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Kansas Community Empowerment

Administered by Kansas Commerce

This document is designed to help communities interested in Kansas Community Empowerment assess their readiness to participate as an organized group. It encourages reflection on the current level of support, engagement, and leadership among local citizens, groups, and organizations.

The results should be used as a starting point for community conversations about whether forming or joining a Kansas Community Empowerment group is a good fit, as well as for identifying potential partners and participants in this ongoing effort.

In addition to answering the questions, use this form as a tool to begin identifying and engaging individuals and organizations who may be interested in being involved. The questions can guide you in determining who to connect with to gauge interest in sustained community involvement.

Community Name: _____

Have you hosted a facilitated public meeting to discuss challenges and benefits of a community improvement program?

Yes / No

If yes, how many attended? _____

What was the general response? _____

Community Readiness & Awareness

How familiar are community members with the concept of a community empowerment group?

What existing efforts or groups are already working toward similar goals?

What gaps exist that a Kansas Community Empowerment group could fill?

Leadership & Capacity

Who is willing to take on leadership roles or help organize efforts?

Do you have individuals who can commit time consistently over the next 12-18 months?

What skills or expertise already exist in your community (e.g., facilitation, grant writing, communication)?

Commitment & Sustainability

What level of commitment are potential members willing to make?

How will your group maintain momentum beyond initial meetings?

What challenges might prevent long-term participation, and how can you address them?

Structure & Direction

What is the initial purpose or focus of your group?

How will decisions be made within the group?

What does success look like for your community in the next 1–3 years?

Resources & Support

What resources (time, funding, space, partnerships) are currently available?

What additional resources will you need to be successful?

Have you engaged your local government? YES / NO

If yes, please list: _____

Have you engaged your economic development agencies? YES / NO

If yes, please list: _____

Have you engaged your local businesses? YES / NO

If yes, please list: _____

Have you engaged other civic organizations? YES / NO

If yes, please list: _____

Have you engaged faith-based? YES / NO

If yes, please list: _____

Have you engaged your youth organizations/schools? YES / NO

If yes, please list: _____

Have you engaged your healthcare and social service organizations? YES / NO

If yes, please list: _____

Have you engaged your local media? YES / NO

If yes, please list: _____

Tier Selection

How many volunteers are in your organization? _____

How many annual goals would you like to complete? _____

How many meetings will you host each year? _____

Do you have the budget and capacity to complete a project on your own? Yes / No

Do you have a designated person to complete the annual reporting requirements? Yes / No

Community of Growth Requirements:

- Maintain a minimum of three active volunteers
- Establish at least one annual community goal
- Hold a minimum of one meeting per year
- Submit regular reporting twice per year

Community of Action Requirements:

- Maintain a minimum of five active volunteers
- Establish at least three annual goals
- Hold a minimum of two meetings per year
- Complete a community assessment within six months of enrollment and update every five years
- Complete at least one annual project valued at \$500 or more
- Submit regular reporting twice per year

Community of Excellence Requirements:

- Maintain a minimum of five active volunteers
- Establish at least three annual community goals
- Hold a minimum of two meetings per year
- Complete a community assessment within six months of enrollment and update every five years
- Complete at least one annual project valued at \$500 or more
- Submit regular reporting twice per year

Which tier best fits your current capacity and level of activity? _____

Next Steps & Readiness Check

Based on your responses, is your community ready to move forward with forming a group?

What are your immediate next steps?

Who will take responsibility for moving this effort forward?

CONTACT US!

Please contact the Kansas Community Empowerment team with your results!

Kansas Community Empowerment (KCE) is administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce through its Quality Places Division. Our team is here to support your community with information, guidance, and resources. If you have questions about enrollment, requirements, or program activities, please reach out. Someone from our staff will be happy to help. Our team can provide:

Technical Assistance - Example surveys for communities, help with enrollment and reporting.

Organizational assistance - Example bylaws, facilitation of conversations and strategic planning.

Educational Opportunities - How to handle money, engage volunteers, celebrate your success and more.

Funding Opportunities - Through the Kansas Community Empowerment program and the Kansas Department of Commerce.

Annual Enrollment for the Kansas Community Empowerment Program opens on July 1 each year.



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