



OAA Title III-E
National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) and Alzheimer's Respite
Guidelines during Pandemic
Released April 17, 2020

The following guidance is effective April 17, 2020 and shall remain in effect until the Stay at Home Order ("Order") is removed.

The Ohio Department of Aging (ODA) recognizes the vital role performed by caregivers and remains committed to providing support, services, education, and outreach to caregivers to help them to better understand their role; when and how to access assistance; how to utilize services/information to decrease stress; and how to better care for their loved ones and themselves.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, ODA remains committed to supporting family caregivers through the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP). Guidance for NFCSP is as follows:

National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP)

[ODA Policy 204.03](#) states the limit on funds allocated for supplemental services is 20% of the funds granted to the AAA under Older Americans Act (OAA) Title III-E. AAAs may request a waiver if they wish to exceed the 20% limit. This may allow AAAs the option to expand supplemental services to meet the needs of caregivers they support. Waiver requests to exceed the 20% limit on Title III-E supplemental services should be submitted to Emilia Jackson (EJackson@age.ohio.gov).

ODA encourages AAAs to continue providing services and supports to caregivers through virtual service delivery, including:

- Virtual caregiver support groups;
- Check-ins with caregiver utilizing video conferencing software (Zoom, Skype, etc.);
- Web-based caregiver training;
- Telephonic care consultation programs

Assessments

Caregivers receiving caregiver support services, including individual counseling, support groups, training, respite or other supplemental services must be assessed and re-assessed every 6 months. A new assessment must be created for each re-assessment.

During the Order, assessments may be completed over the phone or through other remote formats, including video conferencing. If applicable, required in-person assessments can be rescheduled later, after the Order has been suspended.

Caregivers who receive only Information, Referral and Assistance, or Outreach and Mass Outreach are not required to be assessed using the caregiver assessment form.

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

Home-Delivered Meals

In accordance with Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 173-4-02, meals delivered to a residence are eligible for payment with OAA funds if they meet the requirement for meals and if the recipient is one of the following:

1. A consumer who is sixty years of age or older and meets the following requirements:
 - unable to prepare his or her own meals;
 - unable to consume meals at a congregate dining location due to physical or emotional difficulties; and
 - lacking another meal support service in the home or community.
2. The spouse of the consumer;
3. A volunteer who provides volunteer services to the consumer;
4. A person with disabilities who resides in the home of the consumer.

In addition, under the NFCSP, individuals who reside with an eligible caregiver could be served through home-delivered meals if it would benefit the caregiver and enhance the ability of the caregiver to continue providing care to the care recipient. As an example, a grandchild being raised by a grandparent could be served a meal if it would assist the grandparent. Meals provided in this scenario should be funded through Title III-E.

Use of Volunteers

AAAs are encouraged to make use of trained volunteers to expand the provision of services provided through NFSCP. Training and communication of NFSCP volunteers should be delivered remotely, through telephone conferencing or other web-based, virtual formats.

Prioritization of Service Delivery

As of 03/10/2020, WellSky Aging and Disability (*formerly SAMS*) offers the capability to assign a disaster priority level to every enrollee. This functionality was added to facilitate the network's ability to prioritize the care needs of individuals potentially impacted by emergency situations, such as loss of electricity, travel barriers due to flooding, provider shortages related to illness, etc.

All individuals enrolled and actively being served in the following OAA service programs are required to have an assigned disaster priority level: Personal Care, Adult Day Services, Escort - Assisted Transportation, Home Delivered Meals and Care Coordination. For Care Coordination, the Disaster Priority is assigned by the Care Coordinator in WellSky Aging and Disability. The Disaster Priority will be assigned by the contracted service provider for the other services listed. The category is located on the Consumer's page. Disaster Priority corresponds to High, Medium, or Low Risk.

For more details about *Prioritization of Service Delivery*, review Notice 0320483 published on 3/13/2020.

Older Relative Caregivers: Supportive Services

The 2020 reauthorization of the OAA removed the 10% limit on funds available to provide support services to older relative caregivers.

Alzheimer's Respite

AAAs and contracted service providers utilizing OAA Title III-E or Alzheimer's Respite funds to provide adult day care services are encouraged continue supporting consumers and their caregivers without face-to-face contact. If in-home options are implemented, follow in-home health care guidance and contact your local health department if personal protective equipment (PPE) inventory issues arise. You may find it helpful to review ODA's [Checklist for Adult Day Centers and Senior Centers](#).

AAAs may also allocate an additional portion of Alzheimer's Respite site service funds towards Alzheimer's Core services provided by the local Alzheimer's Association Chapters.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

Powerful Tools for Caregivers (PTC) has been approved for remote implementation through telehealth software, such as Zoom or Skype. Telehealth PTC caregiver classes can increase access and much-needed support for caregivers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more guidance on facilitating remote implementation of evidence-based programs during the pandemic, review the [OAA Title III-D Evidence-Based Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Programs Guidelines during Pandemic](#).

Funding & Reporting Requirements

[Major Disaster Declaration](#) was made March 31, 2020 with an end date to be determined. Any open OAA grant awards (i.e. FFY2019 or 2020) Title III funds (B, C, D, and E) can be spent across Titles for disaster relief. This provision also applies funds received through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the anticipated funds received through the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

ODA and AAAs are responsible for monitoring of these dollars and providing details on how funds are being spent across different titles. AAAs are required to continue maintaining appropriate records and documentation to support the charges against the Federal awards. At minimum and where possible, AAAs and providers should be recording the number of clients to whom service is provided, the name or category of services provided, the number of unites of service provided, and the expenditure related to providing such services.

For full details about use of funds and WellSky A&D reporting, please review the [OAA Families First, CARES Act, Major Disaster Declaration, Guidelines during Pandemic](#) .

COVID-19 CARES (Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security) Act

[Legislation](#) was enacted on March 27, 2020. Funds should be received by ODA by mid-late April 2020. Using the federally approved intrastate funding formula, ODA will expedite funding distribution to AAAs. CARES Act will include funding for Title III-B Supportive Services, III-C Nutrition Services and III-E Family Caregiver Support. These funds are to be used for disaster assistance services.

AAAs and contracted service providers will be able to use Title III-E funds to support any disaster relief activities for older individuals and/or family caregivers served under the OAA, including, but are not limited to providing:

- Take out, or home-delivered meals,
- Well-being checks via phone, in-person, or virtual means, and
- Homemaker, chore, grocery/pharmacy/supply delivery, or other services.

Additional Resources:

Reputable, trusted sources of family caregiver support during COVID-19 include the following resources:

- [Administration on Community Living \(ACL\)](#)
- [Ohio Department of Health \(ODH\)](#)
- [Ohio Department of Aging \(ODA\)](#)
- [Family Caregiver Alliance](#)
- [Generations United](#)
- [National Respite Network and Resource Center](#)
- [Caregiver Action Network](#)

In addition, you may also find the following ODA caregiver support resources helpful:

- [Caregiver Checklist #1: Self-Care Tips](#)
- [Caregiver Checklist #2: Dementia Care](#)
- [Caregiver Checklist #3: Kinship Caregivers](#)
- [Caregiver Checklist #4: Helping Older Adults](#)