



Human Capacity &
Community Transformation
Center of Excellence



COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP

Community Needs Assessment

COVID-19

Update Template

EZ Guide

MAY 26, 2020



COVID-19 Community Needs Assessment (EZ Guide)

Template for Completing a Brief COVID-Related Community Assessment Update

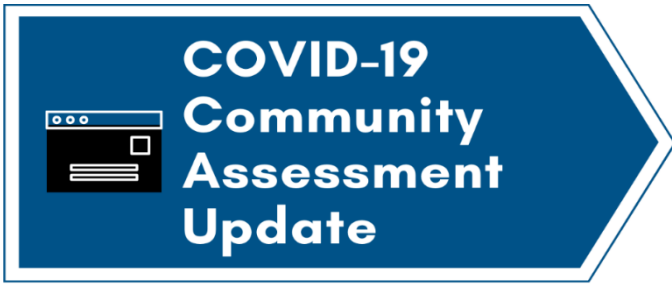
Included within this document is a Community Needs Assessment template for use by local Community Action Agencies as an addendum to their EXISTING Community Needs Assessment in response to the COVID-19 global health pandemic. **This revised template has been edited and reformatted to allow greater ease of use and minimal data collection efforts by the local agency.**

Please note: The urgent needs of communities across the United States require maximum flexibility for CAA's to allocate resources to meet local challenges as well as a minimal administrative burden from state CSBG offices. Due to the block grant nature of CSBG funding, State offices set policies regarding whether local agencies need to provide an updated Community Assessment that addresses the COVID pandemic. If your agency is required to update its Community Assessment, this template is one tool you might find helpful to produce an update as easily as possible.

This document can serve as a foundation to the use of the special supplemental CSBG funding. Within the template is pre-filled text accompanied by places to insert local and agency-specific information, identified by [highlights]. **The gray boxes contain instructions on filling in information. These boxes and the cover pages are meant to be deleted once the template is filled in.** As appropriate, footnotes can be used to cite sources utilized.

Initial Release Date 4/14/20. Updated 4/22/2020. Revised 5/21/2020. This document may be updated as the pandemic progresses. Please visit: <https://communityactionpartnership.com/guidance-and-resources-for-managing-coronavirus-risks/> for more updated information.

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AGENCY
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This update to the **[CAA NAME]** Community Assessment was completed in **[May]** 2020 in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic.

I. Background

This Community Assessment Update is in response to a global health pandemic that has not only affected every community in the United States but has also led to the most significant economic disruption since the Great Depression. This assessment is an **initial** effort to capture **some** of the emerging needs in the community as well as to forecast how those needs may evolve over the coming weeks and months.

Because of the urgent and widespread needs affecting all sectors of the community, this Community Assessment update is intended to provide some **initial** information to describe the scope of this crisis on our community and to support the many different responses that will be required to address emerging, evolving needs. **It is likely that as needs evolve, some of those needs will not be captured in this update and therefore some necessary community responses may not connect to the needs identified in this document.**

The *community* assessed in this document, related to the below information, is defined as the following:

[Label community, noting counties/state served]

The needs assessed will inform services to those affected by the crisis. It is significant to note that Congressional action will permit FY20 and special supplemental CSBG funding to serve families at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (as defined by [the US Census Bureau](#)).

Use this link – [CAP Engagement Network](#) – and directions below to complete the table.

Login (or request an account). Go to FIND DATA, then Community Needs Assessment Tool. Select State and Counties. For Indicators, under Population Profile, select Poverty Rate 125% and Poverty Rate 200%. Generate a Comprehensive Report. Fill in the table below with the total population in each category.

The following table illustrates how the 200% eligibility standard will expand the number of local residents eligible for services:

	# below 125% <i>(CSBG standard)</i>	# below 200% <i>(updated CARES standard)</i>	Additional # eligible to be served <i>(# below 200% - # below 125%)</i>
Population in Service Area			

Specific programs or strategies will target the demographic groups most affected. Given persons of color are being disproportionately affected by both the health crisis and by the resulting economic disruption, an equity lens must be used to view current and emergent needs related to this crisis.

II. National, State and Local public health crisis

State and local health authorities responded to the outbreak by placing restrictions on travel, business and recreation that have had a number of impacts on the community.

As a result of this unprecedented public health crisis, [CAA NAME] is updating its Community Assessment because there is currently a significant impact on the community, and a number of short-, intermediate- and longer-term impacts are expected.

III. Immediate impacts on the community

The immediate impacts of COVID-19 have been felt across all sectors of society. In particular, some of the greatest impacts relevant to the Community Action Network have been in the areas of health, education, employment, human services provision, and community resources. In this community, areas of highest vulnerability are in those communities with high population density, high uninsured rates and a high proportion of older residents.

Nationwide, early data suggest that the following groups have experienced disproportionately higher rates of infection and/or complications/death as a result the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Males
- Individuals 65+ years old
- People of color, particularly African Americans and Native Americans
- People with underlying health conditions (especially, lung disease, asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, liver disease, severe obesity, and individuals with immunocompromised conditions)

The following outlines some of the critical areas of impact to the local community thus far:

Note: the below list of impact areas may not apply to all communities; data is likely **not** readily available for all areas. This template is intended only to note what issues appear to be emerging needs. Check the box that best represents your community.

- Health impacts:
 - Individuals over 65, especially those with underlying health conditions have been shown to be at particular risk for severe health implications from COVID-19. Those in congregate settings (e.g. nursing homes) are a particular concern in this community.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community
 - Community health resources will be stretched thin as resources devoted to those sick with COVID-19 will limit resources available to others. Limited Intensive Care and other hospital services in this community would mean others NOT directly affected by COVID might lack access to care.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

- Behavioral health resources will need to be available in new and increased ways to deal with the many different stressors/traumas caused by the pandemic, especially its impact over an extended time period. Issues such as domestic violence, elder abuse, child abuse, drug abuse, suicide and other indicators of behavioral health issues are a particular concern in this community.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

- Nutrition for school-aged children previously accessing free/reduced breakfast, lunch, and snacks is impacted as many are now removed from that food source due to school closures.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

- Employment impacts:
 - Employment impacts of the pandemic have been immediate and profound. Anecdotal information as well as early data about unemployment claims from March and April confirm a significant emerging need in the area of employment.¹ Local indicators show that national patterns of unemployment are being seen in this community.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

 - Individuals in the health care field are at high-risk of exposure to COVID-19 and are under tremendous stress due to additional work hours and challenging work conditions. In particular many of those workers with close, frequent contact with vulnerable individuals are lower-wage individuals.²
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

 - Individuals in the educational field – especially teachers and assistants in Head Start and Early Head Start as well as other early childhood care settings – are working remotely due to school shutdowns. Lower-wage workers in these fields are more vulnerable to layoffs and/or may lack the technology resources in their home to work remotely.³
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

 - Individuals in many sectors of the economy – but particularly the service sector, the retail sectors, gig economy, and others most affected by quarantine policies – are currently experiencing sudden and unexpected unemployment. Some are unaware of resources available to them and their families as they are experiencing unemployment for the first time. ⁴

¹ <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2020/05/13/what-weekly-unemployment-claims-reveal-about-the-local-impacts-of-the-covid-19-recession/>

² https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6915e6.htm?s_cid=mm6915e6_x

³ <https://www.npr.org/2020/04/11/830856140/teaching-without-schools-grief-then-a-free-for-all>

⁴ <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/03/27/young-workers-likely-to-be-hard-hit-as-covid-19-strikes-a-blow-to-restaurants-and-other-service-sector-jobs/>

- This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

- Educational impacts:
 - Closings of public schools in the Community Assessment area are having an immediate impact on children’s education. Children with less access to resources (broadband internet, computers/tablets, technology expertise, language barriers, etc.) are most at-risk for suffering learning loss during a potentially protracted period of school closure.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

 - Caregivers of school-age children must secure day care arrangements for their children or sacrifice employment to care for their children. These same caregivers are also expected to be primary teachers for their children during the period of the closure. Parents with limited resources face numerous challenges as a result of this situation and educational outcomes for their children will be affected.⁵
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

- Impacts on human services provision:
 - Services to vulnerable populations are being curtailed or drastically changed. Some service providers are not operating, leaving gaps in services to the community. Other service providers have had to alter their service provision in significant ways, leaving some family needs unmet. Finally, for those service providers continuing to operate, the changed circumstances have required significant, immediate adaptations that will require additional resources to support over a longer period of time:
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

- Community resource impacts:
 - The impacts of COVID-19 on community resources are numerous and include a reduction in the availability of resources (access to group activities, commercial services), a scarcity of some resources (health care, food and emergency supplies) and/or needs for resources that have not previously been required in this community in any significant capacity.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

 - The broad impacts of COVID-19 on this community have created an even more urgent need for coordination and collaboration of resources among the public sector, the public health sector, first responders, educators, the business community, the faith community and many others. [CAA NAME] plays an important role convening organizations, people and resources to support families.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community

⁵ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2020/04/17/why-covid-19-will-explode-existing-academic-achievement-gaps/>

IV. Anticipated near- and long-term impacts

The needs above are already established through initial data and anecdotal reports from customers, staff, board members and community stakeholders. Based on these already-observed events, it is likely that there will be near-term (1-3 months) and longer-term (greater than 3 months) impacts that that require immediate planning. A partial, but not complete, list of the anticipated impacts include:

Check the box that best represents your community.

- *Prolonged service disruptions:* The disruptions in service delivery to customers are expected to continue for a substantial time. This is likely to lead to ancillary challenges for customers that may become long-term issues. For example, learning loss⁶ and domestic violence/child abuse⁷ have become larger problems due to service disruptions.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community
- *Exacerbated housing issues:* Due to the immediate economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, renters face one or more months where they may lack the funds to pay rent; homeowners with a mortgage may miss mortgage payments.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community
- *Prolonged employment issues:* Sudden layoffs and other employment disruptions are being addressed by emergency response measures; however, it is anticipated that long-term recovery efforts will be required to help customers reconnect to the workforce, particularly those for whom employment assistance has not previously been required.⁸
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community
- *Prolonged agency capacity issues:* Policies limiting in-person staff/customer interactions may be in place for an extended period of time and agencies will need to maintain remote work and remote customer-interaction infrastructure to be responsive to these needs in a more sustainable capacity.
 - This applies to this community
 - This does NOT apply to this community
- *Prolonged community resource/coordination issues:* The short-term community coordination needs cited in this Assessment are presumed to continue into the long-term. Current conditions may persist for an extended period; recovery efforts will require coordination; ongoing community preparedness to guard against a future outbreak will also require ongoing convening and new community readiness strategies based on what is shown to be effective during the current crisis.⁹
 - This applies to this community

⁶ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2020/04/17/why-covid-19-will-explode-existing-academic-achievement-gaps/>

⁷ <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/social-distancing-domestic-violence.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.brookings.edu/research/how-covid-19-will-change-the-nations-long-term-economic-trends-brookings-metro/>

⁹ <https://centerforcommunityinvestment.org/blog/reimagining-strategy-context-covid-19-crisis-triage-tool>

- This does NOT apply to this community

V. Addressing Equity Implications

Though immediate data may not yet be easily obtained regarding the demographics of those most impacted by the COVID-19 epidemic, previous Community Assessments, as well as countless government and academic studies have established that structural racism, xenophobia, sexism, stigmatization and othering persist – and are often exacerbated – in times of crisis. Community Action recognizes the obligation to ensure that the barriers of structural race, gender, and other inequities are addressed during this time of crisis and beyond. Therefore, it is with this lens that communities are invited to use the equity lens and the question, “why”, to understand the specific needs of the diverse populations served.

If available, the local CAA can add to this section by identifying the local populations disproportionately affected. The full template includes a [Data Resource Guide](#) that contains several links to resources on racial equity to explore. One or more of those articles can be used to support the need to address inequities as they are generally applicable.

PARTNERSHIP STAFF

If you have questions or need further assistance, please contact someone on our HCCT Project Team. We're here to help!

Denise Harlow

CEO, NCAP

dharlow@communityactionpartnership.com

Aaron Wicks

Vice President, Organizational Capacity Building

awicks@communityactionpartnership.com

Tiffany Marley

Vice President, Practice Transformation

tmarley@communityactionpartnership.com

Courtney Kohler

Senior Associate, Training & Technical Assistance

ckohler@communityactionpartnership.com

Lauren Martin

Program Associate, Training & Technical Assistance

lmartin@communityactionpartnership.com