

Oregon State Plan on Aging *October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2023*

The Oregon Department of Human Services' (ODHS') mission is to help Oregonians achieve wellbeing and independence through opportunities that protect, empower, respect choice and preserve dignity. ODHS' Office of Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) develops a State Plan on Aging, as required under the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended. The Plan is a contract with the Administration on Aging (AoA), a part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Community Living (ACL), and allows Oregon to receive funds under the Act. The Plan also provides a vision and direction for Oregon's aging network and provides the State an opportunity to share its priorities and strategies over the next two years for improving the lives of older Oregonians, people with disabilities and caregivers.

APD is accountable for the implementation of programs for older adults and people with disabilities in Oregon including the Older Americans Act, Medicaid long term services and supports, adult protective services and licensing of long term care facilities. The Community Services and Supports Unit (CSSU), a part of APD, is responsible for implementing Older Americans Act (OAA) programs and will do this by working collaboratively with older adults, family caregivers, Oregon's 16 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), the network of Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) agencies, the Indian Tribes of Oregon, other public-private partnerships and our federal and state government partners.

APD works closely with Oregon's AAAs to create a comprehensive package of services. AAAs provide information and a wide array of services to older adults and people with disabilities in all areas of Oregon, while APD coordinates distribution of federal funds, provides training and technical assistance and ensures statewide oversight and coordination for OAA programs. APD also oversees Oregon Project Independence (OPI), which is managed by all AAAs in Oregon. OPI is a state-funded program providing in-home services to older adults and individuals with dementia who need assistance to remain in their own homes and delay or avoid needing Medicaid long term services and supports.

This Plan articulates Oregon's vision to serve older adults over the next two years, and the State identifies two state focus areas: strengthening its work

on service equity, to be more culturally and linguistically responsive to Oregon's growing diversity, and creating a roadmap of recovery out of the COVID-19 pandemic, to meet the needs of older adults through the return of in-person services as well as strategically employing lessons learned to reach more older adults through remote or virtual platforms to provide services and supports.

This State Plan sets forth eight focus areas:

- Service Equity
- COVID-19 Recovery
- Nutrition Services
- Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
- National Family Caregiving Program
- American Indian Programs and Title III/VI Coordination
- Participant-Directed/Person-Centered Planning
- Legal Assistance and Elder Rights Protection Programs

Specific objectives, strategies and outcomes are provided for each of these areas, and these are directly related to APD's long term goals. Further, Service Equity and COVID-19 Recovery will inform the efforts in the other six focus areas listed above.

APD is committed to implementing this Plan with all of its partners. Addressing the current social inequities and the recovery of the COVID pandemic present significant challenges, but it is paramount that Oregon embrace the opportunities in doing this significant work for Oregon's older adults. In this context of building trust and recovering from the pandemic, we believe these goals, objectives, strategies and outcomes will improve our services, supports, partnerships, and most importantly, the experiences of older adults accessing our network in Oregon.

State Focus Areas: Service Equity and COVID-19 Recovery – Summary and Objectives

Service Equity:

Oregon's older adult population is more diverse than at any other point in the state's history. Yet because of its history of racial discrimination and other forms of political, economic and social exclusion, there are glaring disparities experienced by communities of color, Oregon's Tribes, LGBTQIA+ communities, and immigrant communities. These communities may not trust the government, or community providers, that provide OAA services, or they may not have had contact and outreach to be aware of these services.

Oregon's focus on service equity aims to build upon relationships with groups that have experienced discrimination and exclusion to gain trust and to provide outreach about available services to oppressed communities as a start to emerge out of Oregon's history of discrimination and exclusion.

COVID-19 Recovery:

During the pandemic, Oregon's system of services and supports has found innovative ways to deliver services remotely – from home-delivered meals to remote wellness courses and hotlines to assist older adults experiencing social isolation and loneliness.

With this experience during the pandemic, and the expected recovery from the pandemic over the next two years, Oregon is focused on multiple efforts to bring back service delivery in its pre-pandemic in-person format, while taking lessons learned from the pandemic to reach more older adults who are isolated and who may benefit by remote service delivery methods developed quickly during the pandemic.

Service Equity Objectives:

- Establish and build upon relationships with groups and organizations who have historically been or are currently underserved in APD programs, including Older Americans Act programs and services.
- Build upon capacity for language translation and real time interpretation to improve access to programs for older adults who do not use English as their first language.
- The state will work with local AAA partners to create, maintain, and sustain service equity plans to meet local needs and preferences in each area agency on aging in Oregon.
- Conduct a statewide needs assessment to address service gaps in advance of the creation of the next State Plan on Aging.

COVID-19 Recovery Objectives:

- Learn from the experiences of providing and receiving services and supports during the pandemic, with the intent for continuity of innovative services that were delivered during the pandemic, determining strategies to build on, and identifying strategies that did not have significant impacts.
- Create a comprehensive set of policies, practices and protocols to proactively respond to future emergencies, including public health emergencies, natural disasters or other disruptions in services and supports.

Other Focus Areas and Objectives

Nutrition Services:

- Readjust nutrition services post-COVID – moving back to congregate meals, reducing levels of HDMs to refocus on those who more closely meet HDM requirements.

- Use a data to refocus nutrition services on populations at highest risk and to increase culturally responsive services.

Health Promotion and Disease Prevention:

- Promote service equity to ensure inclusive access to disease prevention and health promotion programs and resources while resuming in person programs when it is safe to do so.
- Partner with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to leverage resources within the State Health Improvement Plan, Healthier Together Oregon.

National Family Caregiver Program:

- Increase outreach and resources for family caregivers who have been underserved or are at risk.

Native American Programs and Title III/VI Coordination:

- Improve Title III/Title VI coordination through ongoing communication, collaboration, and working closely with the Tribal Navigator Program (TNP) at the state and local AAA levels.

Participant-Directed/Person-Centered Planning:

- Commit to a culture change and corresponding actions to transition services to a person-directed and person-centered foundation.

Legal Assistance and Elder Rights Programs:

- Promote and maintain effective OAA Title III-B funded legal services delivery in every Oregon county.
- Promote and maintain awareness and prevention of financial exploitation of older Oregonians.

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