

## Public Agency Agreements Tool

Partnerships with outside agencies and organizations are vital to the success of Community Economic Development (CED) and Job Opportunities for Low-Income Individuals (JOLI) projects. Specifically, applicants are required to seek active partnerships with public assistance agencies and other agencies responsible for administering child support enforcement, TANF, and employment education and training programs. Applicants will be awarded up to 10 points for demonstrating public support (see the CED Funding Opportunity Announcement for further details). One way of documenting public support is for applicants to include Public Agency Agreements as part of the grant application. The agreements for public agency partners should detail explicit strategies for collaborations including a clear articulation of the contribution the agency will make to the project.

There is no prescribed format for acceptable Public Agency Agreements – an agreement between an applicant and a public agency that will provide referrals might look very different from an agreement between an applicant and an agency that may provide employment training – though typically Public Agency Agreements take the form of memorandums of understanding (MOUs), partnership agreements, or letter of commitments, which are **signed and dated** by the applicant and the appropriate public agency staff. This tool outlines essential components of and tips for strong agreements with public agency partners and provides sample Public Agency Agreements.

Please note this tool is designed to aid you in preparing and submitting your application, but does not replace or take the place of the information and requirements presented in this year's Funding Opportunity Announcement. This year's Funding Opportunity Announcement should be reviewed closely and all required information should be provided in your application.

### Tips for Public Agency Agreements

**Written Public Agency Agreements Are Important For a Strong Application.** Written Public Agency Agreements for public agency partner(s) are a very important part of a strong application in demonstrating Public Support. Strong written Public Agency Agreements must not only be referred to in the application, but the actual Public Agency Agreement should be included in the application as an attachments or appendices. See Section V.1. of the Funding Opportunity Announcement for further details.

**Partnerships Must Be Verified With a Written Agreement.** The most common mistake applicants make is stating a partnership exists without providing a signed and dated written agreement. It is not sufficient for applicants to state that partnerships exist. Applicants must include documentation in the form of MOUs, partnership agreements, and/or letters of commitment signed and dated by the applicant and public agency staff with signature authority.

**Utilize Existing Partnerships.** There is no need to seek out new partnerships if your organization already has functional, established relationships in place. Often, fulfilling this requirement is a matter of formalizing or expanding existing relationships.

**Acceptable Forms of Documentation.** The best forms of documentation of partnerships are MOUs, partnership agreements, and/or letters of commitment signed and dated by the applicant and public agency staff with signature authority.

**Important Components of Public Agency Agreements.** Public Agency Agreements can be structured in a variety of ways, but should generally include the following elements:

- Parties to the agreement
- Description of the project, with clear roles for each partner in the project
- A Scope of Work for each partner that includes **specific** activities, duties and responsibilities to be performed by each partner
- Duration of agreement
- Records and Reporting requirements (if applicable)
- Remuneration (if applicable)
- Signatures of both parties

Application reviewers will be looking for agreements with these components, which demonstrate high-quality partnerships.

### **Sample Public Agency Agreements**

Two sample Public Agency Agreements are provided in this tool. The agreements, though structured differently, all incorporate the key components of Public Agency Agreements. Please note all information provided in these sample agreements is fictional and is not connected to any particular individual or organization.

## Sample Agreement 1<sup>1</sup>

This sample agreement outlines a partnership between an applicant and their local one-stop career center that serves the same population of socially-disadvantaged residents in Harlem. This agreement can be used as an example of the level of detail and includes essential components necessary for a strong MOU.

It lays out the explicit purpose for the partnership, establishes that the Community Development Corporation will be the organization applying for the grant, documents the number of positions that will be created and filled as a result of the partnership, and breaks down at a detailed level the services that each organization will perform in order to reach their mutual goal of creating and filling twenty-five jobs with eligible participants. It is dated and signed by both parties, making it formal and effective.

### Memorandum of Understanding between the Sunshine Development Corporation & the New Opportunities Career Center

This Agreement is made by and between **SUNSHINE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**, and **NEW OPPORTUNITIES CAREER CENTER**.

**Sunshine Development Corporation** is a **non-profit Community Development Corporation** established to improve the conditions for the socially-disadvantaged residents of Harlem through a comprehensive community development strategy covering housing, human services, and education.

**Sunshine Development Corporation** is applying to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Community Services, for a community economic development grant to create new jobs for low-income individuals. **This project will** develop a new educational facility to allow for the expansions of the Sunshine Head Start Center, which is owned and operated by **Sunshine Development Corporation**, and will create **twenty-five** new jobs for low-income individuals. To ensure these new jobs are filled by Low-income individuals **Sunshine Development Corporation** will partner with local organizations that assist low-income individuals, including TANF recipients, in obtaining education, training, employment, and support services.

**New Opportunities Career Center** is a **Career Center** that serves the Sunshine neighborhood. A comprehensive package of employment and vocational training services are offered to job seekers at all employment levels. This Career Center also seeks to provide access to more intensive career coaching and skills trainings for job seekers who have little or no work history and are unable to move past a series of entry-level positions to achieve financial independence.

**Under this agreement, we agree to the following provision of services:**

- **New Opportunities Career Center staff will provide** employment and vocational training services for job seekers including: Career Advising, Individual Assessment and Goal Planning, Workshops, Job Readiness Training, Skills Training (through Individual Training Account vouchers for eligible high growth occupation training programs, including Security Guards, Maintenance Workers, Preschool Teachers, Administrative Assistants, and Food Services), Public Benefits, Screenings, Legal Aid, Family Support Services, Financial and Tax Counseling, Career Advancement Program, and other Referrals to Support Services.

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• **New Opportunities Career Center staff** will be educated by **Sunshine Development Corporation** on the specific job opportunities created by this project, including job titles, responsibilities, wages and benefits, so that **New Opportunities Career Center** staff can make appropriate job referrals to **Sunshine Development Corporation**.

• **New Opportunities Career Center** staff will be educated by **Sunshine Development Corporation** on the definition of low-income eligibility, which is defined as individuals receiving TANF assistance and individuals living in households with annual incomes at or below 125% of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Poverty Guidelines. These poverty guidelines are updated annually and **Sunshine Development Corporation** will be responsible for providing the updated guidelines to **New Opportunities Career Center** staff; and

• **New Opportunities Career Center** staff will coordinate with **Sunshine Development Corporation** so that every referral made by **New Opportunities Career Center** to **Sunshine Development Corporation**, for the jobs created by this project, is documented as a **New Opportunities Career Center referral**, and documents the level of household income or TANF Assistance, and/or whether participants were issued Individual Training Account (ITA) Vouchers by the **New Opportunities Career Center**.

The above provision of services and the contribution of services and staff time involved in this project are sufficient and will ensure that **Sunshine Development Corporation** will fill twenty-five new jobs with eligible low-income individuals.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto set their hand and seal as of **August, 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009**.

**Sunshine Development Corporation**

*James Smith*

Director of Sunshine Development Corporation

**New Opportunities Career Center**

*Samantha Sims*

Director of New Opportunities Career Center

## Sample Agreement 2<sup>2</sup>

This sample agreement is a Memorandum of Understanding involving three agencies who serve the same community – a Community Action Agency (the applicant), the County Department of Health and Human Services, and the County Child Support Agency. Applicants may choose to formalize partnerships with multiple agencies in one agreement.

The agreement describes the purpose of the collaboration, identifies and describes the parties to the agreement, outlines the goals of the project, and clearly establishes guidelines regarding information-sharing, record-keeping, and confidentiality of program information. It then goes on to delineate the responsibilities of each of the three agencies involved. It has a clear period of effectiveness, and is signed by all parties.

### **Memorandum of Understanding Involving FIRCAP, Wabash County Departments of Health and Human Services, and Child Support Agency**

This Memorandum of Understanding details the partner agencies' coordinated efforts to serve low-income and TANF-eligible persons to participate in self-employment, microenterprise development and job creation activities in Wabash County through grants funded through the Office of Community Services within the federal Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

#### **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this MOU is to ensure that low-income and TANF-eligible individuals access services, including training, technical assistance, case management, economic support, and related services to effectively participate in microenterprise development and related job creation activities that will help participants and their families achieve greater self-sufficiency.

#### **2. Parties**

This Memorandum of understanding is between:

***FIRCAP***, a Community Action Agency serving Wabash County and its Business Development Department, which provides individualized training and technical assistance to help persons start up a business.

***Wabash County Department of Health and Human Services***, which provides economic support and administers the TANF program in Wabash County.

***Wabash County Child Support Agency***, which provides child support enforcement in Wabash County.

#### **3. Program Assurances**

By clarifying each agency's role in the project, this MOU will reduce duplication and enhance service delivery by leveraging all resources available in an effective manner. Through this coordinated

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effort, and follow up evaluation of services, the project will help low-income and TANF-eligible households achieve greater economic self-sufficiency through the development of self-employment and microenterprise businesses and creation of well-paying, full time jobs that have career advancement potential.

To accomplish goals of this project, the participating agencies agree to refer clients for services who would benefit from business development and job creation activities provided through the FIRCAP Incubation Project, a business incubator, coordinate delivery of services, and provide necessary support services for which the participant may be eligible.

Each agency will maintain individual client records. Periodic program participation information will be shared with partner agencies, through signed releases of information by participants, to facilitate planning to address needs of participants and evaluate success of the project. Each party shall maintain the confidentiality of any information or material it receives from other parties concerning customers served through this MOU in accordance with program requirements

#### **4. Responsibilities**

FIRCAP will serve as lead agency for the project and will be responsible for submittal of timely reports to the Office of Community Services, will enroll eligible participants in the program and will assist clients to develop a self-employment microenterprise Development Plan and provide support services through the project. FIRCAP will also provide support services as needed through other agency programs as a Community Action Agency to help participants increase their self-sufficiency. FIRCAP will provide participating county agencies with progress reports of referrals in their achieving increased self-sufficiency.

Wabash County Department of Health and Human Services will provide referral of participants to the program who may be TANF eligible or low-income. The agency will provide TANF-eligible persons with support services available and employment-related services through the Wabash Job Center in Wabash County.

Wabash County Child Support Agency will provide referrals of low-income, non-custodial parents of TANF-eligible children to FIRCAP to assist them in achieving increased self-sufficiency.

#### **5. Amendments**

This Memorandum of Understanding can be amended as necessary upon agreement of participating parties. The MOU is to be effective for the period of October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2012, subject to approval of funding from OCS for business development and job creation activities.

#### **6. Signatures**

This MOU is agreed upon and approved by the representatives of each of the following agencies:

*Susan Parcell* *7/24/2009*  
**Susan Parcell, FIRCAP** **Date**

*Carlos Hernandez* *7/20/2009*  
**Carlos Hernandez, Wabash County Department of Health and Human Services** **Date**

*Jennifer Matteson* *7/18/2009*  
**Jennifer Matteson, Wabash County Child Support Agency** **Date**