

Appendix 4

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX AND CSBG ACCOUNTABILITY

What is the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI)?

The ACSI is the only national cross-industry/government measure of customer satisfaction in the United States. Since 1994, the ACSI has measured satisfaction, its causes, and its effects for seven economic sectors, 41 industries, and more than 200 of the largest U.S. corporations. The ACSI has been used to measure hundreds of services and programs of Federal Government agencies since 1999, ranging from retirement benefits and tax returns to national parks and Federal grants.

The ACSI is co-sponsored by the American Society of Quality (ASQ), the University of Michigan Business School, and the CFI Group, a global company based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, which is the entity that administers the survey for Federal agencies. Read more on the ACSI Website: www.theacsi.org.

Why did OCS select the ACSI methodology as the survey tool for collecting data about performance on the CSBG Accountability Measures?

The ACSI provides an independent, cost-effective, highly valid and reliable measure of satisfaction. It is considered the “gold standard” for customer satisfaction measurement. Use of the ACSI will allow for the collection of consistent, uniform information from States and eligible entities across the country, and will provide OCS and the States with actionable insights to improve their customer experience and boost program results.

As the CFI Group administers the survey, neither OCS nor the States will be required to handle any of the administrative details of the survey except to develop the survey instruments. OCS has relied on a working group of State and eligible entities to develop survey questions for CSBG.

What is the history of the ACSI and OCS?

In 2009, as part of an effort to maximize program performance, OCS’ Assets for Independence (AFI) program conducted its first ACSI survey of grantees to assess satisfaction with the services OCS provided to grantee organizations. Follow-on surveys for AFI were conducted in 2011 and 2015.

In 2012, OCS used the ACSI survey to measure the experience of CSBG and Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) grantees. OCS tailored the survey to address five critical areas of grantee satisfaction: grants requirements and reporting; accessing grant funds; technical assistance provided by OCS staff; training provided by OCS staff; and OCS-funded technical assistance. Based on feedback from the survey, OCS CSBG and LIHEAP program offices undertook efforts to improve in these areas. These efforts are ongoing. OCS remains committed to improving the services and tools it provides States so States, in turn, can support their local agencies in achieving the goals of CSBG and LIHEAP.

How does OCS plan to use the ACSI for CSBG in the future?

OCS plans to use the ACSI to conduct nationally administered surveys of CSBG States and eligible entities as part of the enhanced CSBG accountability and performance management system. In fall 2015, OCS will use the ACSI for a national survey to obtain feedback from CSBG eligible entities about services provided by the State CSBG Lead Agencies. In particular, the survey will focus on critical performance areas identified in the new State accountability measures. The survey will also obtain information about eligible entity training and technical assistance needs.

OCS also plans to use the ACSI for a second national survey of the CSBG State Lead Agencies to assess satisfaction with CSBG services provided by OCS. The State survey will focus on performance areas described in the new Federal accountability measures, as well as collect information about State training and technical assistance needs.

How will the survey results be used?

OCS and the States will use the results from the surveys to learn about performance, as well as training and technical assistance needs. The ACSI “cause and effect” model not only highlights program strengths and weaknesses, but also identifies specific improvements that will have the greatest impact on customer service. Each State will use the survey information to identify areas and strategies for improvement, which the State will describe in its next State plan. OCS will likewise use the survey to identify actions to improve service delivery to the States.

The purpose of using this national survey tool is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the States and OCS. The survey results will not be used to make policy or funding decisions.

Will OCS publish survey results?

The survey results are for internal use and are meant to assist the CSBG Network in improving its efforts on behalf of low-income families and communities. OCS will not publish any specific state survey results on the OCS website.

By the end of the calendar year during which the survey is conducted, OCS will provide information about individual State survey results to each State. We expect the States to inform their eligible entities of the results of their survey. OCS will also provide to the States information about the results of the Federal survey and subsequent planned actions to improve services, including training and technical assistance.

Which State Accountability Measures would the ACSI survey measure?

The ACSI will be used to collect information from the eligible entities on the following State accountability measures. (See Appendix 2 for the complete list of State measures.)

Development of the State Plan

- 1Sb. Using data from a nationally administered survey¹ of eligible entities, and feedback from OCS and other sources, the State adjusted its plan (in the next State plan submission), as appropriate, to improve performance regarding:
- i. the extent of eligible entity participation in developing the State plan; and
 - ii. how well the State plan reflects the input of the eligible entities.²

Implementation of the State Plan

Distribution of Funds

- 2Sb. Using data from a nationally administered survey³ of eligible entities and feedback from OCS and other sources, the State adjusted its plan (in the next State plan submission), as appropriate, to improve the quality of grant and/or contract administration.

Use of Remainder/Discretionary Funds

- 3Sb. Using data from a nationally administered survey⁴ of eligible entities, and feedback from OCS and other sources, the State adjusted its plan (in the next State plan submission), as appropriate, to improve its use of remainder/discretionary funds.
- 3Sd. Using data from a nationally administered survey⁵ of eligible entities, and feedback from OCS and other sources, the State adjusted its plan (in the next State plan submission), as appropriate, to improve the training and technical assistance provided to the eligible entities.

Grantee Monitoring and Corrective Action

- 4Sb. Using data from a nationally administered survey⁶ of eligible entities, and feedback from OCS and other sources, the State adjusted its plan (in the next State plan submission), as appropriate, to improve its monitoring activities.

State Linkages and Communication

- 7Sb. Using data from a nationally administered survey⁷ of eligible entities, and feedback from OCS and other sources, the State adjusted its plan (in the next State plan submission), as appropriate, to improve its communication efforts.

Which Federal Accountability Measures would the ACSI survey measure?

The ACSI will be used to collect information from the States about the following Federal accountability measures. (See Appendix 3 for the complete list of Federal measures.)

¹ OCS will use the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), OMB-approved methodology.

² State Accountability Measures 1Sb, 2Sb, 3Sb, 3Sd, 4Sb, and 7Sb are measures of eligible entity satisfaction with the state's performance of critical elements of the State plan.

³ OCS will use the ACSI, OMB-approved methodology.

⁴ OCS will use the ACSI, OMB-approved methodology.

⁵ OCS will use the ACSI, OMB-approved methodology.

⁶ OCS will use the ACSI, OMB-approved methodology.

⁷ OCS will use the ACSI, OMB-approved methodology.

State Plan Review and Acceptance

1Fb. Using data from a nationally administered survey⁸ of the States and feedback from other sources, OCS made organizational adjustments, as appropriate, to improve performance regarding its grant management services.

Grant Monitoring and Corrective Action

3Fd. Using data from a nationally administered survey⁹ of the States and feedback from other sources, OCS made organizational adjustments, as appropriate, to improve its grant monitoring activities.

Data Collection, Analysis and Reporting

4Fb. Using data from a nationally administered survey¹⁰ of the States and feedback from other sources, OCS made organizational adjustments, as appropriate, to improve the quality of feedback provided by OCS about the State reports.

Training and Technical Assistance

6Fc. Using data from a nationally administered survey¹¹ of the States and feedback from other sources, OCS made organizational adjustments, as appropriate, to improve training and technical assistance provided by contractors and OCS staff.

Communications

7Fb. Using data from a nationally administered survey¹² of the States and feedback from other sources, OCS made organizational adjustments, as appropriate, to improve performance its communication efforts.

Grantee Satisfaction

8F. By 20xx, OCS achieves an overall satisfaction score of “x” (TBD).¹³

⁸ OCS will use the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), OMB-approved methodology.

⁹ OCS will use the ACSI, OMB-approved methodology.

¹⁰ OCS will use the ACSI, OMB-approved methodology.

¹¹ OCS will use the ACSI, OMB-approved methodology.

¹² OCS will use the ACSI, OMB-approved methodology.

¹³ OCS will use the ACSI. The targets will be determined based on the results of the FY 2016 ACSI survey results.