

Agency Purpose

The State Council on Black Minnesotans addresses the needs for people of African heritage to fully and effectively participate in and equitably benefit from the political, social, and economic resources, policies and procedures of this state.

With the insistence and support of the African American community, the council was created by the Minnesota legislature in July 1980 (M.S. Section 3.9225). Its primary purpose is to advise the governor and legislature on the nature and intensity of issues confronting the state's Black populations. The formation of the council was critical for Black Minnesotans because, historically, this population has been, and continues to be, underrepresented in the legislature and has had little access to the office of the governor or other policy makers.

The council is a policy-oriented agency that uses a community mobilization and involvement model. Prior to the creation of the council, there was no state or local agency responsible for advising and educating policy makers, researching and analyzing the broad spectrum of issues affecting Black Minnesotans, to advocate on their behalf or to educate and reeducate Black Minnesotans regarding specific policy issues and the value of political and policy participation.

The council's advice to policy makers must be well founded, accurate, and representative of the will of its constituencies. To facilitate these functions, the council is made up of 13 public members appointed by the governor with the understanding that they must be broadly representative of Minnesota's Black communities. Four ex-officio legislative representatives are also members of the council and participate in setting the agenda and priorities of the agency.

Core Functions

The council operates as a liaison between state agencies, individuals and organizations seeking access to state government. It participates in policy-making processes that affect the interests and welfare of Black Minnesotans and recommends new laws or changes in existing laws to the governor and legislature that may benefit African Americans and Africans in the state of Minnesota. Another important function of the council is to increase the awareness and practice of "cultural responsibility" throughout the state of Minnesota; its institutions and its citizens. It also publicizes the accomplishments of Black Minnesotans and their contributions to the quality of Minnesota life. Specific functions of the council include monitoring government and private sector agencies, programs and policies to determine their impact on Black Minnesotans and other populations of color. The Council also conducts primary and secondary research and sponsors and promotes issue/policy-oriented educational programs.

In order to effectively advise the governor, legislators, and other policy makers, the council has organized community legislative/policy dialogues. It also conducts primary and secondary research to get information on the extent to which Black Minnesotans benefit from current policies/programs and the extent to which disparities exist. Conducting research has provided the council with information that allows it to identify existing community needs and resources and set organizational priorities. A significant barrier to the accomplishment of these functions is

At A Glance

Minnesota's fast growing Black population is the council's primary client constituency and is the state's largest non-European ethnic/cultural group. In 2000, according to the state demographer, there were from 172,000 to 200,000 residents who were Black Minnesotans – more than triple the state's Black population in 1980. The council's client constituency also includes one of the largest African immigrant populations in the United States. The vast majority of the council's constituencies, nearly 92%, are residents of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Smaller Black communities can be found in and near Rochester, Duluth, St. Cloud, Mankato, Moorhead, and Worthington. Currently, rapid Black population growth is taking place in such Greater Minnesota counties as Carlton, Isanti, Chisago, and Crow Wing.

The council also has an institutional constituency of health and human service and research organizations with similar values, concerns, target populations, and objectives.

Overall, the populations served by the council are disproportionately impoverished and have experienced a multitude of complex and inter-related problems; social, political, and economic. These conditions are both caused and exacerbated by a lack of equal access and opportunity, and institutional and individual racism. The council was created to address the disparities associated with these conditions and be an instrument to create institutional and social change.

the current status of available data or information. Most agencies, state or local, public or non-profit, do not collect data in a manner that would allow the council to determine in a precise fashion the extent to which Black Minnesotans participate in and benefit from existing programs and policies. Correcting this condition is a primary objective of the council.

The council has established programs to address the needs of its constituencies. Through collaboration and cooperation, it is involved in about 70 ongoing committees and organizations addressing such issues as out-of-home placement of children, teen pregnancy, hunger, health, affordable housing and homelessness, economic development, education, drugs, violence, childcare, HIV/AIDS, crime, the status of African American males, tobacco usage prevention/reduction, employment, the status of Black veterans, poverty, police community relations (including racial profiling), and the unique concerns of native African communities.

The council also assists the governor's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Commission in managing and overseeing the observance of the Dr. Martin Luther King holiday and celebration. More specifically, the council assists in the planning and presentation of programs and events designed to promote the ideals of Dr. King.

Another important function of the council is to promote the representation, accountability, and increased/effective leadership of Black Minnesotans in policy-making processes. This is accomplished through the identification of individuals, as community assets, and matching individual skills with volunteer opportunities on Boards, Commissions, and Task Forces, etc.

Budget

Revenues: The total allocated budget for agency personnel and operational costs of the council on Black Minnesotans for FY 2005 is \$282,000. Of this amount, \$18,000 (6.4%) is allocated specifically for the Dr. Martin Luther King holiday and celebration. The remaining \$264,000 is considered the agency's designated budget.

Expenditures: Over 85% (\$225,000) of the council's FY 2005 agency's operating budget is used to fund 3.8 full-time equivalents for FY 2005. The remaining \$39,000 (roughly 15%) funds traditional agency operating costs (e.g. rent, travel, communications, supplies, and equipment.)

Contact

Roger W. Banks
Research Analyst Specialist
Council on Black Minnesotans
2233 University Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55114
Phone: (651) 642-0811
E-mail: roger.banks@state.mn.us

Dollars in Thousands

	Current		Forecast Base		Biennium 2006-07
	FY2004	FY2005	FY2006	FY2007	
<u>Direct Appropriations by Fund</u>					
General					
Current Appropriation	282	282	282	282	564
Forecast Base	282	282	282	282	564
Change		0	0	0	0
% Biennial Change from 2004-05					0%
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>					
Direct Appropriations					
General	291	295	282	282	564
Statutory Appropriations					
Special Revenue	54	94	90	0	90
Gift	6	1	0	0	0
Total	351	390	372	282	654
<u>Expenditures by Category</u>					
Total Compensation	278	281	250	225	475
Other Operating Expenses	73	109	122	57	179
Total	351	390	372	282	654
<u>Expenditures by Program</u>					
Council On Black Minn	351	390	372	282	654
Total	351	390	372	282	654
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	4.9	4.8	4.3	3.8	