



AZ Aging

AZAging's Report of Activities of Area Agencies on Aging

Implementation of Legislatively Appropriated Dollars

During the last legislative session, Area Agencies on Aging received \$5 million to implement a housing assistance program and \$5 million for general funding to the Area Agencies on Aging. Both of these funding increases were one-time appropriations. Area Agencies on Aging worked with the Arizona Department of Economic Security Division of Aging and Adult Services to implement both funding streams this fiscal year.

The general funds appropriated to the Area Agencies on Aging will be used as a temporary extension of other one-time funding, both federal and state, for home and community-based services and home-delivered meals. Substantial increases in inflation, minimum wage, demands for service, and a shortage of direct care workers means that these funds will extend both COVID-era funding from the federal government, as well as extend direct care workforce rate increases implemented last year using legislative dollars.

The housing assistance funds appropriated to the Area Agencies on Aging will be used as a one-time pilot program to reduce homelessness and housing insecurity amongst older adults. These services can include rental, mortgage, property tax, HOA, and utility assistance, home repair and modification, and other costs associated with service. Each client will be eligible for \$4,000 of support per household. Clients must have already applied for other government subsidized programs like LIHEAP, ERAP, HAF, and have been denied for or expended all funds prior to accessing the Area Agency on Aging program. Need will be determined based on greatest social and economic need, with household income and size being taken into consideration.

Federal Funding Instability

Since the last report, a threat of a government shutdown has become a serious concern for Area Agencies on Aging. Though a government shutdown was avoided, and a 45 day continuing resolution was implemented that extended Older Americans Act funding, concern over a funding agreement at the congressional level still looms large. Proposed funding cuts would hasten the services cliff that Area Agencies on Aging are already concerned about with regard to the one-time COVID-19 funding expected to expire in September 2024..



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Looking past a bipartisan funding deal before the end of the year, Area Agencies on Aging are already seeing the impact of losing COVID-19-era funding, with several Area Agencies on Aging reducing service levels for home-delivered meals. Some regions have begun to implement a home-delivered meal waiting list - a drastic departure from recent normal practice for Area Agencies on Aging. Throughout the pandemic, over \$60 million of one-time funding was given to Area Agencies on Aging in Arizona to address increased needs - predominately nutritional needs through home-delivered and congregate services. The inequities of the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with demographic shifts of the Baby Boom Generation retiring, means that increased needs will continue to persist in our communities.

Staffing

With changes in funding, increasing inflation, and market factors impacting all employers post COVID-19, many Area Agencies on Aging continue to aggressively recruit for employees. Known open positions are listed at the end of this document. We encourage all interested parties to apply for positions with Area Agencies on Aging.

Leadership Changes

Laura Villa, Director of SEAGO Area Agency on Aging - Region VI, anticipates resigning effective October 20, 2023. Laura has spent nearly 10 years with SEAGO Area Agency on Aging, working to expand services and lead the Area Agency on Aging during the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the past several years, Laura has also worked diligently as both an AZAging Board Member and AZAging Secretary to further advance the interests of our state association. We thank Laura for her dedication to older adults and efforts throughout the state and look forward to welcoming SEAGO Area Agency on Aging's new director after their vigorous search.

In September, NACOG Aging appointed Brandon Baxtor as their new Area Agency on Aging Director. Brandon has worked for NACOG Aging as a Program Manager and currently serves on the Board of the Arizona Caregiver Coalition. Brandon is deeply knowledgeable about state and federal level impacts of funding and aging issues and looks forward to his expanded role as Director. We are excited to welcome Brandon!



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Open Positions with Area Agencies on Aging

Region One Area Agencies on Aging (apply at aaaphx.org)

Contract Specialist

Ombudsman Specialist

Prevention Specialist

Pima Council on Aging (apply at pcoa.org/careers)

Finance Specialist

Case Manager

Program Specialist

EnhanceFitness Instructor

Healthcare Education Instructor - RN

Direct Care Worker

NACOG Aging (apply at nacog.org/human-resources)

AAA Programs Manager

Pinal Gila Council for Senior Citizens (apply at pgcsc.org)

Ombudsman Director

SEAGO Area Agencies on Aging (apply at seago.org/public-notice)

Case Manager



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Program Updates

Region One Area Agency on Aging

Region One Area Agency on Aging was awarded \$97,041 to recruit 30 volunteers who serve as medical chaperones, providing 1,200 rides to 600 older adults needing non-emergency assistance after certain medical procedures. The grant is funded by the Administration for Community Living, administered in partnership by the Oasis Institute, Caregiver Action Network, and USAging. The 18-month award began October 1.

Additionally, Region One Area Agency on Aging received three Mature Media Awards: two goal awards for its World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Campaign and one for a promotional video for Scottsdale Home Delivered Meals Program. Another award was in recognition of a volunteer recruitment ad.

Finally, in partnership with the Arizona Bar Association, Region One Area Agency on Aging will be hosting its Annual Night of Living Will event. Attorneys donate their time to help older adults complete their advanced directives. 47 attorneys have now committed, which will allow for 167 clients to be served.

ITCA Area Agency on Aging

ITCA recently announced its new Assistant Director Thomas Throssel, who began his position on August 28, 2023.

ITCA Area Agency on Aging was honored to provide a presentation on their innovative work being done to the National Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center. Partnering with Banner Alzheimer's Institute, ITCA Area Agency on Aging presented "Expanding Capability in Indian Country, a case example from ITCA" to 249 participants nationally.