established by the Board. An alternate must not serve as an officer of the Board.

(f) *Compensation.* The members of the Board serve without compensation.

(g) *Meetings; quorum.* The Board holds meetings at regular intervals at least 6 times per year. A majority of the members of the Board is a quorum for conducting business. The Board may act on a majority vote of those present. The Board or its designated members

should meet from time to time with the County Executive, the County Council, and other public officials to promote the Board's functions.

## Article IV. Community Action Agency

(h) *Nonpartisan nature.* The Community Action Agency must not participate in partisan political activities or sectarian activities. The Agency may advocate on behalf of, or discuss public issues affecting, low-income people. (1976 L.M.C., ch. 1, § 1; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 28, § 10; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 30, § 10; FY 1991 L.M.C., ch. 9, § 1; 1997, L.M.C., ch. 25, §1.)

**Editor's note-**1976 L.M.C., ch. 1, from which this article was derived, became effective September 9, 1975.

### **Sec. 27-42. General powers and duties of Board.**

To accomplish the purposes for which the Community Action Agency is established, the Community Action Board may:

- (a) Make recommendations on the initiation and development of the community action program;
- (b) Recommend to the county executive an annual budget to support the community action program and develop grant applications in support thereof;
- (c) Decide changes in the community action program within the limits of the annual budget;
- (d) Recommend expenditures within available appropriations or budgetary allocations for the community action program;
- (e) Recommend transfers between and within programs within available appropriations or budgetary allocations;
- (f) Give general advice on the administration of projects carried out in implementation of the community action program;
- (g) Accept, use and account for contributions of property and services from organizations or individuals for purposes consistent with the community action program;
- (h) Participate in recruiting and screening candidates for the position of executive director; and recommend a candidate or candidates for executive director; participate in the performance evaluation of or any personnel actions concerning the executive director;
- (i) Recommend the type and number of personnel required to staff the organization and carry out approved projects;



## Article IV. Community Action Agency

- (j) Adopt, amend and repeal bylaws, and adopt regulations under method (2) of section 2A- 15 of this Code governing the manner in which its activities may be conducted and the powers vested in it may be exercised;
- (k) Provide advice and recommendations to the county executive, county council and other public and private agencies;
- (l) Establish communications with the community concerning programs and policies affecting low-income persons;
- (m) Perform all lawful actions as may be necessary or appropriate to achieve the purposes for which the community action agency is established, including the selection of low-income representatives;
- (n) Carry out such operations as the county government may specifically authorize or provide. (1976 L.M.C., ch. 1, § 1; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 28, § 10; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 30, § 15; 1984 L.M.C., ch. 24, § 30; 1997, L.M.C., ch. 25, §1.)

### **Sec. 27-43. Committees and advisers.**

- (a) The Board must establish an executive committee and other subcommittees necessary to assist in performing the functions of the Board.
- (b) The chair of the Board may appoint a person to advise the Board from public agencies not represented on the Board or from interested citizens in the county. An adviser may participate in meetings of the Board and the executive committee but is not entitled to vote. An advisers may serve as a member of a subcommittee and vote at subcommittee meetings. (1976 L.M.C., ch. 1, § 1; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 28, § 10; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 30, § 15; 1997, L.M.C., ch. 25, §1.)

### **Sec. 27-44. Authority of executive director.**

The executive director may, after considering the Community Action Board's recommendations:

- (a) recommend to the Chief Administrative Officer appointment of Agency staff;  
and
- (b) authorize the expenditure of funds. (1976 L.M.C., ch. 1, § 1; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 28, § 10; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 30, § 15; 1997, L.M.C., ch. 25, §1.)

Montgomery County Code  
Chapter 27. Human Rights and Civil Liberties  
Article IV. Community Action Agency

**Sec. 27-45. Reports.**

The Community Action Board annually must report to the County Executive, the County Council, and the public on the Board's activities. (1976 L.M.C., ch. 1, § 1; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 28, § 10; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 30, §15; 1997, L.M.C., ch. 25, §1.)

**Sec. 27-46. Repeal of current resolution.**

Resolution No. 6-1332, dated June 18, 1968, the current resolution establishing the community action committee, is hereby rescinded, and any section therein inconsistent with this article is hereby declared null and of no effect or force. (1976 L.M.C., ch. 1, § 1; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 28, § 10; 1977 L.M.C., ch. 30, § 15.)

Bill No. 10-12  
Concerning: Community Action Board –  
Membership  
Revised: 3/5/2012 Draft No. 1  
Introduced: March 6, 2012  
Enacted: April 17, 2012  
Executive: April 26, 2012  
Effective: July 26, 2012  
Sunset Date: None  
Ch. 7, Laws of Mont. Co. 2012

## COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

---

By: Council President at the Request of the County Executive

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**AN ACT** to:

- (1) alter the size of the Community Action Board; and
- (2) generally amend County law regarding the Community Action Board

By amending

Montgomery County Code  
Chapter 27, Human Rights and Civil Liberties  
Section 27-41

<b>Boldface</b>	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
[Single boldface brackets]	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
[[Double boldface brackets]]	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

*The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:*

1 **Sec. 1. Section 27-41 is amended as follows:**

2 **27-41. Creation and organization.**


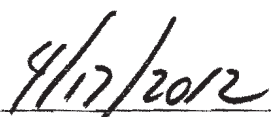
3 \* \* \*

4 (c) *Board—Composition; membership.*

5 (1) The Community Action Board consists of not more than [39]  
6 24 nor less than [27] 15 members.

7 \* \* \*

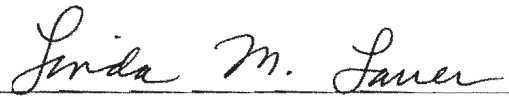
8 *Approved:*

9    
10 \_\_\_\_\_  
11 Roger Berliner, President, County Council Date

12 *Approved:*

13    
14 \_\_\_\_\_  
15 Isiah Leggett, County Executive Date

16 *This is a correct copy of Council action.*

17    
18 \_\_\_\_\_  
19 Linda M. Lauer, Clerk of the Council Date

# APPENDIX III

## BOARD ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS SURVEY

## Community Action Board Performance Standards Survey

Welcome to the Board Survey.

Please answer all 7 questions in this survey. Please select all responses that apply.

Thank you for your participation in this survey. Your feedback is greatly appreciated.

### 1. How does the Agency and the Board include low-income residents in their activities?

- Customer satisfaction surveys
- Participation in public forums
- Participation in programs, training, and events that highlight the needs of low-income residents
- Interviews
- I don't know

Other (please specify)

### 2. Please check any organizations/agencies that the Community Action Agency and Board have partnered with during your time as a Board member.

- Other Boards, Committees, and Commissions
- Other agencies within the County
- Montgomery County Public Schools
- Faith-based organizations
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Local businesses
- Other Community Action Agencies or Community Action Partnerships
- I don't know
- Other (please specify)

**3. How does the Agency determine the needs of the community?**

- Analysis of demographic data
- Community forums
- Using information gathered by partner agencies and other government agencies
- Feedback from customer satisfaction and needs assessment surveys
- Interviews
- Large-scale surveys of community members
- I don't know
- Other (please specify)

**4. Please check any activities in which you have participated that are related to strategic planning.**

- Development of Board goals and priorities
- Development of agency goals and priorities
- Board development work
- Community needs assessments
- Anti-poverty strategies
- I don't know
- Other (please specify)

**5. What training/guidance have you received as a Board member?**

- Orientation session with CAA staff
- Receipt of Board governing materials (bylaws, enabling legislation, meeting minutes, etc.)
- Training/instruction by other Board members
- Guidance from internet resources: the websites of the National Community Action Partnership, the Maryland Community Action Partnership, the County's Department of Health and Human services, CAA, and social media

- Guidance from independent research about Community Action programs
- National Community Action Partnership Conferences or Maryland Community Action Partnership Conferences
- Community Action Program Legal Services (CAPLAW) training
- Head Start Conferences
- Ethics training for members of Boards, Committees, and Commissions
- Online training
- I don't know
- Other (please specify)

**6. Please answer Yes or No. Are you regularly updated about the Agency's Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), which supports the Community Action Agency's direct services, partners/contracts, Head Start program and operations, etc.?**

- Yes
- No

**7. How are you updated on the Agency's progress in achieving its stated outcomes?**

- Updates/reports from the Executive Director of the Agency
- Updates/reports from the Agency's Head Start Program Manager
- Data regarding the provision of services by the Agency
- E-mail correspondence regarding the Board's advocacy and activities
- Other information provided via e-mail and in Board meeting packets (program data, Board testimony, announcements of upcoming events related to the Agency's priorities, etc.)
- I don't know
- Other (please specify)

Done



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Powered by



See how easy it is to create a survey.

# APPENDIX IV

## POVERTY FORUM REPORT



January 28th **Gaithersburg**

**THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD'S  
2015 POVERTY FORUMS**



April 22nd **East County**

In FY15, the Montgomery County Community Action Board hosted two public poverty forums, with the goal of gathering information from low-income residents about the most significant community needs. Members of the community participated in focus groups where they had the opportunity to share their concerns and ideas about four important issues: child care, housing, jobs, and transportation.

- CHILD CARE**
- Implement Universal PreK
  - Increase number and value of vouchers
  - Link transportation with child care providers
  - Improve information/communications about child care options
  - Provide incentives for employers to provide on-site child care
  - Increase number of high-quality, affordable child care providers non-traditional hours
  - Increase before/afterschool care and summer options
  - Provide child care in all schools
  - Change age requirements so that children can start school earlier
  - Keep schools open on holidays/professional days
  - Improve regulation of child care providers

- HOUSING**
- Increase housing options for seniors, disabled and homeless residents
  - Adjust income requirements for housing programs that are too low (vouchers) or too high (MPDU)
  - Improve communications and outreach, including information in other languages
  - Increase the number and value of housing vouchers
  - Increase funding for affordable housing
  - Implement rent control
  - Relax zoning restrictions to increase housing options
  - Ensure safe, clean neighborhoods that promote community
  - Consider innovative ideas such as "tiny houses" and shared housing options

- JOBS**
- Provide job training/education programs for high-demand fields, including on-the-job training
  - Increase access to/training on computer skills
  - Ensure homeless residents have the basic necessities to apply for and maintain employment
  - Support Montgomery College to offer more training and services
  - Post job information at bus stops and Metro stations
  - Develop a phone app with job resources
  - Create a PSA about employment discrimination
  - Increase English classes and provide help to transfer degrees from other countries
  - Strengthen free job counseling/placement services
  - Require paid sick leave and promote flexible schedules

- TRANSPORTATION**
- Schedule more buses in underserved areas, more often, including weekends and non-rush hours, with less waiting time
  - Establish shuttles between HHS offices and non-profits
  - Explore rapid transit/express options and improved regional transportation
  - Provide transportation information in "real time" and in more languages
  - Ensure that bus stops are covered and well-lit
  - Develop free bus service or a circulator project
  - Offer incentives for employers providing transportation services or subsidies for employees
  - Expand low-cost services for singles, such as monthly passes and tax credits
  - Establish walkable communities where people "live, work and play"

# Montgomery County: Just the Facts

NEARLY 70,000 COUNTY RESIDENTS LIVE IN POVERTY

CHILD CARE COSTS IN THE COUNTY ARE THE HIGHEST IN THE STATE

AN AVERAGE SINGLE PARENT WITH TWO CHILDREN IN CARE WOULD HAVE TO PAY OVER 60% OF GROSS INCOME ON CHILD CARE, AFTER RECEIVING A SUBSIDY

ANNUAL INCOME AT COUNTY MINIMUM WAGE = \$17,472

SELF-SUFFICIENCY STANDARD FOR A SINGLE PARENT WITH ONE INFANT AND ONE PRESCHOOLER = \$85,926

RENTERS WHO ARE HOUSING BURDENED= 48%  
HOMEOWNERS WHO ARE HOUSING BURDENED=28.9%

MORE CHILDREN ARE FOOD INSECURE THAN IN ANY OTHER COUNTY IN MARYLAND

2013 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE=6.2%  
AFRICAN AMERICANS=10.4%  
HISPANIC RESIDENTS=8.2%  
LIVING IN POVERTY=25.6%  
DISABLED RESIDENTS=13.7%

RIDE ON USERS WITH ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF LESS THAN \$30,000=55%  
INCOME LESS THAN \$50,000=75%  
SPEAK A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH AT HOME= 43%

## Real Life Stories from the Poverty Forums

When I pick-up food from Manna and other organizations, the trip can take up to 3 hours on public transportation carrying large boxes.

I take 6-10 busses each day and I am concerned about balancing time with my child and working.

I live in East County and work in Laurel. Because there are no buses to Laurel, I spend over \$1000 on cabs getting to and from work.

The Community Action Board appreciates the partnership of agencies and organizations which helped to plan, promote, and host the poverty forums: the City of Gaithersburg, the East County Regional Services Center, East County Citizens Advisory Board, Office of Community Partnerships, Montgomery College, the Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity, and the Montgomery County Conflict Resolution Center.



### The Montgomery County Community Action Agency

Sharon Strauss, Executive Director  
2424 Reedie Drive, Suite 238, Wheaton, MD 20902  
(240)777-1697 (Main)/ (240)777-3295 (fax)  
711 (MD Relay)/ (301)251-4850 (TTY)

Alternative formats of this document are available upon request. Please call the CAA or send e-mail to Leah.Goldfine@montgomerycountymd.gov

# THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION BOARD



**Raise Your Voice!**

## TESS Center Focus Groups

September 25, 2015—Seniors

October 6, 2015—ESOL Class Participants

October 20, 2015—Judy Center Parents and Caretakers



**¡Dé Su Opinión!**

### IMMIGRATION

- Streamline the citizenship and family reunification processes and support immigration reform
- Do not deport people based on minor offenses
- Continue support for citizenship and English classes
- Provide free legal services for citizenship process and ensure that people are aware of these services
- Open more services to undocumented residents, including Food Stamps, MA, and public education

### HEALTH

- Provide dental, vision, mental health, and improved prescription coverage
- Provide training to staff helping residents apply for insurance
- Maintain support for programs providing medical coverage for children and low-income residents
- Increase support for free local clinics
- Form a senior advocacy group to fight for patient rights and better medical care
- Provide insurance for children and pregnant women, regardless of immigration status
- Offer more free health clinics
- Provide more information about health issues: nutrition, exercise, weight control, and Diabetes

### CHILD CARE/EDUCATION

- Raise awareness of and reduce bureaucracy of child care voucher applications
- Increase income limits for child care and other supports to assist more families who are struggling but do not fall below the income cut-off
- Increase support for organizations like TESS and Judy Center that assist people applying for vouchers
- Address space limitations of Head Start/PreK in high-need areas so children do not need to travel
- Continue full support for ESOL programs, which are critical for children learning English
- Support ESOL programs for parents, which are offered at many schools
- Provide programs to prevent children from losing their native language

### HOUSING

- Establish more affordable and accessible housing options and serve those most in-need first
- Improve communications about housing programs and assist with applications
- Adjust income guidelines so that more people are eligible for programs
- Inspect rental properties more frequently to ensure safe and sanitary living conditions
- Improve complaint process for landlord-tenant issues so that residents' complaints are not ignored and landlords make necessary repairs and ensure safety
- Provide a path to citizenship—documented residents have more housing options
- Simplify the mortgage application process

### TRANSPORTATION

- Improve public transportation accessibility, especially on the weekends
- Provide free public transportation for seniors, disabled residents, and students, and reduced rates for shorter routes
- Increase the number of buses and add more direct routes
- Improve transportation for medical appointments
- Improve Metro Access so that it is more reliable

### EMPLOYMENT

- Continue support for English classes, as language skills increase employment opportunities
- Provide more technology training so that low-income residents will be able to compete for more jobs
- Provide a path to citizenship—documented workers have more protections in the labor market
- Provide more information about employment rights/discrimination and ensure that labor laws are enforced and employees are not taken advantage of
- Improve communications about job openings
- Require employers to offer sick leave, medical coverage, and other benefits
- Allow undocumented residents who pay taxes to receive the Earned Income Tax Credit
- Provide assistance with online job applications
- Provide more and improve communications about career development/education programs

### COMMUNICATIONS/OUTREACH

- Improve language access (especially Spanish and Amharic) for medical services, transportation, and County services and enhance communications for recent immigrant communities
- Send more information for seniors through the mail
- Improve communications from Consumer Protection, Rental Assistance, HOC, and Landlord-Tenant Affairs
- Create a public education campaign about fraud and scams targeting seniors
- Increase communications, including social media, to raise awareness of available services and programs, especially programs for qualifying low-income parents
- Create a community newspaper
- Support programs like the TESS Center that provide critical information to residents
- Address discrimination based on language, ethnicity or race by improving communications about basic rights
- Add staff to programs and provide customer service training to better serve the public
- Support programs for recent immigrants to learn about American culture

### FINANCE/BANKING

- Reduce banking fees
- Provide more information about banking options
- Improve access to credit cards so that low-income people can qualify and build good credit
- Open community banks and credit unions with low interest rates

### SERVICES

- Provide free computer courses in Spanish and other languages at libraries and other venues
- Offer more community events where residents can learn about services and receive information
- Offer more senior social programs to reduce isolation
- Increase police presence in communities, especially at night, and encourage people to report crime
- Enhance street lighting and assist residents in making their homes more secure and safe
- Offer more senior discounts for County services
- Offer daytime ESOL classes for low-income adults

## ***Did You Know?* In FY15, the TESS Center:**

\*Served over **8,900** walk-in clients in FY15      \*Provided **1,355** free summer meals to children

\*Referred **380** clients to MANNA for emergency food support

\*Provided free legal services to **533** residents through the Pro Bono Clinic

## Feedback from the TESS Center Staff

- Undocumented clients face numerous obstacles: they cannot obtain work permits, employers take advantage of them, the citizenship process is long and expensive, they are ineligible for many emergency services, they cannot receive housing assistance and are therefore more likely to live in substandard housing.
- Space is very limited for many programs with wrap-around services, such as Families Foremost, Judy Center, and Montgomery Housing Partnership.
- While case managers are responsive to client needs, caseloads are so high that it may take some time to respond and process requests.
- While many training and educational programs can help residents achieve self-sufficiency, clients with child care and work responsibilities are struggling to make ends meet and cannot commit to these programs.
- There is a strong need for more/better dental coverage, vision coverage, and better prescription coverage.
- Fees for many services and programs are too high; guidelines should be reviewed to ensure that those most in need are reached.
- Child Care Vouchers pose many challenges: child support requirement is problematic for many clients, income eligibility is too low, and the fact that subsidies end when parents find work is difficult for low-income parents.
- Head Start/PreK part-day and part-year programs' service hours are too short for working parents. Children and families served by PreK require the same level of high-quality services which Head Start offers. Application requirements for PreK and Head Start can be daunting for parents.
- Affordable, safe, and sanitary housing is very difficult to find; HOC programs have many restrictions and long waiting lists.
- Program guidelines should take into account the actual cost of living in the County, which has increased drastically.
- There is a lack of preventative services to stop people from becoming homeless or facing other crisis situations.
- Seniors and parents with young children struggle with transportation; even basic tasks that require carrying packages or going to a doctor in another part of the County pose a challenge.

### About the TESS Center

The Community Action Agency's TESS Center is a walk-in site serving Montgomery County residents. Its information and referrals, social service assistance, interpretation and translation, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and legal services are delivered in partnership with nonprofits, public agencies, and community groups. As one of the Neighborhood Opportunity Network sites in the community, the TESS Center aims to bring County programs and services to residents in a convenient, easy to find location.

### THANK YOU!

The Community Action Board greatly appreciates the partnership of agencies and organizations which helped to plan, promote, and host the focus groups at TESS: IMPACT Silver Spring, the Judy Center, Aging and Disability Services, and the Gilchrist Center for Cultural Diversity.

#### The Montgomery County Community Action Agency

Sharon Strauss, Executive Director  
2424 Reedie Drive, Suite 238, Wheaton, MD 20902  
240-777-1697 (main)/ 240-777-3295 (fax)/ MD Relay 711 (TTY Users)

#### The TESS Center

Maureen Larenas, Manager  
8513 Piney Branch Road, Silver Spring, MD 20901  
240-773-8260 (main)/ 240-565-5713 (fax)/ MD Relay 711 (TTY Users)



To request this information in alternative formats, please call 240-777-1697 or e-mail [Leah.Goldfine@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:Leah.Goldfine@montgomerycountymd.gov) TTY users, please call MD Relay (711).



# APPENDIX V

## FACES OF POVERTY REPORT





# Faces of Poverty 2016 Montgomery County MD

The Montgomery County Community Action Board

The Community Action Board (CAB), the County's federally designated antipoverty group, advises the County about poverty and the needs of low-income people. CAB provides oversight for the Community Action Agency's federal grants and the agency's services.

## Montgomery County at a Glance

- Over 1 million residents (ACS)
- The highest population density in the state behind Baltimore City (MDP)
- Between 2010 and 2013, the County saw the largest increase in overall population in Maryland (an increase of 44,900 residents) (MDP)

## Demographics

- The County's population is 17.9% African American, 14.7% Asian, 18.7% Hispanic or Latino, and 45.8% white (non-Hispanic) (ACS)
- 40% of County residents speak a language other than English at home and 33% of residents were born outside of the United States (ACS)
- Over 130,000 County residents are Limited English Proficient (CountyStat)
- 39% of the of the 920,418 Maryland residents who speak a foreign language (361,845 people) live in Montgomery County (CountyStat)





## Poverty in Montgomery County

- 7% of the population (71,635 people) live below the Federal Poverty Line (ACS)
- 18.7% of the population (191,252 people) live below 200% of the Federal Poverty Line (ACS)
- 13.9% of female-headed households and 20.7% of female-headed households with related children under age 18 live in poverty (ACS)
- Female-headed households comprise 60.4% of households with children under 18, living in poverty (ACS)
- 52.3% of residents living in poverty speak a language other than English at home (ACS)
- 45.6% of individuals living in poverty were born outside of the United States (ACS)
- In January 2016, the Federal Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) caseload in the County was 880 (County DHHS)

## Children

- The poverty rate for children in the County is 8.2% or 19,757 children (ACS)
- 32,433 children under age 6 (41.7%) live below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (ACS)
- 54,099 children in Montgomery County Public Schools (35.05% of all students) participate in the Free and Reduced Meals Program (MSDE)
- In 2014, there were 8,607 uninsured children in the County (KCDC)

## Seniors

- By 2020, the senior population (age 60+) will increase by 74% in the County (Aging)
- 26.8% of seniors (age 65+) live below 300% of the poverty level (ACS)
- In 2014, 57.5% of senior renters (age 60+) were “housing burdened” – spending 35% or more on income on housing costs (ACS)



### Self-Sufficiency in Montgomery County

- According to the 2012 Self- Sufficiency Standard, it costs about \$83,000 for a four-person family with two working parents, a preschooler and a school-age child, to afford the basic necessities in the County, **four times** the Federal Poverty Level (SSS)
- The Self-Sufficiency wage is higher in Montgomery County than in large metropolitan areas such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia (SSS)

### Poverty vs. Self-Sufficiency

- The Federal Poverty guidelines are based on the total number of people in a household, regardless of age, while the Self-Sufficiency Standard takes into account the number of adults and children in a household and the age of the household members (USDHHS and SSS)
- The Federal Poverty Level is the same for all 48 contiguous states. The Self-Sufficiency Standard is based on the cost of living in a specific area (USDHHS and SSS)

	1 single adult (annual household income)	1 adult + 1 infant + 1 preschooler (annual household income)	2 adults + 1 preschooler + 1 school-age child (annual household income)	2 adults + 1 infant + 1 preschooler + 1 teenager (annual household income)
<b>2016 Federal Poverty Level</b>	\$11,880	\$20,160	\$24,300	\$28,440
<b>New County Minimum Wage*</b>	\$22,360	\$22,360	\$44,720	\$44,720
<b>2012 Self-Sufficiency Standard</b>	\$36,060	\$85,926	\$82,877	\$100,725

\*The County's minimum wage increased to \$10.75/hour on July 1, 2016.



### **Earned Income Tax Credit**

- 55,526 County households received the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit in TY 2013 (Brookings)
- The median adjusted gross income of EITC eligible households in Montgomery County is \$12,595 (Brookings)
- 121,886 residents live in EITC eligible households, including 49,403 children (Brookings)

### **Household Wealth & Financial Access**

- Asset poverty: 16.2% of Montgomery households were without sufficient net worth to subsist at the poverty level for three months in the absence of income (CFED)
- Liquid Asset Poverty: 27.7% of households were without sufficient liquid assets to subsist at the poverty level for three months in the absence of income (CFED)
- Unbanked: 4.5% of households had neither a checking nor savings account (CFED)
- Underbanked: 16.8% of households with a checking and/or a savings account used alternative financial services in the past 12 months (CFED)

### **Food/Hunger**

- 7.9% of the County's population (77,780 people) is food insecure (FA)
- More children in Montgomery County (15.8% or 37,150 children) are food insecure than any other County in the state (FA)
- In February 2015, 74,421 County residents participated in the Food Supplement Program (a five-year increase of 73.7%) (MHS)
- In January 2016, the County's Food Stamp caseload was 32,788 (County DHHS)



## Housing

- Housing burden:
  - 21.8% of homeowners spend 35% or more of their income on housing (ASC)
  - 39.7% of renters spend 35% or more of their income on housing (ASC)
  - 82.4% of County households with incomes less than \$35,000 spend more than 30% of their income on housing alone (ASC)
- According to the 2016 Point-In-Time Survey, there were 981 “literally homeless” people in the County (MWCOG)
- In December 2015:
  - 1,645 households received a Rental Assistance Program subsidy and 3,872 applicants were on the program’s waiting list (a 15-month high) (County DHHS)
  - 235 households received Emergency Services grants to prevent eviction or homelessness (County DHHS)
  - 32 families served in family shelters and 20 families remained on the waiting list for a shelter placement (County DHHS)

## Child Care

- Child care costs in the County are the highest in the state.
  - Average annual cost for Family Child Care Programs: \$13,007 (MDFN)
  - Average annual cost for Child Care Centers: \$13,596 (MDFN)
- For a family of four with two parents, one infant and one preschooler, 21.3% of median income is spent on child care costs (MDFN)
- Parents using family day care and child care centers spend over 20% of income on child care fees alone (MDFN)
- There are 44 *potentially eligible* children for every child receiving a subsidy through the Working Parents Assistance Program (OLO)
- A single mother with the median income for that family type of \$58,000 would need to spend over 29% of income on full-time care in a center for an infant and 50% of income for care for both an infant and a preschooler (OLO)

## References

- 2014 American Community Survey (ACS) <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>
- Brookings Earned Income Tax Credit Information (Brookings) <http://www.brookings.edu/>
- Corporation for Economic Development's Assets and Opportunities Local Data Center (CFED) <http://assetsandopportunity.org/localdata/>
- Feeding America (FA) <http://feedingamerica.org/>
- Kids Count Data Center (KCDC) <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/4649-uninsured-children?loc=22&loct=5#detailed/5/3300-3323/false/869/any/10788,10789>
- Montgomery County Stat (CountyStat) <https://reports.data.montgomerycountymd.gov/countystat>
- Maryland Department of Planning *2013 Statistical Handbook* (MDP) [http://www.mdp.state.md.us/msdc/md\\_statistical\\_handbook13.pdf](http://www.mdp.state.md.us/msdc/md_statistical_handbook13.pdf)
- Maryland Family Network *Child Care Demographics 2016 for Montgomery County* (MDFN) <http://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Montgomery-1.pdf>
- Maryland Hunger Solutions (MHS) <http://www.mdhungersolutions.org/>
- Maryland Self-Sufficiency Standard (SSS) <http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/docs/Maryland2012.pdf>
- Maryland State Department of Education Free and Reduced Meals Participation Rates SY 14-15 (MSDE) <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/schoolnutrition/docs/Free+and+Reduced-Price+Meal+Data.html>
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Report on 2016 Point-In-Time Count (MWCOG) <https://www.mwcoq.org/documents/2016/05/11/homelessness-in-metropolitan-washington-results-and-analysis-from-the-annual-point-in-time-pit-count-of-homeless-persons-homelessness/>
- Montgomery County Commission on Aging Annual Report 2014 (Aging) [http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/2014%20ANNUAL%20REPORT%20\(4\)03172015.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/2014%20ANNUAL%20REPORT%20(4)03172015.pdf)
- Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Statistics (County DHHS) <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/hhs/>
- Office of Legislative Oversight Report, *Child Care in Montgomery County* (OLO) [http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2015\\_Reports/Report2016-3ChildCare.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2015_Reports/Report2016-3ChildCare.pdf)
- United States Department of Health and Human Services Federal Poverty Guidelines (USDHHS) <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>



**The Montgomery County Community Action Agency**  
Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Affairs

The Montgomery County Community Action Agency seeks to reduce poverty and improve the self-sufficiency of low-income residents. Community Action manages \$5 million in federal and state Head Start and Community Services Block Grant funding. The agency provides comprehensive early childhood services through Head Start, delivers social services at the Takoma-East Silver Spring Center (TESS), and increases asset development through its Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) partnership. Throughout the County, nonprofits with contracts monitored by CAA staff – totaling over \$3.3 million – deliver emergency food, clothing, and social services; legal assistance; employment training; and education to Montgomery County's diverse low-income residents and facilitate community engagement.

MidCounty Regional Center  
2424 Reddie Drive, Suite 238  
Wheaton, MD 20902  
Phone: 240-777-1697  
Fax: 240-777-3295

Takoma-East Silver Spring Center  
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