



NEWS RELEASE

April 3, 2026

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COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT PLAN AND BUDGET AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

Community Action Council for Lexington-Fayette, Bourbon, Harrison, and Nicholas Counties, Inc. (the Council) announces that its 2026-2027 Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) Plan and Budget Proposal is now available for public review.

This proposal, prepared annually, is submitted to Kentucky's Cabinet for Health and Family Services and the state association, Community Action Kentucky. The plan contains and reflects an assessment of community needs in the Council's geographic region, as well as budget details and projected outcomes for the period of July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027.

The plan organizes the work it will accomplish by domain: Education, Housing, Income Infrastructure and Asset Building, Education and Cognitive Development, Health, and Social Behavioral Development (and Nutrition), Civic Engagement and Community Development, Agency Capacity, Linkages, and Services Supporting Multiple Domains.

The 2026-2027 CSBG Plan and Budget proposal is complete and available for review at our Administrative Office at 710 West High Street in Lexington or online at www.commaction.org/resources.

Community Action Council is the designated community action agency for the four counties of Bourbon, Lexington-Fayette, Harrison, and Nicholas.

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This project is funded, in part, under a contract with the Cabinet for Health and Families Services with funds from the Community Services Block Grant Act of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

B. REQUIREMENTS:

1. Introduction to the Agency

Organizational Standard

1.1—The organization demonstrates low-income individuals' participation in its activities.

- 1.a Describe the type of agency and include the agency's qualifications, both the agency's mission *and* vision, values, and role the agency plays in the community. Explain the designation of the agency as public or private; state, County, or city government; and profit or nonprofit.

Community Action Council is a private, nonprofit organization

Community Action Council for Lexington-Fayette, Bourbon, Harrison, and Nicholas Counties, Inc. (hereafter Community Action Council or the Council) is established as a private nonprofit organization. Initially known as Community Action for Lexington-Fayette, the agency expanded its scope to encompass the additional counties of Bourbon, Harrison, and Nicholas. Mandated by Kentucky Revised Statute 273.405, the Council is the designated community action agency for this four-county area—Lexington-Fayette, Bourbon, Harrison, and Nicholas.

Agency Qualifications

As the designated Community Action Agency (CAA) for its four core counties, the Council is committed to delivering change-oriented, high-impact, cost-effective results that generate a significant return on investment for local communities. By strengthening community assets, assisting local entrepreneurs, and promoting self-sufficiency, Community Action creates a foundation for economic stability and growth.

Role the Agency Plays in the Community

Community Action Council is dedicated to helping hardworking families attain long-term independence. Our approach is powered by innovative, responsive, and effective programs that are specifically designed to address the unique needs of each county or community in our territory. As part of this strategy, the Council conducts an annual, thorough needs assessment, using the findings to guide the development of its programming and assistance. A detailed explanation of the methodology and results of the Community Needs Assessment is provided later in this document.

Through the provision of programs like high-quality job credential training, effective financial coaching programs, LIHEAP, Weatherization, and early childhood education, along with partnering with private-sector organizations programs to drive prosperity and reinvest tax dollars into the community, Community Action Council has a proven track record of results.

By fostering multi-sector partnerships, Community Action Council amplifies its local impact and strengthens economic mobility for families.

Mission, Vision and Values

The Council's Board of Directors established the following mission and vision statements:

Mission

Community Action Council prevents, reduces and eliminates poverty among individuals, families and communities through direct services.

Vision

Ensure that all communities are thriving.

In support of both its mission and vision and with the oversight and guidance of the Board of Directors, the Council works to increase the availability and quality of core programming for all members of a family. Programs include school readiness and early childhood education, youth development, secondary and post-secondary education, energy assistance/energy conservation, employment, and job readiness skills, transportation, senior engagement, housing, health, and technology.

The Council's approach to its work centers on listening, understanding, and aligning its work with the community's needs and assets.

To further enhance our effectiveness, the Council will continue to:

- Lead collaborative community efforts designed to assist and advance hardworking Kentuckians;
- Deliver high-impact, cost-effective results that represent a significant return on investment for local communities;
- Function as dynamic and resourceful leaders on the issues that matter most to our constituents;
- Utilize and leverage social enterprise to create economic development opportunities.

1.b Provide up-to-date information on CSBG contact information within the agency. Include the complete contact information (i.e., fax and phone number, mailing address, e-mail address) for the: (1) Executive Director, (2) Financial Director, and (3) CSBG Program Director and/or staff, who should be included on e-mail correspondence or contacted for day-to-day CSBG programmatic or financial matters.

Executive Director

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- 1.c** Discuss the geographical area served by the Community Action Agency and distinguish the areas served by programs you provide. Describe your geographical/topical terrain, such as mountainous, remote roads for transportation in certain counties and lack of good infrastructure. Likewise, if you serve a more metropolitan area, you can demonstrate the segments of the city that are more densely populated by clients and distinguish how their issues relate to those locations. Please provide the most current information regarding the families in these counties and regions that may require services unique to the agency's client population. Include current poverty data (with documentation) on maps, tables, charts, etc., related to age, race/ethnicity, and gender specific to your service region (Org. Standard 3.2). Counties and regions need to be named as well as any type of infrastructure problems that **currently** exist that explains the lack of industry and jobs, travel issues, and any problems unique to the area that illustrate how this affects the clients' standards of living. Suggested, not required website to utilize <https://cap.engagementnetwork.org/>.

Geographical Area

The Council is formally recognized as the designated Community Action Agency (CAA) for four central Kentucky counties: Bourbon, Lexington-Fayette, Harrison, and Nicholas. The Council adapts to the distinct challenges each county faces.

Fayette County, which includes the city of Lexington, is the urban core of the service area. Its economy features generally low unemployment rates. However, despite its economic vitality, Lexington-Fayette County struggles with significant pockets of persistent, generational poverty. Like many urban centers across the country, the region also faces the cost of living outpacing earned income, a shortage of affordable housing, and increasing rates of violent crime, all of which demand specialized interventions.

In contrast, Bourbon, Harrison, and Nicholas Counties are primarily rural areas. Residents in these counties often face more limited economic opportunities and a lack of access to resources that could improve their prospects. While manufacturing remains a notable source of employment in Bourbon and Harrison counties, the workforce in these sectors is dwindling over time. In Nicholas County, significant employment opportunities beyond local government and the school system are scarce.

Many workers from these rural counties commute to burgeoning economic centers like Lexington-Fayette, Scott, Clark, and Montgomery counties, with an average commute time of 27.5 minutes. Conversely, the urban "triangle" formed by Kentucky's major metropolitan hubs—Louisville, Lexington, and northern Kentucky/Cincinnati—exhibits more robust economic resilience.

On a broader scale, Kentucky continues to face one of the highest poverty rates in the nation, grappling with long-standing challenges related to uneven economic development. The northeastern portion of the Council's service area extends into Appalachia, a region suffering from decades of economic hardship. Appalachia is marked by chronic unemployment, poor public health, high disability rates, and a severe opioid crisis, all of which compound the economic struggles of its residents.

To provide a more in-depth understanding of the region, demographic data for each county within the Council's territory is presented in the following pages. This data, sourced from reputable platforms such as the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020-2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates and the Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates for 2024, offers a comprehensive snapshot of population size, poverty rates, household demographics, unemployment levels, and educational attainment for each of the Council's four designated counties. This information is a crucial foundation for assessing the specific needs and challenges of the populations the Council works to support.

County-Level Demographic Estimates, 2025 Update

	Bourbon County	Fayette County	Harrison County	Nicholas County
Total Population	20,240	323,725	19,140	7,708
Poverty Rate	14.2%	14.9%	17.1%	17.6%
Poverty Rate by Gender: Male	13.2%	12.9%	13.6%	17.9%
Poverty Rate by Gender: Female	15.3	16.9%	20.4%	17.3%
Percent of population under five	5.9%	5.7%	6.2%	5.6%
Percent under five in poverty	15.0%	22.4%	22.0%	36.5%
Percent below poverty level 5 to 17 years	14.1%	16.2	21.6%	8.9%
Percent below poverty level Under 18 years	14.3%	17.9%	21.7%	15.0%
Percent White (alone)	82.2%	76.8%	97.5%	98.5%
Percent below poverty level White alone	14.7%	11.6%	15.5%	17.9%
Percent Black/African American (alone)	7.0%	17.7%	3.9%	1.7%
Percent below poverty level Black or African American alone	9.1%	22.7%	27.5%	27.4%
Hispanic/Latino (any race)	7.8%	9.5%	2.3%	1.0%
Percent below poverty level Hispanic/Latino (any race) alone	11.5%	26.3%	50.2%	0.0%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates;
Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024*

*** Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2024*

Demographic Information on the Council's Service Counties

	Poverty Rate**	Unemployment Rate	Educational Attainment	
			Adults 25+ with High School Diploma/GED or Higher	Adults 25+ with Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Bourbon County	14.2%	4.3%	87.9%	26.3%
Fayette County	14.9%	4.2%	92.1%	48.3%
Harrison County	17.1%	4.5%	90.7%	22.5%
Nicholas County	17.6%	4.8%	87.7%	9.8%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates;
Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024*

*** Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, 2024*

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE REGION

Kentucky

The Council currently operates early education programs in 13 counties in central and south-central Kentucky, not including the additional two counties wherein the Council operates AgriGrow Network. Kentucky continues to show high rates of poverty and associated economic challenges, including low educational performance, high unemployment, and poor health outcomes. Nine of the 13 counties comprising the Council's early education programs fall within the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) service region. The urban "triangle" formed by the urban centers of Louisville, Lexington, and northern Kentucky/Cincinnati show greater economic strength and includes Fayette and Scott Counties, which are also within the Council's service region.



POPULATION			
	U.S.	Kentucky	Kentucky has experienced slower population loss than the nation overall since 2020. The share of population under age 5 in Kentucky and the US is nearly the same.
Total population, 2023	334,922,499	4,534,824	
Land area (sq. mi.)	3,531,905	39,486	
Population density (persons/sq. mi.)	95	115	
Population at 2020 Census	331,449,281	4,505,836	
Change in population 2020-2023	1.0%	0.6%	
Number of children under age 5	18,779,951	266,225	
% population under age 5	5.6%	5.9%	

RACE AND ETHNICITY			
	U.S.	Kentucky	Kentucky shows significantly less racial and ethnic diversity than the nation overall.
% White/Caucasian (alone)	72.7%	88.4%	
% Black/African American (alone)	14.4%	9.6%	
% Hispanic or Latino (any race)	19.3%	5.0%	

POVERTY, INCOME, AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			
	U.S.	Kentucky	Kentucky has a markedly higher rate of poverty than the U.S. overall, a higher rate of unemployment, and more limited educational attainment. State and national unemployment levels have remained steady since the previous report.
Poverty rate	12.5%	16.1%	
Poverty rate for children under 5	17.3%	22.3%	
Median household income	\$80,734	\$63,726	
Unemployment rate	3.5%	4.2%	
% adults age 25 and over with HS diploma or equivalent or higher	89.6%	88.9%	
% adults age 25 and over with Bachelor's degree or higher	35.7%	27.6%	

FAMILY SERVICES AND HEALTH INDICATORS			
Teen births (per 1,000) (2021-2023)		21.0	Kentucky has markedly high numbers of teen births and children in out-of-home care, though numbers are slightly lower than the previous report. Participation in WIC, SNAP, and KEIS has increased dramatically since the previous report.
Preterm babies (<37 weeks) (%) (2021-2023)		11.7%	
WIC monthly average served (2024)		106,777	
Households receiving SNAP (2024)		239,150	
Children in Kentucky Early Intervention System (KEIS) (2024)		10,967	
Children in foster care (per 1,000) (2022-2024)		39.4	

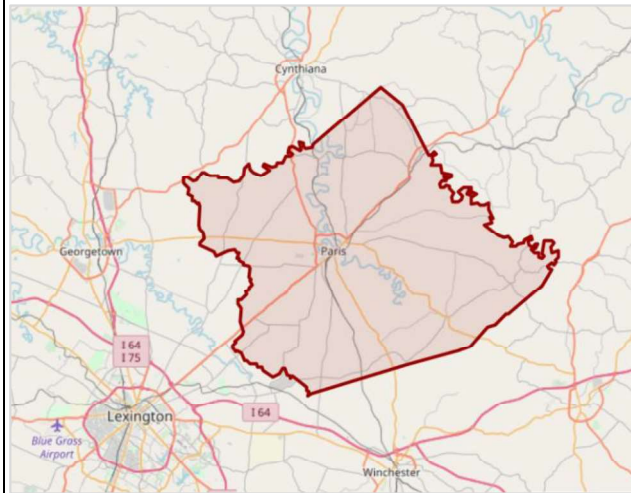
EARLY CHILDCARE CAPACITY AND QUALITY			
Number of regulated providers (2024)		1,680	The number of licensed providers in Kentucky has slightly increased since the last Community Assessment. CCAP participation is almost double over last year.
Total childcare capacity (Jan. 2026)		163,000	
Number of providers serving infants		1,004	
Providers with active CCAP participants		82.5%	
CCAP Count		42,730	
Number of providers with STARS rating of 3 or higher		1,245	
Number of NAEYC-accredited providers		57	

Bourbon County

Bourbon County borders Lexington-Fayette County to the northeast. The county is part of the Lexington-Fayette metropolitan area and lies within Kentucky's Inner Bluegrass region.

The seat of Bourbon County is the city of **Paris**. The county also contains the cities of Millersburg and North Middletown and several unincorporated communities.

The Council provides early education in Bourbon County.



POPULATION		
Total population, 2024	20,240	Bourbon County is largely rural and has generally shown a slow population decline since 2020.
Land area (sq. mi.)	290	
Population density (persons/sq. mi.)	70	
Population at 2020 Census	20,252	
Change in population 2020-2024	-0.1%	
Number of children under age 5	1,186	
% population under age 5	5.9%	

RACE, ETHNICITY, AND LANGUAGE		
% White/Caucasian (alone)	92.2%	Relative to other rural Kentucky counties, Bourbon has a moderately high degree of racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity.
% Black/African-American (alone)	7.0%	
% Hispanic or Latino (any race)	7.8%	
% of households where the language spoken at home is a language other than English	6.3%	

POVERTY AND INCOME		
Poverty rate	14.2%	Bourbon County has a lower rate of child poverty than the state overall.
Poverty rate for children under 5	15.0%	
Median household income	\$61,354	
Unemployment rate	4.3%	

FAMILY SERVICES AND HEALTH INDICATORS		
Teen births (per 1,000)	22.8	SNAP participation increased slightly over the previous year and the rate of children in out-of-home care dropped 3.3 points.
Preterm babies (<37 weeks) (%)	12.0%	
Families receiving WIC	273	
Children enrolled in HANDS (2020-2021)	39	
Households receiving SNAP (2023)	1,149	
Children in out-of-home care (per 1,000)	30.4	

EDUCATION		
Teen births (per 1,000) (2021-2023)	52.5%	Bourbon County saw an 8% increase in kindergarten readiness and a 19% increase in 3 rd grade reading proficiency over the previous year.
Preterm babies (<37 weeks) (%) (2021-2023)	253	
WIC monthly average served (2024)	170	
Children in Kentucky Early Intervention System (KEIS) (2024)	33.3%	
Households receiving SNAP (2024)	25.6%	
Children in foster care (per 1,000) (2022-2024)	87.9%	
Teen births (per 1,000) (2021-2023)	26.3%	

EARLY CHILDCARE CAPACITY AND QUALITY*		
Number of regulated providers (2024)	12	Like many rural counties in Kentucky, childcare in Bourbon County is limited; however, two more regulated providers have come online since the previous year, and capacity has increased by nearly 400.
Total childcare capacity (Jan. 2026)	1,603	
Number of providers serving infants	10	
Providers with active CCAP participants	12	
CCAP Count	257	
Number of providers with STARS rating of 3 or higher	6	
Number of NAEYC-accredited providers	1	

**Note: Table includes only regulated providers and excludes those serving only school-age children*

ESTIMATED EARLY EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY AND CURRENT SERVICES		
Estimated eligible children 3-5 years old	71	The Council offers center- and home-based early childhood education services in Bourbon County.
Estimated eligible children 3 years and under	107	
Estimated eligible pregnant women	85	
Total estimated program eligibility	299	
Current program slot allocation	36	

Fayette County

Fayette County (consolidated with the city of Lexington) is Central Kentucky's urban center and the second-most populous county in Kentucky. It is home to the University of Kentucky and multiple other educational institutions, hospitals, and businesses.

Lexington-Fayette County is a major economic and educational center. However, like many urban areas across the U.S., Fayette County has many isolated neighborhoods with persistent poverty.

Early education for children 5 and under is operated in Fayette County.



POPULATION		
Total population, 2024	323,725	Lexington-Fayette County has a large population that has increased slightly since 2020.
Land area (sq. mi.)	284	
Population density (persons/sq. mi.)	1,140	
Population at 2020 Census	322,570	
Change in population 2020-2024	0.4%	
Number of children under age 5	18,393	
% population under age 5	5.7%	

RACE, ETHNICITY, AND LANGUAGE		
% White/Caucasian (alone)	76.8%	Lexington-Fayette County shows high racial and ethnic diversity relative to Kentucky as a whole.
% Black/African-American (alone)	17.7%	
% Hispanic or Latino (any race)	9.5%	
% of households where the language spoken at home is a language other than English	15.9%	

POVERTY AND INCOME		
Poverty rate	14.9%	An economic center, Fayette County has historically shown strong economic indicators.
Poverty rate for children under 5	22.4%	
Median household income	\$69,479	
Unemployment rate	4.2%	

FAMILY SERVICES AND HEALTH INDICATORS		
Teen births (per 1,000) (2021-2023)	14	Since the previous report, WIC participation has increased by nearly 2,000 people, and the rate of children in foster care continues to trend downward.
Preterm babies (<37 weeks) (%) (2021-2023)	11.2%	
WIC monthly average served (2024)	6,359	
Children in Kentucky Early Intervention System (KEIS) (2024)	733	
Households receiving SNAP (2024)	11,918	
Children in foster care (per 1,000) (2022-2024)	35.3	

EDUCATION		
Kindergarten readiness rate (2024)	42.1%	Education performance is strong relative to the rest of the Commonwealth. Adult educational attainment is exceptionally high. Fayette County's 3 rd Grade Math and Reading proficiency scores are above the state average.
Kindergarten enrollments (2024)	3,252	
Preschool enrollment (2024)	1,157	
3 rd grade math proficiency rate (2024)	33.3%	
3 rd grade reading proficiency rate (2024)	51.3%	
% adults age 25 and over with HS diploma or equivalent or higher	92.1%	
% adults age 25 and over with Bachelor's degree or higher	48.3%	

EARLY CHILDCARE CAPACITY AND QUALITY*		
Number of regulated providers (2024)	164	Proportionate to its size, Lexington-Fayette County has many childcare providers and a concentration of high-quality providers in the region.
Total childcare capacity (Jan. 2026)	18,376	
Number of providers serving infants	96	
Providers with active CCAP participants	160	
CCAP Count	4,156	
Number of providers with STARS rating of 3 or higher	34	
Number of NAEYC-accredited providers	10	

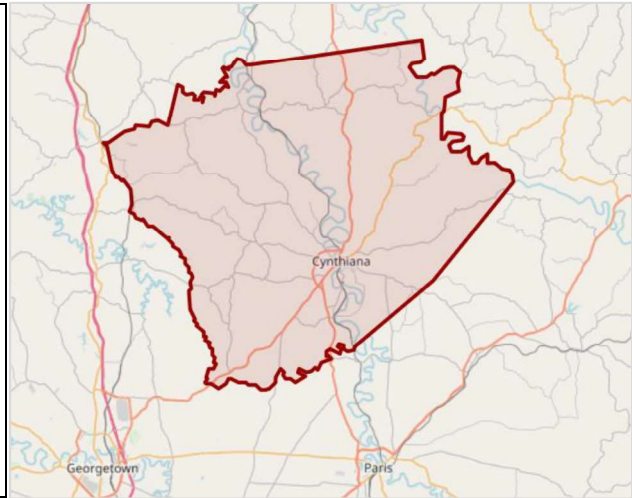
Note: Table includes only regulated providers and excludes those serving only school-age children.

ESTIMATED EARLY EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY AND CURRENT SERVICES		
Estimated eligible children 3-5 years old	1,621	In Fayette County, the Council offers center- and home-based early childhood education.
Estimated eligible children under 3 years old	2,432	
Estimated eligible pregnant women	726	
Total estimated program eligibility	5,590	
Current program slot allocation	546	

Harrison County

Harrison County, the northernmost county in the Council's early education territory lies in Kentucky's Inner Bluegrass region. Its county seat is the city of **Cynthiana**. It also contains the city of Berry and several unincorporated communities.

Early education for pregnant mothers and child children up to 5 years old are in Harrison County.



POPULATION		
Total population, 2024	19,140	Harrison County is highly rural and has recently experienced a small population increase. The proportion of the population under age five is slightly higher than the state percentage.
Land area (sq. mi.)	306	
Population density (persons/sq. mi.)	63	
Population at 2020 Census	18,692	
Change in population 2020-2024	2.4%	
Number of children under age 5	1,192	
% population under age 5	6.2%	

RACE, ETHNICITY, AND LANGUAGE		
% White/Caucasian (alone)	97.5%	Harrison County is highly homogeneous in terms of race and ethnicity. Its Hispanic population percentage is less than half the state percentage.
% Black/African-American (alone)	3.9%	
% Hispanic or Latino (any race)	2.3%	
% of households where the language spoken at home is a language other than English	2.6%	

POVERTY AND INCOME		
Poverty rate	16.4%	Harrison County's poverty rate for children under five increased nearly 10% from the previous year
Poverty rate for children under 5	12.6%	
Median household income	\$63,205	
Unemployment rate	3.8%	

FAMILY SERVICES AND HEALTH INDICATORS		
Teen births (per 1,000) (2021-2023)	27.1	The rate of teen births increased 7 points, but the number of children in foster care dropped by close to 10 points since the previous report.
Preterm babies (<37 weeks) (%) (2021-2023)	10.6%	
WIC monthly average served (2024)	443	
Children in Kentucky Early Intervention System (KEIS) (2024)	29	
Households receiving SNAP (2024)	1,157	
Children in foster care (per 1,000) (2022-2024)	47.4	

EDUCATION		
Kindergarten readiness rate (2024)	59.3%	Harrison County's kindergarten readiness rate remains among the strongest in the Council's service area despite a 2% drop over the previous report. Nearly all educational indicators show improvement over the previous report.
Kindergarten enrollments (2024)	241	
Preschool enrollment (2024)	112	
3 rd grade math proficiency rate (2024)	41.9%	
3 rd grade reading proficiency rate (2024)	38.8%	
% adults age 25 and over with HS diploma or equivalent or higher	90.7%	
% adults age 25 and over with Bachelor's degree or higher	22.5%	

EARLY CHILDCARE CAPACITY AND QUALITY*		
Number of regulated providers (2024)	8	Harrison County has limited childcare capacity but is served by multiple providers. The county has lost another NAEYC-accredited provider since the previous report. CCAP participation has increased threefold.
Total childcare capacity (Jan. 2026)	151	
Number of providers serving infants	5	
Providers with active CCAP participants	6	
CCAP Count	217	
Number of providers with STARS rating of 3 or higher	6	
Number of NAEYC-accredited providers	1	

Note: Table includes only regulated providers and excludes those serving only school-age children.

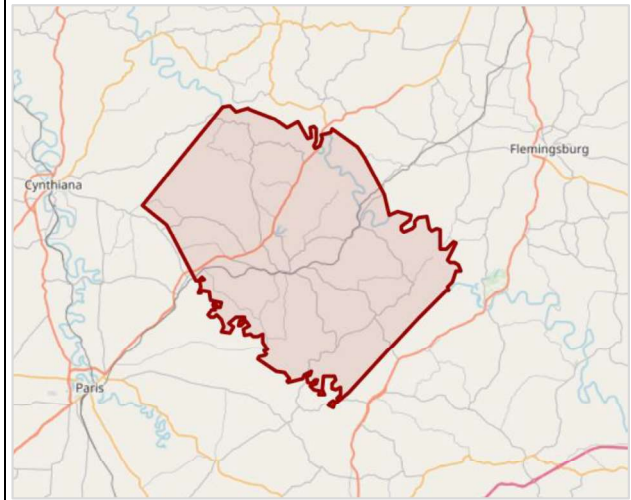
ESTIMATED early education ELIGIBILITY AND CURRENT SERVICES		
Estimated eligible children 3-5 years old	102	Estimated eligibility has nearly doubled across both age groups. The Council offers center- and home-based early childhood services in Harrison County.
Estimated eligible children 3 years and under	152	
Estimated eligible pregnant women	90	
Total estimated program eligibility	394	
Current program slot allocation	117	

Nicholas County

Nicholas County lies in north-central Kentucky, bordered by Harrison, Robertson, Fleming, Bath, and Bourbon counties. Its seat is the city of **Carlisle** and includes several small unincorporated communities.

The Appalachian Regional Commission has designated Nicholas County's economic status as At-risk.

Early education for children 5 years old and under are provided in Nicholas County.



POPULATION		
Total population, 2024	7,708	Nicholas County is the least populous county served by the Council. The population has seen a very small increase since 2020.
Land area (sq. mi.)	195	
Population density (persons/sq. mi.)	40	
Population at 2020 Census	7,537	
Change in population 2020-2024	2.3%	
Number of children under age 5	435	
% population under age 5	5.6%	

RACE, ETHNICITY, AND LANGUAGE		
% White/Caucasian (alone)	98.5%	Nicholas County is highly homogeneous in terms of race and ethnicity.
% Black/African-American (alone)	1.7%	
% Hispanic or Latino (any race)	1.0%	
% of households where the language spoken at home is a language other than English	1.0%	

POVERTY AND INCOME		
Poverty rate	18.5%	Nicholas County has the highest rate of poverty for children under age 5 among service counties, though it has dropped 8% since the previous report.
Poverty rate for children under 5	42.1%	
Median household income	\$53,616	
Unemployment rate	4.3%	

FAMILY SERVICES AND HEALTH INDICATORS		
Teen births (per 1,000) (2021-2023)	27.1	Nicholas County generally performs poorly in health outcomes, but has among the lowest rates of children in out-of-home care.
Preterm babies (<37 weeks) (%) (2021-2023)	8.6%	
WIC monthly average served (2024)	205	
Children in Kentucky Early Intervention System (KEIS) (2024)	10	
Households receiving SNAP (2024)	430	
Children in foster care (per 1,000) (2022-2024)	20.2	

EDUCATION		
Kindergarten readiness rate (2024)	66.7%	The Kindergarten readiness rate is the highest in the Council's service area and 20.7 percent higher than the statewide rate. The 3rd-grade reading and math proficiency scores, however, are among the lowest in the Council's service area.
Kindergarten enrollments (2024)	84	
Preschool enrollment (2024)	**	
3 rd grade math proficiency rate (2024)	16.5%	
3 rd grade reading proficiency rate (2024)	31.9%	
% adults age 25 and over with HS diploma or equivalent or higher	87.7%	
% adults age 25 and over with Bachelor's degree or higher	9.8%	

EARLY CHILDCARE CAPACITY AND QUALITY*		
Number of regulated providers (2024)	2	Childcare capacity is extremely limited in Nicholas County. Only two licensed providers are available, of which only one serves infants.
Total childcare capacity (Jan. 2026)	94	
Number of providers serving infants	1	
Providers with active CCAP participants	1	
CCAP Count	43	
Number of providers with STARS rating of 3 or higher	1	
Number of NAEYC-accredited providers	0	

Note: Table includes only regulated providers and excludes those serving only school-age children.

ESTIMATED EARLY EDUCATION ELIGIBILITY AND CURRENT SERVICES		
Estimated eligible children 3-5 years old	59	The Council offers center-based early education for children 5 years old and under, including pregnant mothers.
Estimated eligible children under 3 years old	89	
Estimated eligible pregnant women	12	
Total estimated program eligibility	190	
Current program slot allocation	117	

1.d Describe how your agency engages low-income individuals to participate in activities in the community. Please remember, low-income individuals can participate in the development of services, in the needs assessment process, volunteering for special events, or serve on an advisory group/board or tripartite board.

The Council is an organization dedicated to empowering individuals with low incomes, recognizing that they must play an active role in economic stability. A key aspect of this mission is reflected in the composition of the Council's Board of Directors, where one-third of the members come from low-income backgrounds. Additionally, the Council's participants are deeply engaged in the organization's activities, including serving on neighborhood Advisory Councils, the Policy Council, parent committee meetings, and initiatives focused on enhancing the involvement of fathers and father figures in the lives of young children.

Members from low-income communities are actively involved in a variety of important forums, such as the Volunteer Senior Advisory Committee, advisory groups in rural counties, early education conferences, and the Board of Directors retreat. They also play a role in shaping the Council's priorities by participating in the annual community assessment, where they are part of the group surveyed to gather insights about the needs of their communities.

In recent years, the Council has expanded its outreach by embracing new forms of media, such as podcasting. Through its "Lex Talk. More Action" podcast, the Council aims to educate and engage listeners, encouraging them to become more involved in their communities. The podcast serves as both a platform for information and a call to action, inspiring individuals to contribute to the well-being of their neighbors and to help strengthen their communities as a whole.

2. Community Needs Assessment Narrative

Organizational Standards

3.3 – The organization collects and analyzes both qualitative and quantitative data on its geographic service area(s) in the community assessment.

1.2 – The organization analyzes information collected directly from low-income individuals as part of the community assessment.

2.2 – The organization 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.

3.4 – The community assessment includes key findings on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of the community addressed.

3.1 – The organization conducted a community assessment and issued a report within the past 3 years.

3.2 – As part of the community assessment, the organization collects and includes current data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age, and race/ethnicity for their service area(s).

2.a Describe in depth the agency's CSBG community needs assessment process and procedures (e.g., who in the community is involved and how are they involved? Does this represent a cross-section of the community, agency and family? How often does your agency undergo the needs assessment process? What times/seasons of the year do you have input from stakeholders to complete your needs assessment tool?).

Please note: your needs assessment must include qualitative and quantitative data.

Utilizing qualitative and quantitative data in our geographic service areas

The Council's Office of Sustainability uses a multi-method approach to develop a comprehensive understanding of the needs of adults, children, and families across its core

counties, which refers to the counties it is designated by statute to serve—Lexington-Fayette, Bourbon, Harrison, and Nicholas.

Community Needs Assessments (CNAs) play a key role in identifying gaps in the resources that constituents consider essential to their progress. At the same time, they help confirm and highlight existing community assets. This process also satisfies the state’s Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) requirement for an annual assessment, allowing the Council to monitor emerging trends and respond effectively to evolving community needs. Through the CNA, the Council gains insight into constituent concerns and the resources available to address them. As an integral part of the Council’s ongoing strategic planning efforts, the CNA serves as a valuable tool for guiding programmatic decision-making.

The CNA process is conducted annually and typically spans four months. It begins with collecting and analyzing quantitative data, followed by developing and distributing a survey to gather input from constituents and stakeholders. In certain years, such as FY 2024, the process aligns with broader strategic planning efforts and includes additional components such as focus groups, employee surveys, interviews, and post-assessment action planning. These activities are designed to identify community needs, as well as existing assets and service gaps.

The survey is distributed to the community both digitally, via SurveyMonkey, and in hard copy. Respondents are asked to identify the most pressing needs within six key areas: housing, income and asset building, employment, education, health, and civic engagement. Participants represent a broad cross-section of the community, including current and prospective constituents, governing board members, service providers, and individuals from both the public and private sectors. In addition to this data, qualitative information is collected continuously through informal conversations, the quarterly customer satisfaction survey, the Policy Council, and other ongoing community and advisory groups, all of which are analyzed regularly. *A copy of the quarterly Customer Satisfaction Survey is contained in the appendices of the Plan and Budget.*

Representing a cross-section of the community, including constituents. This year, between November 2025 and February 2026, the Council conducted a multi-phase CNA process that consisted of:

- intentional stakeholder engagement

- mode of data collection (surveys)
- subsequent analysis and action planning

A total of 406 respondents completed the survey from across the four-county geographic area to identify top priorities. As the chart below demonstrates, and as expected, a significant portion of respondents were from Fayette County, the most populated and most urban area in the four-county region.

Which county do you live in? (check one)

Answer	Percentage
Bourbon	32
Fayette	267
Harrison	79
Nicholas	28

Survey respondents were predominantly female (89%), with males representing 11% of the sample.

Overall, respondents tended to have at least a high school education, were engaged in the workforce or seeking employment, and a majority did not qualify for SNAP benefits.

Specifically:

- 21.1% reported a high school diploma or GED, while 74.4% had some college education or higher
- 79.9% were employed full-time, 6.4% were employed part time, and 4.3% were not employed but actively seeking work
- 79.1% reported not qualifying for SNAP, compared to 20.9% who did

More than half of the respondents came from households with children, and a majority were renters. Household composition and housing status included:

- 49.4% had children under age five, 29.9% had children ages 6–12, and 18.3% had children ages 13–17, while 37.8% reported no children in the household
- 47.9% were renters, 46.9% were homeowners, and 5.3% reported unstable housing or experiencing homelessness

The community assessment aims to inform the Council's ongoing program design and delivery in response to participants' expressed needs.

Following the Assessment, Council staff convened to discuss programming to meet the expressed needs, fill gaps, and strengthen the local system of care. Additionally, information obtained through this Assessment process is analyzed and discussed by the Council's Strategic Leadership Group (SLG), which comprises the Executive Director and the named directors of each departmental office within the organization, including the Offices of: Sustainability (OS); Human Resources (HR); Fiscal Operations; Information Technology (IT); Facilities and Transportation (FT); Family Advancement and Opportunity (FAO); and Child Development (OCD).

Strategic Planning

In addition to the annual assessment, the Council develops a new five-year Strategic Plan every five years. For the current plan, the process spanned six months—April to September 2023—and was guided by the Director of Sustainability, a certified ROMA Trainer.

The planning team comprised the executive director and SLG, governing members, and staff. People Pinnacle, LLC, led by Susan Rogers, facilitated the process, helping the team broadly assess the needs of our constituents and community. This involved analyzing local, state, and national data on early childhood development, school readiness, housing, transportation, and other critical areas. People Pinnacle also administered an employee engagement survey and led focus groups designed to improve employee engagement and retention. The planning team then evaluated the feedback alongside state and national data trends.

At the Governance Board's annual retreat in July 2023, Susan Rogers led a session to review the current state data and findings of the analysis, which was finalized with the Board's input. Strategic priorities for the next five years were identified. A smaller writing team then translated

these findings into goals and outcomes that will guide the Council’s efforts to accomplish its mission.

The five-year Strategic Plan was approved by the Board of Directors in November 2023. Updates on its implementation and progress are provided regularly, with a minimum of ten updates per year through the Executive Director's Strategic Planning Updates and other reports. The Council also regularly collects data on all activities to assess participant needs, using empoWOR for program reporting.

Other input from community stakeholders. As expanded upon in section 2.c., agency staff convene or attend community meetings to discuss local concerns, often leading to new programs and partnerships. Additionally, the Council runs an annual internal planning process once per year, engaging staff, community members, and stakeholders to shape the upcoming year’s initiatives.

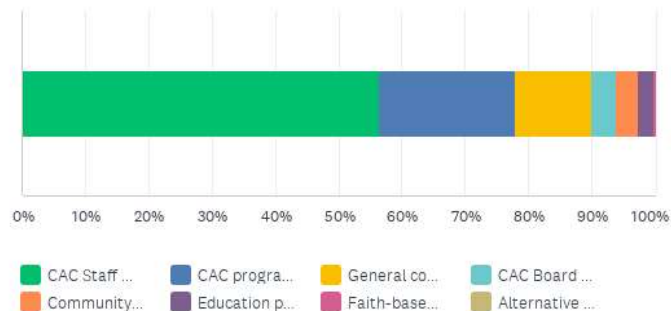
2.b Describe the methodology utilized to assure information is gathered from key sectors of the community to include: community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private sectors, public sectors and educational institutions. Please provide copies of surveys, survey summaries, minutes of the meetings, list of stakeholders organized by sector, and other tools such as newspaper articles advertising these meetings that are utilized in obtaining input from the community and consumers.

Methodology

The Council’s approach equips the Council to effectively respond to community priorities by leveraging internal capacities, engaging the broader local network, and identifying and addressing service gaps. A dedicated team developed the survey in both English and Spanish to ensure broad participation and to ensure input from community members, governing officials, and representatives across a wide range of key sectors within our four-county region, as outlined in the next section. Council staff were responsible for finalizing the survey questions.

Designed with a constituent-focused lens, the survey was distributed to adults living at or below the current CSBG-funded federal poverty level within the Council’s service area, as well as to Council board members, educational institutions, and public and private sector representatives. The graphic below illustrates how respondents identified their relationship with the Council.

Q28 Which of the following best describes your relationship with Community Action Council?
(Choose one. Please pick the descriptor that best fits you.)



This Community Assessment utilizes primary and secondary data to provide a comprehensive portrait of communities. Primary data utilized for this Assessment features responses to survey questionnaires completed by the Council's stakeholders, including faculty, administrative staff, community partners, and parents of children enrolled in the Council's early childhood education programs. Survey questions were designed to identify specific needs and challenges families face, areas of concern within the broader community, and the accessibility and availability of resources within the communities served. Questionnaires were administered either directly online through SurveyMonkey or through paper forms distributed and collected by Council staff, with responses subsequently entered into SurveyMonkey to allow aggregation.

The design of the Survey represents a concerted effort to provide consumers with a series of concepts for them to consider when identifying needs in the community. The team selected more than 80 needs statements used to trigger responses. Additionally, the survey respondents were given the opportunity to identify "other" needs not presented in the tool. Typically, other needs identified in a survey will not have the same statistical weight as those presented in the Survey. The results can minimize the actual need for these resources simply because they were not offered as choices.

Internally aggregated 2024-2025 Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA) Reports provide comprehensive data on the programming, staff, children, and families served by CSBG. All CSBG grant recipients must submit quarterly ROMA reports to the state accountability office for monitoring.

Secondary data refers to information from multiple external sources as listed and described below under “Data Sources.” The data found in this report reflects the most recently available figures.

Note on the determination of poverty rates:

For consistency, American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates (ACS 5YE) is the principal source utilized for reporting poverty rates and related economic data in this Assessment. SAIPE's poverty rate estimates are not available at the level of individual census tracts, which are used to define some of the Council's catchments; further, its estimates of poverty for children under age five are not available below the statewide level. Therefore, in the interest of internal consistency and comparability across catchments, this Assessment utilizes ACS 5YE poverty estimates at all geographic levels.

Data Sources

Community Action Council Community Needs Assessment, 2020–2021 (2020).

This is a multi-phase community assessment conducted by Advantage Consulting on behalf of Community Action Council. The assessment process consisted of intentional stakeholder engagement, several modes of data collection (surveys, focus groups, and interviews) and subsequent analysis, and action planning for addressing community priorities by building on the strengths of the agency and the greater local service ecosystem and by filling service gaps.

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps (2024). Accessible at www.countyhealthrankings.org.

County Health Rankings & Roadmaps organizes and presents multiple health factors and health-relevant indicators at the county level, collected from multiple sources to facilitate comparisons and track progress over time.

Program Recruitment Reports. (2024). [Data File].

This source contains the number of funded and enrolled slots per Council-affiliated HS program (including Regional HS and EHS, South Central HS and EHS, and EHS CCP). Updated in January 2025, these reports were used to determine the number of funded

slots per county/catchment, as well as to update the Council-Affiliated Regulated Provider table.

Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services. Kentucky Child Care Provider Search.

Accessed January 2025. Accessible at https://kynect.ky.gov/benefits/s/program-page?program=CC&language=en_US

The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services provides a full, up-to-date listing of all regulated childcare providers with information about location, capacity, age groups served, quality rating, and CCAP participation.

Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYStats). Early Childhood Profile. (2024). [Public Access Data

File]. Accessible at <https://kystats.ky.gov/Reports/Reports>

The Early Childhood Profile data file provides statewide and county-level information about kindergarten readiness assessment results, third-grade math and reading proficiency results, availability and quality of regulated childcare providers, First Steps enrollment, enrollment in early care and education programs, family and health characteristics, and programming. The most recent data available in the 2024 ECP used for this report ranges from 2020 to 2023.

Kentucky Youth Advocates. Kentucky KIDS COUNT Data Center. Accessed January 2025.

Accessible at <https://kyyouth.org/data/>.

Kentucky Youth Advocates provides state- and county-level data relevant to child well-being that is collected from state and local sources and nationally from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Updates compiled by the Annie E. Casey Foundation reflecting Teen Birth Rates, Percentage of Preterm Babies, and Children in Out of Home Care utilize ACS 5YE data.

U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census.

To examine census tract updates and longitudinal population growth compared to the previous decennial census, data from the 2020 Census was retrieved from Summary File 1, accessible through <https://data.census.gov/>.

U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2023 American Community Survey (ACS) Five-Year Estimates.

This source provides estimates of demographic indicators based on American Community Survey data collected between January 1, 2018, and December 31, 2023. The Census Bureau notes that these estimates are best used for examining census tracts and other small geographies.

U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Program. State and County Estimates for 2023.

The SAIPE program provides single-year estimates of poverty and median household income and poverty for states and all counties based on American Community Survey data in combination with other data.

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

National and state unemployment figures were obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics as determined from the Current Population Surveys. County-level data was obtained from Local Area Unemployment Statistics (2023 Annual Averages).

Kentucky Department of Education.

State homeless counts were obtained from “Homeless Children and Youth Data Collection and Reporting, Homeless Student Counts by District and Grade for 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24” and the most recent available Assessment Data reports, accessible through <https://education.ky.gov/>.

2.c Describe collaborative efforts with other community service organizations regarding the community needs assessment process.

Each year, survey questions are developed and reviewed by an internal team to ensure they are clear, relevant, and aligned with assessment goals. Once finalized, the assessment is converted into a digital format and translated into Spanish to increase accessibility. Survey links and promotional flyers are then shared with community partners, many of whom complete the survey based on their professional expertise and direct service experience. These partners also play a

key role in distributing the survey to the individuals and families they assist, helping to ensure broad and representative participation.

The charts below provide a county-level overview of key community partners, along with a breakdown by sector. While not exhaustive, these lists reflect the wide range of organizations with whom Council staff regularly collaborate.

FAYETTE COUNTY	
• BCTC Ready to Work • Lexington Parks and Recreation • Bluegrass Re-Entry Council • LEX CHIP	• Jubilee Jobs • New Vista • Lexington Leadership Foundation (Fatherhood Initiative) • UK College of Social Work
BOURBON COUNTY	
• Bluegrass Care Navigator • Bourbon County Preschool	• Paris-Bourbon County Health Department • Bourbon County Judge Executive
HARRISON COUNTY	
• Greenhouse17 • Jackie's House • WEDCO (HANDS Program) • Hope's Helping Hands • Harrison County Judge Executive	• Harrison County Fiscal Court • Mountain Comprehensive Care • Cynthiana Public Library
NICHOLAS COUNTY	
• Nicholas County Extension Office • Maysville Community and Technical College	• God's Pantry Food Bank • Nicholas County Public Schools

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS	
• Kentucky Equal Justice Center • Urban League of Lexington–Fayette County • Bluegrass Care Navigators • Kentucky Career Center	• MediaLex • Bluegrass Care Navigators • New Vista • GreenHouse17

PRIVATE SECTOR	
• Cynthiana–Harrison County Chamber of Commerce • One Lexington	• Carlisle–Nicholas County Chamber of Commerce
PUBLIC SECTOR	
• Global Lex, Office of the Mayor, Lexington–Fayette Urban County Government • Lexington–Fayette Urban County Government	• Harrison County Fiscal Court • Lexington–Fayette County Health Department
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	
• Bourbon County Middle and High Schools • Nicholas County FRYSC.	• Maysville Community and Technical College • Fayette County Public Schools
FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS	
• Kentucky Refugee Ministries	• Local church ministries

2.d Describe community strengths and needs, including other service agencies that provide services meeting the community needs in each of the following areas (KRS 273.443):

As noted earlier, the Council continuously evaluates community strengths and needs through multiple strategies to gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing low-income residents in its geographic area.

For the most recent Strategic Plan, a wide range of data informed the assessment, including customer satisfaction and parent surveys, empowOR reports, U.S. Census data, and information from sources like Kentucky’s Office of Employment and Training.

Other Service Agencies

EDUCATION	
• Community Action Council • Early Childhood Education • Local sports classes • Local libraries • Salvation Army • YMCA: after-school and other youth programs	• Boys and Girls Clubs • Family and Youth Resource Centers (FYRCs) • Future Homemakers of America • Financial aid and scholarships (e.g., KEES-Kentucky Education Excellence Scholarships, FAFSA)

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

- Community Action Council: Early Childhood Education
- Common Good
- Family Care Center (LFUCG)
- Fayette County Public Schools — Preschool
- First Steps
- Private daycares and churches
- The Nest
- Nathaniel Mission
- Family Resource Center
- First 5 Lex
- HANDS

CHILDCARE

- Early Childhood Education
- Childcare Council of Kentucky
- Michelle P. Waiver Program (with disabilities)
- Family Care Center
- WECEP
- The Nest

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- Community Action Council: Early Childhood Education, Parent Council, volunteer opportunities
- County Attorney
- Homemakers (e.g., Nicholas County Homemakers)
- High-school civics classes

EMPLOYMENT

- Community Action Council
- Employment center in Lexington for resume building and job search
- Jubilee Jobs
- Maxwell Church
- Seventh-Day Adventist Church
- Amazon hiring office
- Online Search/Resources (e.g., Facebook, Indeed, Score)
- Local Labor office
- Federated Bus Transportation
- Unemployment office

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

- Community Action Council: Fatherhood Initiative
- Job fairs
- Kentucky Career Center
- Lexington Rescue Mission
- Public libraries
- The Life Center
- Bluegrass Career Services
- Goodwill Industries
- Jubilee Jobs
- K.T.A.P./Ready to Work
- OWL
- The Life Center
- Vocational Rehabilitation

HEALTH

- Community Action Council
- Catholic Action Center: food
- Dental programs in schools
- High schools (counselors from University of Kentucky)
- Health Department: smoking-cessation classes
- God's Pantry Food Bank
- Shiloh Church
- Baby Health for Children
- Medicaid office
- Family Youth Resource Center (FYRC): food pantry, PPE, outreach
- Health First Bluegrass (dental)

HOUSING

- Community Action Council: LIHEAP (energy assistance, housing assistance)
- Catholic Action Center: rent, water bills
- Housing Authority*
- Maxwell Presbyterian Church
- Southland Christian Church: rent
- United Way 2-1-1: resource and referral
- Catholic Diocese of Lexington
- Love Fund: rent
- Salvation Army
- Centenary United Methodist Church

INCOME AND ASSET BUILDING

- Community Action Council
- Credit Karma app
- Lexington–Fayette Urban County Government: REACH
- County Attorney’s office
- Nicholas County Bank
- Housing Authority
- Community Ventures: Housing and budgeting

SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION AND PROTECTION

- Community Action Council
- Urban League of Lexington–Fayette County
- Local Community Centers
- NAACP
- The Nest
- Schools
- Family Resource Centers
- ACLU
- Lexington Fair Housing Council
- Maxwell Legal Clinic
- Central Kentucky Council for Peace and Justice

INFORMATION ABOUT ASSOCIATIONS, BOARDS, AND OTHER CIVIC GROUPS

- CivicLex
- Facebook
- Lexington–Fayette Urban County Government
- Get on Board
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- United Way 2-1-1

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Commerce Lexington
- Hope Center
- Lexfun4kids
- School Systems
- Volunteer Match
- United Way, including 2-1-1
- Common Good
- KTAP
- Nathaniel Mission
- Websites of nonprofits, churches, and other organizations with volunteer opportunities

PAYING FOR EDUCATION

- Community Action Council: continuing education for staff
- Bluegrass Community and Technical College (tuition-free courses)
- Pell Grants
- Free GED assistance and testing
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Job Corps
- FAFSA
- KTAP/Get Ready to Work
- Scholarship programs
- Early Childhood Education
- KEES

PARENTING SKILLS PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Action Council: Fatherhood Initiative (24/7 Dads) • AJ Novick Group: online parenting course • Bluewaters • Facebook groups • Families in Transition • Beyond Birth • The Nest • KVC Kentucky • Pathways Family Coaching • First Steps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Care Center: HANDS, Parent Education Program • Health Department • Mending Point/Strengthening Families • Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky • Step by Step • Family Resource Center • Fayette County Public Schools: Family Resources • Sky Families |
|---|---|

FAMILY CARE (IF A FAMILY MEMBER BECOMES ILL OR DISABLED)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bluegrass Care Navigators • Home healthcare agencies • KTAP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kentucky Department for Community Based Services (DCBS.) • Health Department |
|---|---|

FOOD RESOURCES AND ASSISTANCE

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DV shelters and outreach • Food Bank • GleanKY • Health Department • Step by Step • UK Food Extension Office: dietician classes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fayette County Public Schools • FoodChain • God's Pantry Food Bank • SNAP/WIC/food stamps • The Nest |
|--|--|

DENTAL CARE

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Action Council (birth to 5 years old) • Lexington Rescue Mission • Nathaniel Mission | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthfirst Bluegrass • Medicaid • Southland Christian Dental Clinic (refugees) • UK Health Dental Clinic |
|--|--|

PAYING FOR RENT OR UTILITIES

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Action Council • CRISIS/LIHEAP • Lexington Rescue Mission • Local churches (e.g., Maxwell Presbyterian) • Step by Step • The Life Center • VOA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christians in the Community • Greenhouse for DV • Lexington–Fayette Urban County Government: Community and Resident Services • Salvation Army • Tenant Services • United Way |
|--|---|

REDUCING ENERGY COSTS AND WEATHERIZATION

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Action Council and its Neighborhood Centers • Columbia Gas WarmWise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat for Humanity • Kentucky Utilities (KU.) WeCare Program • VOA |
|--|--|

HOMEOWNERSHIP ASSISTANCE

• Banks and financial institutions • Lexington–Fayette Urban County Government: REACH	• Community Ventures • Habitat for Humanity Goodwill Industries
SAVING MONEY, HOUSEHOLD BUDGETING, AND CREDIT REPAIR/IMPROVEMENT ASSISTANCE	
• Community Action Council and its Neighborhood Centers • Money Canvas (free resource through Thrivent Financial) • Bluegrass Career Services • Community Ventures • Jubilee Jobs • The Nest	• Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence (KCADV) • Apprisen • BB&T Bank Bus • Goodwill Industries • Junior Achievement • KVC Kentucky • Public libraries

2.d.i Services and activities having a measurable and potentially major impact on causes of poverty in the community or those areas of the community where poverty is a particularly acute problem:

Each of the Council’s neighborhood community centers operates within a collaborative network of agencies that provide a broad range of services to meet community needs. Within this network, the Council fulfills a dual role: delivering direct anti-poverty programming while also serving as a catalyst for innovation and program development.

The Council supports individuals and families by connecting them to appropriate resources—either through its own programs or through referrals to trusted partner agencies. It directly administers services that address root causes of poverty, including income stability, financial literacy, early childhood education, employment readiness, housing security, and pathways to self-sufficiency. Center Managers and program staff play a critical role in guiding participants through these services. When referrals are made, staff conduct follow-up to ensure needs are addressed promptly and that services are responsive to each individual’s circumstances.

At the same time, the Council leverages its presence within neighborhoods and counties to expand available resources by securing funding, strengthening partnerships, and developing new initiatives that address identified service gaps.

This dual approach is exemplified through the Council's partnership with God's Pantry Food Bank, one of Kentucky's largest food distribution organizations serving more than 40 counties. The Council not only connects eligible individuals and families to food assistance, but also operates a God's Pantry distribution site five days a week in Fayette County and coordinates monthly food distribution events in Nicholas County.

Additionally, the Council continues to develop targeted initiatives to address areas where poverty is especially concentrated. Since 2023, it has served as the grants administrator for the City of Lexington's Gun Violence Prevention program. Beginning in FY27, the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government is expected to allocate up to \$150,000 annually to support projects aimed at reducing gun violence among youth and young adults ages 10–29.

In this role, the Council designed and manages the digital grant application system, oversees the intake and evaluation process, and provides funding recommendations to One Lexington. Through these efforts, more than two dozen grassroots organizations have received funding to implement community-based violence prevention strategies.

2.d.ii Activities designed to assist low-income participants including the elderly poor:

1. To secure and retain meaningful employment; the Council will provide:

- Enhanced case management to understand the employment needs of the community and connect our participants to those opportunities, but also address their individual needs such as resume-building and interview preparation;
- A Commercial Driver's License (Class B) coursework, leading to a permit and license, along with assistance from the Training Instructor for job placement.
- Promotion and participation in community career and job fairs, such as those hosted by Goodwill Industries of Kentucky, Jubilee Jobs and Kentucky Career Center, in addition to directly hosting its own;
- Coordination with the Kentucky Career Center to promote new and existing short-term job training programs to eligible participants; these training programs are those

designed to lead to a successful credential or certification and living-wage employment;

- Individual-focused programs that address employment, including youth-focused initiatives such as Project LIFE, funded by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS);
- Active community entities (individuals, businesses, other) that are engaged in activities and are sensitive to the issues of individuals with low-income;
- Financial workshops comprising individual sessions with topics designed to increase financial stability and employment and skills needed in the workplace. Topics consist of financial literacy, credit scoring, computer skills, resume building, etc.

2. To attain an adequate education, the Council will provide:

- Access to assistance to earn a General Education Diploma (GED), post-secondary education, and financial aid through Kentucky Community & Technical College System or other local institution;
- Collaboration with the local Family Resource and Youth Service Centers in public schools to address the needs of students as identified by the youth officers;
- Collaboration with Bluegrass Community and Technical College, including high-tech child development classrooms that utilize technology to stream video of early childhood classrooms to BCTC for instructional use in the college's early childhood programs;
- Substantial partnerships in early childhood development between its own early childhood education programs, the Child Care Council of Kentucky, and the public school districts for Fayette County and Nicholas County;
- A short-term, intensive Commercial Driver's License (Class B) coursework
- Project Learning Independence, Fostering Empowerment (Project LIFE): With funding from CHFS, this statewide program offers case management to youth aging

out of foster care to assist them in becoming self-sufficient. Since 2020, the Council has also operated the housing component for youth in this program;

- Assistance to community-wide, collaborative anti-truancy and anti-bullying initiatives led by One Lexington to impact community unrest and violence and the high percentage of students identified as "chronically truant."

3. To make better use of available income, the Council will provide:

- Various programs addressing education, employment income, and resource management;
- Financial Empowerment, which consists of consumer credit counseling, and partnerships with local banking institutions;
- Opportunities for consumers to learn if they qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit and assistance with tax preparation through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, offered as part of a partnership with CKEEP and United Way of the Bluegrass;

4. To obtain and maintain adequate housing and a suitable living environment (prevent homelessness), the Council will provide:

- Tenant education and linkage to information and resources offered by the Kentucky Fair Housing Council;
- Rental (including deposits), utility assistance (including electric, gas, and water as available);
- Connections to local legal aid to reduce the number of eviction filings;
- Weatherization that extends beyond the federally-funded Weatherization Assistance Program, including the utility-funded WeCare and WarmWise programs, other opportunities for improving home energy efficiency;
- Community-wide planning and implementation of programs to combat homelessness and address a full spectrum of needs through Lexington's Continuum of Care and Kentucky Housing Corporation's Balance of State;

- Transitional or permanent housing projects in all counties of the service area (see page 31 of this narrative for additional detail);
- Units of affordable housing for seniors through the Shepherd Place complex in Nicholas County.
- Street outreach to those experiencing unsheltered homelessness and wraparound care to those experiencing substance use disorders;
- Affordable housing, through 14 scattered-site units through Fayette County, and multiple housing programs in our services areas;

5. To obtain emergency services through one-time payments or short-term loans to meet immediate needs and urgent individual and family needs, including health services, nutritious food, housing, and employment-related services, the Council will provide or ensure:

- A comprehensive partnership with God's Pantry Food Bank for emergency food in Fayette and Nicholas Counties, and partnerships with local churches and local pantries in Bourbon and Harrison Counties;
- Supplemental resources to LIHEAP for families through programs such as the WinterCare Energy Fund;
- Access to eligible households to all available rental and utility assistance through grant funds as well as private contributions, such as those made by Kentucky Utilities;
- Involvement of faith-based organizations, such as the Black Church Coalition and rural ministerial associations;
- Availability of temporary and transitional housing from public and private entities and programs;

6. To provide nutritious supplies or services that may be needed to counteract conditions of starvation and malnutrition, the Council will provide:

- Referral relationship with God's Pantry Food Bank for emergency food program;
- Access to a Mobile Food Market through the Council's early childhood education programs, or through a partnership with Black Soil and the University of Kentucky's Agricultural Department;
- Education on nutritious and economical food shopping through early childhood education programming;

7. To achieve greater participation in the affairs of the community, the Council will provide or ensure:

- Four urban neighborhood and three rural community comprehensive service delivery centers, each with an Advisory Council or similar community-based stakeholder convening.
- Participation in neighborhood associations and resident councils;
- Program participants are members of the Board of Directors, Policy Council, and Volunteer Advisory Council, among others;
- Participation in local planning and civic involvement projects by constituents, including preparing participants to meet with local and statewide elected officials.

8. To remove obstacles and solve problems by establishing comprehensive, long term programs of family development, which will help achieve goals, solve problems, and maintain self-sufficiency, the Council will ensure:

- Collaborative planning with other agencies;
- Funds for child care;
- Access to transportation;
- Expansion of work-readiness programs designed to assist participants in obtaining living wage jobs

9. To provide on an emergency basis for the provision of goods or services, health care and related services, as may be needed to assure good health care, the Council will provide or ensure:

- Participant enrollment in SNAP, K-CHIP and Medicaid;
- Medical and dental screening and treatment for all enrolled early childhood education children;
- Programming for enrolled children with or eligible for IEPs and IFSPs;
- Oral health screening and education program for enrolled early childhood education children and families;
- Prenatal and Well Baby screenings and care for expectant mothers and newborn babies;
- Assisted referrals for prescriptions;
- Access to health coverage in each of its four core service areas;
- Women Infant and Children provides expectant parents with supplemental foods designed to meet their special nutritional needs.

2.d.iii To ensure the coordination, and to establish linkages between governmental and other social programs to assure the effective delivery of such services to low-income individuals; (Some examples: FRYSC, hospitals, fire department, sheriff's department, etc.), the Council does and will continue to:

- Be an active member of other councils and meetings;
- Engage with local law enforcement and other officials in each county or catchment areas;
- Collaborate with the CHFS/DCBS;
- Receive funding from CHFS to operate Project LIFE; a collaborative effort facilitated by the Council across the state;

- Ensure local government representation on its Board of Directors;
- Ensure that each neighborhood center works with Family Resource and Youth Service Centers (FRYSC) in its catchment area;
- Ensure its Executive Director leads and serves as part of a CEO Roundtable, a regular meeting of leaders from local community-based businesses and nonprofit organizations;
- Encourage participation of local police departments and judge executives in the Council's strategic planning process.

2.d.iv To ensure the involvement of entities in the private sector of the community in efforts to ameliorate poverty in the community; (Some examples: Credit Union, Banks, United Way, and other private foundations), the Council does and will continue to:

- Serve as a member or otherwise participate in the chambers of commerce in all communities;
- Explore ways it can partner with local bank institutions to utilize Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) credits, such as for affordable housing;
- Reserve private sector representation on the Board of Directors, including local banks, universities, and other private organizations;
- Develop relationships and partnerships with private sector entities for service programs, many of which have been mentioned in other parts of this document, including the Blue Grass Community Foundation, PNC Bank, Columbia Gas of Kentucky, United Way of the Bluegrass, Kentucky Utilities, Central Bank, Traditional Bank, and the law firm of McBrayer, McGinnis, Leslie, & Kirkland;
- Offer community education/public awareness events, such as participation as part of CivicLex's meetings. In 2026, the Council will host its sixth Fall Sneaker Ball, a fundraising and community education event sponsored by local private and public organizations, and specifically several banking institutions.

2.d.v Regarding the development, promotion, and ways to encourage economic development activities, which result in assisting low-income persons to become economically productive members of their community; (Advisory Boards, city governments, Child Care Centers, & Chamber of Commerce), the Council does and will continue to:

- Participate with the Council in CivicLex, a civic education organization that is making local public policy accessible to the community;
- Invite participants to meetings with local and state elected officials to share directly about their lived experiences and to be part of the solutions to address their concerns;
- Encourage participants to take on roles of leadership in our advisory and community meetings.
- Expand the Economic and Child Care Opportunities (ECCO+) program to assist community members to quickly earn nationally-recognized workforce credentials.

2.d.vi To ensure the provision of education, counseling and technical assistance on compliance with equal opportunity legislation for individuals and community organizations, both public and private, the Council does and will continue to:

Provide directly, or with the help of partners such as the Kentucky Fair Housing Council, education for participants on their rights, especially tenants' rights. The Council will also continue its partnership with the Human Rights Commission to ensure information regarding fair and equitable treatment/rights is communicated to its staff and the community.

2.e Describe the key findings identified in your community needs Assessment based on the causes and conditions of poverty and the needs of the entire service area. The key findings should outline the prioritized needs, the level of need, as well as causes associated with the need.

Key Findings

Community need assessments are essential for identifying gaps in resources that consumers believe are needed. It also helps to validate and affirm the presence of other resources that exist in the community. The design of the Survey represents a concerted effort to provide consumers

with a series of concepts for them to consider when identifying needs in the community. The team selected more than 80 needs statements used to trigger responses. Additionally, the survey respondents were given the opportunity to identify “other” needs not presented in the tool. Typically, other needs identified in a survey will not have the same statistical weight as those presented in the Survey, and the results can minimize the actual need for these resources simply because they were not offered as choices.

In total, the Council received 686 responses to all survey tools (including its early childhood education survey). Responses from counties outside of the four regional counties were removed from the answer pool, leaving 406 responses. Counties removed were predominantly from south central Kentucky, including Madison, Rockcastle, Jackson, and others.

Across the four-county region, the top five needs within each of the six focus areas are identified as follows:

Employment	Percentage
Childcare	74.07
Job search assistance (finding good jobs, resume writing, help to fill out applications)	60.79
Quickly gaining job skills and certifications (CDL license, lineman training, etc.)	55.60
Transportation assistance (getting to and from work)	51.04
On-the-job training, job shadowing, or job mentoring programs	35.48
Housing	Percentage
More affordable housing units	66.80
Rent/mortgage payment assistance	63.60
Utility bill assistance (water, natural gas, etc.)	59.20
Homeownership assistance programs and services	40.40
Homeless services (emergency shelter, transitional housing)	38.60
Health and Social Behavioral Development (Includes Nutrition)	Percentage
Finding affordable health insurance	65.70
Affordable dental health services (finding a dentist, paying for services)	56.55
Mental health care for children/teens (counseling, substance use treatment, anger management, suicide prevention)	55.93
Mental health care for adults (counseling, substance use treatment, anger management, suicide prevention)	53.43
Medical transportation (getting to and from medical appointments, etc.)	50.52

Education and Cognitive Development	Percentage
Support for parents to better manage child behaviors (setting limits, managing conflicts, etc.)	54.77
More activities for children outside of school hours (after school or summer programs, etc.)	48.96
Earning a GED or high school completion	48.13
Trade or vocational courses	45.85
Preparing teenagers for education or training after school	43.57
Income Infrastructure and Asset Building	Percentage
Debt Relief	63.62
Assistance creating and managing a household budget	61.18
Learning how to save money	56.50
Assistance improving credit scores	54.47
Retirement/long-term care planning	38.01
Civic Engagement and Community Involvement	Percentage
Understanding how taxes work/Income tax filing assistance	56.25
Learning the rights and responsibilities of a citizen	49.57
Learning more about how local government works	46.77
Getting involved in neighborhood associations, community boards, advisory groups or similar organizations	41.16
Feeling safer in my community	40.52
Overall Need	Percentage
Employment	74.07
Housing	66.80
Health and Social Behavioral Development	55.30

To compare across categories, we looked at the single most critical need within each major area—Employment, Housing, Health & Social Behavioral Development, Education & Cognitive Development, Income Infrastructure & Asset Building, and Civic Engagement—using the highest percentage of respondents who selected a need in each category. This approach lets us rank the categories by how strongly the community identified their top concern, providing a clear sense of which areas are viewed as most important overall.

The Council's expertise tells us that as an agency we must address the causes and conditions of poverty with a blend of short-term and long-term solutions that will have a positive effect on current household income while simultaneously offering programs that may help improve long-term earning potential and reduce reliance on government funding. To do this, the Council will

do two central things: develop its own programming and work alongside community-based partners to address family and community need.

- **Employment—Family and Community Level Need:** Overall, responses indicate that employment-related needs are both high and interconnected. Child care emerged as the most significant need across all categories, alongside strong demand for job search assistance, workforce training and certifications, and transportation to and from work. These findings suggest that families are seeking practical supports that enable consistent workforce participation and access to better employment opportunities.
- **Education and Cognitive Development—Family Level Need:** The pattern of responses reflects moderate but widespread educational needs. While no single issue overwhelmingly stands out, respondents identified a range of supports as important, including assistance for parents in managing child behavior, access to enrichment opportunities for children, and pathways to high school completion, job training, and post-secondary education. This suggests a broad interest in strengthening educational outcomes at multiple stages.
- **Income Infrastructure and Asset Building—Family Level Need:** Responses indicate a broad need for financial stability supports. High-priority areas include debt relief, budgeting assistance, saving strategies, and credit improvement. Compared to other categories, needs in this area are consistently reported across multiple items, suggesting that many individuals are seeking tools and resources to build long-term financial security.
- **Housing—Family and Community Level Need:** Survey responses highlight a strong demand for affordable housing and related supports. The most pressing needs include increasing the availability of affordable housing units, assistance with rent or mortgage payments, and help with utility costs. While other housing supports are needed, the data suggest that cost burden and housing affordability are the most critical challenges facing households.
- **Health and Social Behavioral Development (includes Nutrition)—Community Level Need:** Respondents identified strong demand for affordable health insurance, dental care, and mental health services for both children and adults. Access-related barriers, such as transportation to medical appointments and availability of services, were also frequently noted. These findings

indicate that both affordability and access to care remain significant challenges within the community.

- **Civic Engagement and Community Involvement—Family, Agency, and Community Level Need:** Overall, responses show a moderate but steady interest in civic knowledge and community involvement. The most common need identified was help understanding taxes and accessing tax filing support, along with learning more about civic rights and how local government works. People also expressed interest in getting more involved in their communities through local groups, boards, and volunteer opportunities. While this category didn't have as many high-priority responses as others, the results suggest there's still a meaningful opportunity to build awareness, confidence, and participation at the community level.
- **Services Supporting Multiple Domains—Agency and Community Level Need:** Overall, the pattern of responses suggests there is a demand for increased access and help accessing mental health programming, child support, among others.
- **Linkages—Family and Agency Level Need:** In the upcoming year, the Council plans to assess and evaluate its relationships and partnerships to ensure resources and programming is maximized to serve our constituents.
- **Agency Capacity—Agency Level Need:** To provide the programs and initiatives identified in this plan, the Council must consider the cost of communications and information technology for staff based on the cost of FTE by location (phone systems) and IT software and hardware maintenance, along with postage.
- *Causes Associated with Need*

The Council's comprehensive community needs assessment not only identifies key areas of concern but also explores the underlying causes contributing to those needs. Presented below is a selection of insights drawn from that broader analysis.

Employment. It is hardly surprising that employment is contingent upon available and affordable childcare and is cited as a top concern among survey respondents in the region. A 2024 survey from Kentucky Youth Advocates found that one in four Kentucky parents struggle to find childcare when they need it, and 30 percent of responding parents reported having to leave the workforce altogether due to a lack of childcare. According to Dustin Pugel of the

Kentucky Center for Economic Policy, more than half of Kentucky's workforce are parents, and over a third are parents to young children; he further estimates that the state loses approximately \$1.2 billion annually in economic activity due to insufficient childcare access. At the same time, rising costs of basic needs and ongoing uncertainty in global economic conditions continue to increase the demand for stable employment and higher wages within the community. Despite these pressures, labor force participation across the region has remained steady or has increased slightly, with participation rates for both the overall 16+ population and the prime working-age group (25–64) showing minimal change since the previous report, typically varying by only 1–2%. Among individuals living in poverty, participation has seen modest gains, while unemployment rates have generally declined slightly—by about 1%—across most areas. Notably, Bourbon County experienced a significant decrease in unemployment among people in poverty, dropping from 21% to 9%.

Education and Cognitive Development. Education needs across the region highlight a growing focus on both family support and student preparedness. Survey respondents most frequently identified the need for help for parents in managing behavior and setting boundaries, along with expanded out-of-school opportunities such as after-school and summer programs. Other key priorities include earning a GED or completing high school, accessing trade or vocational training, and better preparing teenagers for life after graduation. While many of these needs remain consistent with previous years, the increased emphasis on parenting support marks a notable shift. Kindergarten readiness trends are mixed, with some counties seeing declines while others, like Bourbon County, experienced improvements, and overall engagement among families in early childhood programs remains strong. Academic performance presents ongoing challenges, as math proficiency shows uneven progress and reading proficiency continues to decline in most counties, signaling persistent learning gaps. At the same time, participation in early intervention services for young children with developmental needs is gradually increasing, and the region's population of non-English speakers remains relatively stable. Adult education outcomes have changed only slightly, with small increases in high school completion rates and more variation in college attainment, particularly between urban and rural areas. There is a need for stronger educational supports across the lifespan—from early childhood through adulthood—along with continued investment in both academic success and family stability.

Income Infrastructure and Asset Building. Income and asset-building challenges in the region continue to reflect growing financial strain for many households. Survey respondents identified debt relief, budgeting assistance, and learning how to save money as the most critical needs, along with improving credit scores and planning for retirement or long-term care. Notably, debt relief rose sharply to become the top concern in 2026, while access to low-interest loans dropped out of the top five. At the same time, the cost of living continues to outpace income growth, with the average living wage across the region reaching about \$41.75 per hour—far above both the poverty wage of \$12.81 for a household with one adult and two children and the median incomes in every county. Although median household and per capita incomes have increased since the previous report, they still fall short of what is needed to meet basic living costs. As a result, more households are relying on public assistance programs, with participation in SNAP and WIC rising across all counties and significant increases in child enrollment, particularly in Fayette County. Meanwhile, participation in programs like KTAP and SSI has remained relatively stable. The trends highlight the ongoing gap between earnings and expenses, and the continued need for financial supports and resources to help families build stability and long-term security.

Housing. When you look at the data, it's clear that housing challenges continue to shape everyday life for many people in the region. Most survey respondents pointed to the same core needs—more affordable housing, help with rent or mortgages, and assistance with utility bills—showing that these pressures haven't really let up. Even though some costs, like fair market rent, have only shifted slightly, they remain far out of reach for lower-income households, especially those earning around 30% of the area median income. At the same time, many families are still considered housing-burdened, and while there have been small improvements in some areas, more households are facing severe housing issues. Utility costs aren't helping either, with electric bills continuing to creep up across most counties. All of this contributes to a growing homelessness problem, with increases seen across the region—particularly in Fayette and Bourbon counties—and more families and students experiencing housing instability. What stands out most is how closely tied these issues are to income: low wages and rising rent are among the top reasons people lose housing, and even among those experiencing homelessness, many are still working full-time just trying to get by. Overall, the data paints a picture of a region where housing remains one of the most pressing and persistent challenges, affecting not just where people live, but their stability, health, and ability to move forward.

Health and Social Behavioral Development (including Nutrition). Health-related challenges in the region continue to center around affordability, access, and availability of care. The most commonly identified needs include finding affordable health insurance, access to dental services, and mental health care for both adults and children, along with reliable transportation to medical appointments. While these top concerns have remained consistent over time, their ranking has shifted slightly, reflecting ongoing pressure in multiple areas of the healthcare system. Provider availability remains relatively stable, though disparities persist across counties, with more rural areas facing significantly higher provider-to-population ratios. At the same time, food insecurity has increased slightly among the general population, even as child food insecurity has improved modestly, and more households are turning to assistance programs like SNAP and WIC—despite benefits still falling short of covering the full cost of a meal. Encouragingly, some maternal and child health outcomes are improving, including reductions in smoking during pregnancy and preterm births, though challenges remain for many families. While there are signs of progress in certain areas, the data highlights persistent gaps in affordability and access that continue to impact the health and well-being of the region’s residents.

Civic Engagement and Community Involvement. Civic engagement needs in the region reflect a growing desire for both knowledge and safety within communities. Survey respondents most frequently identified the need for help understanding taxes and accessing income tax filing assistance, followed by learning about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and gaining a better understanding of how local government works. Many also expressed interest in becoming more involved in community groups, such as neighborhood associations and advisory boards, as well as a need to feel safer in their communities. While community involvement was the top priority in 2025, it is the only need to remain in the top five in 2026, with increased emphasis now placed on civic knowledge and personal safety. Concerns about safety are underscored by broader trends, as firearm-related incidents remain a significant issue in Kentucky. Firearms are the leading cause of death for children in the state, with 841 gun-related deaths reported in 2023 alone, including homicides, suicides, and other incidents. Young people are disproportionately affected, accounting for more than half of gun-related homicides, and overall gun death rates have risen substantially over the past decade. These trends highlight the interconnected need for stronger civic awareness, community involvement, and public safety efforts across the region.

2.f Describe in detail the CSBG funded programs and activities to be performed in each, from the point of intake to termination of services when the service is client-oriented.

A little about the design of the Council

The Council has seven neighborhood/community centers strategically located in high-asset zip codes. Primarily, these centers are open Monday-Friday, from 8:30-5 PM, but as a nonprofit organization, the Council operates programs outside those times as well, particularly in the spring and summer.

The Council staff salaries paid with CSBG funding for FY27 amount to 6.05 FTE. This consists of a team of positions—detailed further in B3 and the budget narrative—such as management, administrative, case management, compliance, and program-specific roles that collectively assist with community resource delivery and operations. Operations are individualized by catchment area or county based on need and hyper-local community assets of all seven neighborhood centers. As part of those operations, the Center Manager and center staff are aided by Administrative Assistants, who are typically the first to greet and interact with the participants. Prevention Specialists are our staff members who directly assist neighborhood residents seeking assistance and who, among other things, are the individuals who conduct comprehensive assessments and linkages to resources, both internal and external, and their follow-up. Each of the seven neighborhood centers offers emergency programs like LIHEAP and other financial assistance, overseen by the Rapid Response Manager, with assistance from the Rapid Response Assistant.

The Economic Empowerment Coordinator is responsible for managing the Financial Empowerment Program, which runs in various cohorts of approximately six weeks throughout the year. Annually, the Council collaborates with the United Way of the Bluegrass to run the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. In addition to community volunteers, Council staff assist in processing hundreds of tax documents a year.

These staff members are assisted by the Director and Assistant Director of Office of Family Advancement and Opportunity (FAO, formerly OCS), who help oversee the implementation of the CSBG grant and other community-focused funding from federal, state, and local sources.

The assessment outputs highlight client-focused activities that occur from intake to programming termination. For all client-facing efforts, staff conduct a thorough assessment using a specialized tool designed to identify all areas of need, beyond just the immediate or emergency concern.

Linkages

The Council will facilitate activities aimed at enhancing community engagement for participants, such as referrals and leadership in advocacy, transportation, emergency assistance, and connecting individuals with additional community resources. Follow-up will ensure that participants receive and benefit from the assistance, and staff will continue identifying additional resources as needed.

Agency Capacity Building

The Council will focus on removing obstacles and addressing problems through comprehensive, long-term family development programs aimed at achieving goals and maintaining self-sufficiency. In response to workforce challenges, the Council will explore new recruitment strategies to strengthen its ability to meet community needs.

Income Infrastructure and Asset Building

The Council will engage participants in activities to optimize their available income, such as energy conservation and financial education. The Financial Empowerment Program helps participants improve financial management, reduce debt, and explore programs like SNAP, TANF, and VITA. Pathway Specialists will follow up to ensure successful engagement and identify further resources.

Employment

Council staff will assist participants in securing and maintaining meaningful employment through job assessments, readiness training, skills development, job search, interview

preparation, and referrals to vocational training. Follow-up will ensure successful engagement and identify additional resources that may benefit the participant.

Education and Cognitive Development

The Council will assist participants in obtaining a quality education through early childhood and youth programs, vocational training, educational opportunities, financial aid preparation, and tutoring. Staff will follow up to ensure engagement and identify additional resources as needed.

Housing

The Council's Office of Housing and Homeless division is integral to Lexington's homelessness response, offering winter shelter and assistance with securing permanent housing. Other housing initiatives consist of funding for security and utility deposits, affordable housing development, and weatherization to improve home energy efficiency.

Health and Social Behavioral Development (Includes Nutrition)

The Council will address health needs through the provision of commodities, emergency food, and nutrition education. It will also provide air conditioners to those at health risk during summer months, and make referrals to healthcare programs like KCHIP and local health departments. Additionally, the Council will assist households in accessing healthcare coverage through the Kynect program.

Civic Engagement and Community Involvement

Council staff will encourage participation in local community groups, neighborhood associations, and civic efforts. Participants will be involved in community planning, voter education, and advocacy, including efforts to reduce youth violence. The Council also implements local anti-violence initiatives through mini-grants to grassroots organizations.

Services Supporting Multiple Domains

The Council will assist participants in managing challenges, enhancing leadership skills, and preparing for employment. Participants will gain certifications and secure full-time employment, with follow-up to ensure success and continued identification of beneficial resources.

2.g Describe how your allocation will be targeted, based on your agency's community needs assessment and logic models. Your allocation of funds annotated on the B1, B3 and the NPIs should align with the results of your community needs assessment.

As described earlier, the CSBG service category allocation was based on an analysis of local need and available programming. Where possible, the Council has tried to allocate CSBG funding in a way that enhances programming being provided via other resources, such as community-based partners. In accordance with the Council's B1 and B3 for FY27, allocations for each category are as follows:

- 1. Employment** is prioritized because it directly impacts many of the region's most pressing challenges. While participation is stable and unemployment has slightly decreased, many individuals are still not earning enough to meet rising costs of living. Barriers like lack of affordable childcare also limit workforce participation. By investing in employment and higher wages, the agency can address root causes of financial instability, reducing needs in areas like housing, food, and health—making it the most effective area for the largest budget allocation. **This CSBG category is allocated at 19%.**
- 2. Housing** is prioritized because it is a widespread and urgent need, with many households struggling to afford rent, utilities, and stable housing. Even working families face costs that exceed their income, contributing to housing instability and rising homelessness. This priority is also closely tied to the range of programming available throughout the area. In addition to providing direct financial assistance for rent, security deposits, and sometimes utilities, the agency leverages strong partnerships with local housing authorities, the Urban League, REACH, Section 8 providers, Volunteers of America, and other organizations to address both immediate and long-term housing needs. The Council also supports families through the Continuum of Care with transitional housing and a focus on achieving permanent housing, reinforced by six-month follow-ups to promote stability. Additionally, the operation of Shepherd Place, a 20-unit apartment complex for eligible seniors supported in part by CSBG-funded staff, further strengthens the agency's ability to provide stable housing solutions. Together, these efforts help stabilize families and reduce strain in other areas like health and employment, making housing a critical

area for funding. **Facilitation of referrals and local contacts with other housing agencies is allocated at 17% for this CSBG service category.**

3. **Income Infrastructure and Asset Building** is prioritized because many households are struggling not just to earn income, but to manage it and achieve long-term financial stability. High levels of need around debt relief, budgeting, saving, and credit improvement highlight ongoing financial strain, even among those who are employed, especially as wages continue to fall short of the true cost of living. This priority area is strengthened by intensive family development programming supported through CSBG funding. The Council provides assessment, referral, and follow-up services to connect participants with more focused supports, along with consumer education programming that covers income management and offers Individual Development Accounts for those working toward savings goals. These efforts are enhanced through partnerships with organizations like United Way of the Bluegrass and credit counseling agencies, offering one-on-one coaching and culturally relevant resources. Pathway Specialists further assist participants in maximizing their available resources, while programs like the Earned Income Tax Credit and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance help low-income families secure additional income. Together, these strategies ensure that income gains translate into lasting financial stability, making this a critical area for investment. **This CSBG service category is being allocated at 17%.**
4. **Education and Cognitive Development** is prioritized because the data highlights ongoing needs in both student success and family support. Key concerns include helping parents manage and support their children, expanding out-of-school learning opportunities, and improving pathways to high school completion and workforce readiness. At the same time, mixed kindergarten readiness results and declining reading proficiency in several areas point to persistent gaps in early learning and academic achievement. By investing in education, the agency can address these challenges early and help set children and youth on a path toward long-term success. This work is strengthened by Prevention Specialists, who assist families in advancing their child's learning and development as part of school readiness preparation, ensuring that both

children and their caregivers are supported in building a strong educational foundation. **Allocation is at 10% for this service category.**

5. **Health and Social Behavioral Development (includes Nutrition)** is prioritized because the data highlights ongoing challenges with access to affordable healthcare, mental health services, and basic needs like food and transportation. Many families continue to struggle with securing health insurance, accessing dental and mental health care, and meeting nutritional needs, all of which directly impact overall well-being and stability. Addressing these needs is essential not only for individual health outcomes but also for supporting family stability and long-term success in other areas, such as education and employment. **Allocation is at 10% for this service category.**
6. **Linkages.** This priority area is supported through a range of coordinated services. Pathway Specialists serve as a central point for intake, information, and referrals to programs such as Medicaid, K-CHIP, and other health-related services. The Council also partners with the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department to improve access to care, particularly for families with young children enrolled in early childhood programs. In addition, Pathway Specialists help facilitate medical screenings and immunizations, while also connecting families to SNAP benefits, emergency food pantries, and nutrition and consumer education resources. The Council further strengthens this work through nutrition programming within its child development services. Together, these efforts address immediate health needs while promoting long-term wellness, making health and social development a critical area for investment. **Allocation is at 7% for this service category.**
7. **Agency Capacity Building** is prioritized to provide staff training and professional development, but also focuses on the recruitment of new staff by Human Resources. Staff vacancies are at an all-time high due to a myriad of factors facing the nonprofit sector, including low wages. **The Council is allocating this CSBG service category at 10%.**
8. **Linkages** serve as the seventh priority area and function as the foundational CSBG category that enables coordination across all other CSBG areas. By allocating resources to this category, the Council is able to coordinate both immediate and long-term efforts within the organization and across the broader community. This coordination extends

beyond CSBG-funded activities to those by other local, state, and federal programs managed by the Council. Using its comprehensive database, empoWOR, staff can help guide participants in identifying effective strategies to address their needs through the CSBG Service Plan. With a neighborhood-based approach to delivery, the Council also emphasizes the importance of community engagement and the development of civic capital as essential elements in addressing local challenges, including those reflected in the other CSBG priority areas. **The Council is allocating this CSBG service category at 7%.**

9. **Services Supporting Multiple Domains** is an eighth priority area. Often, our initial interaction with participants is as a result of an emergent or presenting need. Once the Council's Pathway Specialist have responded to that need, it is critical that our staff explore other opportunities to help participants become more self-sufficient. These opportunities often refer to access to coaching, skills assessment, and mentoring to achieve personal goals, such as gaining meaningful employment. **The Council is allocating this CSBG service category at 5%.**

10. **Civic Engagement and Community Involvement** is a ninth priority area. Each of the Council's five urban neighborhood and three rural community comprehensive has an advisory council. Participants are encouraged to participate in neighborhood associations and resident councils as well as on the Board of Directors, Policy Council, and Volunteer Advisory Council. The Council also facilitates people with low income in local planning and civic involvement projects, including its efforts to increase participation in voting-related matters or Census. **Allocation is at 5% for this service category.**

2.h Please give a detailed explanation if your allocation of funds does not align with your community needs assessment due to the leveraging of other funding streams, or private donations, etc. For example, if you have other funding to supplement a category or if the services are provided by another organization, please be specific and explain why less or no funding is allocated to a particular category.

The Council's expertise tells us that, as an agency, we must address the causes and conditions of poverty with a blend of short- and long-term solutions that will improve current household income while simultaneously offering services that may help improve long-term earning potential.

When carefully reviewing the data, the Council chose to prioritize income and asset building slightly above housing because the efforts we are and plan to make this year address the root causes of housing instability. While housing support is critical for immediate stabilization, the data consistently shows that many households struggle due to insufficient income, high debt, and limited financial management skills—even when they are employed. Without improving income stability and financial capability, housing assistance alone often becomes a short-term solution rather than a lasting one.

By focusing on income and asset building, the agency helps individuals increase earnings, reduce debt, improve credit, and build savings, which directly strengthens their ability to secure and maintain stable housing over time. These efforts also reduce long-term reliance on assistance programs, making them a more sustainable investment. In contrast, housing interventions often require ongoing financial support to maintain stability. Prioritizing income infrastructure slightly higher allows the agency to address the underlying financial pressures that contribute to housing insecurity.

Health and social behavioral development, while essential to overall well-being, receives a comparatively lower allocation because many of its services are supported through partnerships, referrals, and existing community resources rather than direct, high-cost financial assistance. The Council's role in this area is often to connect individuals to care and provide supportive services, making it less resource-intensive than direct housing or financial interventions

2.i Describe how CSBG staff are involved when your agency collaborates with other State funded programs or services such as WIOA, LIHEAP, Weatherization, etc.

The programs and assistance to be paid for by CSBG are not currently funded by the Commonwealth or other state and local agencies. The Council's CSBG-funded staff ensures that all participants have access to the Office of Employment and Training's One-Stop, operated by the State. The Council also collaborates with other programs that it operates directly (Weatherization, LIHEAP) both through the program development and intake processes. CSBG employees conduct intakes for direct enrollment and referral to these programs. CSBG also

provides for direct referral to other State and local programs, such as Child Care Assistance, by providing both referral and income verification.

2.j Specify plans for ensuring the coordination of and non-duplication of the agency's services and to support shared goals with other service providers. At minimum provide:

2.j.i Certification of the agency's willingness to share necessary client information and records within legal limitations and willingness to provide the leadership in arranging for a meeting, not less than two (2) times a year, of all social services agencies in the agency's geographic service area for the purpose of developing substantive interagency cooperation and assessing the social services currently being provided;

The Council remains actively engaged with local organizations and nonprofit networks, including the Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky, the Office of Homeless Prevention and Intervention Continuum of Care (Lexington-Fayette), and KHC Region 6 CoC meetings serving rural areas. Regular collaboration continues with key referral partners through ongoing meetings. Additionally, the Council's Executive Director and senior leadership team participate in several collaboratives and coalitions that frequently lead to interagency agreements.

Staff maintain regular case reviews and follow up with referral partners to coordinate efforts. Information is shared with other providers to help assess community needs consistently across the region, confirm eligibility, and reduce the risk of fraud.

2.j.ii Identification of activities the agency jointly pursues or coordinates with faith-based organizations, fatherhood programs, healthy marriage programs, rural development and/or One-Stop partnerships;

The Council actively pursues opportunities to strengthen partnerships with faith-based groups, involve fathers more deeply, and encourage healthy relationship initiatives. Current collaborations involve working with God's Pantry Food Bank to address food insecurity and

partnering with Consolidated Baptist Church to host staff training and family engagement events. In the past, the Council has received mini-grants for activities aimed at engaging fathers of enrolled early childhood children and remains focused on expanding father involvement. Additionally, the Council maintains referral partnerships with One-Stop partners in the region, such as the Bluegrass Area Development District.

2.j.iii Identification in describing the effective delivery of services offered by the agency with the collaboration of the DCBS Service Regions, to help prevent child maltreatment, promote quality foster care/adoption services, and assist vulnerable adults or low-income families. Describe how the services are mutually beneficial to your agency's clients.

The Council plays an active role in provider councils across all counties within its geographic area. These councils, which consist of agencies such as DCBS, foster collaboration and help prevent duplication of efforts. Additionally, the Council's Executive Director and the Service Region Administrator both serve on the county's CEO Roundtable.

Through a contract with DCBS, the Council delivers case management for youth transitioning out of the Foster Care system. Over the course of a year, the Council helps these young adults complete their education, secure employment, and develop essential life skills for independent living. Offerings consist of one-on-one case management, monthly life skills workshops, and job search assistance. This partnership benefits both agencies by allowing the Council to offer critical assistance that DCBS is unable to provide directly.

2.k Outline the applicant agency's efforts to focus attention on addressing the needs of youth in low-income communities through youth development programs that support the primary role of the family, giving priority to the prevention of youth problems and crime and promoting increased community coordination and collaboration in meeting the needs of low income youth programs with a goal of preventing or reducing crime.

As noted previously in this application, the Council has operated Project LIFE since 2014—a CHFS-funded initiative serving youth, primarily ages 18 to 23, who are transitioning out of

foster care. Through this program, case managers work closely with participants for approximately one year, guiding them through early adulthood and assisting their pursuit of employment, higher education, or military service.

The Council has also partnered with the University of Kentucky for revitalization planning in the Winburn neighborhood. This effort has considered strategic upgrades to the neighborhood center and the development of a community garden that fosters intergenerational collaboration between youth and adults.

In addition, the Council administered ONE Lexington's first grant program, which provided funding to numerous grassroots organizations committed to reducing gun violence through youth-centered initiatives such as sports, the arts, mentoring, literacy, and leadership programs.

The Council remains focused on improving early childhood infrastructure in underserved areas, with ongoing investments in facilities in Lexington's East End and Southeast neighborhoods to expand access to early learning opportunities.

2.1 All services directed toward coordination and linkages of other community services to impact the community (non-client specific services), rather than individual client service, should be described in narrative, i.e., community participation and economic development which are directed toward amelioration of poverty in the community. Coordination with emergency energy crisis intervention programs under Title XXVI and the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 should be described. Please indicate the staff member(s) who will be carrying out coordination and linkage functions and any limitations placed on the individual client services.

The Council coordinates all energy assistance programs, including LIHEAP, at the neighborhood level to ensure local access and effectiveness. It operates the WinterCare Energy Fund statewide and, in partnership with Community Action Kentucky, manages the Home Energy Assistance (HEA) program, which provides regular monthly subsidies during the winter heating and summer cooling months. These initiatives are designed to help low-income households manage their energy costs and prevent utility shutoffs.

In addition to energy assistance, the Council's neighborhood center operations play a vital role in community development. Activities at these centers are managed by the center manager in collaboration with each advisory council, and are implemented by center staff. With a budget of over \$60 million, the Council ensures that community programming is both comprehensive and consistent, balancing its efforts across various areas to achieve mutually reinforcing outcomes that address the hyper-local needs of each neighborhood or community.

2.m Describe how the agency will analyze the SFY 2026 ROMA and Customer Satisfaction data to assist in developing the SFY 2027 plan to improve service delivery.

The Office of Family Advancement and Opportunity's Management team reviews the SPP report quarterly to track progress toward outcomes and adjust programs as needed. For example, if enrollment is low, efforts are focused on outreach and recruitment, while successful programs are noted for potential expansion in the following year.

The Council's Strategic Leadership Group also reviews the NPIs quarterly before submitting them to the Board of Directors for approval, allowing for timely adjustments in the first two quarters to ensure goals remain achievable and aligned with program performance.

Staff responsible for achieving outcomes collaborate with management in goal-setting to ensure they are realistic and attainable. Accountability for meeting these outcomes is maintained through the performance appraisal process.

The management team also reviewed last year's logic models, removing outdated outcomes and adjusting those for programs continuing into fiscal year 2027 based on previous results and the inclusion of new partners and initiatives. The plan submitted with this proposal reflects both the successful outcomes from the past year and the expected outcomes for 2027 based on new programming.

Program/Services: Community Action Council - Agency Capacity Building

☐Family ☒Agency ☐Community

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Targeting Success Rate:

Proxy Outcome: none

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**CABINET FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES
COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT**

Attachment B-2
SFY 2024

Cabinet For Health and Family Services
Community Services Block Grant
Local In-Kind Match Certification

CODE	BUDGET/COST CATEROGRIES	PROJECTED EXPENDITURES BY BUDGET/COST CATEGORIES BY THE SFY (FROM ATTACHMENT B1)	Agency Certification of In-Kind Expenditures
1	SALARIES/WAGES	\$ 263,702.00	\$ 86,167.00
2	FRINGE BENEFITS	\$ 101,632.00	
3	CONSULTANT/CONTRACT SERVICE	\$ 1,027.00	
4	SPACE COSTS	\$ 100,688.77	\$ 3,705.00
5	EQUIPMENT	\$ -	
6	CONSUMABLE SUPPLIES	\$ 6,108.00	\$ 103.00
7	UTILITIES	\$ -	
8	TRANSPORTATION/TRAVEL	\$ 9,862.00	
9	CLIENT SERVICES	\$ 59,940.00	
10	STAFF DEVELOPMENT	\$ 6,164.00	
11	OTHER	\$ 83,203.00	\$ 89,072.00
12	INDIRECT	\$ 88,684.00	\$ 1,456.00
	TOTAL PROJECTED EXPENDITURES \$	\$ 721,010.77	\$ 180,503.00

I Certify that the total in-kind expenditures herein reported and designated in the categories above is from funds that are eligible for matching to cover the 20% required in local in-kind match.

Signature:

Date:

CSBG Director

CFO:

Executive Director:

Community Action Council for Lexington-Fayette, Bourbon, Harrison and Nicholas Counties

BUDGET NARRATIVE:

1. Salaries-Wages—\$263,702; Wages for the 6.05 FTE described in this proposal, including new and existing staff, all who are associated with implementing the Council's CSBG Family and Community National Performance Indicators and Services.
2. Fringe Benefits—\$101,632; FICA at 7.65% of salary; Workers Compensation from 0.66% to 5.22% of salary based upon job category; Pension at 7.8% of salary; Health Insurance-plan selected by employee; Life Insurance at 1.938% of salary; and Disability Insurance at 0.41% of salary.
3. Consulting/contract services—\$1,027; This includes costs for an interpreter and other professional services as needed. Audit cost are expensed to the Council's Indirect Cost Pool of expenses and included in Indirect Cost noted below.
4. Space Costs—\$100,688.77; Facilities costs including rent, general maintenance and utilities charged according to cost allocation principles on a basis of square feet occupied per FTE by physical location.
5. Equipment—Not applicable for this application.
6. Consumable supplies—\$6,108; This includes costs for general office supplies for staff providing CSBG services including personal protective equipment (PPE), increased cleaning supplies, paper, pens, file folders, clips, staples, etc.
7. Utilities— These costs have been included in space costs.
8. Transportation/travel— \$9,862; These costs represent an allocated share of the Council's Transportation Services Unit, based on miles driven or local travel by staff implementing the CSBG ROMA goals at the Kentucky Finance and Administration Cabinet approved per diem estimated at \$0.42 per mile. The Council reimburses mileage at the approved Federal per diem currently \$.305 per mile; the difference is paid by non-federal funds and other programs. This also includes the shared cost of company vehicles based on actual miles used.
9. Client Services—\$59,940; Aligned with the proposal, the Council is planning to allocate \$30,000 for rental assistance, and \$29,940 for all other client benefit including: energy bills, water bills, and sewer bills, civic engagement, internet access and automobile

insurance.

10. Staff Development —\$6,164; These costs are budgeted for state-approved conferences and training in-state, when permitted and necessary for implementation.
11. Other costs—\$83,203; Includes cost of communications and information technology for CSBG staff based upon cost allocation principles on a basis of FTE by location (phone systems) and IT software and hardware maintenance; for shared costs of maintaining Council fleet vehicles allocated as a percentage of total miles driven; postage (mailing of program documents to participants,); insurance and bonding; dues and subscriptions; and recruitment.
12. Administration/Indirect Costs—\$88,684; This expense is calculated at the rate of 12.3 percent of direct expenses based on actual current operations. The Executive Director's salary and fringe are charged to the Indirect Cost Pool as they do not exceed level II of the executive schedule. These charges are allocated appropriately to all of the Council's funding sources and to the HS grants.

LOCAL MATCH

1. Salaries/wages—\$86,167—Cost for volunteers calculated at a rate comparable to the hourly wage of a Council employee performing similar work.
2. Space Costs—\$3,705— Facilities costs including rent, general maintenance and utilities charged according to cost allocation principles on a basis of square feet occupied per FTE by physical location.
3. Consumable Supplies—\$103—This includes costs for general office supplies for staff providing CSBG services
4. Other—\$90,528—Includes that is not limited to cost of communications and information technology, postage, insurance and bonding, dues and subscriptions, meeting expenses, and recruitment for CSBG staff based.

Executive Director _____ Date _____

CFO _____ Date _____

CSBG Director _____ Date _____