

III. Program Planning Attachment

1.Planning for Distribution and Use of Funds

Describe the planning process for determining the State's use and distribution of SSBG funds.

Since the two category five (5) hurricanes Irma and Maria in September of 2017 the department has seen a tremendous need for some of the program on the SSBG. Many residents are requesting home delivered meals and home maker services. Some families are caring for their loved ones at home but need assistance while they are working. The Department has reviewed all of our program services and the current recipients in addition to the waiting list to determine how the funds will be distributed across programs.

The Department of Human Services continues our collaboration with the St. Croix Community Foundation to contribute information on our territory's children and how they are faring economically, socially, educationally, and physically. Kids Count 2020 Snapshot: Building Level Pathways for Our Children helped to inform our Planning for Distribution of the SSBG Funding, especially in the area of our Child Welfare Programs. The 2020 publication indicates, while data shows improvements in child health and education, more families are struggling to make ends meet, and children continue to live in poverty in the territory.

With regard to older adults, the data presented herein substantiate the need for continued services and programs that address this and other vulnerable populations. This comes as a poignant concern based on two emergent issues. First, as the "baby boomer" population continues to age and the desire is to maintain persons in the community as long as possible, the need for services and related interventions are expected to increase; and second, as the life expectancy continues to increase, the need for specialized supportive services, such as meals on wheels, Alzheimer's care and home health services continues to emerge as a growing need. Our collaboration with the V.I. AARP and their connectivity to tens of thousands of seniors 50 years and older also influenced our distribution of funds in the SSBG FY 2022 Plan. Senior Services are designated over 50% of the SSBG funding. The Department of Human Services is the designated State Agency for Aging Programs. Consequently, our Planning for Distribution of funds is heavily dependent on the Aging Programs we operate as well as statistical data from our Medicaid and SNAP Divisions which serve well over 30,000 Virgin Islanders on an annual basis.

2. Describe the Characteristics of Individuals to be Served

Include definitions for child, adult, and family; eligibility criteria; and income guidelines.

For the past thirty (30) years, SSBG funds have been used by the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (DHS) to supplement, expand, and strengthen traditional services to families, children, and adult individuals in need. The services provided through the federal grant program continue to be a valuable safety net for the residents who experience some form of financial, familial, social, or health related crisis.

The SSBG Funds are targeted to low to moderate income individuals and families. However, it should be noted some programs funded with the SSBG will not be restricted by income eligibility guidelines. In this Intended Use Plan the following definitions should be noted:

Adult- An individual at least 18 years of age and older

Child- An individual under the age of 18 years

Family- A Unit with at least one adult and at least one child

Eligibility criteria is based on age, disabilities (if applicable), income guidelines, at risk populations to include abused children and adults with disabilities who are vulnerable to abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The specific eligibility for each program funded with the SSBG is included in the Program Description in the Intended Use Plan.

3. Public Inspection of Pre-Expenditure Report

Describe how the State made available for public inspection and comment the current Pre-expenditure Report or revision to the report. Supporting documentation for public inspection is also required. (See V. Appendices, Appendix A: Documentation of public Hearing).

As required for Title XX Social Services Block Grant, the Virgin Islands made the Intended Use Plan and Pre- Expenditure Report available for public inspection and comment. The Virgin Islands Department of Human Services followed the procedures for posting the report for public inspection. DHS placed the document on the Department's Website at www.dhs.gov.vi. DHS also informed the public that the Intended Use Plan and Pre-Expenditure Report were available on the DHS Website via the Department's Website and included the DHS Website link. Comments and feedback on this Plan and Pre-Expenditure Report were welcomed. Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic and social distancing rules and regulations of the Public Health Emergency, no In Person Public Hearings were held.