



DeKalb County Community Action Department

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## **NEW BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION**

## MISSION AND PROMISE

### Mission:

To provide access to opportunities for all low-income individuals and families in DeKalb County by providing education and empowering them with effective community resources and support to increase self-sufficiency and household stability.

### Community Action Promise:

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes American a better place to live. We care about the entire community and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

## MISSION AND PROMISE

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## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Members of the CSBG Administrative Board of DeKalb County Community Action Department exercise advisory authority for guiding the organization's mission, values, goals and strategies to the DeKalb County Board.

Members of the Board do not have ultimate legal and fiduciary responsibilities but commit to honor the fiscal advisory responsibilities stated in the Community Action Organizational Standards recognized by DCEO and HHS.

Members of the Board are required to be familiar with and at all times abide by the governing documents and policies of the organization, including, but not limited to its Bylaws, Ethics Policy, and Conflict of Interest Policy, Confidentiality and the Open Meetings Act.

The Board is specifically responsible for:

- determining DeKalb County Community Action's mission and purpose consistent with its resolution;
- conducting effective organizational planning;
- approving and monitoring the organization's programs and services;
- fostering collaboration between DeKalb County Community Action and other organizations;
- making a personal commitment to actively participate in the organization's resource development activities and efforts to achieve financial sustainability;
- assisting the Executive Director and other staff raise funds from foundations, corporations, governmental entities in accordance with the development policies of the organization;
- working to enhance and protect the public image and reputation of the organization; and for
- advancing the mission and goals of DeKalb County Community Action rather than serving the interests of any special interest group or constituency.

## DUTIES AND RESPOSIBILITIES

# HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION

In 1964, the Great Society, as envisioned by President Lyndon Johnson, was a sweeping plan to improve the lives of all Americans, regardless of their circumstances. Inspired by President Kennedy and his new Frontier, Johnson pledged to fulfill his promise of equal opportunity for all by enacting several comprehensive changes within the federal government. In August of that same year, the Economic Opportunity act was signed into law by President Johnson creating the nationwide Community Action Network.

## The War on Poverty

In 1963, shortly before he was assassinated, President Kennedy had asked his economic advisors to draw up some proposals to address the problem of American poverty. Johnson took up this charge after he succeeded Kennedy as President. In Johnson's first State of the Union address on June 8, 1964, he called for an unconditional war to defeat poverty. He expanded and revised the proposals given to Kennedy and developed the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The act included a variety of initiatives:

1. Head Start
2. Job Corps
3. Work-Study programs for university students
4. VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) - a domestic version of the Peace Corps
5. Neighborhood Youth Corps
6. Basic education and adult job training

CAPS (Community Action Programs) – CAPS turned out to be the most controversial part of the package, as it proposed the “maximum feasible participation” by poor people themselves to determine what would help them the most. CAPS were a radical departure from how government had run most social reform programs in the past.

# HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION

# HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION (CONT.)

## The Start of Community Action

Community Action was a bold idea, especially for the federal government. It handed over control to the local level, so that programs were geared specifically for target population needs. This concept “maximum feasible participation”, represented a new paradigm in the government and many sectors were wary of its innovative ideas. President Johnson selected a member of President Kennedy’s inner circle to head up the newly formed “Office of Economic Opportunity”- Sargent Shriver.

Shriver was head of the Peace Corps in the Kennedy administration and married to Kennedy’s sister, Eunice. He had proved himself to be a capable leader and President Johnson admired his abilities. President Johnson, legendary for his acumen in recruiting key personnel, offered the position to Shriver and he would not take no for an answer. Shriver was installed as the first head of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) on October 11, 1964 and leapt into action.

Unfortunately for Shriver, he simply did not have adequate funding to begin the process of addressing national poverty issues. However, he assembled an impressive team of advisors, including Michael Harrington, author of *The Other America* and began to implement new policies and actions to resolve these issues.

Community Action was modeled after two fairly successful urban renewal projects, one undertaken by the Ford Foundation and the Mobilization for Youth, a program aimed at Juvenile delinquency. Inspiration was also taken from the “Back of the Yards” program in Chicago which was developed by Saul Alinsky, considered the father of “community development”. It should be noted that Alinsky became very critical of the OEO as it developed. The key component was that low-income citizens played an active role in program design and administration “maximum feasible participation”. The Economic Opportunity Act was amended (known as the Green Amendment) in 1967 to mandate the board structure of community action agencies, which complemented the earlier Quie Amendment which required the tripartite representation, including low-income participation.

# HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION (CONT.)

## **HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION (CONT.)**

In 1981, President Reagan introduced the Block Grant, which dramatically changed the way federal funding was distributed. Programs including Community Action, would now receive funding through the State Office of Community Action/Services and would be under more intense scrutiny than previous administrations. Illinois Community Action now worked closely with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity to implement the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) and worked to build a strong partnership to provide robust services to Illinois' low-income residents.

Over the past several years, federal funding to support the Community Service Block Grant has been challenged. However, Community Action remains an important tool for vulnerable families and individuals. Beginning in 2001, Community Action improved their reporting through the Results Oriented Management Accountability (ROMA) framework and continually seeks ways to improve outreach and services. The 56 Organizational Performance Standards created by the Urban Institute, The National Association of Community Services Programs and the Community Action Partnership along with the network of Community Action Agencies are now in place and required to meet by all CAAS by 2015.

The guiding principle of maximum feasible participation continues today in Community Action. Local boards are tripartite, in other words, have representation from all segments of the local community including low-income residents or their representatives.

## **HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION (CONT.)**

## CODE OF ETHICS

We, as Community Action Professionals, ever respectful of cultural diversity, dedicate ourselves to eliminate poverty in the midst of plenty in this nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training; the opportunity to work; and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity, and commit ourselves to:

- Recognize that the chief function of the community action movement at all times is to serve the best interests of the poor.
- Accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up-to-date on emerging issues and to conduct ourselves with professional competence, fairness, and effectiveness.
- Respect the structure and responsibilities of the board of directors, provide them with facts and advice as a basis for their decision making, and uphold and implement the policies adopted by the board of directors.
- Keep the community informed about issues affecting the poor and to facilitate communication among the poor, the non-poor private sector, and locally elected public officials.
- Conduct our organizational and operational duties with positive leadership exemplified by open communication, creativity, dedication, and compassion.
- Exercise whatever discretionary authority we have under the law to promote the interests of the poor.
- Serve the community action movement with respect, concern, and responsiveness, recognizing that service to the poor is beyond service to oneself.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, and fortitude in our community action activities in order to inspire confidence in the community action movement.
- Perform our professional duties in such a way so as not to realize undue personal gain.
- Avoid any interest or activity, which conflicts with the conduct of our official duties.
- Protect confidentiality in the course of our official duties.
- Strive for personal professional excellence and encourage the professional development of our associates and those seeking to become community action executives.

## CODE OF ETHICS

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## Preamble

DeKalb County Community Action Department (DCCAD) is committed to maintaining the highest level of integrity and the highest standards of ethical conduct in all of its activities and dealings. It is important for DCCAD Administrative Board of Directors, Officers, and Employees to be aware that both real and apparent conflicts of interest or dualities of interest sometimes occur in the course of conducting the affairs of the organization and that the appearance of conflict can be troublesome even though there is in fact no legal conflict of interest.

Conflicts occur because the many persons associated with DCCAD should be expected to have, and do in fact generally have multiple interests and affiliations and various positions of responsibility within the community. In these situations, a person will sometimes owe identical duties of loyalty to two or more organizations. Conflicts are undesirable because they potentially place the interests of others ahead of the Department's obligations to the public interest. Conflicts are also undesirable because they often reflect adversely upon the person involved and upon the institutions with which they are affiliated, regardless of the actual facts or motivations of the parties. However, the long range best interests of DCCAD do not require the termination of all association with persons who may have real or apparent conflicts that are harmless to all individuals or entities involved.

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to provide guidance to DCCAD's Administrative Board of Directors, Officers, and Employees so that DCCAD can maintain the highest level of integrity and the highest standards of ethical conduct. Each Director, Officer and Employee of DCCAD is urged to review carefully this Code of Conduct and make every effort to adhere to it.

### **I. Gifts to Directors, Officers, and Employees.**

The acceptance by any director, officer or employee of money, services or any other thing of value offered by a representative, person or entity which (1) does business with DCCAD (or any person or entity which potentially could do business with DCCAD) or (2) has applied for a grant or potentially could apply for an upcoming grant from DCCAD is prohibited. The offer of any such benefit must be reported immediately to the Chair. Notwithstanding the foregoing, it is understood that an officer or employee of DCCAD may receive unsolicited gifts of modest value from persons doing business with DCCAD, such as Christmas gifts of modest value. It is also expressly understood that this policy does not preclude business meals or nominal entertainment on an infrequent basis.

# CODE OF CONDUCT



## CODE OF CONDUCT (CONT.)

### **II. Confidentiality of Information.**

DCCAD's directors, officers, and employees owe a duty of loyalty to DCCAD. The duty of loyalty requires each director, officer and employee of DCCAD to respect the confidentiality of information gained in the course of board activities or employment. No director, officer or employee shall use information received in the course of serving DCCAD if the personal use of such information would be detrimental in any way to DCCAD.

### **III. Conflicts of Interest.**

#### **A. Directors.**

Any possible conflict of interest of any director (or member of the director's immediate family) shall be fully disclosed to the other directors and made a matter of record. When any such possible conflict of interest becomes relevant to any matter requiring Board of Directors or committee action, it shall be called to the attention of the board or committee and, if any question is raised as to whether a conflict of interest exists, the potentially interested person shall leave the meeting while the matter is discussed and voted upon. The remaining members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists. If the remaining members determine that a conflict of interest exists, or if no such vote is taken because a conflict of interest clearly exists, the director shall not vote on the matter in which he or she (or a member of his or her immediate family) has a possible conflict of interest, shall not use personal influence to affect the vote and shall leave the room during the final discussion and vote on the matter. However, any director who is excluded from voting because of such possible conflict of interest may answer any pertinent questions of other directors or committee members when the director's knowledge of the matter may assist the board or committee in making its determination. Any vote approving a transaction that involves a possible conflict of interest should include a determination by the disinterested directors that the transaction is in the best interest of DCCAD and is fair in all respects to DCCAD. The minutes of the meeting shall reflect that a disclosure was made and the nature of the disclosure, that the interested director abstained from voting and left the room for the final discussion and vote, and that the interested director abstained from the action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest existed, if any.

#### **B. Committee Members.**

The provisions of this policy applying to directors also shall apply to any person who is not a director but who is at any time serving as a member of any committee.

#### **C. Officers and Management Employees.**

Each officer and management employee has a duty to make full disclosure to the Board of Directors of any possible conflict of interest (or that of a member of his or her immediately family) regarding any matter as to which the officer or employee provides recommendations or advice to the Board of Directors.

## CODE OF CONDUCT (CONT.)

## CODE OF CONDUCT (CONT.)

### D. Types of Conflicts of Interest.

A particularly important type of possible conflict of interest arises when a director, officer or management employee holds a direct or indirect financial interest in (or will receive a benefit from) a business firm furnishing services, materials, or supplies to DCCAD or that is seeking grant funds from DCCAD. A direct financial interest is the receipt of remuneration of any sort. An indirect financial interest exists if a party transacting business with DCCAD is an entity:

- (1) in which DCCAD's director, officer or management employee (or a member of his or her immediate family) has a material financial interest;
- (2) with which DCCAD's director, officer or management employee (or a member of his or her immediate family) has a substantial business relationship; or
- (3) of which DCCAD's director, officer or employee (or a member of his or her immediate family) is an officer, director, director, general partner or employee.

It is understood that a director, officer or employee may be a direct or indirect party to a transaction with DCCAD which might create or provide the appearance of a conflict of interest, as above defined, if all the above disclosure and other requirements are met and if the transaction is fair to DCCAD.

### IV. Use of DCCAD's Services, Property or Facilities for Personal Purposes.

No director, officer, or employee shall make use of DCCAD's services, property or facilities for any purpose that is not related to DCCAD's purposes.

### V. Political Activities.

No director, officer or employee of DCCAD in the name of DCCAD or under the color of the official capacity or authority of DCCSD shall:

- (1) participate or become actively involved in any political campaign or in any other type of political activity, or
- (2) provide financial support for, or make contributions to or for the benefit of any political candidate, political party, or political action committee or provide financial support for or make contributions in support of any other political objective.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, DCCAD recognizes that each of its directors, officers, and employees has the right as a citizen to become involved in his or her individual capacity in the political process in Illinois and on a national and local basis. Any such participation or involvement by any person in a political campaign or other type of political activity or any contribution to or any other financial support of a political candidate or any other type of political contribution or support shall only be carried on or provided in an individual capacity.

## CODE OF CONDUCT (CONT.)

# DCCA SERVICES

## **Scope and Mission of Services**

The scope and mission of our work is to help low-income families achieve and maintain a higher level of household stability through comprehensive ongoing support services. It is through these support services that families can address their biggest obstacles to household stability.

Our Family Support Specialists work with each family to assess their unique situation and then identify strengths and available resources to address needs. We work with families to help them access the resources in the community that will be able to help them address any potential barriers to household stability. Our services are family centered and each family interacts with our workers based upon their own self-identified needs.

## **Comprehensive Support Services**

Comprehensive Support Services are the backbone of Community Action Services. DCCA serves residents of DeKalb County who are income eligible. Here is a list of services DCCA offers:

- Family Centered Services
- Employment Related Services
- Budgeting
- Time Management
- Household Emergencies
- Applying for Governmental Benefits
- Information & Referral Services
- CSBG Scholarship
- DeKalb County Community Gardens Produce
- DCCA Technology Resource Area
- Access to Participation Incentives

# DCCA SERVICES

**BYLAWS**  
DeKalb County **BYLAWS**  
DeKalb County Community Action Department  
Community Services Block Grant Administrative Board

**Article I: Name**

The name of this body shall be the Community Services Block Grant Administrative Board (CSBG Board), serving DeKalb County in Illinois.

**Article II: Purpose**

It shall be the responsibility of the CSBG Board to recommend and approve programs to be implemented under the Community Services Block Grant, which shall include:

- The provision of a range of services having a measurable and desirable impact on the causes and effects of poverty, both long and short term, in DeKalb County.
- The provision of activities designed to assist low-income participants,
- Establishing and coordinating linkages between government and other social service programs to assure the effective delivery of those services to low-income individuals; and
- The use of private sector entities in the County in efforts to lessen the impact of poverty.

The CSBG Board shall also:

- Review the performance of work programs operated by DeKalb County Community Action Department.
- Make policy recommendations on program operations.
- Solicit the input and participation of appropriate community-based organizations, agencies and human-services providers in the County in the development of program services.

**Article III: Board of Directors**

Section 1 - Members

Representative of Public Official - The Board shall consist of fifteen (15) members. Not more than five (5) shall be from public officials designated by the County Board and they will serve at their pleasure. Each public official selected to serve on the CSBG Board may, in turn, select one (1) permanent representative to serve in his/her place whenever he/she cannot attend a meeting. These representatives shall have full authority to act for the public officials themselves. The CSBG Board shall nominate the five (5) public officials and send representatives to the DeKalb County Board for approval.

## **BY-LAWS (CONT.)**

Representative of Low-Income Individuals – At least five (5) Board members shall be comprised of democratically selected representatives of low income individuals. These members need not be low income themselves, but the selection process shall ensure that they represent the low-income populations. As stated in U.S. HHS informational memorandum Transmittal No. 82k “Representatives of low-income individuals and families may be selected through election, public forum, or through a similar democratic process such as appointment or election to a position of responsibility in another significant service or community organization or an advisory board/ governing council to another low-income service provider.” Should the representative be an employee at a community organization that serves low income individuals, the democratic selection shall be satisfied through their nomination and election at the CSBG Board. The CSBG Board shall nominate at least five (five) low income individuals and send representatives to the DeKalb County Board for approval.

Representative of Private Organizations - Not more than five (5) Board members shall be comprised of representatives of the private sector. These seats shall be held by representatives of business, industry, labor groups, private social service agencies, private educational institutions, and religious organizations. These organizations shall choose persons to represent them on the board and these persons shall be empowered to speak and act on behalf of the organization they represent in connection with the Board’s business. The CSBG Board shall nominate the private sector organizations and send representatives to the DeKalb County Board for approval.

### **Section 2- Appointments**

Upon approval of a nomination (in accordance with Article III Sections 1-3 of these By-laws) by majority vote by the CSBG Board, appointments shall be made by the Chairman of the DeKalb County Board and approved by the DeKalb County Board. Initial appointments will be staggered terms of one, two, and three years, with all terms of appointment thereafter being for three years.

### **Section 3 - Vacancies**

Vacancies which occur during a term shall be filled in accordance with Article III Section 2 of these Bylaws. A member appointed to fill a vacancy shall hold the appointment for the unexpired term of his/her predecessor.

### **Section 4- Ineligibility**

When a member has been absent from three (3) consecutive meetings, his/her name may be submitted to the CSBG Board to afford the opportunity for consideration of a replacement. The CSBG Board will then have the option of submitting the name of a replacement to the Chairperson of the County Board for its consideration of a replacement.

## **BY-LAWS (CONT.)**

## **BY-LAWS (CONT.)**

A member shall also be declared ineligible if he/she is no longer associated with the sector he/she was appointed to represent. If a member qualifies for another sector, and there is an open seat in that sector, the member may fill the open seat of the qualifying sector.

### **Section 6 - Allowances and Reimbursements**

Board members shall not be compensated for serving on the CSBG Board. Board members may be reimbursed for expenses that have received prior approval by the CSBG Board.

### **Article IV: Officers**

#### **Section 1- Number, Title, Election and Terms**

There shall be a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson. These officers will be nominated and elected by the CSBG Board. Officers are elected by the CSBG Board for a term of two years. CSBG Board members shall serve staggered three-year terms.

#### **Section 2- Powers and Responsibilities**

The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings, using Robert's Rules of Order, and see that they are conducted in accordance with CSBG guidelines and these bylaws. The Vice-chairperson shall act as Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.

### **Article V: Committee**

#### **Section 1- Board Committees**

The standing committees of the CSBG Board will include the Executive Committee and the Scholarship Committee.

The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, and the Executive Director of the DeKalb County Community Action Department. The Executive Committee shall meet at the call of the CSBG Board Chairperson or the Executive Director of DeKalb County Community Action Department or when requested by two (2) or more members of the committee.

Specific functions of the Executive Committee shall be determined by the full CSBG Board, but the Executive Committee shall be generally empowered to act in emergency situations on behalf of the full CSBG Board in the interim between full Board meetings.

## **BY-LAWS (CONT.)**

## BY-LAWS (CONT.)

The Scholarship Committee shall convene at a date after the deadline for submission of annual scholarships applications to review the applications and information gathered. This committee will recommend scholarship recipients to the CSBG Board for approval.

Other committees may be formed at the discretion of the Chairperson, or when called for by a majority of the voting members present at a meeting. Standing committees formed shall function for a period of two (2) years. Special committees formed shall function until their purpose is considered completed by the CSBG Board and/or the Chairperson. The Chairperson will appoint committee members and the established committee will select a committee Chairperson.

Unless entrusted with specific authority to act on behalf of the CSBG Board, committees will serve in an advisory capacity only. No recommendations or actions taken by a committee will be considered actions of the CSBG Board without approval or ratification by the Board.

### **Article VI: Adequate Representation**

Any low-income individual, low-income community organization, or low-income religious organization, or representative of low-income individuals that considers its organization or low-income individuals to be inadequately represented on the Board may present the Board with a signed petition of fifty (50) signatures by any representative group of low-income and community agencies.

The Board will meet and a fair hearing will be conducted within 60 days to listen to and determine if the request is justified. If petition is approved by the Board, expansion or revision of the Board will be made as written in the Bylaws to maintain the 1/3 representation of each of the Board constituents: public officials, representatives of the poor, and private organizations.

### **Article VII- Meeting of Members**

#### Section 1- Meetings

Meetings will be convened at least four times per year. Meeting dates will be provided with as much advanced notice as possible and will be determined according to maximum availability of CSBG Board members. Meeting notices are sent via post and/or email 7-10 days before the scheduled meeting.

#### Section 2- Special Meetings

Special meetings of the CSBG Board may be called either by the Chair or at the written request of any five (5) members provided a written notice stating the purpose of the meeting is given at least ten (10) days prior to such date. In the case of any

## BY-LAWS (CONT.)

## **BY-LAWS (CONT.)**

emergency, an emergency meeting may be called by either the Chair or by not less than any five (5) members when the need is apparent to address emergencies.

### **Section 3- Quorum**

A quorum shall be determined by the presence of 6 members of the Board.

### **Section 4- Meeting Format**

Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order.

### **Section 5- Open Meetings Act**

In conducting meetings, the CSBG Board will follow the Illinois Open Meetings Act to the extent that it applies.

### **Section 6 - Voting**

No proxy provision is provided and all members must be present to vote. Members may participate via teleconference call or video conference, but are not permitted to vote.

## **Article VIII- Records**

Minutes shall be kept at all meetings of the CSBG Board, its committees, and sub-committees. These minutes will be recorded by the DeKalb County Community Action Department. The minutes are the Official Meeting Record of the CSBG Board. A copy of the minutes will be filed with the DeKalb County Board and the DeKalb County Clerk.

## **Article IX- Policy**

It shall be the policy of the CSBG Board to operate under the provisions of the DeKalb County Board, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and any rules and regulations applicable hereunder promulgated by the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

## **Article X- Conflict of Interest**

The members of the DeKalb County Community Action Department CSBG Board are encouraged to play active roles in the community and elsewhere by serving as board members or otherwise being involved with a wide spectrum of organizations. This means that potential conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts will inevitably arise.

## **BY-LAWS (CONT.)**



## **BY-LAWS (CONT.)**

Conflicting involvements consist of direct or indirect relationships or obligations, either business or voluntary, which may impair the independence of judgment of a Board member in the exercise of duties or judgment relating to the CSBG Board or its affairs. Such conflicts are not limited to financial interest or legal obligations, but also extend to duties of loyalty or trust.

In the case of such conflicts or the appearance thereof, CSBG Board members are expected to disclose the conflict prior to making any related decisions. Once such a disclosure has been made, the remaining Board members will determine whether or not there is a potential conflict of interest.

Should it be so considered, the Board member involved shall abstain from voting and may participate in the discussion unless the Board states otherwise in its consideration of the question of conflict. In any case, however, the Board member may answer specific questions that may be raised by other Board members. Specifically, Board members shall not make a profit in any way in their outside employment or business interests from their association with the Board. Individual Board members hold an office of shared power and responsibility and are never to exercise authority except when action in a meeting with the full Board or when delegated to do so by the Board.

Board members will approach all Board issues with an open mind, will keep confidential information confidential, and will do nothing to violate the trust of the County Board which appointed them.

### **Article XI- Amendments to Bylaws**

These Bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed and new Bylaws may be adopted by a majority of a quorum at any regular meeting of the membership, provided that the proposed amendment or new Bylaws are presented in writing or via email to each individual representative at least twenty (20) days prior to the regular meeting.

These amended Bylaws were adopted this 14th day of May, 2018.

## **BY-LAWS (CONT.)**