



## CARES Act Substantial Amendment to FY 2019 Action Plan Meeting May 6, 2020

### Meeting Questions

**Question from the Public: "Who was at the table to make the decisions on how the CDBG dollars were expended and who will be there for the CARES act expenditures? What equity lens was used?"**

Response from the City: Decision making for the proposed allocation included the Mayor, the Mayor's Chief of Staff, the City's Chief Equity Officer, the City's Critical Community Manager, leadership from the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), and staff from the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget.

**Question from the Public: How are disbursements granted? How can groups apply for funds?**

Response from the City: Most of the planned allocations for the CARES Act Community Development Block Grant allocation (CDBG-CV) are modifications and expansions of existing programs already serving vulnerable populations in the City, like the URA's Housing Stabilization Program. There are also allocations in the CDBG-CV plan to groups that submitted scopes through the Public Service grant, which was open from 03.12.20 to 04.24.20.

The application for the City and County's joint CARES Act Emergency Solutions grant program (ESG-CV) will go live in the middle of May.

**Question from the Public: What safeguards are in place to ensure money will be available when the rent moratorium is lifted?**

Response from the City: City, County, and Urban Redevelopment Authority staff are currently working to establish that safety net. Good government includes numerous checks and balances, like the HUD-mandated public comment period, or City Council's three-week legislative model. The challenge we are in the middle of is trying to move fast enough to make the funds available when people need them, while also soliciting and responding to public input.

**Question from the Public: Will any group audit recipients? If so, will the auditors and results be made public and how can the information be accessed by the public?**

Response from the City: Sub-recipients are monitored for compliance with Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations by Office of Management and Budget staff. All HUD-related expenditures also go through the Controller's Office for review.

Each year, the City reports outcomes for expenditures, like the number of people served by a program, in a Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) filed with HUD. Those reports, along with the City's Annual Action Plans, Analysis to Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, and five year consolidated plans can be found on the following website: <https://pittsburghpa.gov/omb/community-development-documents>

**Question from the Public: How can you extend street outreach if it is suspended also people who live in shelters are not the only ones on the street! They need a bathroom and you can't get 4.1 million and claim to help homeless folks if you won't mention the 3 shelters you don't have insurance for.?! Also how come aids victims get direct funds for assistance but homeless folks get put in a group of funding. The cares act is a joke and isn't to help those who are suffering the most**

Response from the City: The level of funding and eligibility requirements for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) programs are determined by Congress and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Unfortunately, the City does not have the freedom to move money between the different programs, or distribute funds in ways that do not follow HUD regulations.

**Question from the Public: The proposed emergency funding distribution seems to be missing MOST of the folks on the ground, working the front lines, volunteering because our leaders have failed to provide adequate community resources during a state and national emergency. The funding organizations receiving (sic) the bulk of funding is vague. In my personal opinion, when funding is vague, that usually means it will go to the already privlidged (sic) entities, further harming some of our most vulnerable communities. Where are the emergency funds for Sex Workers? Where are the emergency funds for BLACK led organizations? Where are the emergency funds for Trans led organizations? Here is my comment I submitted. Please y'all fill their inbox with comments. Few funds are going to the most vulnerable communities. Let them know this isn't ok. One might say that this budget shows exactly why Pennsylvania made #5 most corrupt state. THIS. IS. PART. OF. THE. PROBLEM. In fact, mighty cis, privlidged (sic) and white of y'all. When you provide support from the BOTTOM up, you ensure that everyone has access to survival resources in our community. Leave no one behind. Back to the drawing board y'all. You're providing most of the "help" to the wrong end.**

Response from the City: The City recognizes the unique stresses and risks COVID-19 poses for our most vulnerable communities. The proposed plan for the CARES Act money includes allocations for:

- The Women's Center and Shelter for a direct services advocate and digital communication tools so women can access legal advice from home
- The Center for Victims for conflict resolution counseling including the Healing Rivers Project
- Pittsburgh Action Against Rape (PAAR) to support trauma/crisis counseling and legal advocacy, and communication equipment to increase, modify, and sustain services to meet the needs of individuals impacted by COVID-19