

**FY20 Community Action Plan
LIFT Action Agency, Inc.**

Addendum 1

This addendum to LIFT Community Action Agency's FY20 Community Action Plan is necessary in order to address unforeseen needs arising due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This need encompasses all levels to include: individual, family, community and agency.

The Community Needs Assessment conducted in FY19 began with dissemination and collection of needs surveys. A total of 865 surveys were completed and returned. The survey results showed residents within LIFT CAA's service area identified Emergency Services as the 2nd highest need (surpassed only by housing) and Health Services as the 5th highest need. COVID-19 fits within each of these categories as well as others (Economic/Community Development, etc.). Step two of the C.N.A. process involved further analysis and discussion (community meetings, focus groups, etc.) of the top twelve needs from the survey results. This process led to prioritization of needs as such: ***Prioritized Need #1 - Housing; Prioritized Need #2 - Substance Abuse Services; and Prioritized Need #3 - Economic/Community Development.***

This addendum will recognize **COVID-19** as ***Prioritized Need #4 –COVID-19 Related Services*** within LIFT CAA's FY20 CAP Plan: No other sections of the plan will be revised. It should be noted that COVID-19 needs have been given **top priority** across all aspects of operations and is identified as Need #4 only for purposes of ease and convenience in revisions to the CAP.

Prioritized Need #4: COVID-19 Related Services: The Coronavirus Pandemic has led to an increased need for emergency services i.e. food, utility payments, rent/mortgage payments, medical/prescription services, transportation services, etc.; emergency preparedness, health services; and more and is recognized as an individual, family, community and agency level need. Organizations at every level (local, state and federal) had no way of predicting the coronavirus pandemic and were not prepared for the impact realized across our communities, our Country and the World. While recognizing the deep devastation in terms of the public health crisis, the downturn of the economy, and all other negative aspects of dealing with a worldwide pandemic, this crisis forced us to face threats introduced by COVID-19, thereby providing an opportunity to plan and prepare so as to ensure for continued service provision of essential services during this crisis and moving forward.

LIFT CAA is addressing this need by tapping into local, foundation, state and federal resources; implementing teleworking practices when/where possible; reducing risks by provision of personal protective equipment for staff, customers, Board members, etc.; and changes in daily operations of service provision to allow for social distancing practices i.e. contactless service provision. Many of these strategies have been implemented via use of online applications for services; services provided by appointment or via telephone; no-fare transit rides so drivers and

passengers did not exchange money, vouchers, etc.; decreased hours of operation at all locations to minimize exposure; social distancing on public transit buses for passengers via limited seating; and use of technology (Zoom, email, social media) for trainings, Board meetings, meetings with funders, etc.

FY 20 Goal: Establish processes/protocols/guidance for agency operations, staffing, essential service provision, etc. in the wake of a national pandemic.

FY20 Objectives: Reduce health risks while continuing to provide emergency and other services using non-traditional methods as/when necessary to meet the needs of individuals, families, the community and the agency.

FY20 Strategies: LIFT CAA applied for the Payment Protection Program funding available through the CAREs Act to ensure ability to sustain salaries and benefits of employees who were sent home due to the pandemic. This addressed immediate needs of individuals and families by sustaining their salaries/benefits while simultaneously addressing the agency level need to ensure we did not lose trained, experienced staff and associated capacity. It addressed a community level need by facilitating “Safer at Home” practices thereby reducing exposure and risks of contracting and spreading the virus.

LIFT CAA developed and implemented teleworking processes/policies and provided staff with laptops and other technology equipment to address agency and community level needs. Teleworking practices ensure grant applications are still being prepared/submitted; program and financial reports are still be completed/submitted; and fiscal operations are still occurring to ensure vendor payments; etc.

LIFT CAA implemented Social Distancing practices by following CDC (Centers for Disease Control) guidelines and reducing the number of staff at any/all locations to the maximum of 12 people per building with even fewer when/where possible; reducing the number of passengers allowed on public transit vans at one time; communicating social distancing requirements to staff; posting signage around agency buildings (inside and outside); sending out daily email blasts to remind people to wash their hands and take other measures to reduce risks; conducting temperature checks on employees who were/are reporting to their regular worksites and more.

LIFT CAA followed directives provided by the State (Governor’s Office), the Oklahoma Department of Commerce and others for continued service provision of essential services such as transportation and emergency services.

LIFT CAA applied to numerous entities for additional resources to help with expenses associated with preventing, preparing for and/or responding to the coronavirus pandemic. This included applications to the Oklahoma Department of Commerce for CSBG CAREs funding; Oklahoma Department of Public Transportation for CAREs Act funding; NeighborWorks America COVID-19 Emergency Funds; NeighborWorks America Rental Resiliency Funds; Oklahoma

Community Service Commission (Utah Jazz) and also to Foundations such as AEP/PSO; Tyson Foods; and more. LIFT CAA also utilized the agency emergency fund to address individual and family level needs for food, utilities, rent, etc.

Resources received via CSBG/CARES Act; ODOT CAREs Act, NeighborWorks America, Foundations and other sources will be used for preventing, preparing for and responding to the Coronavirus pandemic by:

- Purchasing updated technology equipment (laptops) to allow for teleworking for non-essential services; subscriptions to Zoom and other services that allow for contactless meetings, etc.

- Purchasing/replenishing supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (disinfectants, gloves, masks, wipes, cleaning supplies, etc.) and providing to staff, Board, customers, etc.

- Providing emergency relief payments to help individuals/families to purchase food, pay utilities, rent/mortgage payments, medical/prescription needs, transportation services, etc.

- Continue practices to minimize risk such as daily contractual cleaning/disinfecting of buildings in the evenings and on weekends.

- Accommodate staff and customers who are at higher risk of infection due to underlying conditions, age, etc. by allowing for more flexible work schedules, working from home.

- Purchase of hotspots for internet connectivity for employees exhibiting this need.

- Distribution of food, toiletry items, etc. for individuals/families representing more vulnerable populations (elderly, handicap, etc.)

LIFT CAA's leadership will ensure ongoing and frequent communication to employees and the community following the States guidance/phases for reopening.