



FACT SHEET

The Older Americans Act and Title III Services

Older Americans Act

Many of the home and community-based services available to older adults in southwestern Ohio and the rest of the country are mandated by the Older Americans Act (OAA). Title III, the largest program in the OAA, serves as the funding source for the programs and services state and local aging agencies must provide to older adults in their service areas.

What is the Older Americans Act?

Signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on July 14, 1965, the federal Older Americans Act created the Administration on Aging and laid the foundation of our country's aging network. Ohio's aging network includes: Ohio Department of Aging, Area Agencies on Aging, senior centers, service providers and others.

The OAA authorized grants to states for community planning and services programs, as well as for research, demonstration and training projects in the field of aging. Later amendments to the Act added grants to Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) for local needs identification, planning, and funding of services.

Title III

The OAA is made up of many focus areas, called "Titles," which support or provide for nutrition programs, home and community-based services, caregiver support, long-term care ombudsman programs and senior employment programs.

Title III is the largest focus area in the OAA. Through Title III, funds are granted to each state by the federal government. In Ohio, the funds are directed to the Ohio Department of Aging and then distributed to 12 AAAs.

Each AAA uses the funding to plan, develop and coordinate systems of supportive, in-home and community-based services. Council on Aging is the Area Agency on Aging for Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton and Warren counties. This area is known as AAA1.

Who is Eligible for Older Americans Act and Title III Services?

Typically, any Ohioan age 60 or older, or any Ohioan who serves as a caregiver for an older Ohioan, is eligible for OAA services, provided he or she meets the eligibility requirements for specific programs. Due to limited funding, priority is often given to low-income, minority and rural elders.

Benefits and Services

In southwestern Ohio, Council on Aging uses Title III funds to advocate for older adults and help them remain in their own homes and communities. Money goes to senior centers and organizations that provide services such as transportation, congregate meals, caregiver support, legal help and wellness education. COA also combines Title III dollars with state funds and county tax levies to provide home care services to seniors who are not eligible for PASSPORT (the state's Medicaid in-home care program).

The following benefits and services are funded by Title III:

- Adult Day Services: community-based group programs designed to meet the needs of functionally and/or cognitively impaired adults. These structured, comprehensive programs provide a variety of health, social and other related support services in a protective setting when family caregivers may be working or away from the home.
- Alzheimer's Education: a program or service providing persons who have Alzheimer's or related dementia, their caregivers and family with education, counseling and supportive services that enable them to cope with the various stages of dementia. Services may be delivered as an educational seminar or support group.
- Caregiver Support/Education: provide education and support to families and caregivers of older adults, including access to community resources that fulfill unmet need(s); educational sessions; counseling and advising in group settings.
- Congregate Meals: provide safe and nutritious meals in a group setting designed to 1) sustain and improve participants' health and 2) reduce isolation by promoting socialization.
- Home-delivered Meals: sustain and improve participants' health by providing safe and nutritious meals served in a home setting.
- Information/Referral/Assistance: provide education and support to families and caregivers of older adults. Assistance may include screening, locating previously unidentified, appropriate community resources that fulfill unmet need(s); referral to community resources; education related to the disease process and counseling.
- Legal Assistance: provide community education, legal advise and representation to individuals 60 and over related to income, health care, long-term care, nutrition, housing, utilities, protective services, defense of guardianship, abuse, neglect, and age discrimination.
- Mass Outreach: provide informational/educational programming to the population at large related to aging issues.
- Mental Health Assessment: may include screening for the prevention of depression, coordination of community mental health services, provision of educational activities, and referral to psychiatric and psychological services.
- Ombudsman: advocate, investigate and resolve issues on behalf of nursing home residents, participants in adult day services, and people age 60+ who receive in-home services. Also plan and provide community education programs and/or training events.
- Personal Care: enable participants to achieve optimal function with activities of daily living; may also be used to provide respite for the participant's caregiver.
- Respite: provides relief for the caregiver (family or friend) who is responsible for 24-hour care of the participant. The purpose is to decrease stress and/or isolation for the caregiver and ensure time to care for personal responsibilities.
- Senior Issues/Education: educate and train older adults and caregivers in the knowledge and skills necessary to advocate for current and future senior needs at the local, regional, and state level; educate community leaders on important senior issues.
- Supportive Services: linking participants to appropriate community services, advocating on the participant's behalf, assisting with completion of necessary forms such as those needed for benefits or services, supporting independent activities of daily living when no other support is available. This service may not replace any existing informal/formal support systems (help already received from family, friend or other informal caregiver).
- Transportation: moves eligible individuals to and from community resources, services and activities through the use of a driver and motorized vehicle.
- Wellness Programs: group activities designed to promote the health and well-being of the whole person in one or more of the following six dimensions of wellness: Intellectual, Physical, Social, Vocational, Emotional, and Spiritual. Funds for this service are granted to several local senior centers to assist in providing this type of programming. Please contact your local senior center for more information.

Preserving Independence, Enhancing Quality of Life

Council on Aging is designated by the state of Ohio to serve older adults and people with disabilities within a multi-county region. We are experts at helping people with complex medical and long-term care needs, offering a variety of services via publicly-funded programs. Our mission: Enhance lives by assisting people to remain independent through a range of quality services.