

SECTION 900

SENIOR ACCESS SERVICE SYSTEM STANDARDS

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SECTION 900: SENIOR ACCESS SERVICE SYSTEM STANDARDS

901. Purpose of Section

The purpose of this section is to describe the minimum requirements for the provision of access services to older persons in Planning and Service Area 05. An access system is a set of coordinated activities which assist older persons in obtaining other services in their community. These standards will be used by the Area Agency on Aging in cooperation with local organizations to establish or enhance the capacity of the local access system to respond to inquiries and requests for assistance from older persons, especially those in greatest economic or social need.

Access service providers shall refer to Section 400 of this manual for access service specific standards.

902. Award Standards

Access services shall be located at multi-purpose centers if feasible. At minimum, access services shall be made available in and coordinated with multi-purpose senior centers. Written working agreements shall be established between such centers and access service providers.

903. Auspices

The mission of the access system in each county is to respond to inquiries and requests from all persons age 60 and older and to target services to older persons in greatest economic and social need.

Minimum Requirements:

- A. The access system in each county may be comprised of one or more organizations. Each organization must be clearly identifiable to persons concerned about services for older persons.
- B. An access service provider shall have a governing board which empowers the organization to provide access services.
- C. An access service provider shall clearly define its target population.
- D. An access service provider shall clearly define its geographic service area.

- E. An access service provider shall determine the range of individual and program advocacy to be undertaken on behalf of clients.
- F. An access service provider shall have general liability insurance coverage for its governing body and professional staff.

904. Staffing

The staff of the access service provider shall be competent, ethical, qualified, and sufficient in number to implement service objectives.

A. Minimum Requirements for Staffing:

1. Provisions of information, client screening, evaluating information, home visits for the purpose of interviewing clients, referral, reporting incidents of adult abuse or neglect, client advocacy, counseling about service options, follow-up, monitoring client's condition, and development of non-traditional resources shall be performed by staff with appropriate experience and skills.
2. The access service provider shall provide for supervision and evaluation of all staff and insurance appropriate to their roles.
3. The access service provider shall establish procedures for:
 - a. keeping staff apprised of changes in services available
 - b. on-going in-service training of staff
 - c. insuring confidentiality of client information
 - d. providing consultation needed to insure staff competency
4. All staff, paid and non-paid, shall be provided with a written job description outlining the skills, duties, and lines of communication.
5. Volunteers are considered as non-paid staff, entitled to the provision of orientation, in-service training, and insurance as available and appropriate to their role.
6. The access provider shall attempt to reimburse the volunteer for out-of-pocket expenses when resources are available.

Access service providers should also refer to Section 400 of this manual for case management, outreach, and information and assistance specific staffing requirements.

- B. Minimum Requirements for Training:
 - 1. The training component shall consist of:
 - a. pre-service orientation;
 - b. pre-service training;
 - c. on-the-job training; and,
 - d. in-service training, including workshops and training offered by the Illinois Department on Aging and the Area Agency on Aging.
 - 2. Training and orientation for access direct service staff may consist of, but is not limited to:
 - a. interviewing and assessing techniques and procedures;
 - b. eligibility determination policies and procedures;
 - c. information-giving and assistance procedures;
 - d. outreach procedures;
 - e. follow-up;
 - f. confidentiality;
 - g. reporting statistical data;
 - h. record keeping;
 - i. reporting and documenting cases of elder abuse and neglect;
 - j. resource identification;
 - k. agency organization, purpose, and structure;
 - l. advocacy skills and techniques;
 - m. procedures for reporting incidents of adult abuse and neglect;
 - n. human development and motivation
 - 3. Training which is provided to access direct service provider staff must be documented in each access direct service staff person's personnel file.
 - 4. Access service providers are encouraged by the Area Agency to develop and implement a training manual for access direct service staff.

905. Resource Information

The access service provider shall maintain or have access to accurate, up-to-date information on available resources.

Minimum Requirements:

- A. Resource gathering shall include a compilation of all agencies and services available in the access provider's county or service area.
- B. An agency's resource information shall contain the following components:
 - 1. An alphabetical list of public, private, and volunteer organizations, which

provide services to the elderly in the access provider's service area.

Each organization listing shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. legal name, address, and telephone number;
 - b. service provided;
 - c. eligibility criteria;
 - d. fee/no fee/sliding scale;
 - e. area served; and,
 - f. contact person and/or staff position.
2. An in-depth file of service information with cross references and related agency names. These files should include brochures, agency information, news or magazine clippings, and related information.
- C. The resource information shall be updated on a continual basis but at least annually.

906. Targeting and Accessibility of Services

Access service providers shall identify and respond to older persons in greatest social and economic need, with special emphasis on low income minorities. Greatest social need refers to older persons who are socially or geographically isolated, physically or functionally impaired, or who have traditionally been denied access to services by social barriers such as discrimination because of race, sex, age, or language. Greatest economic need refers to older persons whose annual incomes are at or below the national poverty level.

Minimum Requirements:

- A. Access service providers shall establish affirmative action plans to promote the employment of minority persons, older workers, and persons who can communicate with non-English speaking older persons.
- B. Access service providers shall establish procedures for outreach and publicity to make services accessible to older persons in greatest social or economic need.
- C. The access system in each county shall have the capacity to provide on-going monitoring of persons who are physically or functionally impaired. If feasible, a provider of access services shall establish a continuing one-on-one relationship with persons who have multiple impairments and multiple service needs in order to prevent confusion of the client and to promote coordination of services.
- D. Providers of access services to the elderly shall make their services available at

minimum seven hours each working day and shall not be closed for more than four consecutive days unless an alternative method of providing access services, approved by and on file with the Area Agency, is implemented.

- E. The senior access system in each county shall be accessible after normal business hours and on weekends and holidays through a local emergency back-up system. The design of this back-up may vary according to the resources available in each county. The program design of the emergency back-up system must be approved by and on file with the Area Agency.

907. Data Collection

The data collection system shall be developed to meet client and service needs and as a resource for meeting community needs.

Minimum Requirements:

- A. The data collection system shall include adequate information necessary for the resolution of the need or problem of the client.
- B. The client maintains the right to withhold information not directly relevant to the resolution of the problem.
- C. The access service provider must establish written policies and procedures for insuring confidentiality of client information in accordance with item 503 B.2.G. "Confidentiality of Personal Information" as noted on pages in Section 500 of this manual.
- D. Client records shall be stored in a secure manner in order to maintain the confidentiality of client information.

908. Emergencies and Disasters

At minimum, service providers shall comply with Area Agency emergency and disaster requirements as outlined in Section 500 of this manual.