



**Central
Florida** Community
Action Agency, Inc.

AMERICA'S POVERTY FIGHTING NETWORK

Serving Alachua, Marion, & Levy Counties

Levy County Board of County Commissioners

July 19, 2022

Formerly Referred to as
"The Light People"

Helping People,
Changing Lives!



THE HISTORY OF CFCAA

- In 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared an “unconditional war on poverty” and created the **Economic Opportunity Act**. Working with the poverty task force created by Kennedy, President Johnson created the *Office of Economic Opportunity* to administer a wide variety of poverty prevention programs.
- Community Action Agencies were founded on the idea that local citizens were the most knowledgeable and best equipped to address problems of poverty in their communities.
- Today, there are approximately 1,000 Community Action Agencies in the United States.
- CFCAA incorporated in 1981, is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that is the sole provider of **CSBG, LIHEAP** and **WAP** funds in **Alachua, Marion and Levy counties**.



Vision Mission & Values

Mission: Our mission is to promote economic mobility by helping people living in poverty achieve self-sufficiency.

Vision: We envision a future where the citizens we serve achieve and maintain a standard of living above the established federal poverty guidelines.

Core Values:

- **RESPECT** – Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- **CUSTOMER-FOCUSED** – Implement a customer-focused approach by removing barriers to self-sufficiency and economic mobility
- **EXCELLENCE** – Maintain a high level of excellence in service delivery and operations
- **ADVOCACY** – Exhibit strong leadership in advocacy efforts to improve the lives of individuals and communities
- **INNOVATION** – Promote innovation by creating an inclusive culture that embraces change and creates unconventional ideas

AGENCY PROFILE

- CFCOA is Governed by a **15** Member Board of Directors
- **22** Dedicated Employees
- **3** Office Locations
 - *Gainesville (Alachua County)*
 - *Ocala (Marion County)*
 - *Chiefland (Levy County)*
- The Agency Provides Assistance (Yearly) to Approximately:
 - **11,000** Individuals
 - **4,200** Households
 - Annual Funding Level of Over **\$8,000,000**

The Promise of Community Action:

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.



AGENCY PROGRAMS

❖ **Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**

LIHEAP helps keep families safe and healthy through initiatives that assist families with energy costs. CFCAA provides federally-funded assistance in managing costs associated with the following:

- Payment of heating or cooling bills (only the energy costs portion of the bill will be paid)
- Utilities that will be disconnected due to non-payment
- Deposits for beginning utility service

❖ **Raising & Improving Self-Sufficiency Expectations (R.I.S.E.) Program**

The R.I.S.E. program provides a comprehensive and holistic approach to services by empowering individuals to actively pursue economic independence and obtain employment that pays a living wage. The program is designed for goal-oriented individuals who are motivated and persistent in their pursuit of self-sufficiency.

Participants work with a case manager to assess their needs, set goals, and create a specified case plan that is designed to address barriers to self-sufficiency such as employment and education. Individuals must be able to attend college or trade school and work between 20 – 40 hours per week.

The R.I.S.E. Program is made available with Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funding.

❖ Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

WAP enables low-income families to reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient. Based upon home pre-inspection and available funding, components of the program may include:

- testing air filtration
- improving heating and air conditioning methods
- replacing or repairing insulation and/or other energy saving measures

To qualify for WAP, the total household income may not be more than 200% of the federal poverty level. Preference is given to owner-occupied homes, elderly (60+) or disabled residents, families with children under 12, and households with a high-energy burden (repeated high utility bills).

❖ Aging in Place (AIP) Home Rehabilitation Program

AIP program assists low-income, elderly homeowners aged 60+ with home rehabilitation modifications that provide elderly residents with increased opportunities to stay in their homes, while preserving their independence and dignity.

Aging in Place modifications may include the following:

- 1) Installation of grab bars at back and sides of shower, tub, and toilets
- 2) Raised toilet seats
- 3) Limited mobility ramps
- 4) Task lighting under counter
- 5) Lever door handles
- 6) Removing tub and installing showers with seats
- 7) Any additional modifications that aid in protecting the health and safety of the client

How is CFCAA Funded?

➤ Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) - 99.07%

- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) - Utility & Rental Assistance
- LIHEAP - American Rescue Program (Pandemic)
- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) - RISE
- CSBG Cares Act - (Pandemic)
- Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

➤ County and Municipal - 0.91%

- State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) - *Marion County*
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) - Aging in Place
- Enhancement programs leveraged with Weatherization - *Home Repair & Rehabilitation*

➤ Duke Energy Neighborhood Fund - 0.2%



Strategic Plan 2021-2023

The Strategic Planning Committee developed the following (4) goals:

1. CFCAA will help people living in poverty achieve economic mobility and self-sufficiency.
2. CFCAA will enhance its capacity to achieve results.
3. CFCAA will improve its overall financial health.
4. CFCAA will help people living in poverty improve the communities in which they live.

Top 4 Community Needs Identified:

- #1. Employment
- #2. Housing
- #3. Transportation
- #4. Education

10 KEY FINDINGS:

1. The population of CFCAA's service area in 2017 was 650,285 as compared to 630,850 in previous Community Needs Assessment.
2. One in six people (15%) in CFCAA's service area lives in poverty.
3. Nearly three out of every ten children (28.7%) lives in poverty.
4. 37% of survey respondents identified lack of good paying jobs in the area.
5. 19% of survey respondents said they lack the skill set to obtain well-paying jobs.
6. Over 60% of jobs in Levy County, and over 80% of jobs in Alachua and Marion Counties are in service related fields which require fewer skills, but where wages are lower and benefits often not available.

10 KEY FINDINGS *(continued)* :

7. Transportation remains a major challenge in rural areas and smaller cities. Households with a restricted income cannot afford the cost of running and maintaining their own vehicle.
8. 85% of employed survey respondents earned less than \$25,000 last year and 53% of those earned less than \$12,000.
9. Acquiring a job does not necessarily raise a person out of poverty. Access to better paying jobs requires more education and better skills.
10. The median gross rent in 2017 was \$871 in Alachua County, \$671 in Levy County, and \$803 in Marion County. Rent may take half or more of a household's net income. Renting makes up 76% in CFCAA service area, while 19% are homeowners.



**HELPING
PEOPLE.
CHANGING
LIVES.**



Caroline W. Ruff-Looney, CEO

(352) 373-7667

cruff-looney@cfcaa.org