



New Citizen Program (NCP)

Response to Statement of Legislative Intent 76-1-A-1-145

Wednesday, September 14, 2011 | Seattle Human Services Department | Dannette R. Smith, Director

Mayor Michael McGinn
Deputy Mayor Darryl Smith

CHARGE TO THE HSD DIRECTOR BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL,
JULY 2010

1. Create a seamless service delivery system;
2. Reorganize, redesign contracting infrastructure and processes; and
3. Develop a data-driven environment that guides investments.

BACKGROUND

- ✚ The program was established in 1997 in response to the national welfare and immigration reform that limited federally funded public benefits to non-U.S. citizens
- ✚ Serves low-income legal immigrants and refugees eligible to apply for citizenship
- ✚ Seattle Human Services Department contracts with community-based organizations to provide direct services

NCP services include:

- ✚ Screening for citizenship eligibility
- ✚ Assessment of English language skills to take the citizenship test
- ✚ Citizenship instruction
- ✚ Assistance in completing and submitting citizenship applications
- ✚ Assistance obtaining disability waivers
- ✚ Assistance obtaining fee waivers
- ✚ Legal assistance, consultation and/or representation
- ✚ Follow up and case management

2000 – 2010 Program Results

+ Total number of people served: **21,442**

+ Demographic:

- 55% Asian
- 20% African/Black
- 17% White
- 8% Hispanic/Latino

More than 52 languages are spoken by clients being served by NCP agencies.

+ Age of participants:

- 8% are 18 - 29 years old
- 24% are 30 – 45 years old
- 15% are 46 – 55 years old
- 53% are 56 years old and older

+ Total number of people who became U.S. citizens: **6,452**

State Budget Cuts

- ✚ In November 2010, the State's Naturalization program was eliminated as the Seattle Human Services Department (HSD) completed its Request for Investment (RFI) process for NCP
- ✚ As a result of the funding cut, available funding for contracts was decreased by 68%
- ✚ The number of service providers were reduced from 19 to 11
- ✚ NCP agencies were restricted to serving only low-income City of Seattle residents

Community Engagement

- In October and November 2010, HSD staff convened two meetings with service providers who had successfully completed the NCP Request For Investment interview process to discuss implications of the cuts
- Two options for continuing NCP services with less funding were presented to the service providers at the first meeting
- Input and feedback from service providers were integrated into a third option and presented to the service providers at the second community meeting
- The third option prioritized services to our most vulnerable populations and maintained funding for small agencies serving hard to reach communities

Impact of losing State dollars on New Citizen Program

| | 2010 | 2011 |
|---|--|---|
| Program Budget | \$1,461,848 | \$550,262 |
| Amount Contracted to Agencies | \$1,306,829 | \$419,168 |
| Fund Source | City General Fund: \$521,568 Seattle Housing Authority: \$25,000 Dept. Social & Health Services: \$915,280 | City General Fund: \$389,262 State Grant: \$136,000 Seattle Housing Authority: \$25,000 |
| Program Staff | 2.50 FTE (2 Senior Grants and Contracts positions and .50 Administrative Assistant) | 1.50 FTE (1 Senior Grants and Contracts and .50 Administrative Assistant) |
| Number of Contracted Agencies | 19 | 11 |
| Program eligibility criteria | King County residents (in and outside of Seattle) who have low incomes and/or receive public assistance | Low income City of Seattle residents |
| Number of people receiving citizenship assistance | 2,208 | 562 |
| Population Served | Seniors, Families with children, Disabled, and Preliterate (unable to read/write in their home language) | Same hard-to-serve populations, but smaller number served |

Program Evaluation

- ✚ NCP is unique and comprehensive
 - Agencies provide a full range of services to help individuals achieve U.S. citizenship
 - Services are culturally and linguistically appropriate
 - Services to eligible participants are free
 - Program follows established U.S. Citizenship Immigration Services (USCIS) Best Practices
 - NCP is a consortium of diverse community-based agencies collaboratively working together to assist individuals seeking U.S. citizenship
 - Client outcomes are tracked and monitored to ensure success and prevent duplication
 - An HSD Program Specialist monitors, coordinates and provides technical assistance to agencies
- ✚ Challenges to cost savings efficiencies
 - Reduction of HSD staff from 2.5 to 1.50
 - Funded fewer agencies from 19 to 11
 - No longer able to provide professional development and training to service providers
 - Unable to provide services to immigrants and refugees living outside of the City of Seattle limit
 - With less funding, agencies are relying more on volunteers to help meet the demands for services

Participating NCP Agencies

| 2010 | 2011 |
|---|---|
| Asian Counseling and Referral Services | Asian Counseling and Referral Services |
| Catholic Community Services of Western Washington | Catholic Community Services of Western Washington |
| Center for MultiCultural Health | Center for MultiCultural Health |
| Center for Career Alternatives | Chinese Information and Service Center |
| Chinese Information and Service Center | Filipino Community of Seattle |
| El Centro de La Raza | Literacy Source |
| Filipino Community of Seattle | Neighborhood House |
| Horn of Africa Service | Northwest Immigrant Rights Project |
| Jewish Family Service | Refugee Women's Alliance |
| International District Housing Alliance | Sea Mar Community Health Center |
| International Rescue Committee | St. James |
| Literacy Source | |
| My Service Mind | |
| Neighborhood House | |
| Northwest Immigrant Rights Project | |
| Refugee Women's Alliance | |
| Sea Mar Community Health Center | |
| St. James | |
| Ukrainian Community Center of Washington | |

Funding Sources

- ✚ U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) of the Department of Homeland Security is the only agency funding citizenship services
 - Cities are not eligible to compete for funding
- ✚ No other funding for citizenship services
 - No known institution and/or foundations fund citizenship services
 - The City of Seattle is the only municipality funding citizenship services in 2011
- ✚ NCP has responded to recent State's Department of Social and Health Services Request For Qualification for citizenship services
 - Application included a consortium of 14 agencies
 - Successful bidders will be notified on August 29, 2011

Alternative Models

- ✚ NCP is the alternative model
- ✚ Services are:
 - Culturally and linguistically appropriate
 - Comprehensive
 - Free
- ✚ Agencies participate in:
 - Design of the program model
 - Sharing of Best Practices
 - Coordination of services
 - National, State and local advocacy efforts to support immigrant and refugee communities

Support from City Council

1. Continue to fund NCP services
2. Support the new program model and approach that was implemented at the start of 2011
3. Expand outreach efforts and partnership with other municipalities to build an integrative service approach with shared Best Practices

Thank you

QUESTIONS?

