

Mid-Columbia Community Action Council (MCCAC) and Washington Gorge Action Programs (WAGAP) See Delays to Services due to Government Shutdown

Subhead: MCCAC and WAGAP warn of fast-approaching effects to community service programs

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Dalles, OR and Bingen, WA – MCCAC and WAGAP today issued a warning that critical programs serving thousands of low-income residents across the Mid-Columbia region could be delayed because of the extended government shutdown that ended November 12th, 2025.

Both MCCAC and WAGAP rely on federal funding to provide our Gorge communities with tailored local programs for individuals and families facing financial hardship. These services, ranging from food and energy assistance to housing and emergency shelter, support our community members often on the brink of disaster and enable them to achieve self-sufficiency. Because of the shutdown, many of these programs will likely be forced to pause for an unforeseeable amount of time while we wait for contracts to administer services.

“We know this is a really scary time for our community. Individuals and families throughout the Gorge rely on our programs, and federal funds are woven into the foundations of both MCCAC and WAGAP. Our agencies have been a trusted part of the community for over 60 years, but as a result of the shutdown, we will have no choice but to begin curbing program services as we experience delays in receiving funding,” says MCCAC Executive Director Leslie Naramore. “When federal funding is delayed, it’s not just programs that pause — it’s meals missed, homes left cold, and families pushed closer to crisis. Our community can’t afford that,” says WAGAP Executive Director Jennifer Pauletto.

Specifically, the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is fundamental to both MCCAC and WAGAP’s operations. CSBG is a unique federal program that enables flexibility and local decision-making to prevent poverty and address community needs. CSBG provides core operational support that enables both agencies to provide a range of other programs, including:

- The Low-Income Housing Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which provides heating and cooling assistance, keeping energy costs down for the entire community
- For WAGAP, CSBG funds additionally support the Nutrition Assistance programs and the Community Youth Center
- For MCCAC, CSBG funds support Housing programs and Utility Assistance

As temperatures drop across the Gorge, families and seniors are already struggling to keep their homes warm and their energy bills manageable. Without LIHEAP funding, hundreds of households could lose access to critical heating assistance, putting vulnerable residents—especially children, older adults, and those with health conditions—at serious risk. This essential service in the Gorge ensured 827 homes in Klickitat and Skamania Counties and 1,068 homes in Wasco, Hood River and Sherman Counties in 2024 were kept warm. When the current contract ends, MCCAC and WAGAP teams will not be able to support households in need this fall and winter. Programs will be forced to pause early at the time our community needs it most.

According to the National Community Action Partnership (NCAP), “When Congress ultimately passes a funding package and federal operations resume, grant and contract funding doesn’t flow immediately. There are several steps before money reaches states and local programs — including [OMB apportionment, allotment, obligation, and contract execution](#). For passthrough dollars (such as CSBG), states also may need to process their own agreements with subgrantees before funds can be invoiced or drawn down. This process depends on each state’s internal timelines and invoice procedures, which can further extend the delay.”

MCCAC and WAGAP are joining NCAP and countless other Community Action Agencies across the country to urge Congress and the President to expedite contracts and continue to support the Office of Community Services staff necessary to ensure the timely administration of the Community Services Block Grant.

MCCAC and WAGAP will continue to provide updates on program services and closures. While community giving cannot bridge the gap created by the federal shutdown, both WAGAP and MCCAC welcome support from the community. For up-to-date information and details on how you can support, please visit [Mid-Columbia Community Action Council and Washington Gorge Action Programs](#).

About MCCAC and WAGAP

MCCAC is the Community Action Agency serving Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman Counties in Oregon; MCCAC's mission is to build a better future for our community through partnership and equity-centered programs that prevent and eliminate poverty and homelessness. WAGAP is the Community Action Agency serving Klickitat and Skamania Counties in Washington; WAGAP's mission is strengthening community through connection, collaboration and action. Community Action is a nationwide program, with over 1,000 agencies working throughout the United States to support people to move from poverty to thriving.

Media Contacts

Leslie Naramore
MCCAC Executive Director
lnaramore@mccac.com

Jennifer Pauletto
WAGAP Executive Director
jennifer@wagap.org