

IC 12-14-23

Chapter 23. Community Action Agencies; Community Action Boards

IC 12-14-23-1

Legislative policy; purpose of chapter

Sec. 1. (a) It is the policy of Indiana to help develop the full potential of each of its citizens so that they can live in decency and dignity and so that they can contribute to the strength of the state as a whole. The resources of the private sector of the economy should be employed to increase the opportunities for people to develop their capabilities.

(b) It is the purpose of this chapter to strengthen, supplement, and coordinate efforts that further the policies stated in subsection (a).

As added by P.L.2-1992, SEC.8.

IC 12-14-23-2

"Community action agency" defined

Sec. 2. As used in this chapter, "community action agency" means an entity that meets the following conditions:

(1) Is any of the following:

(A) A private nonprofit organization that is geographically located within a community.

(B) A private nonprofit organization that is located in a county or counties contiguous to or within reasonable proximity of a community.

(C) A political subdivision, if there is no qualified nonprofit organization identified that meets the criteria set forth in clause A or B.

(2) Has the authority under state or federal law to receive money to support the community action programs described in sections 3 and 4 of this chapter.

(3) Is designated as a community action agency by the governor or by federal law.

As added by P.L.2-1992, SEC.8. Amended by P.L.186-2001, SEC.7.

IC 12-14-23-3

"Community action program" defined

Sec. 3. As used in this chapter, "community action program" means a community based and operated program that meets the following conditions:

(1) Includes or is designed to include a sufficient number of projects or components to provide a range of services and activities that have a measurable and potentially major impact on causes of poverty in:

(A) the community; or

(B) those areas of the community where poverty is a particularly acute problem.

(2) Has been developed, and organizes and combines the program's component projects and activities, in a manner

appropriate to carry out all the purposes of this chapter.

(3) Conforms to any other criteria that the governor prescribes consistent with this chapter.

As added by P.L.2-1992, SEC.8.

IC 12-14-23-4

Community action programs; design and purpose; components

Sec. 4. (a) The components of a community action program shall be designed to assist participants, including the poor and near poor, persons with disabilities, farmworkers, the elderly, and youth, to do the following:

- (1) Secure and retain meaningful employment.
- (2) Attain an adequate education.
- (3) Make better use of available income.
- (4) Provide and maintain adequate housing and a suitable living environment.
- (5) Undertake family planning consistent with personal and family goals and religious and moral convictions.
- (6) Obtain services for the following:
 - (A) The prevention of narcotics addiction and alcoholism.
 - (B) The rehabilitation of narcotic addicts and alcoholics.
- (7) Obtain emergency assistance through loans or grants to meet immediate and urgent individual and family needs, including the need for health services, nutritious food, housing, and employment related assistance.
- (8) Remove obstacles and solve personal and family problems that block the achievement of self-sufficiency.
- (9) Achieve greater participation in the affairs of the community.
- (10) Make more frequent and effective use of other programs related to the purposes of this chapter.

(b) Components of a community action program may be:

- (1) administered by:
 - (A) the community action agency when consistent with sound and efficient management and applicable law; or
 - (B) other agencies;
- (2) projects assisted from other public or private sources; and
- (3) specially designed to meet local needs, or designed under the eligibility standards of a state or federal program providing assistance to a particular type of activity that will help meet local needs.

As added by P.L.2-1992, SEC.8.

IC 12-14-23-5

Organization under IC 12-14-23; right to receive state or federal funds

Sec. 5. A community action agency may not receive state or federal money appropriated or allocated by the state to carry out community action programs unless the agency is organized in accordance with this chapter.

As added by P.L.2-1992, SEC.8.

IC 12-14-23-6

Administration of programs; community action board

Sec. 6. (a) Each community action agency shall administer the agency's community action programs through a volunteer community action board consisting of not less than fifteen (15) and not more than fifty-one (51) members.

(b) One-third (1/3) of the members of the board must be elected public officials currently holding office or representatives of the public officials.

(c) At least one-third (1/3) of the members of the board must be persons chosen by democratic selection procedures that are adequate to assure that those members are representative of the poor in the area served.

(d) The other members of the board must be officials or members of business, industry, labor, religious, welfare, education, or other major groups and interests in the community.

(e) Each member of the board selected to represent a specific geographic area within a community must reside in the area represented.

As added by P.L.2-1992, SEC.8.

IC 12-14-23-7

Subsidiary board or agency responsible for major policy determination; representation of geographic area

Sec. 7. If a community action agency places in a subsidiary board, council, or similar agency the responsibility for major policy determination concerning the character, funding, extent, administration, and budgeting of programs to be carried on in a particular geographic area within the community, the board, council, or agency must be broadly representative of the geographic area.

As added by P.L.2-1992, SEC.8.

IC 12-14-23-8

Community action agencies; consultation with neighborhood based organizations

Sec. 8. Each community action agency shall consult neighborhood based organizations composed of:

- (1) residents of the area served; or
- (2) members of the groups served;

to assist the agency in the planning, conduct, and evaluation of components of the community action program.

As added by P.L.2-1992, SEC.8.

IC 12-14-23-9

Community action agencies; powers, duties, and activities

Sec. 9. A community action agency shall do the following:

- (1) Systematically plan for an effective community action program.

- (2) Develop information concerning the problems and causes of poverty in the community.
- (3) Determine the amount and effectiveness of the assistance being provided to deal with the problems and causes of poverty in the community.
- (4) Establish priorities among projects, activities, and areas to ensure the best and most efficient use of resources.
- (5) Encourage agencies engaged in activities related to the community action program to do the following:
 - (A) Plan for, secure, and administer available assistance on a common or cooperative basis.
 - (B) Provide planning or technical assistance to those agencies.
- (6) In cooperation with community agencies and officials, undertake actions to improve existing efforts to reduce poverty, including the following:
 - (A) Improving day-to-day communications.
 - (B) Closing service gaps.
 - (C) Focusing resources on the most needy.
 - (D) Providing additional opportunities to low income individuals for any of the following:
 - (i) Regular employment.
 - (ii) Participation in the programs or activities for which those community agencies and officials are responsible.
- (7) Initiate and sponsor projects responsive to those needs of the poor that are not otherwise being met. The projects must emphasize the following:
 - (A) Providing central or common services that can be drawn upon by various related programs.
 - (B) Developing new approaches or new types of services that can be incorporated into other programs.
 - (C) Filling gaps pending the expansion or modification of the programs.
- (8) Establish effective procedures to do the following:
 - (A) Enable the poor and the affected area residents to influence the character of programs affecting the interests of the poor and the affected area.
 - (B) Provide for regular participation of the poor and the affected area residents in the implementation of the programs.
 - (C) Provide technical and other support needed to enable the poor and neighborhood groups to secure available assistance from public and private sources.
- (9) Join with and encourage business, labor, and other private groups and organizations to undertake, together with public officials and agencies, activities in support of the community action program that will result in the additional use of private resources and capabilities. These activities shall be undertaken for the following purposes:
 - (A) Developing new employment opportunities.

(B) Stimulating investment that will have a measurable impact on reducing poverty among residents of areas of concentrated poverty.

(C) Providing methods by which residents of the areas can work with private groups, firms, and institutions in seeking solutions to problems of common concern.

As added by P.L.2-1992, SEC.8.

IC 12-14-23-10

Interlocal cooperation agreements

Sec. 10. Community action agencies may enter into interlocal cooperation agreements with units of government.

As added by P.L.2-1992, SEC.8.