



ADMINISTRATION FOR  
**CHILDREN & FAMILIES**

Office of Community Services | 330 C Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20201  
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## Social Services Block Grant

### Dear Colleague Letter

**DCL#:** SSBG-DCL-2022-04  
**DATE:** March 2, 2022  
**TO:** Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) Territory Consolidated Recipients  
**SUBJECT:** Territories Notice of Account and Policy Streamline Adjustments  
**ATTACHMENT(S):** N/A

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Dear Colleagues,

The purpose of this message is to provide background information on the legislative and procedural formation of the Consolidated Block Grant (CBG), share an update on Notice of Award (NOA) for the first and second quarter allocations in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022, and alert CBG territories to an upcoming webinar.

#### Consolidated Block Grant (CBG) Background

In accordance with the Omnibus Territories Act, Public Law 95-134, Section X of Title XX of the Social Security Act, Public Law 97-81, and 45 Code of Federal Regulations Part 97.10-.17, the U.S. insular areas (hereafter, territories) of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands may consolidate up to 22 grant programs to form the Consolidated Block Grant (CBG). Territories may operate the CBG under the Social Services Block Grant authority, meeting the goals set in this flexible grant. CBG authority permits the territories to submit, as regular SSBG grant recipients, a single intended use report to receive CBG funding in lieu of individual reports for each program included in the consolidated grant. CBG grant recipients must submit a post-expenditure report, as well. There is no match requirement in the CBG, or maintenance of effort – even if such may be required in programs consolidated. Award formulas are based on the amounts set in the original legislation.

## Discussion

A summer 2021 review of administration of the Consolidated Block Grant by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) found that account measures for the CBG needed to be further streamlined for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2022 so that the consolidation of grant distribution provide each territory receive their award in one account per territory, rather than disbursed across several individual program accounts.

The review also noted that policy declarations for the SSBG needed to be more distinct about the Consolidated Block Grant for territories as a unique enterprise associated with the SSBG. As such, the federal agency implemented in fiscal year 2022 adjustments to existing policies to more clearly outline CBG governing policies, laws, and regulations.

The adjustments include the following:

- Revised SSBG Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) at 93.667 to reference the Consolidated Block Grant, the authorizing legislation in the Omnibus Territories Act, as amended, and Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 creating SSBG, and the associated rules at 45 Code of Federal Regulations Part 97.
- Updated SSBG/CBG Supplemental Terms and Conditions as guidance to auditors reviewing grant awards for territories.
- Established a new, distinct payment code for the CBG when territories access their grant awards in the Payment Management System, with SSBG beginning with **SOSR**, and territories consolidating now with an access code of **SOSC**.
- Coordinated the deposit of all program resources requested by the territories for consolidated awards into one account for each territory, instead of separate accounts.

## Award Delay and Technical Challenges

The mandate that SSBG reconcile and distinguish its administration of the Consolidated Block Grant was made in the summer of 2021. While HHS immediately began making the adjustments for program operations, our offices were impeded by the fact that the mandate came during the closeout of fiscal year 2021 awards. Ultimately, our offices worked to rectify the matters presented across several systems and policies, to make all policy adjustments by December 24, 2021. However, the payment systems adjustments to streamline and reconfigure operations for payment have presented technical challenges with our capability to fully award resources for the territories across community living, community strengthening and child welfare programs. These technical challenges resulted in a delay in drawdown of the FFY 2022 CBG award.

OCS is pleased to report that drawdown issues with our Payment Management System have been resolved at this time. Territories should be able to successfully drawdown funds from the Payment Management System. HHS is working daily to ensure the system remains fully operational as intended.

We remain committed to optimal program operations and regret the delays in the FFY 2022 CBG award.

### **Upcoming Webinar**

March 10, 2022, at 1:30 pm EST, OCS will host a webinar to provide further context regarding the CBG streamlining effort, share a proposal for the availability of full and unrestricted funds, and answer any questions that may arise. Consolidated territories should expect an invitation to participate in this webinar by Friday, March 4.

As always, we appreciate your hard work and dedication to the social services and activities supported with SSBG/CBG resources. Thank you for your continued partnership and cooperation with the Office of Community Services (OCS), the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as we work together to provide essential social services that aim to reduce poverty and promote self-sufficiency for vulnerable children, individuals, families, and communities.

Thank you for your attention to these matters. OCS looks forward to continuing to provide high-quality services to OCS grantees.

/s/

Yolanda J. Butler, PhD

Lead

Social Services Block Grant

Office of Community Services