

El Dorado County Community Services Block Grant 2008/2009 Community Action Plan Summary

VISION STATEMENT

The Vision of the El Dorado County Department of Human Services is:

- Families who are encouraged to develop supportive relationships within their family unit, positive participation in their community and economic self-sufficiency.
- Agency recognition and facilitation of service needs that support individuals and families to become self-sufficient members of the community.
- Community participation that ensures social, governmental and economic systems are effective in achieving a healthy community, that supports individuals and the family unit and that employs a philosophy of collaboration to further enable client self-sufficiency.

MISSION STATEMENT

The El Dorado County Department of Human Services supports its vision by:

- Ensuring that needs are identified and services are coordinated in an effort to eliminate duplication of services.
- Facilitating comprehensive, well-planned community action activities and services.
- Encouraging the coordination of available local, state, federal and private resources to have a measurable impact on the causes of poverty.
- Utilizing CSBG funding to facilitate and support the provision of vital services to the community, including the leveraging of additional service dollars.
- Concentrating programs and services in multi-service central locations, essential in rural areas with limited access to public transportation.
- Working to identify and reduce potential gaps in services to the segments of our population in-need of support to live independently.
- Providing a variety of direct human and social services that meet individual and community needs for the alleviation of poverty.
- Establishing partnerships and collaborations that support clients who seek self-sufficiency.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS

- A need exists to mitigate the high cost of housing for low-income households paying more than 30% of their income for shelter, and to make available low interest housing loans for health and safety repairs or handicapped modifications.
- A need exists to promote availability of basic health services for low-income and vulnerable households in outlying areas of the County.
- A need exists to ensure that the low-income and vulnerable populations will be able to access safe and affordable housing opportunities and will have their financial and housing situations improved.
- A need exists to provide a comprehensive service delivery system in the recruitment and involvement of volunteers in the community, and to enhance volunteer expectations of services.
- A need exists to ensure participation of low-income individuals on advisory councils, including the Community Action Council enabling them to provide input to decision-making and policy setting boards that are relative to community issues.
- A need exists to provide training and/or loans to small business owners and to encourage self-employment among individuals who have an idea and the ability to initiate a small business, but lack resources to implement their idea.

- A need exists to maintain a strong, viable administrative unit in order to support and collaborate with community entities promoting the goals and planning for impacts related to self-sufficiency, to identify and evaluate existing services and/or gaps in services, thereby strengthening the planning and evaluation process, to promote fiscal responsibility and to provide accurate, responsive service information to clients seeking assistance.
- A need exists to provide accurate, responsive reporting to ensure grant funding for provision of services and to seek additional grant dollars through the application process whenever possible.
- A need exists to provide a comprehensive service delivery system of well-planned, unduplicated support programs to meet the needs of vulnerable senior and disabled adults, incorporating outreach efforts to connect with those who may be unaware of services and programs that are in place in the community, which would stabilize their situation and make it possible for these individuals to remain safe and comfortable and independent to the extent possible in their own homes.
- A need exists to mitigate hunger in El Dorado County by supplementing nutrition and providing food resource access to the low-income population, from infants to senior citizens; to mitigate the high cost of energy consumption for low-income, senior and disabled households throughout El Dorado County and to provide legal assistance to senior households seeking support with emergency situations relating to health, exploitation and property concerns.
- A need exists to alleviate hunger and provide proper nutrition education and assistance to families with young children and single parents living on fixed incomes.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERY STRATEGIES

Improve housing opportunities for low-income residents

- Work with developers to ensure completion and lease up of Runnymede Terrace Project, which will create 70 workforce affordable housing units.
- Administer the Housing Rehabilitation Program to address health and safety needs and provide handicapped modifications for eligible low-income residents.
- Assist households in reducing long-term energy costs through home weatherization and repair services.

Improve conditions in which low-income residents reside

- Assist eligible low-income residents in obtaining affordable and safe rental housing.
- Support the accessibility of health clinics in outlying areas for the low-income population.
- Advocate for and facilitate implementation of the Housing Element of the recently adopted El Dorado County General Plan.

Increase volunteer participation in the community

- Encourage and promote volunteer participation by advertising through word of mouth and newspaper ads and articles. Many agency volunteers become interested through contact with friends and family members who have accessed the services or are volunteers for one of the agency programs.

Ensure participation of low-income individuals on advisory councils that promotes decision making and policy setting

- Conduct monthly Community Action Council meetings with the participation of low-income individuals.
- Administer EDBC-Microenterprise grants to provide training and loans to small business owners and to encourage self-employment.
- Administer a CDBG Housing Acquisition Program to assist low-income first-time homebuyers in purchasing affordable homes.
- Administer the Mortgage Credit Certificate, First-Time Homebuyer and other programs that facilitate homeownerships by low-income households.

Expand resources and services in order to achieve positive family and community outcomes

- Support and advocate for expansion of resources and services, creating a full continuum of care for low-income and vulnerable individuals.
- Promote community awareness and participation in program planning.
- Work with community agencies to promote provision of necessary services, independent living and self-sufficiency.

Ensure grant funding for provision of services

- Continue to seek and identify additional grant dollars through the application process whenever possible.

Link vulnerable, at-risk populations to services that promote independence and prevent isolation or abuse

- Administer support services such as Linkages, Multi-Purpose Senior Service Program, Senior Nutrition (congregate and home-delivered meals), a Representative Payee Program, In-Home Support Services, Family Caregiver Support Services, and Adult Protective Services to promote socialization and prevent premature institutionalization and abuse.
- Provide appropriate referrals to community agencies to promote independence among the vulnerable and at-risk population.

Increase access to food resources for low-income population

- Provide low-income and vulnerable individuals seeking food resources with appropriate referrals to churches, food closets, local food banks, and the Upper Room Dining Hall.
- Encourage at-risk seniors to access the Senior Nutrition Home-Delivered Meals Program or Congregate Meal Sites.

Assist low-income households that are experiencing emergency situations

- Assist vulnerable and low-income households to apply for Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.
- Assist vulnerable and low-income households to receive wood, propane or heating oil assistance.
- Coordinate with Salvation Army to enable low-income households at risk of imminent shut-off of their utilities to access REACH resources to retain utility service.

Provide legal assistance to low-income disabled and senior households seeking support with emergency situations.

- Administer the Legal Assistance Program for seniors, offering no-cost legal advice and services on issues such as health care, exploitation, and property disputes.
- Encourage and support low-income non-seniors to access free legal assistance through programs such as Legal Services of Northern California or a free legal service clinic at the local courthouse.

Ensure that low-income families with young children obtain proper nutrition and alleviate hunger

- Administer the Supplemental Food Program Women, Infants and Children (WIC), providing services to a caseload of over 2,500 eligible clients with nutrition assessments and education, promoting safe, economic and healthy use of available foods along with food-specific WIC vouchers to promote good nutrition and reduce the incidence of nutritionally at-risk infants, children and pregnant and lactating women.
- Enhance client access by maintaining bi-lingual staff and scheduling evening and weekend client appointments that allow working clients to access services.
- Provide information, outreach and referral efforts on available food resources throughout the County.