

<b>EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY SYSTEM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Washington, D.C. 20210</b>	<b>CLASSIFICATION</b> SCSEP
	<b>CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL</b> OWI DNPTTA
	<b>DATE</b> May 6, 2021

**ADVISORY: TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER NO. 20-20**

**TO:** SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM  
GRANTEES

**FROM:** SUZAN G. LEVINE /s/  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary

**SUBJECT:** Program Year (PY) 2021 Planning Instructions and Allotments for Senior  
Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) State, Territorial, and  
National Grantees

1. **Purpose.** To provide SCSEP grantees with PY 2021 allotments and grant application instructions, and dissemination of annual Federal poverty guidelines used in SCSEP eligibility determinations.
2. **Action Requested.** To apply for PY 2021 grant funds, SCSEP grantees must follow the instructions in this TEGl and submit all documents to <https://www.grants.gov> with a copy to their respective Federal Project Office, as well as the SCSEP program office at [grants.scsepdocs@dol.gov](mailto:grants.scsepdocs@dol.gov), by May 24, 2021. SCSEP grantees should also note the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) plan for disseminating poverty and low-income guidelines in future years.
3. **Summary and Background.**
  - a. Summary –ETA releases grant planning guidance each program year to advise SCSEP grantees of the number of authorized positions and associated allotments for the program year and ETA's requirements for obligating funding to grantees. This TEGl provides SCSEP state, territorial, and national grantees with the PY 2021 SCSEP allotments and instructions for PY 2021 grant submissions.
  - b. Background – SCSEP funds are allocated by a formula provided in Section 506 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (OAA), as amended, 42 USC §3056d, and operate on a PY basis, from July 1 through the following June 30. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021, Pub. L. 116-260, (from this point forward, referred to as "the Act") Division H, Title I, secs. 106(b) and 107, allows the Secretary of Labor (Secretary) to set aside up to 0.5 percent of each discretionary appropriation for activities related to program integrity and 0.75 percent of most operating funds for evaluations. In PY 2021, after reducing the appropriation by \$1,123,000 for set-asides authorized by the Act, \$403,877,000 is

<b>RESCISSIONS</b> TEGL 22-19 and TEGl 22-19, Change 1	<b>EXPIRATION DATE</b> Continuing
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available for SCSEP program activities. Any funds not used for these reserve activities will be distributed by formula to state, territorial, and national grantees.

SCSEP funds are allocated to and administered through grants to all state governors, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and four territories, as well as competitively awarded to national non-profit agencies for services across the country. The national non-profit organizations compete for the awards every four years (subject to annual appropriations), with an optional one-year extension. ETA renews SCSEP state and territorial grant awards on an annual basis and SCSEP national grants on an annual basis during non-competitive years, which includes PY 2021 (as PY 2020 was a national competition award year). Each year, ETA requires grantees to submit a grant application that includes an SF-424, an SF-424A, the geographic areas to be served, a detailed budget narrative, a program narrative, signed programmatic assurances, and any optional special requests.

Each year in January, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) publishes the poverty and low-income guidelines based on the last calendar year's increase in prices as measured by the Consumer Price Index. These numbers, multiplied by 125 percent, are the basis of "low income" for eligibility determinations as defined at Section 518(a)(3)(A) of the OAA Amendments of 2006, 42 USC §3056p(a)(3)(A).

4. **Program Details – Annual Grant Guidance.** This section provides detailed submission instructions for state and territory formula grantees, as well as current national grantees.
  - a. **Program Allotments (Attachment I).** Attachment I details the funding amounts and authorized positions for each grantee in PY 2021.
  - b. **Grant Application Requirements.** Grantees must submit a complete grant package to receive PY 2021 funds. ETA will not obligate funds to any grantee until it has provided all of the information outlined in this guidance. Additionally, grantees must ensure that the components of the grant application package are consistent with each other.
    - i. **Application and Budget Information Form.** Grantees must submit current versions of the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance and the SF-424A Budget Information Form. Budgets must include the non-Federal share of at least 10 percent of the total cost (OAA Sec. 502(c)(1), 42 USC §3056(c)(1)). These interactive documents and accompanying instructions are available at the following link<sup>1</sup>: <https://www.grants.gov/forms/sf-424-family.html>.
    - ii. **Geographic Areas.** Item 14 of the SF-424 requires a list of the "Areas Affected by Project." Grantees must list the states and counties the grant will serve and must use [www.scseped.org](http://www.scseped.org) to obtain that information. Grantees can export the data for the service area(s) to an Excel spreadsheet and attach the list as a separate document.
    - iii. **Budget Narrative (Attachment II).** Grantees must submit a budget narrative that provides the information outlined in Attachment II, including:

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<sup>1</sup> Choose the SF-424 and SF-424A that note "Agency Owner" as "Grants.gov".

- A detailed description of costs associated with each line item on the SF-424A Budget Information Form;
  - Both the percentage and total dollar amount allocated to participant wages and fringe benefits as described at 20 CFR 641.565;
  - Both the percentage and total dollar amount allocated to administrative costs as described at 20 CFR 641.856; and
  - Infrastructure contributions to the workforce system in accordance with WIOA Sec. 121(h), 29 USC §3151(h).
- iv. Program Narrative (Attachment III).** All grantees must submit a narrative that includes the information outlined in detail in Attachment III, including:
- SCSEP operation, service delivery, and coordination;
  - Services to minorities; and
  - Organizational structure, monitoring, and audits.

Additionally, national grantees may also choose to provide any relevant updates to the statement of work that was included in the grant award documents following the PY 2020 National Competition. State grantees may also choose to provide any updates since submission of the SCSEP portion of the PY 2020 State Plan.

- v. Programmatic Assurances (Attachment IV).** Grantees must review, sign, and submit the programmatic assurances in Attachment IV that outline program requirements based on the OAA and the SCSEP regulations at 20 CFR Part 641. Adobe signatures are acceptable. The signatory must be the same individual as the Authorized Representative listed in item 21 of the SF-424.

- vi. Optional Requests (Attachment V).** Grantees may submit one or more of the optional requests described in Attachment V.
- c. Notices of Award.** ETA will issue Notices of Award with new grant numbers and allocation amounts to SCSEP grantees for PY 2021.
- d. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Approval.** As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act, OMB has reviewed and approved this information collection (OMB Control Number 1205-0040, which expires on November 30, 2021). Under 5 CFR 1320.5(b), an agency cannot conduct, sponsor, or require a response to a collection of information unless the collection displays a valid OMB Control Number.
- e. Poverty Guidelines.** HHS published updated Federal poverty guidelines on January 13, 2021. These guidelines provide the basis for determining the income eligibility of SCSEP applicants and enrollees. Grantees must multiply the appropriate base poverty guideline by 125 percent (or 1.25) to convert the poverty guidelines to “low income” as defined at Section 518(a)(3)(A) OAA, 42 USC § 3056p(a)(3)(A). The poverty guidelines are published annually on the HHS website and in the Federal Register. The HHS website that provides federal poverty guidelines (<https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>) also provides a chart with percentages of the guidelines, including 125 percent levels.

Until last year, ETA published an annual TEGl indicating the numbers to be used for SCSEP eligibility, based on the definition at OAA Section 518, 42 USC § 3056p and derived from the HHS guidelines. Given the availability of this information via the

Federal Register and the HHS website, going forward, ETA will no longer publish annual TEGs to convey poverty guidelines. Rather, grantees should review the poverty guidelines to be used on one of these sites, which provide the poverty guideline numbers that are effective as of the publication date. ETA will notify grantees informally once the poverty guidelines are published, and will post links to the guidelines at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/seniors> and <https://olderworkers.workforcegps.org/>.

**Continued SCSEP Provisions of the CARES Act.** The CARES Act, (Pub.L 116-136, March 27, 2020) Sec. 3223(2) provided the Secretary authority to increase the administrative costs for a project as described in OAA Sec. 502(c)(3) (42 USC §3056(c)(3)) to an amount not to exceed 20 percent of the grant amount if such an increase is appropriate due to the effects of the COVID-19 public health emergency. This TEG provides SCSEP grantees the opportunity once again to request an increase to their administrative cost limitation to up to 20 percent of the grant amount if the grantee can demonstrate that such an increase will help it mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on its operations, employees, or participants. As noted above in the instructions for the Budget Narrative and in Attachment II, grantees should note in their Budget Narrative whether they plan to request the increased 20 percent cost limitation. To use this flexibility, grantees must request and obtain ETA's approval according to the instructions in Attachment V, Optional Special Requests, addressing the justification requirements in 20 CFR 641.870.

5. **Inquiries.** Please direct inquiries to the appropriate Federal Project Officer.

6. **References.**

- Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, 42 USC §3056, et seq.; Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2016, Pub.L. 114-144 (April 19, 2016); Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020, Pub.L.116-131 (March 25, 2020);
- Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 [Including Coronavirus Stimulus & Relief], Pub.L. 116-260 (December 27, 2020);
- TEG 17-20, Update Guidance on Priority of Service, Durational Limits, and State Plan Submissions (April 15, 2021)
- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act of 2020 (CARES Act), Pub. L. 116-136 (March 27, 2020)
- TEG 17-16, *Infrastructure Funding of the One-Stop Delivery System* (January 18, 2017);
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Pub. L. 113-128, Sec. 121, Funding of One-Stop Infrastructure;
- Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Pub. L. 104-13 (May 22, 1995);
- SCSEP Performance Data Collection Approval (Office of Management and Budget No. 1205-0040) (expiration date November 30, 2021);
- OMB Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; Final Rule, 78 FR 78589 (December 26, 2013), published at 2 CFR Part 200;

- TEGL 12-06, *Revised Income Inclusions and Exclusions and Procedures for Determining Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Eligibility* (December 28, 2006);
- VOW (Veterans Opportunity to Work) to Hire Heroes Act of 2011, Pub. L. 112-56 (November 21, 2011);
- *Federal Poverty Guidelines*, Federal Register 86 FR 7732 (February 1, 2021); or HHS website at <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>.

**7. Attachments.**

Attachment IA-IE:	Funding Allocations and Authorized Positions
Attachment II:	Budget Narrative Instructions
Attachment III:	Program Narrative Instructions
Attachment IV:	Programmatic Assurances
Attachment V:	Optional Requests