

OLDER AMERICANS ACT OF 1965
(Public Law 89-73)

DECLARATION OF OBJECTIVES FOR OLDER AMERICANS

Sec. 101. The Congress hereby finds and declares that, in keeping with the traditional American concept of the inherent dignity of the individual in our democratic society, the older people of our Nation are entitled to, and it is the joint and several duty and responsibility of the governments of the United States, of the several States and their political subdivisions, and of Indian tribes to assist our older people to secure equal opportunity to the full and free enjoyment of the following objectives:

1. An adequate income in retirement in accordance with the American standard of living.
2. The best possible physical and mental health which science can make available and without regard to economic status.
3. Obtaining and maintaining suitable housing, independently selected, designed and located with reference to special needs and available at costs which older citizens can afford.
4. Full restorative services for those who require institutional care, and a comprehensive array of community-based, long-term care services adequate to appropriately sustain older people in their communities and in their homes, including support to family members and other persons providing voluntary care to older individuals needing long-term care services.
5. Opportunity for employment with no discriminatory personnel practices because of age.
6. Retirement in health, honor, dignity - after years of contribution to the economy.
7. Participating in and contributing to meaningful activity within the widest range of civic, cultural, educational and training and recreational opportunities.
8. Efficient community services, including access to low-cost transportation, which provide a choice in supported living arrangements and social assistance in a coordinated manner and which are readily available when needed, with emphasis on maintaining a continuum of care for vulnerable older individuals.
9. Immediate benefit from proven research knowledge that can sustain and improve health and happiness.
10. Freedom, independence, and the free exercise of individual initiative in planning and managing their own lives, full participation in the planning and operation of community-based services and programs provided for their benefit, and protection against abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT OF 1965

HISTORY

The roots of the Older Americans Act (OAA) can be traced to the 1961 White House Conference on Aging. Resolutions agreed to at that conference helped form the basis for landmark health legislation (Medicare, 1965) and solidify arguments later used to establish the Act that would cut across the responsibilities of many departments and agencies to better serve the elderly. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Older Americans Act into law on July 14, 1965.

TITLES spell out the specific provisions of the Act and establish funding categories.

Title I PURPOSE

Title II ADMINISTRATION ON AGING

Title II created the Administration on Aging (AoA) within the Department of Health and Human Services and established the Federal Council on the Aging.

Title III GRANTS FOR STATE AND COMMUNITY PROGRAMS ON AGING

The OAA is best known for its supportive services, most of which are defined and funded by Title III. The **Boulder County Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council** (AAC) has recommended using Older American Act funds in the current four-year plan period (2004 – 2007) for the following programs:

Access Services

- Transportation services
- Medicare Ombudsman
- Program development and coordination
- Legal Services

Community and Caregiver Services

- Adult day care
- Respite care volunteer program
- Respite and emergency assistance
- Caregiver Initiative

In-Home Services

- Project HOPE supportive services
- Homemaker and personal care services

Nutrition Services

- Congregate and home-delivered meals
- Nutrition counseling

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention

- Wellness education and services
- LGBT outreach and program
- Safe medication use

Title IV TRAINING, RESEARCH, AND DISCRETIONARY PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

The major goal of Title IV is to expand knowledge of aging by placing a priority on training people to work with older individuals, research and development of effective practice in the field of aging, demonstration projects related to aging, and dissemination of information on aging and the aging process.

Title V COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT

Part-time public service and private sector jobs for low-income persons age 55 and older are created through Title V of the Older Americans Act.

Title VI GRANTS FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

Under Title VI, tribal organizations representing at least 60 persons age 60 or older can receive grants to support social and nutrition services comparable to those provided under Title III.

Title VII ALLOTMENTS FOR VULNERABLE ELDER RIGHTS PROTECTION ACTIVITIES

This title establishes and provides funding to carry out vulnerable elder rights protection activities: ombudsman program; prevention of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation; outreach, counseling and assistance programs. Boulder County AAC has allocated Title VII funds to Elder Abuse Prevention and Ombudsman Services.

TITLE III

GRANTS FOR STATE AND COMMUNITY PROGRAM ON AGING

- PART A** Administration
- PART B** Supportive Services and Senior Centers
- PART C** Nutrition Services
- PART D** Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Services
- PART E** National Family Caregiver Support Program

What is an Area Agency on Aging?

An area agency on aging (AAA) is a public or private non-profit organization designated by the State to identify and address the strengths and needs of older adults and caregivers at the local level. AAAs were created by the 1973 amendments to federal legislation known as the Older Americans Act. There are over 660 AAAs in the United States, sixteen in Colorado.

Area agency on aging is a generic term; the specific name of a local AAA may vary. Some AAAs serve a single county (e.g., Boulder, Larimer, Weld, Pueblo); others serve a multi-county area. AAAs plan, coordinate, fund, and advocate for the development of comprehensive, community-based services for older adults (60+) and their caregivers. Each AAA has a local advisory council made up primarily of persons 60+ that develops recommendations on how funds should be spent at the local level.

Boulder County Aging Services Division (BCASD) serves as the Area Agency on Aging for Boulder County. BCASD is housed within the Community Services Department of Boulder County government. Over 30 people work for the Division and the budget, including county and grant funds, totals more than \$1.6 million.

Responsibilities of a AAA

The responsibilities of a AAA are established by the Older Americans Act and spelled out in the Colorado Department of Human Services staff manual (Volume 10). They include, but are not be limited to, the following:

- A. Identify the strengths and needs of older adults and caregivers.
- B. Develop a plan to build upon the strengths of older adults and caregivers and address their needs.
- C. Administer Older American Act and Older Coloradan Act programs and services either directly or through grants to local organizations.
- D. Develop a comprehensive and coordinated system of services for older adults and their caregivers.
- E. Act as a focal point for issues and concerns affecting older adults and caregivers.
- F. Provide leadership and advocacy on issues affecting older adults and caregivers.

What Services Does an Area Agency on Aging Provide?

AAAs provide certain services directly (information and assistance, outreach, program development and coordination, long-term care ombudsman, advocacy, etc). Other services (legal, nutrition, in-home, etc.) are provided through a grant or contract with service providers and organizations in the local community.

Required Support Services:

- Access (25% of Part B, at a minimum)
Services include Information and Assistance, Outreach, and Transportation.
- In-Home (15% of Part B, at a minimum)
Services include: Personal Care, Homemaker, and Respite Care.
- Legal (3% of Part B, at a minimum)
Services include: Individual Legal Assistance and Legal Education.

Optional Support Services:

Client Representation, Case Management, Material Aid, Counseling, Adult Day Care, Health Screening, Employment Services and Education/Training.