

DHS Responses to Public Comments Regarding Social Services Block Grant Review

Laura Tyler, LPC, PhD

Chief Executive Officer

Comment: I am writing to request that the Intended Use Plan be updated to reflect Arisa Health, Inc. in two sections.

These two sections are both in the Program Operations component of the Plan.

1. On page 9, under Program Operations – Counseling Services, please replace NEACMHC DBA Mid-South Health Systems with Arisa Health, Inc. This correction is needed in 4.g. Subgrantee/Service Providers
2. On page 25, under Program Operations – Prevention and Intervention Services, please replace NEACMHC DBA Mid-South Health Systems with Arisa Health, Inc. This correction is needed in 20.g. Subgrantee/Service Providers

It is likely that this legacy name was not updated following the merger of Mid-South into Arisa. Arisa has assumed all contracts previously under Mid-South.

Thank you and please let me know if you have any questions.

Response: Based on this public comment and following internal review, the state's SSBG Intended Use Plan has been updated to reflect Arisa Health, Inc, as our service provider. The following changes were made:

- On page 9, under Program Operations – Counseling Services, DHS replaced NEACMHC DBA Mid-South Health Systems with Arisa Health, Inc. This correction was made in 4.g. Subgrantee/Service Providers.
- On page 25, under Program Operations – Prevention and Intervention Services, DHS replaced NEACMHC DBA Mid-South Health Systems with Arisa Health, Inc. This correction was made in 20.g. Subgrantee/Service Providers

We appreciate your comments and have incorporated appropriate changes. We also appreciate your role as a service provider delivering SSBG funded services to Arkansans.

Joel Landreneau

Public hearing held remotely 5/28/2025 at 10:00 a.m.

Comment: Okay, great. So, I'm probably the only one in the room and really, the only comment I want to make is to make clear on the record that I think that the amount of notices given for review and public comment on this matter is, it can't possibly be sufficient. If you can't, 3 days' notice is probably

not complying with whatever process you guys have to comply with in order to have meaningful public input onto the decisions that are reflected in the spending priorities in this document. I don't really necessarily object to those spending priorities. In fact, I can't even, I didn't even have time to look at what the existing priorities are to see if this any kind of a change or redistribution on how this money has been spent in the past. There hasn't been time. So, I just, it looked like to me that this notice and this public hearing it was just put out there hastily for the sake of being able to say that you did it, but without any meaningful opportunity for input and I'd like to note my objections to that.

Response: Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) regulations require states to allow for public comment on their SSBG plans for a specific period after the plan is published. There is no mandatory minimum timeframe. Your objection to the length of time for public review is noted and will be taken into consideration as appropriate for future public notices. We appreciate your review of the state's Intended Use Plan, your participation in the public hearing, and your comments, and we are pleased that your review did not result in objection to the important spending priorities articulated in the plan.