



Broward County

Legislation Text

File #: 21-721, Version: 1

Broward County Commission Regular Meeting

Director's Name: Keith D. Bostick (Deputy Director)

Department: Human Services

Division: Family Success Administration

Information

Requested Action

MOTION TO AUTHORIZE County Administrator to execute the Federally Funded Subgrant Umbrella Agreement between the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and Broward County, subject to review for legal sufficiency by the Office of the County Attorney, in the estimated amount of \$31,500,000, effective from October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2023, to provide services under the Community Services Block Grant and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program Grant; authorize the County Administrator to execute amendments and modifications to the subgrant Agreement, subject to the review for legal sufficiency by the Office of the County Attorney; and authorize the County Administrator to take all necessary administrative and budgetary actions to implement the subgrant Agreement.

Why Action is Necessary

Section 20.31(b)(3), Broward County Administrative Code, requires that the Broward County Board of County Commissioners ("Commission") approves all state and federal grant agreements.

What Action Accomplishes

Approval of this subgrant Agreement ensures continuation of Community Services Block Grant ("CSBG") and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program ("LIHEAP") Grant funds. CSBG funding provides a range of services which focus on increasing economic stability and have a measurable impact on poverty for residents of Broward County at or below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines. LIHEAP funding provides home energy assistance to households in Broward County that are at or below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines.

Is this Action Goal Related

Yes

Previous Action Taken

None

Summary Explanation/Background

THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE FAMILY SUCCESS ADMINISTRATION DIVISION RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE ABOVE MOTION.

This item supports the Commission's value of "approaching human services collaboratively and compassionately, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable," and the goal to "effectively advocate for and acquire municipal, state, and federal financial support to equitably address health

and human services needs of the entire community, through a truly coordinated system of care.” This funding allows Broward County’s Family Success Administration Division (“FSAD”) to provide financial support and services to eligible residents to assist with emergency needs and increase financial self-sufficiency.

Local agencies must meet federal requirements to be formally designated as a Community Action Agency (“CAA”) and receive CSBG and LIHEAP funds. Broward County received its CAA designation in 1991. The CAA program is administered through FSAD. Utilizing federal funds from the CSBG and LIHEAP grants, Broward County’s CAA program has ensured a safety net for individuals and families who meet low-income guidelines in Broward County while creating opportunities to move from poverty to economic stability.

The CAA utilizes self-sufficiency case management for residents to promote the agency’s anti-poverty goals through these two federally funded grant programs. CSBG funding assists households at or below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines through case management services that focus on poverty causes and conditions to help eligible residents increase their financial self-sufficiency, improve their living conditions, and foster ownership of and pride in their community. Case managers and eligible residents work together to set goals, acquire employment skills, and access services needed achieve self-sufficiency. The program also includes emergency financial assistance, educational programs, training, books, childcare, food vouchers, and bus passes. CSBG-related programming is coordinated with a wide range of other community programs to provide comprehensive anti-poverty support. LIHEAP funding assists households in Broward County at or below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines with electric bill payments to reduce the risk of health and safety problems that may arise from lack of energy or use of unsafe heating and cooling practices.

Funds for these two grant programs originate from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, are awarded to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (“DEO”), and then are awarded as pass-through funding to the local CAA subrecipients. Historically, DEO has awarded these funds through separate agreements on an annual basis. DEO has changed the format of its agreements beginning with the fiscal year 2021 funding cycle. The new format combines the federal grants administered by DEO under one subgrant umbrella agreement, allowing DEO to enhance the accountability, transparency, and oversight of their network of subrecipients. In addition, the agreement format has been changed to a three-year funding cycle and does not specify a funding amount but authorizes the use of Notice of Funding Awards (“NFA”) to obligate and release funds for each grant.

The estimated amount of funding to be received under this three-year Agreement was derived from amounts received over the past three years. The County received CSBG funds in the amounts of \$1,350,888 for Fiscal Year 2020, \$1,431,870 for Fiscal Year 2019, and \$1,345,600 for Fiscal Year 2018, totaling \$4,128,358 for the prior three-year period. An additional \$1,888,767 was awarded through CSBG to assist with COVID-related needs. The County received LIHEAP funds in the amounts of \$6,936,260 for Fiscal Year 2020, \$7,259,332 for Fiscal Year 2019, and \$6,951,798 for Fiscal Year 2018, totaling \$21,147,390 for the prior three-year period. An additional \$4,236,171 was awarded through LIHEAP for COVID-related needs. The combined amount of funding received for the past three-year period totaled \$31,400,686. It is DEO’s past practice to release funds annually and make at least one mid-year adjustment. DEO allows unspent funds to be rolled over and spent in the following year.

During Fiscal Year 2020, CSBG funding served 185 households, providing employment placement or retention, educational and training opportunities, emergency assistance payments, facilitated the completion of educational goals, and provided childcare assistance for eligible residents. During Fiscal Year 2020, LIHEAP funds allowed the County to process 10,703 payments for energy assistance at an average of \$379 to stabilize Broward County residents living at or below the federal poverty guidelines. FSAD anticipates receiving the same level of funds for Fiscal Year 2021 and allowing services to continue at the same level.

In 2019, DEO announced its intent to utilize a combined umbrella subgrant agreement beginning October 1, 2020. The umbrella agreement was delayed, and the existing grant agreements were extended through March 31, 2021. Broward County did not receive an umbrella agreement for review until late February 2021. To allow time for negotiation and legal review, the existing agreements were extended to May 31, 2021. The County will receive Fiscal Year 2021 funding for the period beginning October 1, 2020, after the execution of the umbrella subgrant Agreement.

The draft subgrant Agreement contains provisions that differ from Broward County's standard terms, as follows: the Agreement is silent regarding the amount of funding provided for each grant, the amount will be provided through the periodic issuance of an NFA; if a block of funds are released for a restricted purpose such as support for hurricane victims or COVID-related assistance, the NFA may include an attachment with additional terms and restrictions; the venue for any legal action is in Leon County (instead of Broward County) as customary in state contracts; there is no provision for Broward County to terminate for convenience except by mutual written agreement; the Agreement contains provisions for possible reimbursement of costs of investigation by the State Inspector General for investigations of Broward County's compliance with the terms of this or any other agreements with the state; if Broward County is non-compliant with terms of the Agreement, the state may impose additional fees to Broward County.

The draft Agreement establishes the terms and conditions to which subrecipients must agree to receive federal funds from DEO and will be reviewed for legal sufficiency by the Office of the County Attorney prior to approval and execution by the County Administrator.

Source of Additional Information

Ismael A. Martinez, Director, Family Success Administration Division, (954) 357-6367

Natalie M. Beasley, Assistant Director, Family Success Administration Division, (954) 357-6367

Fiscal Impact

Fiscal Impact/Cost Summary

These programs are 100% federally funded. No Broward County match is required. CSBG matching requirement was discontinued in 2018. Broward County has continued to provide \$26,000 annually from general funds to maintain the level of services provided through the CSBG program. These funds are budgeted in 70032-10010-40502545-BRW01-105935-HSCSB20 for Fiscal Year 21.