

# The Basics of the CSBG Organizational Standards

*September 5, 2024*



# The Promise Of Community Action

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



1000+ Community Action Agencies  
leading change across America

**Why  
Organizational  
Standards?**



**Why Now?**

# The National Community Action Network Theory of Change

## Community Action Goals

**Goal 1:** Individuals and families with low incomes are stable and achieve economic security.

**Goal 2:** Communities where people with low incomes live are healthy and offer economic opportunity.

**Goal 3:** People with low incomes are engaged and active in building opportunities in communities.



## Services and Strategies

Employment



Education & Cognitive Development



Income, Infrastructure & Asset Building



Housing

Health/Social Behavioral Development



Civic Engagement & Community Involvement



### Core Principles

- Recognize the complexity of the issues of poverty
- Build local solutions specific to local needs
- Support family stability as a foundation for economic security
- Advocate for systemic change
- Pursue positive individual, family, and community level change
- Maximize involvement of people with low incomes
- Engage local community partners and citizens in solutions
- Leverage state, federal, and community resources

### Performance Management

How well does the network operate?

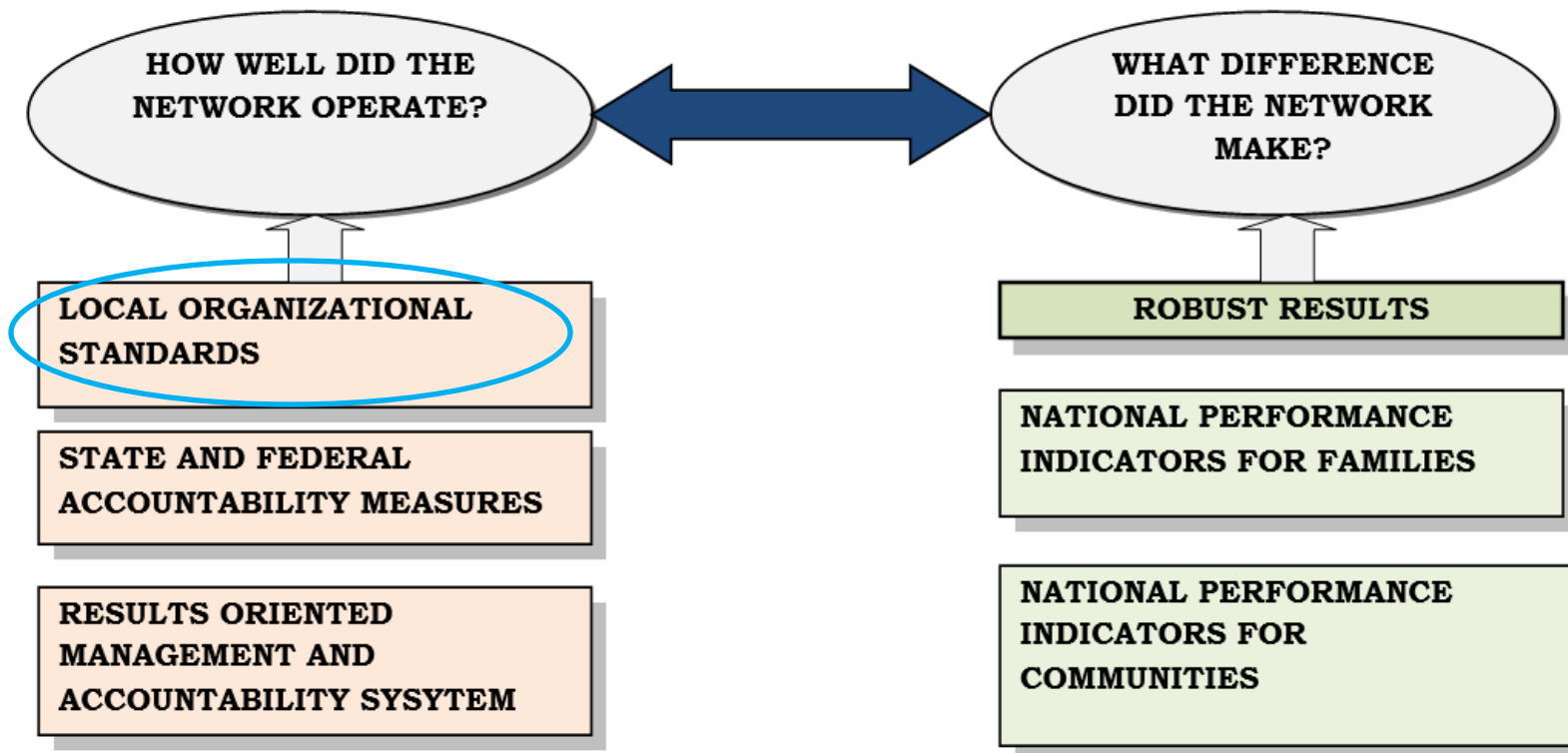
What difference does the network make?

- Local Organizational Standards
- State and Federal Accountability Measures
- Results Oriented Management and Accountability System
- Individual and Family National Performance Indicators
- Community National Performance Indicators

*A national network of over 1,000 high performing Community Action Agencies, State Associations, State offices, and Federal partners supported by the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) to mobilize communities to fight poverty.*

# CSBG Performance Management Framework

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



# CSBG Organizational Standards

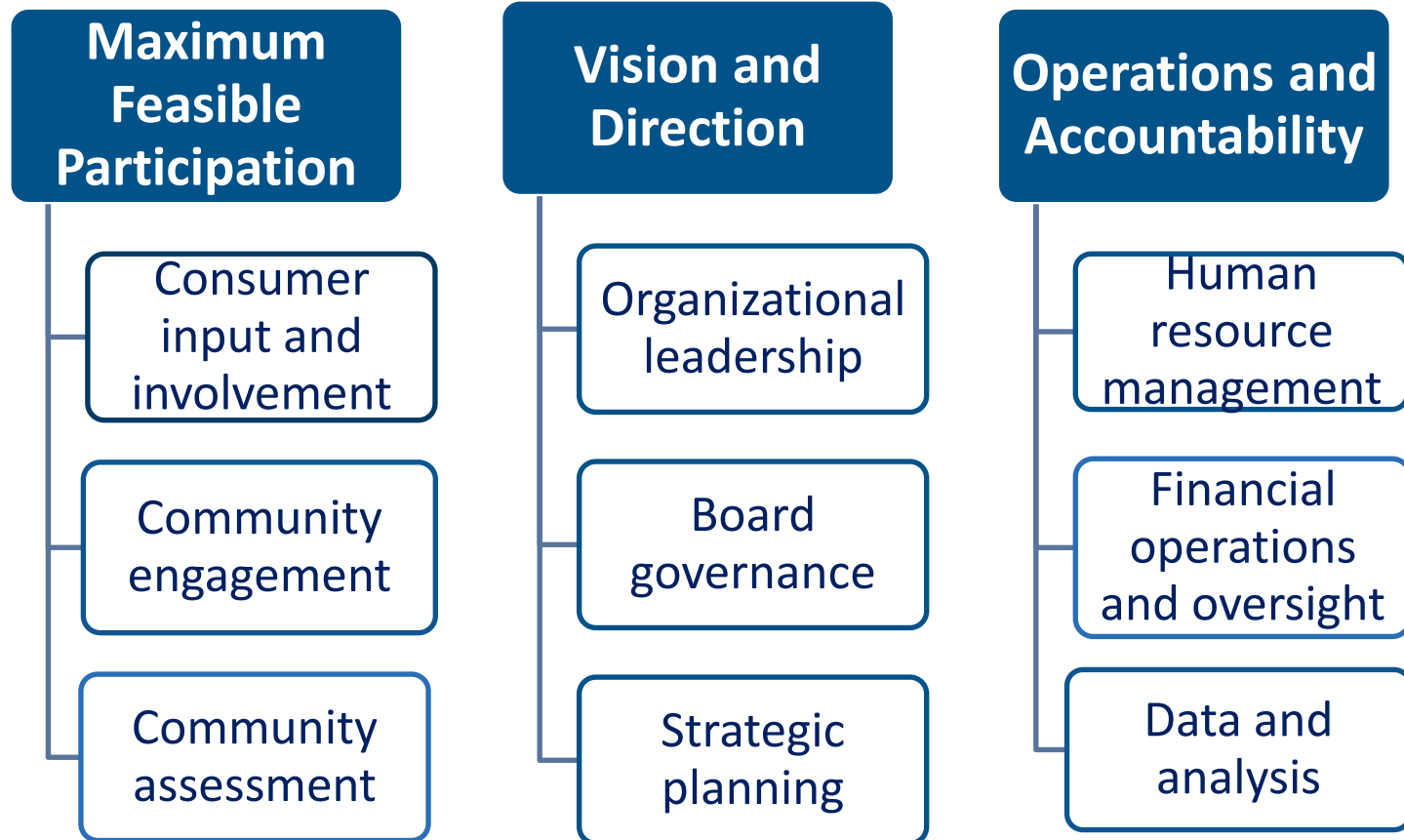
- Developed through the Organizational Standards Center of Excellence at the Community Action Partnership, **the CSBG Organizational Standards work together to define the necessary capacities a Community Action Agency needs to be effective.**
- Direct Links to:
  - CSBG Act
  - OMB Guidance
  - Federal Laws & Regulation
  - Good Management Practices
  - Values of Community Action

# CSBG Organizational Standards

Established in CSBG IM 138:

[https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ocs/im\\_138\\_csbg\\_organizational\\_standards\\_fy\\_2015.pdf](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ocs/im_138_csbg_organizational_standards_fy_2015.pdf)

Organized into three thematic groups:



# Key Points of CSBG Organizational Standards

- Developed **BY** the Community Action network, **FOR** the network.
- Standards are intentionally broad – meant to recognize the need for each state and local CAA to be responsive to local needs
  - Specific/required documentation, processes, etc. are intentionally NOT prescribed in many cases
- States assess Organizational Standards on an annual basis
  - The Standards are assessed as either met or unmet (no partial credit!)
- CSBG Organizational Standards assessments go to the presence of an item, not the quality of it

# Balancing...



- Checking the Box

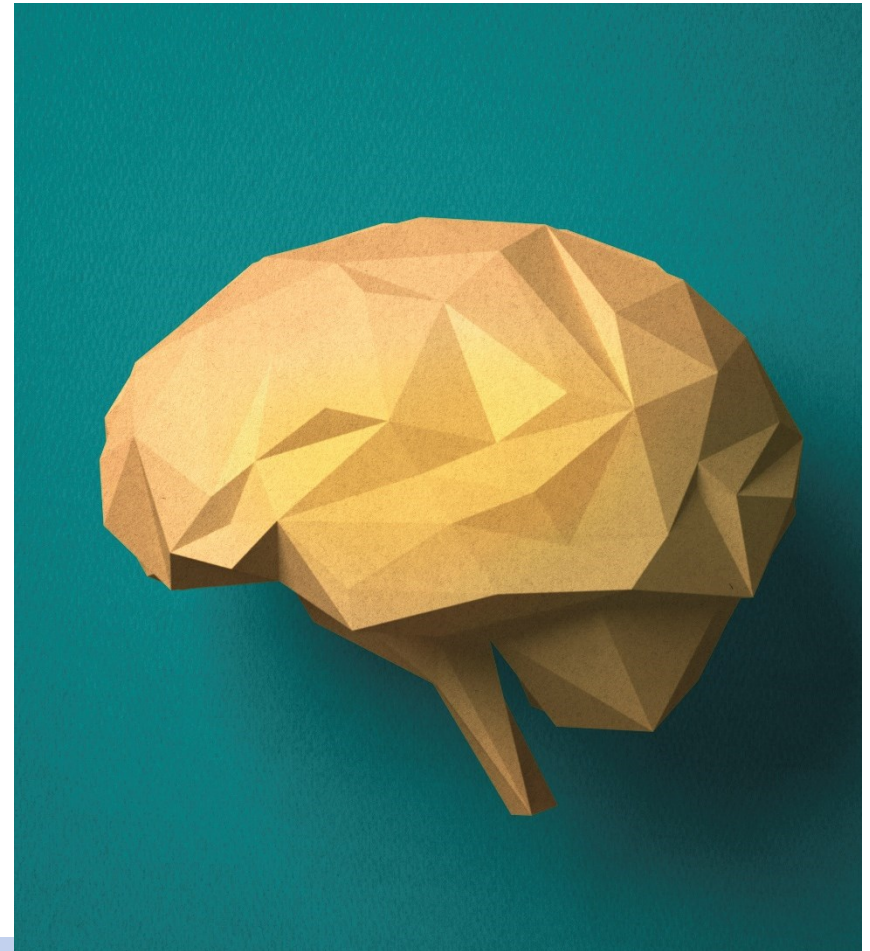
- Fully living into the intent of the Standard

**The Organizational Standards are bigger than one person or role in the agency.**



# Tips for Assisting Local CAAs: Understanding the Organizational Standards

- Identify requirements
  - Reflect on the intention of the requirements for guidance
- Always clarify questions about the definition, intent, and documentation of organizational standards with State CSBG Office
- Read the standards “in context and as a whole”



# Tips for Assisting Local CAAs: Implementing the Organizational Standards



- Build requirements into agency operations/SOPs
- Document Standards as they occur
- Document your process / approach for implementing / assessing / monitoring Standards

# Tips for Assisting Local CAAs: Assessing the Organizational Standards

- Integrate your assessment activities into existing processes
  - Community needs assessments
  - Strategic planning
  - Community action plan
- Use a central filing system to track and manage documents
- Use a team-based approach to build organizational capacity



# Tips for Assisting Local CAAs: Evaluating the Organizational Standards

- Choose one or two categories a year to conduct deeper evaluations
- Benchmark your performance across all the standards
  - Keep score
  - Make recommendations
- Use the assessment to leverage resources from technical assistance to funding



# CSBG ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS

## A Brief History...



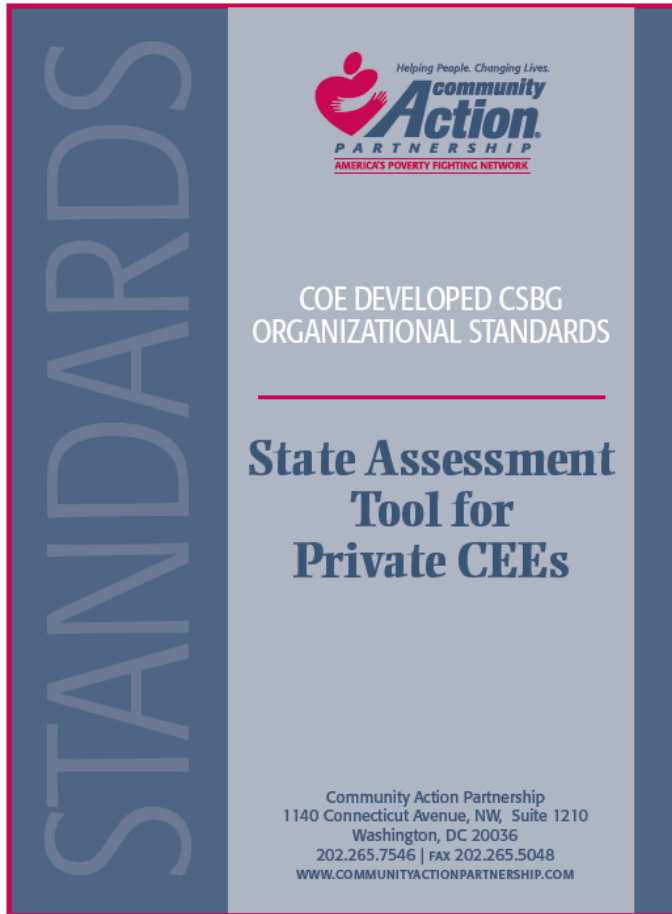
## What are the CSBG Organizational Standards?

The **CSBG Organizational Standards** are a comprehensive set of standards developed with input from the entire CSBG Network through a three-year multi phase process led by the Center of Excellence. The Organizational Standards were announced in January 2015 with the OCS release of **IM 138, State Establishment of Organizational Standards for CSBG Eligible Entities**, directing States to establish organizational standards by fiscal year 2016.

The Organizational Standards are organized in three thematic groups comprising nine categories and totals of 58 standards for private, nonprofit entities and 50 for public entities. The purpose of the organizational standards is to ensure that all agencies have appropriate organizational capacity, in both critical financial and administrative areas, as well as areas of unique importance to the mission of the Community Action network.

<https://communityactionpartnership.com/organizational-standards/>

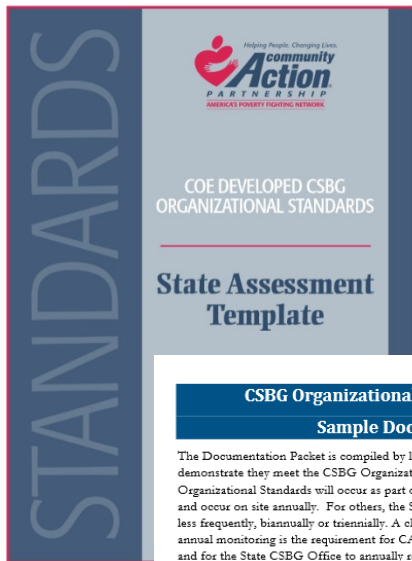
# Tools to Help Assess



- Assessment Tool
- Separate Tools for States and CAAs
- Separate Tool for Private and Public CAA State Assessments
- Includes Final COE-Developed Standards Language
- COE Guidance

# Assessment Template

## States and CAAs Summary Sheet Documentation Packet



### CSBG Organizational Standards-Self Assessment Sample Documentation Packet

The Documentation Packet is compiled by local CAAs as they collect information annually to demonstrate they meet the CSBG Organizational Standards. For many CAAs, the assessment of Organizational Standards will occur as part of regular monitoring by the State CSBG Lead Agency and occur on site annually. For others, the State CSBG lead Agency conducts on site monitoring less frequently, biannually or triennially. A challenge for States and CAAs that do not conduct annual monitoring is the requirement for CAAs to demonstrate they meet the Standards annually and for the State CSBG Office to annually report the number of CAAs meeting Standards.

To meet this challenge, CAAs and State CSBG Lead Agencies will develop a process that meets the needs in that State. Tools and resources are available from the Organizational Standards Center of Excellence (OSCOE) to assist CAAs and States to meet this challenge in ways that are not overly burdensome. This tool focuses on capturing and filing the documentation necessary to demonstrate how a CAA meets each Standard. This tool and others can be found at [www.communityactionpartnership.com](http://www.communityactionpartnership.com).

CAAs will need to demonstrate they meet all Standards annually. Many individual Standards require action on an annual basis, while others do so on a biannual, triennial, or even five year span. There will be materials local CAAs will need to collect that may not change over a five year period (e.g. bylaws, strategic plan). In addition, there will be documents that will need to be collected that may be created monthly (e.g. board minutes). There are certain documents that will be used to demonstrate the CAA meets multiple Standards. This tool is provided to be a guide to help CAAs and State CSBG Lead Agencies think about how to collect, store, and report needed materials over time, limiting duplication of effort. It frames the collection of materials under the title of "Documentation Packet".

A CAA's Documentation Packet may be:

- **Hard copy or electronic (or a blend).** Some CAAs may prefer to have a binder, file folder, banker's box, or other hard copy system for collecting and storing the documents. Others may prefer electronic documents. In some cases, CAAs may use a mix of both options.
- **Stored at the CAA, State CSBG Lead Agency, in the "cloud", on in some other document sharing environment;** Depending on the system established, the Documentation Packet may be stored at the CAA for access during onsite monitoring, at the State Office for desk audits, or in an online file sharing/storage system accessible to both and even perhaps third parties.
- **Formally updated periodically or as part of the annual assessment process.** Some CAAs may choose to update the Documentation Packet monthly as new materials are developed or may choose to select a single time each year they update the packet.
- **Spread across multiple years.** Some documents may be submitted in the initial Documentation Packet and may not need to be updated for two to four years. CAAs and

### SAMPLE Table of Contents (EACH CAA's TABLE OF CONTENTS WILL VARY)

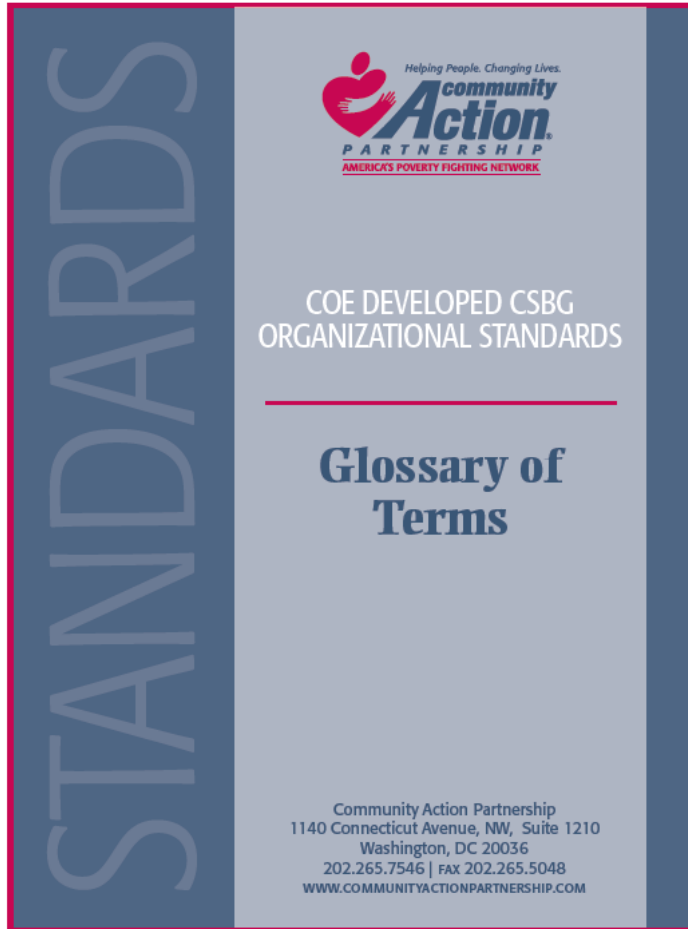
A. Check Off List of items on File with State CSBG Office	#
B. Relevant Portions of Board Approved Strategic Plan	#
C. Additional Strategic Planning Documents	#
a. Committee Meeting Minutes/Notes	#
b. Summaries of Focus Groups/Surveys	#
D. Relevant Portions of Community Needs Assessment	#
a. Additional Community Needs Assessment Documents	#
E. Relevant Board Minutes/Sections	#

Date of Assessment \_\_\_\_\_ Agency Name \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 1: CSBG Organizational Standards Which Need to Be Documented as Met Annually

Standard Number	Standard	Standard Category	CAA Assessment Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CAA Assessment Not Met <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Documentation Packet Page Number(s)	State's Assessment Agrees with CAA's Y/N	Notes
1.1	The organization demonstrates low-income individuals' participation in its activities.	Consumer Input and Involvement					
1.3	The organization has a systematic approach for collecting, analyzing, and reporting customer satisfaction data to the governing board.	Consumer Input and Involvement					
2.1	The organization has documented or demonstrated partnerships across the community, for specifically identified purposes; partnerships include other anti-poverty organizations in the area.	Community Engagement					
2.3	The organization communicates its activities and its results to the community.	Community Engagement					
2.4	The organization documents the number of volunteers and hours mobilized in support of its activities.	Community Engagement					
4.2	The organization's Community Action plan is outcome-based, anti-poverty focused, and ties directly to the community assessment.	Leadership					

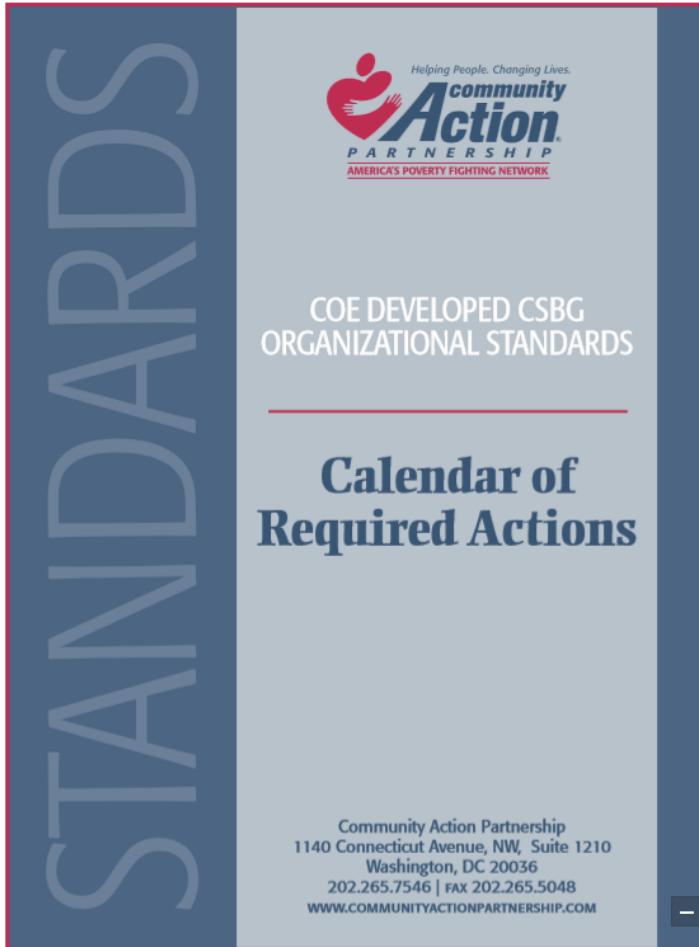
# Tools to Help Assess



## Glossary of Terms

This glossary is provided as guidance by the Organizational Standards Center of Excellence (OSCOE). It is intended to provide some clarity as to the intent of the CSBG Working Group in the development of the Standards. Please note that this is not official guidance and CAAs and State CSBG Offices are encouraged to work together to come to agreement on definitions and to refer to the CSBG Act and Office of Community Services' Information Memoranda when needed.

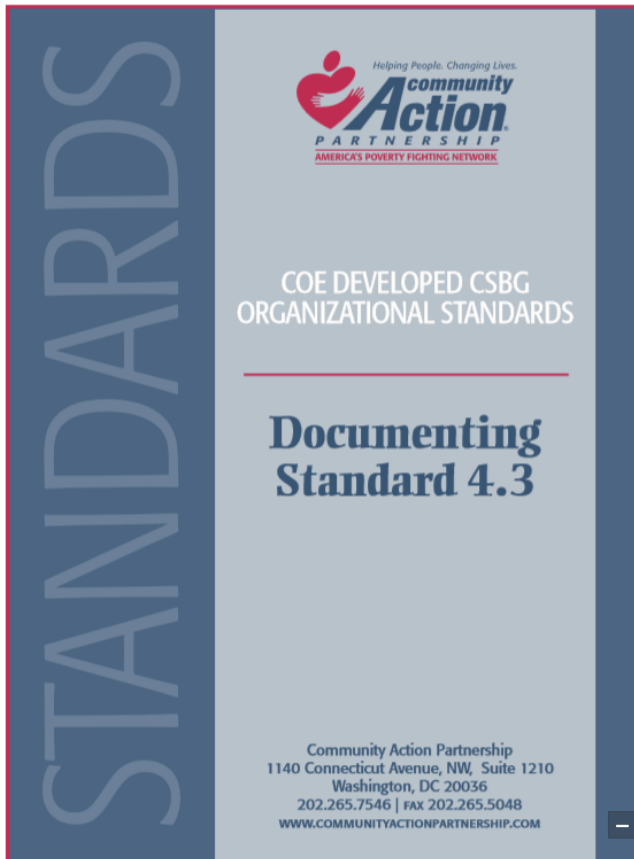
# Calendar of Required Actions



- Annually
- Every 2 Years
- Every 3 Years
- Every 5 Years
- Documentation

# Standard 4.3 Document Use of Certified ROMA Trainer

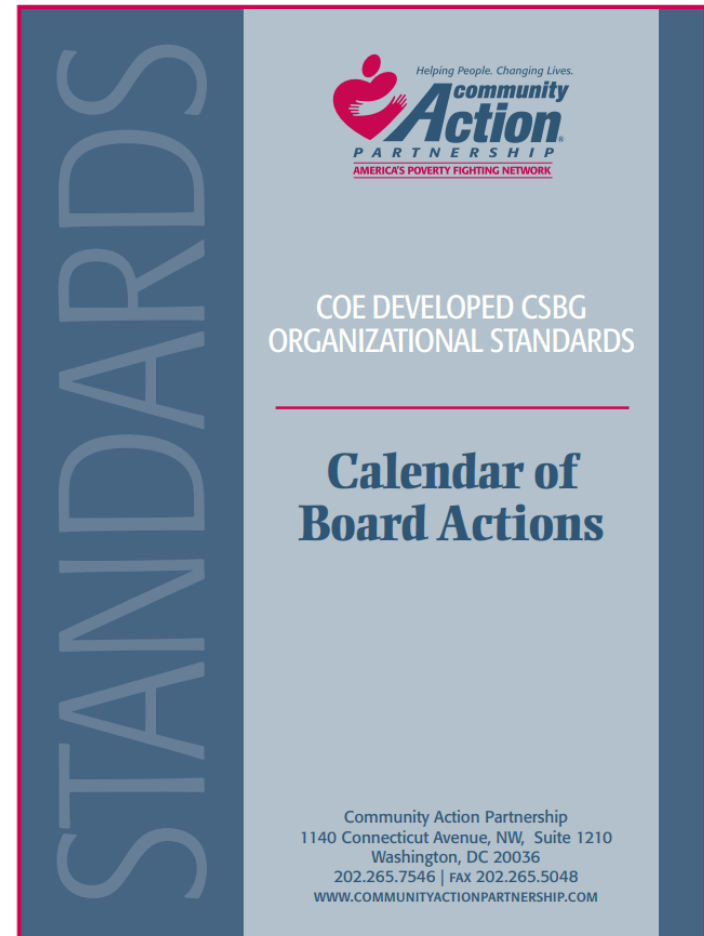
- Intent: Nationally Certified ROMA Trainer
- Use of “Equivalent” intended for States that have selected a performance management system other than ROMA



# Calendar of Activities

- The Organizational Standards have several requirements for boards that happen on different time cycles—use our Calendar of Activities to help manage requirements

[https://communityactionpartnership.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/29\\_Schedule-for-Boards\\_Final-Fillable.pdf](https://communityactionpartnership.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/29_Schedule-for-Boards_Final-Fillable.pdf)



# T/A Guides Toolkits and Webinars for Each of the Nine Categories

- Additional Guidance
  - Definition
  - Compliance
  - Document
- Beyond Compliance
- Resources
- Assessment Scales



# Organizational Standards Related Webinars

- Webinar series on the Organizational Standards
- Four webinar series on both Community Needs Assessments and Strategic Planning
- Two webinar series on Succession Planning
- Peer-to-Peer series on scorecards, data collection and Head Start integration

## Planning for a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

by Community Action Partnership | Nov 2, 2017 | Community Needs Assessment, Management & Operations |

ROMA and the CNA  
Planning for a Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

- Assessment is the first stage of the ROMA cycle and helps determine:
  - Who are our customers?
  - What do they value?
  - What outcomes should we aim to achieve?
- Assessment is the foundation of all subsequent phases
- Assessment is an ongoing process

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graph TD; Assessment[Assessment] --> Planning[Planning]; Planning --> Implementation[Implementation]; Implementation --> Results[Achievement of Results]; Results --> Evaluation[Evaluation]; Evaluation --> Assessment;
```

### Download Slides

This is the first session of four part webinar series offering a deep dive into the community needs assessment process – from planning for a comprehensive, agency-wide needs assessment, to the research, analysis, and communication of the assessment. This session focuses on planning the comprehensive needs assessment.

# ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARDS SKILL BUILDER TRAINING

Join Us for a Virtual or  
In-Person Training!

**Virtual Sessions:**  
September 10–11, 2024

**In-Person Sessions:**  
November 14–15, 2024



Learn More:





# Thank You!

**The National Community Action Partnership is YOUR partnership and is always ready to support your organization in any way we can.**

**Contact us at any time!**

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