



TO: NCAAA Advisory Council and Board of Directors
FROM: Maureen McIntyre, Chief Executive Officer
RE: **2026 PROPOSAL REVIEW PRIORITIES**

The Advisory Council and Board of Directors are charged with establishing funding priorities for Title III funds based on mandates of the Older Americans Act and local needs assessments done for NCAAA's Area Plan. These priorities must be approved by the Board of Directors prior to the start of the Proposal Review Process in March 2025. With the guidance of these priorities, difficult decisions can be made as to which proposals should be recommended for 2026 funding.

RESOURCES:

The Older Americans Act (OAA), effective through FY2029 as reauthorized on December 10, 2024, and the NCAAA Area Plan 2026 – 2028, shall serve as primary planning and funding resources. NCAAA will prepare a budget as final numbers are received from the Connecticut State Unit on Aging (SUA).

GOALS:

The basic goal of OAA funding is to identify new elder service needs in the community and develop new programs and services. OAA funding should be used as “seed money”. This federal funding should start programs that will later be supported by local communities. That is why we have a formula that requires a local match. Over a multi-year period, OAA funding declines as local resources increase. OAA funding supports programs that coordinate and collaborate, and this is encouraged to maximize efforts, resources, and efficiencies. Local match will be required on program dollars and despite the limited timeframe, project sustainability will be strongly considered during program review.

MANDATES:

The OAA mandates services be targeted to those older individuals with the greatest economic need and the greatest social need, with particular attention to low-income older individuals, low-income minority older individuals, minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, older individuals at risk of institutional placement, older individuals residing in rural areas, older LGBTQ individuals, individuals with Alzheimer's Disease and related disorders, older individuals with severe disabilities, and older individuals living with HIV. OAA dollars are not to be used to duplicate current services or to supplant resources that are no longer available.

OAA and the SUA also mandate that we fund the following social services areas under Title III-B:

Older Americans Act (OAA) Funding Mandates:

- Access (16% of total funding, minimum)
- In Home (25% of total funding, minimum)
- Legal (6% of total funding, minimum)

State Unit on Aging (SUA) Funding Mandates:

- Behavioral Health (5% of total funding, minimum)
- Senior Centers (5% of total funding, minimum)
- Transportation (10% of total funding, minimum)



Discretionary based on local priorities (33%)

The OAA Title III-C, D, and E monies are allocated separately with funding targeted for Nutrition, Evidence-Based Health Promotion services, and services for Family Caregivers.

ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL NEEDS:

Based on NCAAA's assessment of needs, the following areas will be priorities for funding under Older Americans Act Title III B, D, and E, in 2026:

1. LONG TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

- Programs that provide older adults improved access to available services and supports by reducing or addressing barriers.
- Programs offering transportation across town lines and during extended hours, assisted transportation, and enhanced transportation to medical appointments are priorities.
- Programs that provide in-home care services not covered by another funding source that allow older persons to remain at home safely and independently, such as but not limited to, adult day care, homemaker, home health aide, chore, and companion.
- Programs that provide legal assistance, education and information assistance, outreach and social support programs, are encouraged as well as services coordinated at or through community-based sites that serve older adults, including but not limited to senior centers.
- Programs that provide counseling, guidance, instruction, and support to caregivers of older adults and grandparents or older relatives raising children.
- Priority will be given to programs providing new or expanded access to home- and community-based services and supports, as well as those that specifically target services to older persons with the greatest economic need and greatest social need.

2. HEALTHY AGING

- Programs that promote healthy aging by addressing physical health, mental health and social determinants of health. Services include health services not covered by other sources of payment including dental, nutrition, behavioral or mental health, physical activity, disease prevention, management of chronic conditions, fall prevention, personal safety, social connection, and overall wellness promotion. Programs based on research with documented improvements to health outcomes for older adults are encouraged.
- Programs that offer innovative and multi-faceted approaches to food-insecurity such as but not limited to facilitated shopping, shopping list development, nutrition counseling, and nutrition education. Successful projects will support consumer choice, independence, and the integration of social interaction into the delivery system.
- Priority will be given to programs that provide evidence-based health interventions, programs that address health disparities, and programs designed to provide enhanced access to community-based health services for older persons with the greatest economic need and the greatest social need.

3. ELDER RIGHTS

- Programs that promote elder rights efforts and the dissemination of information to address the rights of older persons are encouraged. Issues include but are not limited to housing, age discrimination, patients/tenants/grandparents' rights and other elder rights issues.
- Programs that work to counter systemic discrimination, including ageism, and those that contribute to the prevention of discrimination towards and devaluation of older adults.
- Programs that address elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- Priority will be given to programs that promote the protection of elder rights, address issues of equity, and provide legal assistance specifically targeted to older adults with the greatest economic need and the greatest social need.

