



WESTERN CONNECTICUT AREA AGENCY ON AGING

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NOTICE (TITLE III & STATE MATCH FUNDS) JANUARY, 2025

TO: Interested community service organizations in the Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging planning and service area.

FROM: Spring Raymond, MBA, President and CEO

RE: Request for proposal (RFP) process consideration of fiscal year 2026, Title III Older Americans Act and state matching funds. **Applications are due Monday, March 17, 2025.**

I. **INTRODUCTION:** The Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging (WCAAA) is currently accepting applications for funds from its Title III & state match funds allocations in accordance with the Older Americans Act through contract with the State Unit on Aging. Depending on the application request, awards may be made in grant form or unit of service (UOS) contracts for services to the 60+ population at the discretion of the WCAAA Board of Directors which is considered final. The precise level of funding for each category is not available at this time due to dependence on FFY 2025 federal allocations. Please note, there are additional requirements for some funding categories.

II. **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The purpose of Title III as specified in the Older Americans Act is to promote the development of a comprehensive and coordinated service system for older persons. The primary goals of this system are:

To secure and maintain independence and dignity in a home environment for persons capable of self care with appropriate supportive services; and,

To remove individual and social barriers to economic and personal independence for older persons.

III. **ROLE OF THE AREA AGENCY**

The Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging (WCAAA) is one of the five Area Agencies on Aging in this state established under Title III. The Agency was established in October 1986 with responsibility for fostering the development of comprehensive and coordinated service systems for older persons. As such, the major functions of the Area Agency are:

- Needs Assessment
- Establishment of priorities
- Bilateral planning and Plan implementation
- Service Coordination/Provision through contracting
- Resource development
- Evaluation
- Collection and dissemination of information
- Leadership and advocacy

IV. **FUNDING GUIDING PRINCIPLES:** There are several policies developed by the WCAAA which should be viewed by applicants as guiding principles for proposal development, and these apply to all categories of funding. All applicants should note that OAA funds must be used for service to persons age 60+ unless special conditions apply. (See grandparents section)

First, proposals which offer INNOVATIVE ideas based on documented research or best practices in programs and services aimed at maintaining seniors in their own homes are encouraged.

Second, proposals which consider the changes in legislation/regulations at the state and federal levels will also receive more favorable consideration. In this regard, we are concerned that proposals reflect such changes as they impact on local service delivery systems with specific regard to incorporating principles of health care reform.

Third, seniors who are frail, at risk of institutionalization, limited English proficiency, with Alzheimer's & related dementia, homebound and/or isolated in their homes are among the AAA's highest priority target groups. Of particular concern are those seniors who, due to health, safety or other social concerns may be considered isolated from the general social service system and/or family, friends, and other potential caregivers.

Fourth, proposals which will provide health/mental health type services and Transportation opportunities in INNOVATIVE ways will be more favorably considered.

Last, proposals that demonstrate how self-sufficiency can be reached without multiyear AAA funding will also be more favorably considered.

- V. **FUNDING AVAILABLE:** The following types of funding opportunities will become available through this RFP. Applicants are required to choose a funding title. The WCAAA reserves the right to adjust awards as funds become available. Applicants should note a) any special conditions that apply to the categories below and b) forms MAY have changed.

A. TITLE III B FUNDS (SUPPORTIVE SERVICES AND SENIOR CENTERS):

Title III B funds are being made available for general social services. However, there are categories of general service which the Agency wishes to promote. The ten service categories below are not exclusive; they represent types of services previously funded. Applicants are encouraged to present applications for innovative services/new methods of serving seniors under any of the service categories or the category of demonstration/Innovation. However, requests for demonstration funds should be developed so that activities can be concluded in one year. **NO RESEARCH/PLANNING ACTIVITIES WILL BE FUNDED UNDER ANY OF THE SERVICE CATEGORIES.**

- ADULT DAY CARE
- LEGAL SERVICES
- IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES
- HEALTH - MENTAL SERVICES
- EMERGENCY FUEL – UTILITIES
- TRANSPORTATION
- SENIOR CENTERS
- OUTREACH, INFORMATION & REFERRAL
- CHORE
- DEMONSTRATION/INNOVATION

It is the intent of the WCAAA to comply with requirements of the State Unit on Aging in allocation of OAA & State match funds as follows:

- A minimum of 25% of funds shall be allocated for in-home services
- A minimum of 21% of funds shall be allocated for access services including 5% minimum for behavioral health and 10% minimum for transportation
- A minimum of 6% of funds shall be allocated for legal services

B. TITLE III D FUNDS (HEALTH PROMOTION, DISEASE PREVENTION):

Title-III D funds are generally characterized as evidence-based health promotion, disease prevention and must be used to support programs that fit the “highest level” criteria evidence-based prevention and health promotion programs in accordance with the definition found on the Administration for Community Living or National Council on Aging’s websites. A minimum of two evidence-based programs will be funded but any one program will not be funded with more than 60% of the final Title III D federal funds. Applicants whose proposed programs do not fit within those researched based examples will not be considered for Title III D funds. Applications will not be returned. Furthermore, proposed programs must be research-tested and/or clinically evaluated and proven to provide adults 60 years and over with positive health outcomes in a community-based setting. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** The WCAAA does not anticipate any additional funding in this category of programming.

Examples of Evidence Based programs are: Active Choices, AEA Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program, Aging Mastery, Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Programs (A Matter of Balance), Active Living Every Day, Enhance Fitness, Enhance Wellness, Fit & Strong, Healthy Moves for Aging Well, Walk with Ease, Healthy IDEAS, PEARLS. (Refer to NCOA or ACL websites for list and descriptions).

C. TITLE III E FUNDS (GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN):

Title-III E funds are available to help grandparents over *55 years old* who have the responsibility of caring for grandchildren related by blood, marriage, or adoption under the age of 18. Direct service programs such as childcare, respite, and activities are preferred. The WCAAA Board of Directors has established grandparents raising grandchildren through Probate Court action as our priority.

IV. **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:** In addition to the specific requirements applicable to Title III Funds, there are certain general requirements which govern all applicants and requests. General requirements follow.

- All application forms must be completed.
- Do not renumber the pages.
- All assurances must be signed and dated.
- Applications must be received by the due date March 17, 2025.
- No fax copies will be accepted.
- Once an application is submitted, no amendment will be accepted unless specifically invited by the Board of Directors.
- Supplemental awards will be considered after the applicable federal fiscal year funding is known.
- The WCAAA Board of Directors reserves the right to place special conditions on awards that relate to productivity, quality and/or reimbursement.

Awards will be made on a unit of service reimbursement basis although some may be grant based with special conditions. These awards will include the required match which must be met prior to final payment by the WCAAA. Any cost sharing formula must be clearly described. A sliding fee scale must be included in the application for UOS awards; however, no senior can be refused services due to inability to pay.

A minimum match of 25% for all applicants. In general, the required match of 25% may be calculated as \$1.00 for every \$3.00 requested of Title III funds or by using the following example:

- a) Title III funds requested - \$15,000
- b) Required Non-Federal Match (a divided by 3) = \$5,000
- c) Total Program Cost is \$20,000

ALL APPLICANTS - The WCAAA uses a "**declining cash grant/contract concept**" that applies to programs operating on direct grant situation and agreements financing units of services such as "one-way trips or home health aide hours." The intent of this policy is that WCAAA financial support should decrease over the life of our financial support with a concomitant increase in the non-federal cash portion thereby ensuring program operation at the same or increased costs level unless written evidence shows increasing project need. Any written evidence of substantial need for additional funds will be reviewed in conjunction with other WCAAA funding available through National Family Caregiver and state direct service funds. Applicants for direct service programs such as chore, adult day care are cautioned to include tight protocols that show how these Title III funds will be utilized prior to National Family Caregiver benefits.

Under the declining cash grant/contract concept, the WCAAA does not commit to funding any project for three years. However, if any type of funding is provided, applicants must recognize that a three-year growth period is provided with WCAAA funds decreasing and other cash and/or in-kind services provided as increased match (please note formula below) unless the application indicates a change in service or larger number of clients to be served in support of the increased request. After the third year of continuous WCAAA funding/contract commitment, grantees/contractors are expected to locate non-WCAAA **cash to finance program increases or be able to otherwise justify increases**. Because of decline in state and federal funds to finance programs, grantees & contractors are encouraged to show innovation in financing the cash differential between actual cost per unit of service and total cash as well as WCAAA funds provided.

MATCHING WAIVER - Applicants, **whether they are current grantees or new applicants seeking a waiver of matching requirements MUST submit a letter outlining their reasons for this waiver with their full proposal**. All grantees will be expected to work toward self-sufficiency and be able to demonstrate such through a plan of action. Waivers are possible for those programs which, by nature of their service cannot generate program income (i.e., telephone services), which are serving primarily target populations as mandated by the Older Americans Act, or which cannot fund raise because of specific organizational regulations.

PRE-AGREEMENT COSTS - Any costs incurred by the potential grantee prior to the award of the AAA grant or contract by the WCAAA are not reimbursable. The grant period for these awards is October 1, 2025 - September 30, 2026.

CLIENT CONTRIBUTIONS/FUNDRAISING - Any client contributions or fund-raising generated through this award's clients & activities must be used in furthering the activities of this grant, recorded in Other Resources, **SPENT FIRST AND USED IN THE DESIGNATED PROGRAM YEAR**. Fundraising and municipal contributions may be included in Cash Match.

- a. Future appropriations are contingent upon Congressional action for all Titles of OAA funds. Therefore, applicants are instructed to plan for one year only. The WCAAA cannot guarantee funds for the purposes announced in this grant solicitation beyond this

year. Applicants may represent public, towns, private, for profit, or non-profit agencies. Contracts with for-profit agencies must be approved by the State Unit on Aging prior to initiation of the award activities.

- b. Applicants must be currently delivering services to seniors 60+ of age in the Western area (41 towns) and propose to serve seniors in the 41-town area only with WCAAA funds. (grandparents age 55 or older)
- c. Applicants must submit their latest independent audit (or audited financial statements if audit is not available).
- d. No Title III grant funds will be awarded to replace existing sources; in addition, NO TITLE III GRANT FUNDS WILL BE AWARDED/ ALLOWED FOR USE FOR SERVICES FOR WHICH PAYMENT CAN BE MADE UNDER TITLE XVIII OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT (42 USC 1395 et seq.) Medicaid for specified eligible/enrolled clients or other 3rd party payors.
- e. Matching funds or resources must not be obtained from other federal funding sources, with the exception of remaining Revenue Sharing Funds, or federal replacement, and may not be used to match any other federal funds. In addition, assurance must be provided that matching funds derived on a non calendar year basis will be used one time only.
- f. Grantees requesting unit of service payment for services (such as home health aides) may not request rates higher than those allowed by the Department of Social Services.

V. SPECIFIC ADULT DAY CARE REQUIREMENTS - Applicants applying for ADC funding must show evidence of meeting the following requirements;

DEFINITION OF ADULT DAY SERVICES: Adult Day Care is defined as a program of services provided in a congregate care setting for individuals who require supervised care. Elements of an adult day care center program are directed toward meeting the supervision, health maintenance and restoration needs of participants. There are also socialization elements in the program which, by overcoming the isolation so often associated with illness in the aged and disabled, are considered vital for the purposes of fostering and maintaining the maximum possible level of health and well-being. Adult day care centers applying for reimbursement of adult day care days will be funded only on UOS basis.

REQUIREMENTS OF APPLICANTS: In order to receive funding from the WCAAA from either Title III-B (social service) or CT State Alzheimer monies, an adult day care center provider must:

1. Meet all local and state zoning, licensing, fire and safety requirements.
2. Show evidence of successful peer review process completion through CT Association of Adult Day Services (CAADS) by date of application submission, and/or certification renewal for the current year. ADC standards may be obtained from CAADS or the WCAAA.

VI. SPECIFIC SECTION ON SENIOR CENTERS AND OUTREACH APPLICATIONS

Applicants for these funding categories must demonstrate efficient planning for the 12 months covered by the grant since most of these applications are grant based through completion of the form labeled “Monthly Activity Calendar” (MAC) in the application form. Senior centers that also function as a meal site will be considered for funding prior to applicants who do not serve congregate meals in an organized senior center setting. All senior center applicants are cautioned to demonstrate in their applications, how funds raised by their community will be used to finance senior center activities beyond travel and other social events.

Applications for other outreach activities must also demonstrate efficient and forward planning for the 12 months by completion of the “Monthly Activity Calendar”. Applications for outreach funding are expected to show quantifiable services so that activities and numbers of persons reached can be recorded.

VII. CRITERIA FOR REVIEW

The following criteria (in addition to any other deemed to be appropriate by the WCAAA or imposed by state or federal law/ regulations) will be WCAAA's guide when considering proposals.

1. Ability of applicant to provide the proposed service to the target groups mentioned above (past MIS documentation, quarterly financial reports will be considered).
2. Proposed service for more than one town, especially evidenced by the MIS system.
3. Incorporation of any principles of the State of CT Program Review & Investigations Committee LTCSS report or health care reform principles as currently applicable.
4. Non-duplication of proposed service with existing programs and cost efficiency of proposed service in comparison to cost of similar service in the target area;
5. Ability of the applicant to quantify need for the proposed service and demonstrated commitment to contribute cash through fundraising/generating client donations.

6. Innovative approach to the services for the proposed service;
7. Documentation regarding cooperative agreements with existing providers;
8. Plan for outreach and service to low income, minority and/or low-income minority seniors.
9. Adequate internal programmatic evaluation including the principle of declining funds.
10. Degree to which this RFPs guiding principles are incorporated into the proposal.
11. APPLICANTS SHOULD NOTE THAT, IF FUNDS BECOME LIMITED, THE AGENCY WILL ALSO CONSIDER AVAILABILITY OF OTHER FUNDS FOR THE SERVICE.

VIII. REVIEW PROCESS/PROCEDURES

1. Request for Proposal (RFP) mailed to Western area service agencies & available on website.
2. Agencies can download the application from our website at www.wcaaa.org.
3. Application Workshop (voluntary) will be announced at <https://wcaaa.org/grants-contracts>.
4. All Applications are due at WCAAA office by 4:00 p.m., Monday, March 17, 2025.
5. NO EXTENSIONS WILL BE GRANTED; NO LATE OR RENUMBERED APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED. HOWEVER, APPLICATIONS MAILED PRIOR TO THAT DATE BUT RECEIVED AFTER 3/17/2025 WILL BE CONSIDERED.
6. Only one ORIGINAL application may be submitted along with your latest completed audit.
7. ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE SECURELY BOUND/STAPLED (NO PAPER CLIPS/LOOSE PAPER).
9. NO FAX COPIES WILL BE ACCEPTED.
10. Letters of support/recommendation should not be mailed separately to the WCAAA but should be included with the application. No additional material will be accepted after the final date unless requested by staff/committee.
11. Review sub committees will meet to discuss applications; applicants may be invited to one meeting to discuss proposal and respond to questions. Recommendations formulated by review sub committees will be sent to the Advisory Council for review. Advisory Council discusses applications and formulates recommendations for Board of Directors (Advisory

Council meetings June, July and August of 2025).

12. Board of Directors meet to review recommendations of preceding groups and make final award decisions (September of 2025).
13. The Funding begins on October 1, 2025.

IX. EXPLANATION OF "TARGET POPULATION INCLUDING AT RISK"

Seniors (age 60+) in the 41 town Western area are the general population group to be served with Title III funds under the Older Americans Act and matching resources.

The general target population for grantees under the Older Americans Act is seniors age 60 and older (grandparents 55 or older). However, there are specific individual population groups which have been identified through the legislative process, as being necessary service targets. The following groups have been identified in this context, as required service targets for Area Agency on Aging funding:

- I) older individuals residing in rural areas;
- II) older individuals with greatest economic need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals);
- III) older individuals with greatest social need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals);
- IV) older individuals with severe disabilities;
- V) older individuals with limited English-speaking ability;
- VI) older individuals with Alzheimer's disease or related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunction and the caregivers of such individuals); and (ii) inform the older individuals referred to in sub clauses (I) through (VI) of clause (i), and the caretakers of such individuals, of the availability of such assistance.

Unduplicated person means an individual who participates in a Title III funded program one time and is given an identifying code.

A means test may not be used. The AAA understands that the income of clients is often estimated due to confidentiality constraints. Seniors in the greatest social need group are those whose ability to perform normal daily tasks and whose ability to live independently is threatened by non-economic factors. These factors include physical and mental disorders, language barriers, cultural and social isolation, including that caused by racial and ethnic status. At risk seniors have the following characteristics according to the Management Information System (MIS) system:

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| 80+ and living alone; | Unable to go outdoors - 3 points |
| 3 or more points on the disability scale; | Unable to climb stairs - 2 points |
| 3 or more points on the mobility scale; | Unable to walk 1/2 mile - 1 point |
| Unable to bathe, dress alone or both - 10 points | Unable to get in or out of a bus/car - 1 point |
| Unable to move around the house - 4 points | |

X. AMENDMENT/NEGOTIATION

The WCAAA reserves the right to amend any segment of this RFP prior to the announcement of funded projects especially in relation to recently enacted Older Americans Act Amendments. **The WCAAA also reserves the right to negotiate with any applicant, change the funding level because of federal funding changes AT ANY TIME INCLUDING AFTER THE SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS. Due to late notice of actual federal awards, the WCAAA may reduce previously made awards after October 1, 2025.**