

MONTEREY COUNTY
COMMUNITY ACTION
PARTNERSHIP & COMMISSION
INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES

2022

Fact Sheet, Job Description, Code of Ethics,
and What to Expect Each Month

MONTEREY COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP & COMMISSION

Fact Sheet

What is Community Action?

Community Action, also known as Community Action Agencies (CAA), are non-profit private and public agencies established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty." Congress' original plan was that the federal government through the newly-formed Office of Economic Opportunity would implement education, employment and training programs such as the Job Corps, the Neighborhood Youth Corps and Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA). However, rather than allocate monies to state and local governments for low-income programs, Congress determined that low-income people could be best served at the local level with the direct funding of community groups. This concept formed Community Action.

Community Action agencies were designed specifically to provide a focal point to coordinate and plan for the provision of community services that empower low-income people and improve their quality of life. The goal of this coordination and planning was to advance people from low-income to self-sufficiency. This is the national mission of the Community Action Partnership.

Over the years, the concept and structure of the Office of Economic Opportunity and Community Action has been redesigned. Today, there is no federal Office of Economic Opportunity. Federally-funded human needs programs have been consolidated into what is now known as "Community Services Block Grants" (CSBG). These federally-funded block grants are allocated to each state, which then uses an allocation formula to pass the monies on to the local CAAs. Today, there are approximately 1000 CAA's nationwide which serve as focal points to coordinate and plan for the provision of community services that assist and empower people living at or below the federal poverty limit so they can improve their quality of life.

What does Community Action look like in Monterey County?

In Monterey County, the Community Action Partnership¹ has operated through several organizations. Initially, its responsibilities were designated to a local private nonprofit agency. In 1972, the Board of Supervisors established the MCCAP as a County department.

In 1982, to coordinate services and reduce administrative costs, MCCAP moved into the Department of Social Services. MCCAP has moved several times in concert with various reorganizations of the Department of Social and Employment Services, now called the Department of Social Services (DSS). Today, MCCAP is part of the Office of the Director. MCCAP staff consists of a Community Affiliations Manager, a Management Analyst, administrative support personnel, and a part-time fiscal officer.

¹ The agency name was changed from Community Action Agency to Community Action Partnership in January 2003.

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MCCAP staff and the Monterey County Community Action Commission meet monthly to support engagement in three major Community Action activities: contracting with nonprofit and public agencies for services, collaborating with community stakeholders, and supporting educational community activities.

What is the Monterey County Community Action Commission?

The Community Action Commission (CAC) is a great place to get involved to serve your community by advocating for services that help people living at or below the federal poverty limit achieve self-sufficiency and improve their quality of life. The CAC is a tripartite board comprised of volunteers who are appointed by and are advisory to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors. Commissioners participate in monthly meetings and have opportunities to volunteer for a variety of committees and public councils as their personal schedules allow.

The Board of Supervisors is the legal governing board for the Community Action Partnership and Commission and is responsible for policy decisions. The CAC is advisory to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors and is comprised of 15 members. Each of the five supervisorial districts is represented by three Commissioners; one from the public sector, one from the private sector and one from the low-income sector of the community, which reflects the race, economic status, and gender of the county.

What is the Vision of the Monterey County Community Action Partnership?

Monterey County Community Action Partnership and Community Action Commission envisions a thriving community in which policy makers, community members and a broad representation of the public and private sectors are engaged in service delivery systems that promote self-sufficiency, reduce poverty and homelessness, and build community spirit for the low-income population in Monterey County.

What is the Mission of the Community Action Partnership?

The Mission of MCCAP is to assess the needs of the low-income people in Monterey County and develop, maintain, and evaluate community services that empower low-income individuals and families to improve their quality of life.

The following agency activities are tools used to accomplish this mission:

- Developing a Community Action Plan based upon strategic planning;
- Coordinating and collaborating with other community-based efforts to develop partnerships, maximize resources, and enhance existing service delivery systems;
- Identifying service gaps;
- Advocating for the needs of the low-income population;
- Developing needed community services and leverage funds to support them
- Serving as lead agency for homeless issues;
- Encouraging accessible, culturally sensitive, family-friendly, and responsive services.

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What is the Community Action Commission's relationship with the Community Action Partnership staff?

The Community Action Commission approaches its relationship with MCCAP staff as a partnership. The CAC relies on MCCAP staff to develop and administer contracts, prepare for and conduct needs assessments, coordinate service providers' site visits, assist in strategic planning, conduct research on low-income community services, and provide recommendations and technical assistance regarding MCCAP programs and activities. The CAC also relies on the MCCAP staff to secure and administer funding resources, as well as assist the CAC in increasing available program revenues through fundraising activities. With the information and support provided by the MCCAP staff, the CAC can then determine community service needs, advocate on behalf of low-income persons, and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

Whom do the MCCAP and Community Action Commission serve?

MCCAP and the Community Action Commission are concerned with that portion of the population generally described by governmental and social services agencies as low-income. Needs of this population include rental assistance, homeless services, domestic violence services, substance abuse counseling and services, literacy services, and food access. Response to these needs involve both prevention and intervention. Monterey County has found it effective to contract with specialized public and/or non-profit organizations and agencies for the necessary services.

Where does the Funding come from to pay for MCCAP Services?

MCCAP contracts with local non-profit agencies to provide needed low-income services. Funding comes from a variety of sources. The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) federal funding allocation provides the basis funding for the community services provided. Other funding sources utilized are: Domestic Violence Trust Fund (DVTF); Homeless Fund (HF); and other DSS support from Monterey County general funds. These various funds are provided through the following avenues: CSBG comes from the federal government via the State Department of Community Services and Development; DVTF are generated by marriage license taxes; and HF are generated by a County hotel tax. Although funding remains generally consistent, during some years' tax levels increase or decrease affecting the amount of funding that MCCAP receives.

Services to the low-income are contracted for through a Request for Proposal (RFP) competitive open bid process. When community needs assessments are conducted, the Commission and MCCAP staff analyze whether current services under contract satisfy those documented needs. Based on that analysis, an RFP may be released to community non-profit agencies. Agencies may submit proposals which address the requirements of the RFP and fulfill the requirements of the needs assessments. Once proposals are received and evaluated for completeness, the CAC makes recommendations for funding allocations. Ultimately, MCCAP staff develops and executes contracts with the non-profit agencies for low-income services.

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What is the role of the Community Action Commission?

The Community Action Commission provides input into planning for the needs of Monterey County's low-income population. This input comes through participation at monthly Commission meetings, visits to funded agencies, conducting public hearings and needs assessments throughout the County, serving on community coalitions and committees, and keeping abreast of issues concerning low-income persons in each supervisorial district. With this information, the Community Action Commission:

- Identifies needs and assesses community services;
- Determines service needs and funding priorities for the Community Action Plan;
- Recommends funding allocations;
- Assists MCCAP staff in efforts to increase program revenues through fundraising activities; and
- Evaluates programs

What is the purpose of the CAC By Laws?

The current By Laws, approved by the Board of Supervisors on January 31, 2017, provide guidance and information on how the Commission operates. As an appointed Commissioner, it is each member's responsibility to accept and abide by these By Laws.

Who serves on the Community Action Commission and how do they get appointed?

The CAC is a tripartite board consisting of a total of 15 Commissioners who are public volunteers. Each of the five Monterey County supervisorial districts have three representatives on the Commission: a public-sector representative, a private-sector representative, and a representative for the low-income community.

- Representatives of the public sector are general citizens of Monterey County appointed to represent the public and public agencies.
- Representatives of the private sector are officials, members, or former members of business, industry, agricultural, religious, welfare, education or other major organizations and interests in the community.
- Representatives of the low-income community must be representative of low-income individuals and families served by the MCCAP and are chosen in accordance with democratic selection procedures appropriate for the district, circumstances and ensuring board representation.

Commissioners are not required to have specific experience but should have a passion for the community and agency mission. Public and private sector representatives should submit their interest for appointment to the Supervisor's office of their district and are formally appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Candidates interested in representing the low-income should seek initial support from their district supervisor and then obtain a public endorsement from the low-income community. Endorsed candidates can then be

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formally appointed by the Board of Supervisors. Interest forms can be found on the Monterey County Clerk of the Board website, <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/bcandcApply/?boardName=COMMUNITY%20ACTION%20COMMISSION>

The term for Commission members is three years and Commissioners may remain on the CAC for more than one term. Every Commissioner must be formally reappointed by the Board of Supervisors at the beginning of each term.

Commissioners are encouraged to maintain regular contact with their representing Supervisor so that communication lines remain open. Supervisors can be a source of information and provide valuable networking in the accomplishment of MCCAP and CAC goals, and in locating new Commissioner candidates to fill vacancies.

How does the Representative for the Low-Income get endorsed?

The federal CSBG Act imposes the tripartite requirement but does not offer any guidance on how to conduct a democratic selection procedure for low-income representatives. The COVID-19 pandemic presented new challenges for public meetings and board governance leading CAAs to innovate procedures to facilitate the recruitment and election of representatives of the low-income community to serve on tripartite boards. As a basis for establishing selection processes that align with the intent of the tripartite board structure, CAPLAW suggests CAAs look to CSBG Information Memorandum (IM) 82 from the Office of Community Services, which states:

Every effort should be made by eligible entities to assure that board members representing low-income individuals and families have been selected on the basis of some form of democratic procedure either directly through election, public forum, or, if not possible, through a similar democratic process such as election to a position of responsibility in another significant service or community organization such as a school PTA, a faith-based organization leadership group; or an advisory board/governing council to another low-income service provider.

CAPLAW has termed the latter method a “micro election”. In April 2021, CAPLAW published “Preserving the Low-Income Voice” to document creative “micro-election” approaches CAAs have developed for selection processes using this type of procedure -- whereby CAAs reach out to another group representative or comprised primarily of low-income individuals to elect someone from their group to sit on the CAA’s tripartite board. These approaches preserve the intent of low-income representation while also allowing for flexibility in the democratic selection process.

In accordance with the federal CSBG Act and updated CAPLAW guidance, MCCAP will ensure one third of the Community Action Commission members are representative of low-income county residents. To this end, MCCAP will employ and document democratic processes necessary to facilitate the recruitment, selection and endorsement of low-income representatives in each district. The endorsed low-income representative

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must still be appointed by the Board of Supervisors following the democratic selection process.

Commissioner Job Description

In order to serve on the Community Action Commission, *you must:*

- Live or work in the district to which you are appointed or elected.
- Be appointed by a member of the Board of Supervisors (BOS) or elected by the low-income community and confirmed by the BOS.
- Endorse and support the mission and program goals of the Monterey County Community Action Partnership.
- Be knowledgeable of and abide by the CAC By Laws.
- Understand and be committed to the CAC Code of Ethics.
- Make a commitment to attend monthly Commission meetings as scheduled.
- Participate in fundraising activities to increase program revenues.
- Complete California Form 700, Statement of Economic Interests every year.
- Attend AB1234 Ethics Training every two years during service on the CAC.

As a member of the Community Action Commission, *it is your responsibility to:*

- Assist in identifying the needs of the poor in your district.
- Seek programs and other means for increasing the participation and influence of the poor in your district.
- Recommend to the Monterey County Board of Supervisors a Community Action Plan to meet the identified needs through use of the Community Services Block Grant and other leveraged funds.
- Monitor the progress of the Community Action Plan.
- Perform outreach to your district's Supervisor and to community members to fill Commission vacancies.
- Evaluate the success of the funded programs in meeting the objectives of the MCCAP.
- Use the research, recommendations, technical assistance and other services provided by the MCCAP staff as a means of serving as an informed, efficient and effective commissioner and advisory to the Board of Supervisors.
- Participate on at least one standing committee of the Commission.
- Stay current on issues related to the poor and disenfranchised by reading appropriate and applicable materials, attending community hearings and meetings, and networking with appropriate authorities.

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CAC Code of Ethics

We, as members of the Community Action Commission or staff, dedicate ourselves to eliminating poverty in the midst of plenty in this nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity with respect for cultural diversity. We commit ourselves to:

1. Recognize that the primary function of the Community Action movement at all times is to serve the best interests of the poor thereby serving the best interests of all people.
2. Accept as a personal duty the responsibility to keep up-to-date on emerging issues and to conduct ourselves with professional competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
3. Respect the structure and responsibilities of the Board of Supervisors, provide them with facts and advice as a basis for policy decisions, and uphold and implement policies adopted by the Board of Supervisors.
4. Keep the community informed about issues affecting the poor, and facilitate communication between the poor, locally elected public officials, and the non-poor private sector.
5. Conduct the CAC's organizational and operational duties with positive leadership exemplified by open communication, creativity, dedication, and compassion.
6. Exercise whatever discretionary authority we have under the law to promote the interests of the poor.
7. Serve the Community Action movement with respect, concern, courtesy, and responsiveness, recognizing that service to the poor is beyond service to oneself.
8. Demonstrate the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in all Community Action activities in order to inspire confidence and trust in the Community Action movement.
9. Serve in such a way that we do not realize undue personal gain from the performance of our volunteer or professional duties.

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Are Community Action Commission members paid?

Commission members receive no compensation for their time. However, Commissioners may receive reimbursement for travel and other incidental expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. MCCAP staff will provide Commissioners with instructions and claim forms when reimbursement is requested. All such expenses must be approved in advance by the Director of the Monterey County Department of Social Services or his/her delegate.

What is the requirement for AB 1234 Ethics Training?

On January 1, 2006, AB 1234 was passed which requires specified elected and appointed officials to take ethics training if the officials receive compensation for their service or are reimbursed for their expenses (such as travel, lodging, mileage, food, etc.). Because Commissioners can be reimbursed for travel and other incidental expenses, they are required to undertake this training.

The basic training requirement is two hours every two years of service, and the training is provided at County expense. MCCAP staff will alert Commissioners when this training is to be conducted. After training is completed, a certificate of completion is provided proving that this requirement has been met.

What is the Statement of Economic Interests Form 700?

California Form 700, Statement of Economic Interests, must be completed by each Commissioner each year no later than April 1st. By indicating reportable interests, Commissioners provide verification that they are not personally profiting from their role as Commissioner.

Legislative References:

Established April 1, 1972, pursuant to Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (Public Law 90-222, Title II, Section 210) as amended in 1967 by Public Law 80-222, Title II, Section 211. Re-established by Board of Supervisors Resolution 80-443, adopted August 5, 1980; amended by Resolution No. 89-415. Name changed from Community Services Commission to Community Action Commission on June 15, 1999, Resolution No. 99-243; Amended By-laws, January 7, 2003; Amended Bylaws, December 18, 2007; January 31, 2017 Bylaws Amended.

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What to Expect Each Month

Commission Monthly Meetings

- Third Monday of the month, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- Normally at the Life Foundation Building, 1000 S. Main Street, Salinas, 93901.
- Meeting agenda includes approval of monthly CAC minutes, review of Executive Committee minutes, review of monthly delegate agency financial statements, guest presentation on community service programs or issues, commissioner reports, committee reports and voting on action items.
- CAC informational packets are emailed to Commissioners 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting unless hard copies are specifically requested. Packets include CAC meeting minutes from the prior month, Executive Committee meeting minutes, current financial statements for agencies under contract, and other pertinent data.

Site visits to Delegate Agencies

- Conducting annual Site Visits for agencies receiving CSBG funding is required, and both MCCAP staff and Commissioners participate. Other agencies under contract may be visited as well. The purpose of these visits is to learn about MCCAP-funded programs, evaluate program and/or administrative performance, ensure that programs are meeting established needs, and talk with the agency, its board of directors and clients.

Committee Meetings

- Executive/Allocations Committee – Meets the first Monday of the month from 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the Life Foundation Building, 1000 S. Main Street, Salinas, 93901. Agenda includes discussion and recommendations regarding MCCAP program services, review proposals and make funding recommendations regarding MCCAP services, Commission activities related to low-income issues, and review of that month's CAC agenda.
- Nominating Committee – Meets annually in June to nominate the next year's Officers; i.e., Chair and Vice Chair.
- The CAC creates other committees as needed.

Other Involvement

- To advocate for low-income people, Commissioners may be involved with other committees, hearings or community activities.