



Coronavirus Aid, Response, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Area Agency on Aging Guidance

May 22, 2020

This guidance is for area agencies on aging (AAA) on administering CARES Act funds to support OAA services and supports.

AAAs are required to develop and submit a *CARES Act AAA Project Plan* to ODA for approval before proceeding with implementation. Using the project plan, AAAs will identify and describe usage of CARES Act funds for Title III-B, III-C2, and III-E, including plans for implementing the small business restaurant initiative. This project plan must be submitted to ODA on/before **Friday, June 5, 2020**.

Background

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced \$955 million in grants from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) to help meet the needs of older adults and people with disabilities as communities implement measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Service match is waived when using these funds.

The Ohio Department of Aging (ODA) received its notice of award on April 21, 2020 for just over \$29 million for Older Americans Act (OAA) services and supports. The federally approved intrastate funding formula has been used to allocate funds to each AAA.

Purpose of CARES Act Funding

Funds expended from the CARES Act are to respond to COVID-19 by providing OAA services related to the pandemic. Funds must be expended on allowable OAA activities as defined by the OAA, State, and local policies. In accordance with policy [AAA Funding Formula \(108-FIS-14\)](#), AAAs are required to use the local funding formula to allocate funds to each county within their planning and service area (PSA).

General Guidelines – Project Plan

AAAs will receive allocations of CARES Act funds in Titles III B (*Supportive Services*), C2 (*Home-Delivered Meals*) and E (*Caregiver Support*). This formula grant award is issued under the authority of the CARES Act, P.L. 116-136 for activities authorized under Title III of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended through P.L. 116-131, enacted March 25, 2020.

AAAs shall develop and submit a project plan to identify planned use of CARES Act funds. ODA will provide a project plan template for AAAs to complete and submit. Within each Title, AAAs must identify *at least* three objectives to guide work. For each Title, AAA must identify:

Fostering sound public policy, research, and initiatives that benefit older Ohioans.

- **At least two objectives** focused on maintaining and **meeting current demand** of the COVID-19 crisis.
- **At least one objective** focused on **recovery efforts** to restore the aging network.

For Titles III-B and III-C2, ODA has established one required objective for each Title, focused on maintaining and meeting current demand. All AAAs are required to address these ODA-directed objectives. Additional space has been made available to accommodate AAAs that wish to identify added objectives.

For each objective, AAAs must identify the service category and provide a detailed description. This description should include but is not limited to: an explanation of how the service will be expanded, including the reach within specific counties; the involvement of any contracted partners/providers; and an established timeline for service expansion.

AAAs are encouraged to reference results from ODA’s *CARES Act Planning Survey* in developing this plan.

Guidance regarding reporting requirements with CARES Act funds will be forthcoming.

CARES Act Fund Allocations

AAA	Admin	Title III B	Title III C2	Title III E Admin	Title III E Services
1	\$314,722	\$871,678	\$1,777,306	\$43,079	\$387,707
2	\$265,827	\$736,256	\$1,501,187	\$36,386	\$327,474
3	\$78,871	\$218,448	\$445,405	\$10,796	\$97,162
4	\$199,194	\$551,704	\$1,124,895	\$27,265	\$245,388
5	\$116,266	\$322,020	\$656,581	\$15,914	\$143,229
6	\$307,594	\$851,938	\$1,737,057	\$42,103	\$378,927
7	\$101,507	\$281,142	\$573,233	\$13,894	\$125,047
8	\$58,414	\$161,788	\$329,877	\$7,996	\$71,961
9	\$116,954	\$323,926	\$660,469	\$16,009	\$144,077
10A	\$521,093	\$1,443,260	\$2,942,731	\$71,326	\$641,937
10B	\$264,289	\$731,996	\$1,492,501	\$36,175	\$325,579
11	\$173,236	\$479,808	\$978,303	\$23,712	\$213,410
Total	\$2,517,968	\$6,973,963	\$14,219,545	\$344,655	\$3,101,899

Considerations

AAAs should review the following considerations when developing CARES Act project plans:

- [COVID-19: OAA FFCRA, CARES Act, and MDD Guidelines during Pandemic](#)
- ODA Policies:
 - [Service Priority to Specific Client Groups \(105-SVC-01\)](#)
 - [AAA Funding Formula \(108-FIS-14\)](#)

Title III-B Supportive Services

Supportive services provide a range of social services aimed at helping older adults remain independent in their own homes and communities. AAAs shall identify *at least* three objectives to guide work with Title III-B funds. At least two objectives must be focused on maintaining and meeting current demand of the COVID-19 crisis. At least one objective must be focused on recovery efforts to restore the aging network.

ODA has established one objective focused on maintaining and meeting current demand. **All AAAs are required to address the ODA-directed objective, *Wellness Kits*:**

AAAs shall allocate a portion of Title III-B funds toward the implementation Wellness Kits program. Funds allocated to this initiative shall be reserved for procuring and distributing wellness kits containing personal safety items to prevent the spread of COVID-10. These kits may include but are not limited to face masks, hand sanitizer or hand soap, and information on resources available in the community. For more details about this program, review *AAA Guidance – Wellness Kits*.

In addition to the *Wellness Kits* program, AAAs shall identify at least one additional objective focused on meeting current demand and at least one objective on recovery efforts.

ODA strongly encourages AAAs to consider implementing and/or expanding grocery programs. With Title III-B funds, grocery programs may include ordering, shopping, and delivery of food and personal care items. To provide emergency assistance, Title III-B funds can also be used to purchase these items.

Title III-B Example Services:

- Access Services (Care Coordination; Information and Assistance; Outreach; Transportation);
- In-Home Services (Chore; Homemaking; Personal Care);
- Legal Assistance (Eviction; Termination of Benefits or Essential Services; Elder Abuse);
- Community Services (Adult Day Care; Disease Prevention; Home Repair; Caregiver and Kinship Support; Emergency Assistance); and/or
 - Emergency food boxes may also be provided, as long as in coordination with and not duplication of the emergency food network.

Title III-C2 Home Delivered Meals

In accordance with the [Older Americans Act of 1965 \(Amended\)](#), the purposes of this part are to:

1. Reduce hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition;
2. Promote socialization of older individuals; and
3. Promote the health and well-being of older individuals by assisting such individuals to gain access to nutrition and other disease prevention and health promotion services to delay the onset of adverse health conditions resulting from poor nutritional health or sedentary behavior.

AAAs shall identify *at least* three objectives to guide work with Title III-C2 funds. At least two objectives must be focused on maintaining and meeting current demand of the COVID-19 crisis. At least one objective must be focused on recovery efforts to restore the aging network.

ODA has established one objective focused on maintaining and meeting current demand. **All AAAs are required to address the ODA-directed objective, the *Small Business Restaurant Initiative*:**

AAAs shall allocate at **least 35 percent** of Title III-C2 CARES Act funding to implement and support *Small Business Restaurant Initiative*. AAAs may elect to allocate Title III-C2 CARES Act funds above the 35 percent minimum. For more details about this program, review *AAA Guidance – Small Business Restaurant Initiative*.

In addition to the *Small Business Restaurant Initiative*. program, AAAs shall identify at least one additional objective focused on meeting current demand and at least one objective on recovery efforts.

AAAs shall allocate **no more than 65 percent** of Title III-C2 CARES Act funds to support home-delivered meals contracts with traditional nutrition service providers. AAAs are permitted the flexibility to transfer Title III-C2 funds to support Title III-C1 initiatives, including but not limited to the safe reopening of congregate meal sites. For details related to transfers, AAAs are encouraged to reference ODA's [COVID-19: OAA FFCRA, CARES Act, and Major Disaster Declaration Guidelines during Pandemic](#).

Title III-C2 Example Services:

- Eliminate waiting lists;
- Provide more than one meal per day;
- Partner with local farmers and food producers to increase use of local food;
- Increase nutrition education to include education about healthy shelf-stable foods, safe food handling, and dietary substitutions;
- Increase virtual nutrition counseling;
- Partner with senior centers and other meal sites to plan for safely reopening congregate nutrition sites including re-design of dining space, promoting socialization while physically distanced, alternative voluntary contributions, changes to service style (e.g., buffets, salad bars), and staff safety protocols. It may help to review [Phased Reopening Guidelines for Senior Nutrition Program Operations during COVID-19](#); and/or
- Other (*AAA proposed*)

Title III-E National Family Caregiver Program

The National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) recognizes the vital role performed by informal caregivers. NFCSP's intent is to directly benefit informal caregivers with services through a statewide, easily identifiable program that supports the efforts of caregivers, including kinship caregivers (grandparents supporting grandchildren).

AAAs shall identify *at least* three objectives to guide work with Title III-E funds. At least two objectives must be focused on maintaining and meeting current demand of the COVID-19 crisis. At least one objective must be focused on recovery efforts to restore the aging network.

ODA strongly encourages AAAs to consider implementing and/or expanding technology-based, remote solutions to enhance communication and magnify the level of caregiver support during the pandemic, including virtual caregiver support programs.

Title III-E Example Services:

- Information Services (public information and community education);
- Access Assistance Services (Outreach; Information and Assistance; Interpretation; Legal resources);
- Counseling Services (Individual/Group Counseling; Support Groups; Training);
- Respite Services (In-home Respite; Out-of-Home Care; Kinship Care Support); and/or
- Supplemental Services (Home Modifications; Assistive Devices; Cash/Material Aid).