

MARYLAND COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP

ADVOCACY DAY GUIDE



FEBRUARY 23, 2022

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

MCAP Advocacy Day will be held on **Wednesday, Feb. 23, 2022**. The program will begin at **10:30am**. During the program we will hear from state and federal legislators and partners.

Help us acknowledge and celebrate the work and the mission of helping people and changing lives. Your involvement makes this work possible and your continued support is critically important.

To access the event you will go to MCAP's Advocacy Day website:
<https://advocacy-day.maryland-cap.org/>

10:30 a.m. -10:45 a.m.

Welcome & Introduction

10:45 a.m. - 11:50 a.m.

Guest Speakers

11:50 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Closing Remarks

12:00 p.m.

Legislative Visits Begin

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MCAP TALKING POINTS

What is MCAP?

Maryland Community Action Partnership (MCAP) is a network of community action agencies across Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia. We connect our members to each other and the resources they need to develop effective approaches to reducing poverty. Collectively, MCAP's 19 member agencies provide lifechanging services to nearly 300,000 children and families experiencing poverty across our region.

What Does MCAP Do?

We strengthen our members' capacity to provide innovative strategies, community solutions, and opportunities that help people achieve economic security through:

- **Advocacy:** We work to ensure the voices of people experiencing poverty are heard at the local, state, and national levels. Informed by our member agencies, we advocate for policies that are proven to advance social and economic mobility.
- **Training and Technical Assistance:** We work hand in hand with community action agencies to build organizational effectiveness, through training that promotes best practices for community and family wellbeing. We facilitate opportunities for community action agencies to learn from one another through our annual conference, webinars, regional meetings, member portal, and newsletter
- **Resources:** We offer a suite of tools to help our members meet the needs of their communities through assessment, strategic planning, outreach, and development.
- **Communication:** We inspire hope and action by sharing stories from Community Action Agencies about what's working, and help shape smarter federal and state proposals on how to help families succeed by sharing solutions that work.

What is a Community Action Agency?

Community action agencies (CAAs) are local organizations that provide a wealth of services targeted to the specific needs of their communities. CAAs empower people experiencing poverty to achieve economic security through proven approaches.

What is MCAP's Purpose?

MCAP serves two major purposes: to serve low income individuals and families with other types of critical needs such as rental assistance, energy assistance, job placement services, and more.

Community Action Is...

- **Essential:** CAAs are often the only organizations capable of delivering resources to their communities quickly and effectively.
- **Action by the Community, for the Community:** Local challenges require local solutions. CAAs conduct regular community assessments to identify local needs and develop targeted action plans.
- **An Ecosystem of Support:** CAAs provide a range of services such as affordable housing, financial counseling, employment, education, weatherization, food and nutrition programs, and emergency shelters.
- **A Whole-Family Approach:** Too often, supports and services for families experiencing poverty benefit either caregivers or children. CAAs use a “whole-family” approach to breaking the cycle of generational poverty by supporting children and the adults in their lives simultaneously.
- **A Beacon of Hope:** CAAs are often the first intervention for individuals experiencing poverty and the last form of support as they achieve economic security.

MCAP's Role During COVID-19

The MCAP network was essential in assisting and supporting those who were adversely impacted by the pandemic. They were critical partners in working with the state and county to prevent evictions by distributing emergency rental assistance through the Emergency Fund. MCAP Agencies also provided food for families in need through their various food pantries and delivered food to those unable to access food distribution locations. MCAP Agencies ensured that shelters continued to stay open despite being at full capacity.

Employees at MCAP Agencies had to physically work out of their buildings due to the types of services they provide. They put themselves at risk in order to do the essential work needed to support our community.

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POLICY TALKING POINTS

CAA Employees Deserve a Living Wage

CAA employees are essential workers on the front lines of the pandemic, providing critical services for people in need. But too often, CAA employees do not earn enough to meet their own basic needs. This is unacceptable. We must care for the needs of those who care for others. Increasing annual wages for CAA employees acknowledges the importance of their work and helps to ensure the continuity of their essential services.

Community Action drives statewide success. It creates change at a local level and makes Maryland a better place to live. An investment in CAA employees is an investment in the well-being of our state.

Community Action Fund

This is why MCAP needs a **\$4M Community Action Fund**. It will help the CAAs maintain the services and resources that they provide. It will also provide CAAs with the opportunity to bring their employees up to a living wage because CAAs are mandated by law to provide these essential services. This money will be budgeted through CSBG and other state funds.

Permanent Source of 2-G / Whole Family Funding

Through the Community Action Network, whole family approaches to moving families toward economic security are being implemented across the state. This holistic approach to serving families (also known as the 2-Generation approach) is helping families develop pathways to achieve their aspirations and goals. The Community Action Network seeks a **permanent source of funding in the amount of \$1 million** to continue the work of moving families out of poverty.

Closing

MCAP and its member Agencies would like to continue the good work they are doing and funding is critical for this essential work to continue.

Maryland Community Action Partnership LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

2022

The Maryland Community Action Partnership (“MCAP”) was established in 1986. The non-profit, multi-regional association advocates on behalf of Community Action Agencies (“CAA’s”) and partnering organizations that serve individuals and families with low incomes who reside in Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia to ensure their voices are heard at the local, state, and federal levels. We continuously monitor for legislation and regulations that affect our members.



Strengthening the Capacity of Community Action Agencies



The Establishment of a Community Action Fund to Increase the Overall Capacity of CAAs to Not Pay Poverty Wages.

Workers of Community Action Agencies are essential and should not qualify for the same services they provide. Maryland Community Action Partnership calls for a **\$3 million** dollar Community Action fund to raise the wages of essential workers to **\$15** and beyond to ensure lower-income workers are paid a decent livable wage. No Community Action Agency should offer poverty level jobs and/or reduce critical services to the community at the expense of paying better wages.



Continuity of Comprehensive Services for Children & Families



A Permanent Source of Funding for the Whole Family Statewide Initiative.

Through the Community Action Network, whole family approaches to moving families toward economic security are being implemented across the state. This holistic approach to serving families (also known as the 2-Generation approach) is helping families develop pathways to achieve their aspirations and goals. The Community Action Network seeks a permanent source of funding in the amount of **\$1 million** to continue the work of moving families out of poverty.



Support for Returning Citizens



Fines, fees and a lack of resources reinforce the cycle of poverty and criminalization. Community Action supports legislation that addresses major barriers to economic success for individuals with a criminal background re-entering into society.



Capital Funding for Building and Improvements



Capital for Building and Improvements.

Communities across Maryland have very different needs. Community Action Agencies response to the needs require custom approaches and strategies. MCAP seeks funding for the Community Action Network to improve safety-related building elements and safety systems to mitigate occupational and environmental hazards related to COVID and new requirements for staff and clients.



Housing Stabilization



MCAP supports legislation and funding that supports the right to counsel for Tenants facing evictions to mitigate the impact of COVID on housing, and promote housing security.



Lifting the Voices of The Community



Engaging and empowering clients to overcome barriers and represent their own interest helps them increase control of their own lives. MCAP supports legislation that lifts the needs and voices of the community on issues such as **homelessness, childcare and EITC.**

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BILLS WE ARE SUPPORTING

HB571/SB279 Access to Counsel in Evictions Special Fund - Alteration

HB252/SB369 Income Tax - Return Preparation Assistance Program for Low-Income Families

HB674/SB384 Landlord and Tenant - Stay of Eviction Proceeding for Rental Assistance Determination

HB367 Landlord and Tenant - Repossession for Failure to Pay Rent - Rental Assistance Programs

HB122 2022 REDEEM Act - Criminal Procedure - Expungement of Records - Expansion

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ADVOCACY DAY TOOLKIT

TOOLKIT LINKS

MCAP Advocacy Toolkit Folder:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1zvpzSmMyJJe2LA5nPdX8Jlko1ytr5GFB?usp=sharing>

2022 House Committee Guidelines:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/18Jg-piJC5hEqg9KsC3nnulEz-dzHQ8hm/view?usp=sharing>

2022 Session Guidelines & Protocols

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1b7Is52cGb1a6RcV9G8_QL-XPc4WUsljD/view?usp=sharing

Your Voice in Annapolis:

Legislative History, Procedures, Contacts, and Committees

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IDlcpXgL2n6hWh2Jpd0xkDDpQWzJduCv/view?usp=sharing>

Lobbying Guidelines:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_AbMLjH3Ga2B3B3MCasvH-VB0x4FMJj0/view?usp=sharing