

**Request for Waiver of Non-Federal Share:**

**Total NFS required (inclusive of COLA):** \$1,143,114

**Waiver Request total:** \$(632,114): Head Start (\$404,026); Early Head Start (\$228,088)

**New NFD Share Total:** \$511,000

Washington County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. (d/b/a L.E.A.P.) is requesting a waiver from the Non-Federal Share (NFS) requirement under the Head Start Act section 640 (b) and administrative requirements detailed in 45 C.F.R. §75.308, for Program Year 02 that begins on 04/01/2021 and ends on March 31, 2022. This request is driven primarily by a lack of community resources, specifically as it relates to the ability to generate volunteer support for health and safety reasons during the COVID-19 pandemic.

L.E.A.P. staff, Board of Directors and Policy Council members have comprehensively reviewed our sources of existing and potential non-federal share (primarily in the form of in-kind contributions) throughout April 1, 2021 to present. As of the end of the third quarter (December 31, 2021) the trend appears to show that our Agency is lagging the budgeted amount in various categories of non-federal share (equivalent to a 20% share of the budget in total).

Over the past few years, L.E.A.P. has built several key private and public (non-Federal) partnerships that have contributed to in-kind contributions and services for the Agency's Head

Start and Early Head Start programs. This includes but is not limited to sources of in-kind from Washington County, local school districts, private vendors, and individual volunteers (including parents) in ensuring a quality and successful program. The following information describes in detail the areas where a waiver is being requested as well as the efforts to ensure meeting the Agency's matching requirement in the future.

**Requests for Non-Federal Share Wavier within the In-Kind Donation Categories: Volunteers, Professional Services, Supplies, Training and Marketing/Outreach**

Volunteer In-Kind: (\$310,000)

Professional Services In-Kind: (\$21,480)

Supplies In-Kind: (\$185,634)

Staff Training In-Kind: (\$7,500)

Marketing & Outreach In-Kind: (\$7,500)

To-date, the number of volunteers, program supplies and other professional services (marketing and staff training) that the Agency has been able to generate has lagged behind budgeted figures. The Agency sources volunteers primarily from three different groups for our program – Head Start and Early Head Start parents, Policy Council Members and Board Directors. Each type of volunteer activity is valued at a rate equivalent to a 'like' staff role, inclusive of fringe (as outlined in the Year 2 Budget Narrative). The parent volunteer activities were assumed to generate more than half of the budgeted volunteer time for the grant year, or \$200,000 of a \$340,000 total volunteer budget. This would be contributed in the form of both home-based and classroom-based parent support. However, due to guidance from the CDC,

NYS Public Health and local health authorities during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have conducted much of the program year virtually. And during in-classroom programming, the number of individuals in the building has been limited to ensure the health, safety and well-being of both our staff and families. These restrictions have impacted our ability to source other forms of support in the form of professional services, marketing & outreach and onsite staff-trainings. Among many impacts on our program, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly reduced the agency's ability to generate the needed in-kind to ensure adequate Non-Federal match against our Head Start grant funding.

**Requests for Non-Federal Share Waiver within the In-Kind Donation Categories:**

**Health & Disability In-Kind: (\$100,000)**

To-date, mental health services have been formally provided through a consultation agreement with the practice of Dr's. Osika & Scarano. Osika & Scarano provide a licensed staff consultant dedicated to Head Start and Early Head Start families. During the prior grant year, but post-submission of the Year 2 (current) budget period, the practice notified the agency that they were no longer going to be able to provide in-kind support; instead, services would be billed at the practice's normal, non-adjusted rate. Due to the level of in-kind this practice had been offering the agency up to this point, this change has had a significant impact on overall Non-Federal share figures. The agency has agreed, as was described in the Year 2 Grant Application, to hire a Licensed Mental Health Counselor in place of the services provided by Osika & Scarano. As of this date, this role has not yet been hired or onboarded and we continue to pay for this service less any in-kind contribution or adjusted rate.

We will continue to work on identifying other sources of allowable non-federal share on an ongoing basis. For this grant year, the total non-federal share required is \$1,143,114. We are seeking a waiver in the amount of \$632,114. The Policy Council approved this waiver application at a meeting with management on February 15, 2022. The Board of Directors approved the application at a meeting with Key Staff on Monday March 7, 2022. We believe we have made significant progress in our effort to grow our non-federal share and we hope you will consider our request for the current grant year.