

Improving Audit Prep Time by 50% and Freeing Up Time to Support South Carolina Communities



About the Agency

Lowcountry Community Action Agency is a private non-profit organization established in 1974, because of the war on poverty. The agency provides services to low-income constituents and families of Colleton and Hampton counties in South Carolina. Services include financial assistance, outreach and referral, advocacy, counseling, case management, training and employment, youth development, emergency homeless shelter, health, and nutrition, Early Head Start, and Head Start.



Local Grant Funds



Enrolled Head Start Children



Meals to Individuals



Additional Services to Families

Pain Points

Lowcountry Community Action Agency was looking to upgrade to software that featured internal controls and could cut audit preparation time. The agency, sought out software that would produce grant reports much faster, reduce the burden of audits, and save time on budgeting. They found MIP Fund Accounting and gained a supportive team from implementation to everyday execution.

Challenges

Lowcountry Community Action Agency needed to save time accounting for and managing budgets, grant reports for over 20 local, state, and federal grants totaling over \$16 million annually, and payroll for 70-plus employees.

Searching for:

- Software with internal controls
- Ability to account for multiple grants
- Decrease audit preparation time

Benefits of MIP:

- Robust internal controls
- Ability to create reports 50% faster than before
- Cut audit preparation in half

"I fell in love with the people that you all selected to bring the agency on because they had patience...we became personal."

Tamika Shiggs, Fiscal Officer

Audits:

The agency cut its audit preparation time by 50%, from six months to three months. The agency also shares view-only access, through an Executive View License, with its auditor, eliminating the time and costs to print all documents or upload them to a secure file transfer service. By including the auditor at the very start of the process, they streamlined communication. When Lowcountry's auditor has a question, they reach out, and the agency quickly and easily uploads the necessary documentation.

Internal controls:

Before Shiggs joined Lowcountry in October 2021, she worked with the agency in another capacity and knew its internal controls could be improved. MIP's robust internal controls now segment the agency's information by title or role, allowing Lowcountry to control who and which roles can access financial data.

"MIP is all about internal controls," Shiggs said. "I can lock a grant, flag a grant when the line item or budget is at a certain percentage or before it goes over."

Budgeting and reporting:

Lowcountry cut the amount of time spent developing budgets by nearly 50%. With the old software, they had to start with a blank budget each year. With MIP, they use a past year's budget as a starting template for new budgets, which saves considerable time and prevents data entry mistakes.

Grant reporting:

With 20-plus grants, the agency needed a way to easily and efficiently track and report on them. With MIP, the agency now tracks grants across multiple budget years and creates reports however needed, whether starting blank, from previous reports, or from a template to save hours of time.

"I love the way that you can report quality monthly, yearly, however you desire, whatever the request may be," Shiggs said. "... You can specify the grants, identify your object code and also it allows you to forecast. It is very user-friendly when it comes down to the fundamental part of the grants and the funding."

Payroll:

The agency implemented MIP Payroll and loved how easy it is now for her team to process payroll and for the agency to collaborate across team members.

"We used to have a third party for payroll, and it's heaven over here," Shiggs said.

Software Implementation and Support:

The agency wanted a trusted partner that would make the implementation process easy and provide support for questions or issues that might come up in the process of transitioning accounting softwares. With nearly 200 years of combined experience, MIP's support team partnered with the agency and was readily available to provide complete support.

"Whenever we reach out, ... you all find a result, and if you can't find a result immediately, you don't just leave us hanging out there," Shiggs said.

With more than 40 years of experience, MIP Fund Accounting® is the nation's leading nonprofit, cloud-based SaaS fund accounting software that manages multiple funding streams, and helps your organization accomplish its mission. [Discover how MIP can work for your organization.](#)

