



Area Agencies on Aging

Title III Programs Standards and Indicators

October 2014

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Elder Affairs



Area Agencies on Aging,

In accordance with language as outlined in the Older Americans Act, Administration for Community Living directives (ACL) (formerly the Administration on Aging/AoA), State Procurement Policies, and pertinent regulations relative to the award of Title III Federal funding to Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), the Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA), in its role as the State Unit on Aging, is responsible for establishing and managing monitoring procedures to ensure compliance with applicable Federal and State requirements. EOEA is charged with evaluating AAA and sub-recipient operations in safeguarding that funds are being spent in connection with contract requirements and program regulations. Additionally, EOEA is responsible for establishing and implementing procedures to assess program performance for quality and effectiveness.

Personnel from specific EOEA programs manage monitoring activities related to program specific operations funded in whole or in part by Title III. EOEA program staff from the Nutrition, Family Caregiver, Homecare, I&R, and LTC Ombudsman units are charged with visiting AAAs and Nutrition Programs to monitor and evaluate activities, standards, consumer records, and program operations. The role of the Title III monitoring effort, through the Standards and Indicators document, is to work in coordination with existing program specific monitoring activities and integrate Federal and State regulations and requirements into a broader view of program quality and effectiveness.

The Title III Programs – Standards and Indicators describes benchmarks for high quality operation of Title III Programs and menus of activities in support of achieving them. Taken together, these benchmarks of quality and sets of activities provide a foundation for EOEA evaluation and monitoring of Title III Programs as carried out by the AAAs. Some Indicators are followed by a (**) designation, representing a provisional indicator that will theoretically be made both permanent and required in future monitoring cycles.

While federal law necessitates the monitoring of Title III Programs, the greater value is that it provides a means and method for AAAs and ELD to directly partner and cooperate toward achieving the best quality of service for the Commonwealths' elders.

Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs
October 2014

COMMONWEALTH of MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE of ELDER AFFAIRS

AREA AGENCIES on AGING

TITLE III PROGRAMS – STANDARDS and INDICATORS

Contents

I.	Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Fiscal Management	1
II.	Subgrant and Direct Service Monitoring and Evaluation Process	3
III.	Subgrant Award Process	4
IV.	Administrative Functions of the AAA	5
V.	Progress Toward Completion of the Area Plan Goals	6
VI.	Advisory Council Performance	7
VII.	Legal Services	8
VIII.	Transportation Services	10
IX.	I&R/A Services and Network Administration	11
X.	Long Term Care Ombudsman Program	16
XI.	Family Caregiver Support Program	17
XII.	Nutrition Projects	18

I. Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Fiscal Management

Standard 1: There are established systems and procedures in place to ensure that funds are being spent in accordance with contract requirements, including Federal and State regulations and that procedures are in place that assess program quality and effectiveness.

Indicators:

- A. The fiscal operations of the AAA are in compliance with all government regulations, including, but not limited to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Standard Terms and Conditions for Human and Social Services; the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended; OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations; 45 CFR Part 74, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Awards and Subawards to Non-Profit Organizations; 45 CFR 1321, Grants to State and Community Programs on Aging; and additional regulations as applicable.
- B. Standard Operating Procedures and accounting guidelines and principles have been established and disseminated throughout the AAA with regard to fiscal procedures and policies. The AAA adheres to the following Title III reporting deadlines, as well as any additional deadlines as directed by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, in its role as the State Unit on Aging (SUA).
 - 1. Title III Area Plan Administration and Supportive Services Invoice Submission Form – due 25 days after month of service.
 - 2. Title III-C Nutrition Invoice Submission Form (including Meal Information reporting and separate NSIP Invoice) – due 25 days after month of service.
 - 3. Title III-E Caregiver Invoice Submission Form – due 25 days after month of service.
 - 4. Area Plan on Aging or Annual Update to Area Plan on Aging.
 - 5. Title III Income and Expenditure Statement and Fund Balance Reconciliation Report – due following end of FFY.
 - 6. National Aging Program Information System (NAPIS) Report – due December 20 following end of FFY (projected).
- C. The AAA has implemented financial management practices that address potential risks surrounding cash contributions, asset management, and other aspects of AAA fiscal operation.

Standard 2: The AAA has designed and maintains a system of internal controls.

Indicators:

- A. Procedures are in place to safeguard real property and other assets, including taking the necessary precautions to account for all cash contributions.
- B. The AAA has implemented controls to check the accuracy and reliability of accounting data.
- C. There are policies in place to promote operational efficiency and sound management practices, including administration of volunteers.

Standard 3: Fiscal standards have been designed that ensure appropriate spending, recording and reporting of expenditures and revenues incurred directly by the AAA.

Indicators:

- A. A formal budget process is employed to guide all programs managed directly by the AAA. Additionally, Older Americans Act match requirements are recognized and properly monitored.
- B. The AAA can document the financial activities and provision of direct services in substantiating requests for payment under the Title III Invoice Submission system.
- C. A system for report analysis and a procedure for corrective action are in place to address reporting problems.

Standard 4: Fiscal standards have been disseminated to subgrantees and providers of the AAA that ensure appropriate spending, recording and reporting of expenditures and revenues.

Indicators:

- A. The AAA has implemented and monitors a formal budget process for all Title III subgrantees and providers.
- B. The AAA documents the financial activities and the provision of services in substantiating requests for subgrant payments under the Title III Invoice Submission system.
- C. Subgrant/provider financial and programmatic reporting to the AAA is submitted on time and reviewed. A system for report assessment, including verifying match requirements, and a procedure for corrective action is in place to address reporting discrepancies by subgrantees.
- D. In connection with the voluntary contribution policies as outlined in 45 CFR 1321.67, the AAA has instituted policies and approved procedures that address the proper observances to consumer confidentiality and the voluntary nature of solicited consumer contributions.
- E. The AAA, in coordination with service providers, has developed, implemented and maintains a reasonably secure system for collecting and accounting for all voluntary consumer contributions.

II. Subgrant and Direct Service Monitoring and Evaluation Process

Standard 1: The AAA has implemented systematic procedures for the ongoing assessment of grantees/providers and direct service programs funded under Title III.

Indicators:

- A. There is a formal written procedure available for review of the off-site monitoring of grantees/providers and the on-site monitoring of direct services supplied by the AAA.
- B. Both monitoring and evaluation procedures include a process for advising grantees/providers of the findings, specifically noting corrective actions that may be required and timeframes to complete them.

Standard 2: The AAA enforces both monitoring and evaluation procedures consistently for all grantees/providers and direct services funded under Title III.

Indicators:

- A. Procedures for both monitoring and evaluation are service specific, are codified, and available for review.
- B. The AAA follows-up on any necessary Required Corrective Action(s) to insure that actions are taken in the manner and according to the timeframe defined in the monitoring or evaluation report.
- C. The AAA utilizes a monitoring instrument that, at a minimum, tests for the following measures:
 - 1. Providers have completed CORI screenings for all employees and volunteers.
 - 2. Instrument contains basic data (evaluation date, project period, etc).
 - 3. Measures for efforts to reach priority (e.g., low-income, minority, etc.) populations.
 - 4. The existence and use of a Consumer Satisfaction Survey.
 - 5. The use of some method of written notice, posted or distributed, to advise participants of the opportunity to make a confidential/voluntary contribution to the program (excepting LTC Ombudsman program).
 - 6. Existence of a procedure to safeguard and account for all contributions received from participants, including a review of how providers transport (as needed), deposit and record donations.
 - 7. The extent of outreach/publicity efforts.
 - 8. Number of unduplicated elders served.
 - 9. Use of volunteers, including elder volunteers.
 - 10. Providers' efforts toward attaining non-Title III sources of funding.
 - 11. Availability of services, other than Title III, that elder consumers and their caregivers can access from provider.
 - 12. The existence and review of safety/emergency policies and procedures to safeguard consumers at the provider level, i.e., emergency evacuation and exit plans, building exit

signs and maps, consumer accessibility needs, public address systems, etc. (Application of indicator focuses on providers that serve consumers at providers facility or place of business.)

III. Subgrant Award Process

Standard 1: The AAA has in place procedures for the awarding of Title III grants/contracts that meet the suggested minimum requirements as outlined in Elder Affairs' policies and Program Instructions.

Indicators:

- A. The AAA has in place a standard practice or procedure for requesting proposals for Title III grants/contracts that includes a discussion of the service needs of older consumers in the relevant Planning and Service Area (PSA) based on analysis of the AAAs current Needs Assessment.
- B. When requesting proposals for Title III grants/contracts, the AAA advertises the RFP, making reasonable effort to reach minority providers.
- C. The request for proposals contains all information relative to all requirements for applicants.

Standard 2: Applications for Title III grants/contracts are reviewed using a standardized format.

Indicators:

- A. The AAA has a standard procedure for reviewing proposals; the review is based on a system of objective criteria and includes the Board of Directors, the Advisory Council and relevant staff.
- B. An applicant for a Title III grant/contract who is denied funding is notified in writing, and the reasons for denial are stated, and this notification is made prior to the denial being made public.

Standard 3: The AAA offers technical assistance to applicants for Title III grants/contracts.

Indicators:

- A. A system of technical assistance is offered to all applicants either by:
 - 1. Training sessions for all applicants on a prescribed date; or
 - 2. Training sessions for applicants individually; or
 - 3. Upon request of individual applicants; or
 - 4. Some other means or method that affords an equal opportunity to the access of assistance.
- B. The AAA has codified a formal appeals process complete with specific timeframes as established within the Commonwealth Code of Regulations.

- C. An applicant for a Title III grant/contract who is denied funding is advised of the right to appeal and provided with a copy of the appeal procedures, pursuant to the Commonwealth Code of Regulations.

IV. Administrative Functions of the AAA

Standard 1: The AAA provides an orientation and develops a manual relative to Title III and AAA activities for all members of the Board of Directors.

Indicators:

- A. There is evidence that the orientation program for new Board members includes reference to Title III and AAA activities.
- B. There is evidence of ongoing training of the Board of Directors relative to Title III and AAA activities
- C. The AAA has developed informational literature. (**)

Standard 2: The AAA provides an orientation and develops a manual relative to Title III and AAA activities for all members of the Advisory Council.

Indicators:

- A. There is evidence that an orientation session is held for new members of the Advisory Council.
- B. There is evidence of ongoing training of the Advisory Council.
- C. The AAA has developed a manual or compendium of documents to be used by the Advisory Council.

Standard 3: The Area Agency provides in-service training to staff.

Indicators

- A. As part of its in-service training and staff development plan, the AAA has formulated an Education and Training Policy. (**)
- B. The AAA has conducted regular in-service trainings sessions for staff.
- C. Relevant staff (e.g., I&R, Long Term Care Ombudsmen) have received training in relevant provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996.

Standard 4: AAAs are ensuring that relevant or affected providers are cognizant of and compliant with relevant provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.

Indicators:

- A. Each affected grantee has been supplied guidelines for achieving HIPAA compliance.
- B. During monitoring and evaluation, the AAA reviews grantees' compliance with HIPAA Standards.
- C. Technical assistance toward achieving HIPAA compliance is offered for grantees in need of same.

Standard 5: AAAs are maintaining proper and appropriate records, systems, and tracking.

Indicators:

- A. Complete reports of all evaluation and monitoring activities are on file at the AAA. All documentation is updated annually consequent on reviews which are performed once yearly, at a minimum.
- B. The AAA regularly monitors providers' compliance with the voluntary donation policy and procedure.
- C. Consumer record retention, both on-site or with providers, is being executed and monitored according to provisions of state law and Elder Affairs directives.

V. Progress Towards Completion of Area Plan Goals

Standard 1: The AAA pursues objectives leading toward implementation of Goals as noted in the Area Plan.

Indicators:

- A. Measurable efforts toward achieving each of the Area Plan objectives, as prescribed in the Area Plan and its Annual Update, have been taken.
- B. There is a quantitative process to insure that the objectives and Goals are met. (**)
- C. Any alterations to objectives or goals of the Area Plan are explained and forwarded to Elder Affairs for review and approval, thus altering the Area Plan accordingly.

Standard 2: The AAA has established specific objectives for serving older consumers with greatest economic and social need, with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas. Results of the Needs Assessment have demonstrably informed this process.

Indicators:

- A. Grants/contracts are awarded for services to be located in geographic areas most accessible to those with greatest economic or social need, with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and/or those residing in rural areas.
- B. Priority is given to the types of services most applicable to those in greatest economic and social need, with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and/or those residing in rural areas.
- C. The AAAs RFP process addresses the agency objectives with respect to serving elders in greatest social or economic need, with particular attention to low-income and minority individuals.
- D. The AAA has developed, maintains and employs demographic information regarding the areas in the PSA containing older consumers with greatest economic and social need, with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and/or those residing in rural areas.

VI. Advisory Council Performance

Standard 1: The Advisory Council is active in the development and administration of the Area Plan on Aging.

Indicators:

- A. The Advisory Council is involved in the Needs Assessment process:
 - 1. By devoting meeting minutes to discussion of needs within the PSA.
 - 2. By means of a review of the findings of the Needs Assessment conducted by the Board of Directors and/or the staff of the AAA.
- B. The Advisory Council receives from the Board of Directors and/or the staff of the AAA periodic reports relative to the implementation of the Area Plan.
- C. The Advisory Council reviews and comments on the Area Plan on Aging prior to its submission to Elder Affairs and offers any alterations as may be needed toward the effective provision of services to older consumers within the PSA.

Standard 2: The Advisory Council represents the interests of older consumers within the PSA.

Indicators:

- A. A review of minutes of Advisory Council meetings indicates that the Council does represent the interests of older consumers, brings these interests to the attention of the Board of

Directors, and is cognizant of the interests of other agencies serving older consumers within the PSA.

- B. A review of minutes of Advisory Council meetings indicate that AAA staff advises the Advisory Council of current or developing community issues that affect older consumers. There is evidence that the Advisory Council (or the Board of Directors of the AAA at the advice of the Advisory Council) comments on these community issues and advises AAA Staff on policies affecting older consumers.
- C. The composition of the Advisory Council meets all requirements of Federal law, Elder Affairs guidance, and regulation relative to:
 - 1. Number of members of Advisory Council.
 - 2. Number of members aged sixty (60) years of age or older.
 - 3. Number of members sixty (60) years of age or older who are minority.
 - 4. Number of members who are representatives of older consumers.
 - 5. Number of representatives of health care and veterans' health care organizations.
 - 6. Number of representatives of supportive services providers.
 - 7. Persons with leadership expertise in private or public sectors.
 - 8. Number of members who are local elected officials.
 - 9. Number of members representing the general public.

VII. Legal Services

Standard 1: A Legal Services Provider has been funded under Title III-B to provide assistance in legal matters for individuals sixty (60) years of age or older who reside in the PSA, giving priority to older consumers with the greatest economic and social need with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and those residing in rural areas.

Indicators:

- A. During the process of negotiating a legal services agreement, there is at least one meeting between the AAA and the Legal Services Provider at which priorities for legal representation (and other provider activities) are agreed to.
- B. The AAA and the legal service provider, using the Needs Assessment analysis, have identified priority populations of significant size within the PSA (e.g., elders in danger of becoming homeless, in need of protective services, etc.) and formed a plan for serving these populations. (**)

Standard 2: The AAA can demonstrate that the Legal Services Provider has the experience and capacity to deliver legal assistance.

Indicators:

- A. The AAA has made a finding after assessment, pursuant to standards, that the provider selected is the best entity able to provide the service. (**)
- B. The provider has staff with expertise in specific areas of law affecting older consumers in economic or social need (e.g., public benefits, institutionalization and alternatives to institutionalization). (**)
- C. The provider demonstrates the capacity to provide support to other advocacy efforts (e.g., the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program).
- D. The provider demonstrates the capacity to provide legal assistance in the principal language spoken by consumers in areas where significant numbers of consumers do not speak English as their principal language.
- E. The provider attempts to involve the private bar in legal assistance activities authorized under Title III-B, including groups within the private bar furnishing services to older individuals on a pro bono and reduced fee basis. (**)

Standard 3: The AAA uses its reporting system for Legal Services Providers 1) to monitor compliance with Federal and State requirements; 2) to monitor the extent of the provider's performance in accordance with its contractual obligations; and 3) as an active tool in evaluating the quality of Legal services being offered.

Indicators:

- A. The reporting system for Legal Services Providers requests at least the following information, in accordance with Elder Affairs mandate and the National Aging Program Information System (NAPIS):
 - 1. Estimated total number of unduplicated older consumers serviced by the program;
 - 2. Breakdown of line one (1) above by ethnicity;
 - 3. The total number of those in line one (1) above who are low-income;
 - 4. The number of those in line one (1) above who are socially needy.
- B. The AAAs reporting system for its Legal Services Provider requests the following information:
 - 1. Total number of cases opened during the reporting period.
 - 2. Number of cases opened and classified by type of legal problem.
 - 3. Total number of cases closed during the reporting period.
 - 4. Number of cases closed classified by type and by reason for closure.
 - 5. Listing of community education events, by date, location and size of audience. (**)

Standard 4: The AAA assures that if the provider is not a Legal Services Corporation project grantee, such provider shall coordinate its services with existing Legal Services Corporation

projects in the PSA in order to concentrate the use of funds provided under this title on individuals with the greatest need.

Indicators:

- A. The provider does not require an older person to disclose information about income or resources as a condition for providing legal assistance under this program. (A provider may ask about the person's financial circumstances as a part of the process of providing legal advice, counseling and representation, or for the purpose of identifying additional resources and benefits for which an older consumer may be eligible.)
- B. The AAA allows the provider and its attorneys to engage in other legal activities to the extent that there is neither conflict of interest nor other interference with their professional responsibilities under this Act.

Standard 5: The AAA, in conjunction with the Legal Service Provider, attempts to involve the private bar in legal assistance activities.

Indicator:

- A. There is evidence that the AAA has done outreach to inform the private bar about local aging programs and services as well as the legal assistance needs of elderly in the PSA. (**)

VIII. Transportation Services

Standard 1: The AAA has effective procedures to coordinate transportation programs related to the purposes of the Act within the PSA.

Indicators:

- A. The AAA is working with transportation providers to insure a coordinated effort in delivering transportation services.
- B. The AAA has developed a volunteer transportation network and is providing training to drivers, dispatchers, etc. (**)
- C. The AAA has awarded grants/contracts for transportation to proprietary, private non-profit, or public transportation agencies. (**)
- D. The transportation service grants mandate that services be handicapped accessible.
- E. The AAA has a procedure to ensure that outreach regarding transportation is being done within the PSA.
- F. The Board of Directors and Advisory Council have been involved in the planning and coordination of transportation services.

Standard 2: The AAA solicits comments from the public relative to the transportation needs of older consumers.

Indicators:

- A. The AAA has a process to insure input from older consumers regarding transportation through the AAA Needs Assessment.
- B. The AAA has developed a plan to address gaps in transportation services.
- C. The AAA communicates older consumers' transportation concerns and issues to the Regional Transit Authority as well as the Human Services Transportation Advisory Committee.

Standard 3: The AAA is taking all necessary steps to ensure the safety of program participants.

Indicator:

- A. The AAA, as part of its monitoring and evaluation activities of transportation providers, reviews maintenance schedules of vehicles and training of drivers to ensure safety. (**)

IX. I&R/A SERVICES and NETWORK ADMINISTRATION

Standard 1: The AAAs overall goal is to provide I&R/A services and systems that are able to deliver information that is needed to link inquiries with available resources.

Indicators:

- A. Ensure that all elder consumers seeking information regarding services, programs, or benefits receive such information in an unbiased, timely, and professional manner.
- B. Provide Information and Referral Services in which the elder has one-to-one phone contact with an I&R specialist (paid or volunteer).
- C. Ensure that the referral process consists of assessing the needs of the elder, triaging calls by identifying appropriate resources, assessing appropriate response modes, and indicating organizations capable of meeting those needs.
- D. Provide enough information about each organization to help elders make an informed choice.
- E. Offer follow up with consumers to confirm needs are met, and assist elders for whom services are unavailable by locating alternative resources.
- F. Actively participate, as appropriate, in linking elders to needed services.

Standard 2: The AAA has a procedure in place for providing necessary training and qualification assessment mechanisms for I&R/A staff.

Indicators:

- A. Train I&R staff in program, services, benefits, and customer service. Evidence of training shall consist of training curriculum bearing dates, topics, and attendance roster by position title. An annual statewide meeting convened by Elder Affairs' I&R state director is mandatory and counts as one 3 hour training – efforts to include all I&R/A staff of the AAA are encouraged. A minimum of at least 40 hours per year is required; documentation of such will be documented by annual emails to the I&R state director listing in-service staff trainings and attendance counts.
- B. Provide I&R specialists with direct access to an in-house CIRS-A specialist (Certified Information and Referral Specialist for Aging) (at least .5 FTE), or have in place a plan to fulfill this requirement within 12 months. CIRS-A is a professional credential awarded internationally by AIRS (Alliance of Information and Referral Systems) to individuals who have demonstrated that they have the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and work-related behaviors required by I&R specialists working in the aging area to successfully execute their duties.
- C. Maintain membership in AIRS and participate in AIRS annual conferences as budgets allow.
- D. Post the AIRS I&R Bill of Rights at the AAA. The I&R service should have a written policy which ensures that the confidentiality of consumers is preserved.
- E. Ensure that I&R specialists inform consumers about access to the Community Care Ombudsman Program regarding community service complaints.
- F. Meet the AOA/AIRS professional I&R standards as set forth by AOA and AIRS. (For standards, see the following link:
http://nasuad.org/documentation/I_R/AssessmentandImplementationGuide.pdf)

Standard 3: The AAA offers a vision for service delivery that involves collaboration in maintaining a classification system and resource database, and is involved through the appropriate use of technology in collecting, analyzing and reporting inquirer data in offering I&R/A services to consumers and in support of AAA planning purposes.

Indicators:

- A. The AAA and the I&R/A department will use and maintain the following resources:
 - 1. The 800ageinfo website - a searchable I&R database on the Internet that provides consumers with a comprehensive, easily retrievable, statewide resource database;
 - 2. The statewide elder network telephone number of 1-800-243-4636; and
 - 3. The Senior Information Management System (SIMS) calls management system.

- B. Utilize other technology, as appropriate, that improves access to services and enhances the provider's ability to serve consumers efficiently and effectively while preserving the level and quality of its services. Other technology may include: telephone systems, telecommunications, directories on diskette, self-service mechanisms such as automated attendants/interactive voice response systems, fax-on-demand, community kiosks, and myriad searchable I&R databases available on the Internet.
- C. Use SIMS in accordance with instructions issued by Elder Affairs and ad hoc communications from SIMS Support.
- D. Maintain updated provider records for community agencies, including the Aging Services Access Points (ASAP) and their contract providers. The process of updating records will in turn interface SAMS with www.800ageinfo.com to keep consumer resources current.
- E. Adhere to data base inclusion/exclusion policies and processes, and ensure that all staff members who perform data entry understand these policies. This also includes procedures for identifying new agencies, acquiring required information about such agencies and including agency information in the database. In accordance with statewide accepted www.800ageinfo.com inclusion/exclusion policy, each ASAP and AAA has cooperatively worked together as an I&R team to adopt a statewide accepted policy (May 2007).
- F. Record basic consumer profile information in SIMS for I&R calls, such as name, address, gender, disability if any, and reason for call (call topic).

Standard 4: The AAA and I&R/A department support efforts to offer broad access to Information and Referral services for all consumers.

Indicators:

- A. Provide barrier-free access to its services for individuals and groups who have special needs (e.g., TDD/TTY access for people with hearing impairments; language access assistance for consumers who speak languages other than English; and physical access for people with disabilities if the I&R service assists consumers at its facility).
- B. Establish policies and procedures to ensure capacity to serve non-English speaking and deaf elders, including a list of employees and the languages they speak (excluding English) as well as external interpreter resources.
- C. Document staff training on use of TTY/TDD.

Standard 5: The AAA and I&R/A services make efforts throughout the PSA (or across PSAs) to develop collaborations and partnerships toward providing and coordinating services for older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their caregivers.

Indicators:

- A. In communities having a multiplicity of comprehensive and specialized I&R providers, develop cooperative working relationships to build a coordinated I&R system which ensures broad access to information and referral services, maximizes the utilization of existing I&R resources, avoids duplication of effort, and encourages seamless access to community resource information.
- B. Choose to be “full service” programs, as appropriate, performing all necessary I&R functions within their designated service area; or partner with one or more I&R Services to share those functions (e.g., one I&R service might build and maintain the resource database and another might assume responsibility for service delivery).
- C. Collect information on “best practices” by reviewing models of collaborative efforts as demonstrated through Aging and Disability Resource Consortia (ADRCs), regionalized I&R Services, and Council on Aging (COA) collaborations.
- D. The AAA arranges for periodic, regularly scheduled meetings with COAs to provide assistance, as may be needed or requested (efforts to include all I&R/A staff of the AAA are encouraged).
- E. Explore opportunities for joint service delivery with community service providers (e.g., participation in community collaborations with local COAs).
- F. Work cooperatively with other I&R service providers to address issues that have a critical impact on the community as a whole, such as public benefits, transportation, disability services, employment, disaster relief and recovery, homelessness, and one-stop co-located human services.
- G. Encourage collaborating service providers to participate in community-wide data collection, analysis and reporting activities.

Standard 6: In connection with area ASAP organizations, the AAA and the I&R/A service department formulates appropriate provisions for disaster preparedness in the PSA.

Indicators:

- A. Be prepared to assess and provide referrals for consumers who are experiencing a crisis due to a disaster of natural or human origin, or who want to offer assistance and contact the I&R service for a means to do so.
- B. Develop an emergency operation and business contingency plan that enables the I&R service to continue to provide services if its building is damaged and or destroyed; and to support its ability to effectively accumulate and disseminate accurate disaster-related information, provide information and referral assistance for individuals impacted by a disaster and provide community reports regarding consumer needs and referrals.

- C. Maintain written procedures addressing specific types of emergencies affecting the organization's operations and consumers including power outages, fires, medical emergencies, bomb threats, radiological threats, workplace violence and other incidents that may require different forms of response.
- D. Maintain written procedures for emergency evacuation of the facility following a disaster that impacts the immediate area surrounding the facility and potentially threatens staff safety. The evacuation procedure designates exits, specifies an assembly area, and includes provisions for ensuring that everyone has left the building. Special arrangements for helping staff or visitors with a disability exit the building must also be addressed.
- E. Maintain procedures for maintaining service delivery (e.g., answering inquiries and continuing to update community resources) during and after an emergency, including relocation or alternative modes of service delivery through an MOU with another I&R service outside the area or some alternate facility.
- F. Conduct periodic drills, at a minimum annually, that allow staff to practice emergency procedures outlined in the plan.
- G. Support and encourage all staff to develop emergency plans for their own homes and families that allow them to better fulfill their agency roles in an emergency, secure in the knowledge that their families are properly prepared.
- H. Ensure that the resource database includes information about permanent local, state and federal disaster-related resources (e.g., organizations with a formal or informal role in emergency response, a clearly defined disaster mission and/or a history of providing services during previous incidents).

Standard 7: The I&R/A unit is cognizant of, completes timely and is reviewing for quality assurance the statistical data and reports associated with information services across the PSA.

Indicators:

- A. Ensure that staffing is structured to meet the needs of callers (e.g., that the optimum number of staff are available at the times most inquiries occur). ASAP I&R Services should be staffed by at least 1 FTE I&R Specialist for every 4,000 inquiries received annually.
- B. Conduct a structured evaluation, on an annual basis, to measure the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of the I&R service(s) and their impact on the people it serves (outcomes).
- C. Organize efforts to involve consumers, service providers and other representatives of the community in the evaluation process and modify the program in response to evaluation outcomes.
- D. Provide timely access to an I&R specialist and have a written policy regarding acceptable waiting times and abandoned call rates. The staff must be accessible to I&R callers for at

least 40 hours per week and have a back-up voicemail system that updates callers about office hours and when call backs can be expected.

- E. Generate report methods for tracking call volume, average speed of answer, abandoned calls, average call handling time and incoming call patterns.
- F. Answer I&R calls within 20 seconds.
- G. Review monthly the number of I&R staff per call volume of calls.
- H. Participate in an on-site visit by Elder Affairs' Director of I&R to review standard quality assurance. Elder Affairs' requires the National Association of State Units on Aging and AIRS' Standards for Professional Information and Referral Assessment and Implementation Guide for Older Americans Act (December 2002) to document agency policy and quality assurance.
- I. Utilize the Performance Outcome Measurement Project (POMP) survey short form tool developed by ACL/AoA to gather statistical information on caller satisfaction. Annual usage of this survey tool will be required of all ASAP I&Rs to reach out to consumers and collect satisfaction information that would help to ensure quality.

X. Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Standard 1: There is a designated local Long Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman Program within the PSA.

Indicators:

- A. There is a letter on file indicating that Elder Affairs has designated a program within the PSA.
- B. The agency has liability insurance for Director and all Assistant/Associate Directors.
- C. If the AAA operates the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program as a direct service, a record of Elder Affairs approval for doing so is kept on site.

Standard 2: AAA has taken steps to strengthen the local Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, including assisting with the recruitment of workers.

Indicators:

- A. The AAA is a leader and an advocate toward fostering volunteer recruitment and retention.
- B. There is evidence that the AAA encourages promotion of program goals and objectives using media; promotion of community activities that focus on long term care issues and residents; inclusion of LTC resident issues in Area Plan; or other means of actively supporting the LTC Ombudsman program and the population it serves.

- C. There is evidence that the AAA provides for the independence of the program from conflicts of interest that impede its responsibility of representing the needs and interests of residents of the areas long term care facilities.

Standard 3: The AAA has developed and coordinated community programs in such a manner that they are available, when appropriate, to residents of nursing homes and rest homes in the PSA.

Indicators:

- A. Residents of nursing/rest homes participate in community programs. (**)
- B. There is evidence that the AAA has advised nursing homes/rest homes in the PSA of the availability of services and programs.
- C. The AAA has arranged for transportation of residents of nursing homes/rest homes to community services or programs.

XI. Family Caregiver Support Program

Standard 1: The AAA has the responsibility to uphold the integrity of the Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) in its PSA and has the capacity to meet Elder Affairs' program expectations.

Indicators:

- A. The FCSP is managed under the Elder Affairs' Program Guidelines and Expectations, and Business Rules.
- B. A program plan and budget is established each program year.
- C. FCSP staff and associated staff funded through Title III-E are reported to Elder Affairs annually by FTE count. Including: caregiver specialist (staff engaged in direct service), supervisor, administrative support, and quality assurance (responsible for caregiver survey).
- D. The services offered through local FCSP are appropriate in view of the grant allocation, needs assessments and documented trends.

Standard 2: The AAA ensures that ACL/AoA and Elder Affairs' FCSP reporting requirements are satisfied.

Indicators:

- A. Designated program and financial staff are aware of FCSP reporting requirements and there is an internal process for appropriate staff to review reports before submission to Elder Affairs, i.e. annual budget, program plan, and NAPIS SRT.

- B. Reports and required documentation are completed and submitted as directed.

XII. Nutrition Projects

Standard 1: The AAA conducts an evaluation of the Title III funded Nutrition Project at least semiannually. If the Nutrition Project is operated as a direct service of the AAA, an evaluation of the program's kitchen is conducted at least semiannually by personnel with appropriate sanitation training (e.g., *ServSafe* certificate), and an assessment of the meal sites and the management of the program is conducted at least semiannually.

Indicators:

- A. There is documentation that an evaluation of the Title III Funded Nutrition Project or the caterer's kitchen has been conducted at least semiannually with a correction plan (as necessary) by personnel with appropriate sanitation training (e.g., *ServSafe* certificate).
- B. If appropriate, there is documentation that an assessment of the direct service Nutrition Project and meal sites have been conducted at least semiannually.
- C. The evaluation includes ensuring that participants have the opportunity to make a voluntary, confidential contribution to the program.

Standard 2: The Nutrition Project management is in accord with the Federal and State standards as outlined in the OAA and Elder Affairs Nutrition Standards.

Indicators:

- A. The Nutrition Project is ensuring the quality of its meals services through monitoring efforts. It will include but not be limited to the following: monthly menu submissions, sanitation inspections from the Nutrition Project and the local Board of Health, documentation of USDA commodity usage, documentation of nutrition education sessions, and satisfaction survey results.
- B. The Nutrition Project is actively soliciting funds to maintain/expand the program.
- C. The Nutrition Project has documentation relative to central intake.
- D. A written policy is in effect to ensure the integrity and confidentiality of the voluntary contribution.
- E. The Nutrition Project monitors the voluntary contribution system through both technical assistance and monitoring procedures that address congregate meal sites and home delivered meal routines.

- F. The Nutrition Project has procedures in place to track commodity food usage and documents the adequacy of all meal providers' storage and record keeping practices with regard to the commodity food program.
- G. The Nutrition Project has procedures in place toward making full utilization of commodity foods and verifies that the caterer or provider credits the full commodity value.
- H. The Nutrition Project has a procedure in place to record and verify all program income. All sources of program income are recorded and credited to the Nutrition Project for expansion of services and are verifiable through proper record keeping.

Standard 3: The AAA ensures the Nutrition Project provides in-service training to staff.

Indicators:

- A. As part of its in-service training and staff development plan, the Nutrition Project has formulated an Education and Training Policy. (**)
- B. The Nutrition Project has conducted regular in-service training sessions for staff and maintained a record of date, topic, and attendance.

Standard 4: The AAA ensures the Nutrition Project maintains proper and appropriate records, systems, and tracking methods.

Indicators:

- A. Complete reports of all evaluation and monitoring activities are on file at the Nutrition Project. All documentation is updated annually consequent on reviews which are performed once yearly, at a minimum.
- B. The Nutrition Project shall comply with all applicable provisions of federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination in employment.