

TRI-COUNTY OPPORTUNITIES COUNCIL COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

Serving Bureau, Carroll, LaSalle, Lee, Marshall, Ogle, Putnam, Stark & Whiteside Counties

AGENCY PROGRAM DIRECTORY



Tri-County Opportunities Council will investigate the impact of poverty throughout our nine county service area and will work, in partnership with individuals, families and communities to provide opportunities that supports movement towards stability and self-sufficiency.

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www.tcohelps.org

#TCOCTRANSFORMS



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OFFICE LOCATIONS

Main Office

405 Emmons Avenue
 Rock Falls, IL 61071
 PH: 815/625-7830
 PH: 1-800-323-5434

LaSalle Office

308 N. 30th Road
 LaSalle, IL 61301
 CSBG: 815/224-0028
 CSBG: 815/224-3939
 LIHEAP: 815/223-2333
 HEAD START: 815/224-2533

Princeton Office

1019 N. Main Street
 Princeton, IL 61356
 CSBG: 815/875-6064
 LIHEAP: 815/879-6035

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

PROJECT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides customers the opportunity to obtain certification and/or training in order to achieve employment with a living wage or higher.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will assist customers with funding towards licensing and/or certification. In addition, the program will prepare customers by offering resources on financial literacy, general job readiness skills, transportation, and child care in order to sustain employment.

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORTS PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides customers with assistance to obtain necessary employment supplies to either begin employment and/or increase career advancement.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will assist customer with funding opportunities to purchase necessary supplies in order to begin employment and/or increase career advancement within their current place of employment.

SCHOOL SUPPLY PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Assists eligible CSBG families with assistance to purchase school supplies for their children to attend school; kindergarten through 12th grade.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

Provide financial assistance, up to \$50 per child, to purchase necessary school supplies; shoes, physical education uniforms, winter coats/boot/pants, backpacks, general school supplies, etc.

YOUTH ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides opportunities for youth to participate in community, school, and family activities. These activities are beneficial in assisting with their growth, knowledge, and motivation in order to become more engaged in life skill building.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will allow for youth participation in community, school, and family wellness activities. These activities will include sports, camps, arts, music, wellness, etc.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides 12 eligible customers with a scholarship for a post-secondary education at an accredited Illinois institution.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days. Must be planning to attend an Illinois post-secondary institution as full-time or part-time students in the fall.

Services Provided:

The program will provide scholarships to customers enrolled in an accredited Illinois institution that will provide formal education or occupational training towards a degree.

FAMILY REWARDS PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides case management services to help customers stabilize and achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will assist customers with the opportunity to promote self-improvement, family stability, employment, and savings.

TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides customers financial assistance to maintain employment, attend college, or to meet basic transportation needs.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will provide financial assistance, up to \$750, to eligible customers who are currently working at least 30 hours a week or more and have been employed for at least 90 days with their current employer; currently attending college; receive social security as their only source of income; or lacks transportation support. Assistance will be offered to make repairs on the customer's vehicle, purchase up to 6 months' car insurance, and purchase bus passes.

ID PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides assistance to customers seeking necessary identification documents in order to improve a level of self-sufficiency.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will provide case management services to eligible customers in need of acquiring necessary identification documents; driver's license, birth certificates, etc.

EMERGENCY UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides direct utility assistance towards a water or sewer bill to eligible customers who have had an economic hardship to meet basic needs.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will assist customers with a one-time emergency utility payment assistance within the last 90 days in order to meet basic needs. Customers must show proof of an economic crisis within the past 90 days and payment history if needed, and be required to pay 30% of the bill as a good faith effort prior to receiving assistance.

HOME SAFETY PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides assistance to homeowners who are in need of minor home repairs to maintain a safe home.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will provide case management services to eligible customers in need of home repairs up to \$500 to remain safely housed.

HEALTH ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides assistance to customers seeking health assistance to meet their medical needs.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will provide case management services to eligible customers in need of health assistance up to \$300.

DENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides assistance to customers seeking dental assistance to meet their dental needs.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will provide case management services to eligible customers in need of dental health assistance up to \$300.

SENIOR MEAL PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides financial assistance and education to eligible seniors, over the age of 55, with a grocery food voucher or Meals on Wheels service, in order to meet meal gaps.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will provide nutritional education to seniors during case management to ensure the customers are purchasing and preparing nutritional meals.

PERSONAL CARE PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides financial assistance to eligible families to assist with the costs of personal care items to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will provide financial assistance up to \$100 per household, to purchase personal care items: laundry detergent, toilet paper, shampoo, body wash, deodorant, dish soap, cleaning supplies, feminine hygiene products, etc.

LITTLE BOTTOMS PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides financial assistance to eligible families to offset the costs of hygiene assistance to children under the age of 5 or with a diagnosed disability.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Customer must be at 125% of federal poverty level for the past 90 days.

Services Provided:

The program will provide financial assistance up to \$100 per child, to purchase diapers, wipes, and creams for children in the household.

DISASTER PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides direct emergency assistance to customers affected by a disaster beyond their control in order to meet basic needs.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

No guidelines.

Services Provided:

The program will assist customers with emergency relief; temporary housing placement, minor home repairs, food, and emergency clothing to meet basic needs.

BUREAU COUNTY FOOD PANTRY

Purpose of Program:

Provides food to meet meal gaps for families residing in Bureau County in the following communities: Dover, Kasbeer, Malden, Manlius, New Bedford, Ohio, Princeton, Tampico, Tiskilwa-VanOrin.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Must provide proof of residency.

Timeframe: All year; Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Services Provided:

Food and personal products provided.

EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT (ESG) – Rapid Re-Housing Program

Purpose of Program:

Assist homeless individuals and families to gain housing.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Must be literally homeless (staying in an emergency shelter, safe haven, motel/hotel supported with government/charity funding, street/place not meant for human habitation, or fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence. Rent must be under Fair Market Rent amount, must have no appropriate subsequent housing option, and lack sufficient resources and support networks to retain housing.

Services Provided:

Provides financial assistance and case management to eligible individuals to gain housing.

HOMELESS PREVENTION

Purpose of Program:

Assist individuals and families with a one-time assistance with rent/deposit to prevent homelessness.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Income must be under 200% of federal poverty guidelines; proven financial crisis within the last 90 days; rent must be affordable; must not have received previous help within the last 2 years, and lack financial resources to prevent homelessness without assistance.

Services Provided:

Provide financial assistance and case management to eligible individuals maintain housing.

VOUCHER SHELTER

Purpose of Program:

Provides voucher shelter in an emergency situation to prevent homelessness.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Income must be under 200% poverty level; must be literally homeless and unable to stay at a homeless shelter; must lack financial resources to obtain shelter on their own; must not have received help in the last two years.

Services Provided:

Provide financial assistance to prevent homelessness.

RENTAL HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM

Purpose of the Program:

Provides rental assistance to extremely low-income households living in participating landlord properties.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Income at or below the 30% of area median income.

Timeframe:

Ongoing

Services Provided:

Housing support with participating landlords to help extremely low and severely low income households find housing.

FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

Provides meaningful volunteer opportunities for those in the lower income range who are 55 years old and older. The Foster Grandparents program offers supportive person-to-person services to at-risk and children with special or exceptional needs in reading, math, spelling, art and other constructive projects.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Foster Grandparents need to be 55 years old or older and have incomes that do not exceed 200% of the federal poverty level. They should be able to work 15-40 hours a week depending on assignment.

Timeframe: This is a year-round program for the volunteers that are in day care facilities and the Exceptional Care Facility in Sterling. Those in the public and private school assignments and the volunteers in Head Start classrooms follow the school-year calendar. Some Foster Grandparents volunteer for summer school programs and special summer park district program, or area libraries that offer a summer reading program for children.

Services Provided:

The Foster Grandparents make a service commitment to youngsters and individuals who are struggling with learning needs and provide personal guidance in order that the children or individuals can grow more fully. Besides assisting the child and the site teacher or supervisor, the Foster Grandparents also expand their own personal lives with friendships and experiences in addition to utilizing their special talents.

Other Information:

The program serves Bureau, Carroll, LaSalle, Lee, Marshall, Ogle, Putnam, Stark and Whiteside counties in the public and private schools, preschools, Head Start program, day care facilities, and at the Exceptional Care Facility in Sterling, Participant receive a tax-free stipend of \$2.65 per hour, transportation or reimbursement for transportation, meals during service time, annual physical examinations, 10 paid holidays, sick leave, vacation days and training.

HEAD START PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

To promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services. Services and a variety of programming options are provided to eligible children and their families in Bureau, Carroll, LaSalle, Lee, Marshall, Ogle, Putnam, Stark, and Whiteside counties. The program provides several programming options including half-day, full-day and full-year options.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Children ages 3-5 years of age (birthdate is figured on an August 31st cut-off date) who are from families with incomes below the poverty guidelines, experiencing homelessness, and/or receiving public assistance such as TANF or SSI are eligible. Foster children

are eligible regardless of their foster family's income. In addition, ten percent of enrollment is reserved for children with qualifying diagnosed disabilities, regardless of income, if that child will benefit from enrollment in an inclusive classroom setting.

Timeframe:

Most center-base classes operate during the school year, or September through May annually. The program does provide full-day, full-year classrooms in Ottawa and Streator (LaSalle County) and Sterling (Whiteside County). The full-year classrooms are funded with a combination of Head Start and Illinois Child Care subsidy funding. Center-based classroom schedules and days of operation vary depending on community and family needs.

Services Provided:

Comprehensive school readiness services in the following domains: approaches to learning; social and emotional development; language and literacy; cognition; and perceptual, motor, and physical development. Supportive services to children and their families in the areas of medical health, dental health, nutrition, and disabilities. Opportunities are provided to parents in the areas of parent education, program participation and decision-making roles. Transportation to and from the center is provided for the majority (but not all) classes.

Other Information:

All program classrooms are licensed by the Department of Children and Family Services. All program centers are staffed by qualified Bachelor Degree teachers. Each family is assigned a Family and Community Service Worker who works collaboratively with the teaching staff to promote, support and empower families to set and meet expressed family goals which move them toward self-sufficiency.

EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

To provide quality, comprehensive care and experiences for infants, toddlers, and expectant mothers. This programs' mission is to promote healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women, enhance the development of very young children and promote healthy family functioning. Service options are available in Bureau, LaSalle, Lee, Marshall, Ogle, Putnam and Whiteside Counties.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Pregnant women and children birth to 3 years of age who are from families with incomes below the poverty guidelines, experiencing homelessness, and/or families receiving public assistance such as TANF or SSI are eligible. Foster children are eligible regardless of their foster family's income. In addition, ten percent of enrollment is reserved for children with qualifying diagnosed disabilities, regardless of income, if that child will benefit from enrollment.

Timeframe:

Early Head Start services are provided full-year.

Services Provided:

Services are offered in home-based and center-based settings based on the respective communities and the needs of each individual family. Early Head Start center-based classrooms are located in Sterling, Ottawa, and Streator and are funded with a combination of Early Head Start and Illinois Child Care subsidy funding. Center slots are reserved for parents who are working and/or in school or job training on a full-time basis. All other services are provided in a home-based model. Services include early education services within developmentally appropriate settings and supportive services in the areas of medical health, dental health, mental health, nutrition and disabilities. Opportunities are provided to parents in the areas of parent education, program participation and decision-making roles.

Other Information:

All program centers are staff by qualified Associates Degree infant/toddler teachers. Parent/child educators have degrees and credentials as per federal requirements.

LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (LIHEAP)

Purpose of Program:

To assist income eligible households with their utility bills in the winter months.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Income must be at or below 150% of the Federal poverty guidelines.

Timeframe: October 1 – May 31 (depends on the funding)

Services Provided:

LIHEAP – If a household meets the income guidelines, LIHEAP makes a one-time payment to his/her utility company. Bills must be in the name of the applicant at the address in which they reside. The payment is determined by using a matrix given by the State. Some applicants may qualify for emergency funding if a utility has been disconnected.

PIPP – The Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) program is designed to help client's pay their own bill with a manageable budget bill. Eligibility for this program includes being within the LIHEAP guidelines and must have a participating utility company. As of now Ameren, Com-Ed, and Nicor are participants within the nine-county service area.

NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR – Neighbor to Neighbor funds are for Jo-Carroll energy clients. The income cannot exceed 300% of poverty level and can use up to \$500 in benefits in a rolling year depending on when they applied.

COM-ED HARDSHIP – This program helps households that may be having a hardship crisis situation. Examples of a hardship qualification are as follows: disabled (must have Social Security Disability or SSI), loss of income (unemployment, job closing or illness), outstanding medical bills, prescription costs, military deployment, death of an immediate family member living in the home at the time of death or property damage due to a natural disaster not covered by insurance. Guidelines are 250% of the poverty level or less. Past due balance can be requested up to \$1000 if they are not shut-off.

AMEREN SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAM – Ameren donated \$15,000 for the 2017 program year to use for clients. The criteria that we have established is 200% of poverty level and a benefit amount no more than \$200.

Other Information

If a household is eligible for LIHEAP, owns their own home and has a property tax bill in his/her name; the program may also be able to help with a furnace repair or replacement throughout the LIHEAP program. There is only help with this providing the furnace is not working.

ILLINOIS HOME WEATHERIZATION PROGRAM

Purpose of Program:

To make homes more energy efficient, provide safe heating equipment, if needed, may replace furnace if necessary and provide customers with safety equipment.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Based on the household's gross income for the past 3 or 12 months.

Timeframe: July 1 through June 30 of the following year

Services Provided:

Possible items to be taken care of: furnaces, doors, repair or replacement, smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, insulation, carbon monoxide detectors, caulking.

Other Information:

This program is open to both homeowners and renters (if the owner agrees to the program terms). All nine counties have waiting lists, some as long as a year. Home weatherized after September 30, 1994 are not eligible to be re-weatherized at this timer per the Department of Energy regulations.

RENTAL HOUSING

Purpose of Program:

To provide decent, safe and affordable housing to low-income customers.

Income/Eligibility Criteria:

Family must be at or below 50% of the area median income.

Timeframe: Ongoing

Services Provided: Six single-family families, 32 subsidized units and 16 apartments are available for rent in Sterling, Rock Falls, Dixon and Wyanet. There is a waiting list, but customers are welcome to fill out an application to get on the list at any time. Referrals to other programs which may be helpful are also made.