

# Department of Family Services

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LOB #118:

## **AREA AGENCY ON AGING**

### **Purpose**

The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging is one of 25 in the state and serves the County as well as the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church. The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging operates under a contract (called the area plan) with the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services. The purpose of the Area Agency on Aging as established by the Older Americans Act is “To secure and maintain maximum independence and dignity in a home environment for older individuals capable of self-care with appropriate supportive services. To remove individual and social barriers to economic and personal independence for older individuals. To provide a continuum of care for the vulnerable elderly.”

### **Description**

The County’s general fund does not contain most of the programs operated by the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Most of the AAA programs (Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman, VICAP, Volunteer Solutions, Care Network, and caregiver services) are in the grant fund and are not described in this LOB. Funding for the positions for the Congregate Meals program and the Home Delivered Meals program are in the General Fund; however, operating funds for those programs are in the grant fund.

Included in the general fund are the following 18 ½ positions:

- Area Agency on Aging director,
- administrative assistants (2),
- multi-cultural outreach management analyst,
- management analyst supervisor who supports the Commission on Aging and who supervises the grant caregiver positions,
- volunteer social services specialist,
- half-time caregiver support management analyst,
- communications positions (2),
- congregate meals management analysts (2), and
- home-delivered meals social services specialists (8).

**Congregate meals** are served in 29 congregate meal sites around the County, including the County’s senior and adult day health centers, several private senior centers and other sites serving older adults, such as Insight Family Day Center. The purpose of the meals is to ensure that older adults receive a nutritious meal (must meet state standards) and to encourage their participation in social and recreational activities for their overall well-being. Meals are prepared by Fairfax County Public Schools and private vendors. Participants are asked to contribute a sliding scale donation.

**Home Delivered Meals** are designed for adults sixty and older or those under the age of sixty with a disability who are homebound and cannot prepare their own meals. Meals are delivered in partnership with individuals and volunteer groups who drive 49 delivery routes. Meals must meet nutritional guidelines established by the state. The meals are prepared by Fairfax County Public Schools, two private vendors (one is for Vietnamese meals), and the Korean Senior Center. Participants are asked to contribute a sliding scale donation to the program.

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## **Communications**

The operating funds for *The Golden Gazette* are in the general fund as is the editor position (one of the communications positions noted above). *The Golden Gazette*, a hard copy newspaper targeting older adults, has a monthly distribution of over 25,000 copies. Ads are sold to support the publishing cost. *The Golden Gazette* has been in production for almost forty years and has a devoted audience who read it to receive trusted and essential information about topics such as Medicare, as well as news about County services.

The Older Adults County webpage (with about 250,000 annual views) is the landing page for information about services across County agencies and is a link to community engagement opportunities and other media channels, such as podcasts, YouTube, and Channel 16 videos. Targeted e-newsletters are distributed to caregivers, 50+ subscribers, and volunteers. Recruitment of volunteers requires continuous advertising in multiple mediums. The public does not automatically know where to turn for help, and the phone number for Aging, Disability, and Caregiver Resources (intake) is distributed widely. Print bookmarks and fact sheets about services are also developed and distributed in multiple languages to reach an audience that does not use computers and is at risk of being isolated.

Staff provides support for the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging (COA), which is appointed by the Board of Supervisors and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church. The COA identifies and promotes better understanding of the problems facing the aging population and plans and conducts activities to contribute to their well-being. The COA serves as the official advisory body to the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging. The COA worked with the Board of Supervisors to update the 50+ Action Plan and is continuing to work towards accomplishing the 31 initiatives in the plan.

**Transportation** is in the Area Agency on Aging general fund budget, but the services are not managed by the Area Agency on Aging. Funding is transferred to the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services. The transportation funding provides services to persons age 60 and over who are traveling from their homes to adult day care, senior centers, and from senior residences to shopping centers. The services are for persons who are economically in need and who do not have another means of transportation. The riders pay fees. In FY 2015, 879 older adults were transported and approximately \$70,000 in fees was collected.

## **Benefits**

The Area Agency on Aging has name recognition across the country as being the place to go for expert information and services for older adults. Fairfax County citizens benefit from the Area Agency on Aging's being part of the Department of Family Services' Adult and Aging Division, and though services are divided in the budget between the general fund and the grant stream, the public contacts one phone number and are routed to the most appropriate County or community program.

Through communication initiatives and from volunteers' time, the Area Agency on Aging leverages its resources. With fewer than 50 positions, including those in the grant stream, hundreds of clients receive direct services, and thousands of people participate in community engagement opportunities, while thousands more benefit from the older adults web page, various e-news publications, pod casts, and other communication efforts.

The Volunteer Solutions' unit recruits and matches volunteers for clients of the entire division as well as for the Health Department's adult day health centers and Neighborhood and Community Services' senior centers. Through volunteer initiatives, there are mutual benefits for all. Volunteering involves the community in the responsibilities of providing human services and engages clients with the community. 87 percent of volunteers noted in FY 2015 that they felt a stronger connection to their community. In FY 2015, the value of the hours contributed by volunteers equaled \$2,624,834 (105,415 hours). Local businesses are joining in group efforts to refurbish houses and in delivering Meals on Wheels, and along with their time, donate supplies and dollars. In FY 2015, seven new partnerships were formed and eighteen businesses made donations to support programs.

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Congregate meals served in senior centers, adult day health centers, and two County senior assisted living facilities and home delivered meals, delivered by volunteers, to people's homes, provide balanced nutrition to people who are at dietary risk. Serving of the meals at the congregate sites encourages social participation, and for the home bound people receiving Meals on Wheels, volunteers provide opportunity for interaction, as well as checks on well-being.

Fairfax Area Agency on Aging staff assisted the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging and the Board of Supervisors in the revising of the 50+ Community Action Plan. The 50+ Community Action Plan provides direction for the County in planning and implementing initiatives to benefit older adults, caregivers, and the community at-large.

This LOB supports the following County vision elements:

## **Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities**

- Promote services for a particularly vulnerable segment of the community
- Promote volunteerism
- Promote partnerships that provide human services to the community

## **Connecting People and Places**

- Enhance the community's access to information
- Provide safe and affordable transit

## **Creating a Culture of Engagement**

- Promote community dialogue
- Encourage volunteers to support County initiatives
- Promote advocacy through the legislative process.

## **Exercising Corporate Leadership**

- Ensure efficient revenue collection
- Provide responsive support to County departments

## **Mandates**

Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, Federal, Older Americans Act, Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare, Chapter 35, Programs for Older Americans, Subchapter III, Grants for State and Community Programs on Aging

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## Trends and Challenges

Between 2010 and 2030, Fairfax County projects a dramatic increase in its older population, with the 50 and older population estimated to increase by 19 percent, the 65 and over population by 51 percent, and the 70 and over population by 55 percent.

Many older adults are remaining in their homes and communities, resulting in both a greater demand for services and more available older adults to volunteer and give back to the community. Persons living alone (according to the 2010 Census, 30.5 percent of those 75+) may need more intense support than someone living with family.

There is huge diversity in the older adult population when considering: the age range of 60 to 100+ and the generational differences in experiences and expectations; the many cultures and languages of people living in this County; along with the varying health conditions and disabilities that impact the level and continuum of service needs. Key driving forces involve disabilities increasing as people grow older, the growing diversity of the County's population, a need for support for caregivers, and increased expectations about access to information.

Live Healthy Fairfax notes that in 2012, 9.4 percent of Medicare beneficiaries were treated for Alzheimer's disease or dementia. Dementia impacts not only the individual but also the family, particularly caregivers. The Area Agency on Aging provides services to support caregivers by providing educational forums, telephone support groups, telephone and in-person consultation, as well as useful information on the specially designed older adults webpage.

In public forums that led to the newly revised Board of Supervisors' 50+ Community Action Plan, the need for information about services was often cited. Publicizing information about County aging services and keeping up with new social media is a continuous challenge. People have expectations about 24/7 availability of information and access to initiation of services. Aging, Disability, and Caregiver Resources (intake) is publicized in conjunction with the older adults' web page that integrates all County services for older adults. The older adults webpage has annual views of over 240,000. To reach a variety of audiences, there are flyers for the public in libraries; e-newsletters targeting caregivers, persons with disabilities, and persons 50+; YouTube podcasts on subjects of interest to caregivers and older adults; Channel 16 Mature Living broadcasts; and the Golden Gazette newspaper with a monthly distribution of over 25,000.

Recruitment of volunteers requires continuous efforts at marketing the need and appealing to community members to share their talents and interests. Volunteers come and go, and programs and clients are dependent upon their assistance. With a focus on the safety of vulnerable clients and the establishment of standards of practice, volunteers must submit applications and participate in background checks. Volunteers need training and support in order to best perform their matched responsibilities. A vibrant volunteer program requires staff positions to support it.

Fairfax County has an increased number of older adults who have moved here from other countries. Services and contracts reflect an emphasis upon reaching persons who are at risk of being isolated by language and culture. Menus for home delivered and congregate meals have changed to reflect the tastes of a more diverse population. A position for multi-cultural outreach meets with communities and provides information for community ambassadors who then link people with County and community resources.

The use of technology to expand and improve services is in an infancy stage (it is included in the 50+ Community Action Plan). In coming years, there will be more focus upon improving service delivery through technology – linking with programs and social engagement, monitoring of taking of medications, connecting with County staff, and perhaps actual in-home assistance with daily tasks.

The initiatives in the 50+ Community Action Plan focus upon caregivers, communication/information, home care, housing, behavioral health, safety, activities and culture, employment, volunteering, transportation, and technology. The plan represents the interests and priorities of the Board of Supervisors and the County's citizens and recognizes the many benefits of community engagement for local government and for those who live in the County.

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## Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
<b>LOB #118: Area Agency on Aging</b>			
<b>FUNDING</b>			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$843,968	\$841,336	\$894,962
Operating Expenses	3,184,443	3,175,238	3,191,679
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$4,028,411</b>	<b>\$4,016,574</b>	<b>\$4,086,641</b>
General Fund Revenue	\$524,671	\$783,290	\$1,421,079
Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund	\$3,503,740	\$3,233,284	\$2,665,562
<b>POSITIONS</b>			
<i>Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)</i>			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	19 / 18.5	19 / 18.5	19 / 18.5
<b>Total Positions</b>	<b>19 / 18.5</b>	<b>19 / 18.5</b>	<b>19 / 18.5</b>

## Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Number of home-delivered meals clients	818	846	895	895	895
Percent of home-delivered meals clients whose nutritional status is maintained with a goal of 80 percent	80%	80%	85%	80%	80%
Percent satisfied with home delivered meals	94%	86%	92%	90%	90%
Percent of clients who score at or below moderate nutritional risk with a goal of 80 percent	85%	87%	85%	80%	80%
Percent satisfied with congregate meals	90%	90%	88%	90%	90%

The number of clients receiving home delivered meal services has increased by 7 percent since FY 2013. This trend is expected to continue as older adults seek to age in place. Since FY 2013, 80 percent of clients receiving home delivered meals have maintained their nutritional status. The rate increased in FY 2015 to 85 percent of clients meeting this goal. Overall client satisfaction with the program has fluctuated since FY 2013 due to programmatic changes. These changes included vendor, delivery method, and menu changes to meet the needs of the growing number of clients and community support for the program. Of those clients who participated in the annual satisfaction survey, 92 percent reported overall satisfaction with their home delivered meals in 2015.

The decline in the number of clients and the number of meals from FY 2012 to FY 2013 reflects tightening of eligibility for liquid supplement meals. It is believed that the people now receiving the liquid supplement are those who are truly not able to participate in the solid meals program.

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In FY 2014, two work units of staff were created to move staff from being centrally located to also being assigned to the Annandale and South County offices. The creation of two units also provides for the likely need for growth in staff. The home delivered meals specialists have caseloads of around 55 clients at any given time. Their time is spent responding to the requests for services by new clients and conducting required assessments, while also coordinating services with the volunteers who deliver the meals. The goal is for smaller caseloads to allow for more time to provide clinical services for a vulnerable homebound population who have medical conditions and dementia.

Even with the increasing number of volunteers, home delivered meals were routinely not being delivered, and clients were unserved. To maximize the use of the volunteers and to allow for clients' need to schedule medical appointments during the day, meal delivery was changed from 5 days per week to 3 days. The meals being delivered are flash frozen and are nutritionally fresher than food that was previously delivered hot and then often refrigerated and reheated. Clients have adjusted to the change, and satisfaction with the meals remains high as noted above.

The increase in congregate meals served from FY 2014 to FY 2015 reflects the opening of the metro-accessible Providence Community Center and increased program participation at other sites. In the three years prior, an Adult Day Health closure (and transition into an Inova PACE site) and a major multi-year site renovation resulted in a decline in meals served. Further, inclement weather resulted in fewer meals served at some sites: meals were not served for 20 days in FY 2014 and for 15 days in 2015. The percent of clients satisfied with congregate meals has been fairly consistent – 90 percent in FY 2013 and 2014 and 88 percent in FY 2015. Based on survey responses, the drop in satisfaction in FY 2015 may be attributed in part to the differing meal preferences of the diverse group of Fairfax County older adults attending the congregate meals program. Efforts are underway to diversify the menus and accommodate participants' food preferences as much as possible.

For the past three years, 85-87 percent of congregate meals program participants have remained at or below moderate nutritional risk, exceeding the goal of 80 percent. The "Determine Your Nutritional Health" Nutrition Screening checklist is a partnership between the American Academy of Family Physicians, the National Council on the Aging and others to assess risk for poor nutritional status or malnutrition among older adults. The Virginia Department for the Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) requires that Congregate Meals Program participants complete this checklist as part of the assessment process.

In addition to providing nutritious meals, the congregate meals program provides opportunities for socialization and recreation. The percentage of participants reporting opportunities to meet people/feel better connected to the community has increased from 95 percent in 2014 to 97 percent in 2015.

The number of volunteer hours increased significantly from FY 2012 to FY 2013 due to a partnership between the Area Agency on Aging and the Health Department's adult day health centers and Neighborhood and Community Services' senior centers. The Area Agency on Aging's Volunteer Solutions recruits, oversees the background checks, and matches the volunteers. Through this interagency partnership, Volunteer Solutions' expertise is shared across County aging programs. The change in the delivery of meals from five days to three is reflected in the reduction of volunteer hours from FY 2013 to FY 2014. However, the overall number of volunteers continues to grow as Volunteer Solutions engages businesses and a variety of youth/intergenerational groups in one-time projects from de-cluttering to minor home repairs and ongoing opportunities such as Meals on Wheels.

### KEY Productivity Measures: Area Agency on Aging

Service	Merit & Merit Grant Positions	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015
Annual Home Delivered Meals Clients	11 Social Services Specialists and 2 Supervisors	871 (206 Liquid Supplement)	818 (153 Liquid Supplement)	846 ((126 Liquid Supplement)	895 (116 Liquid Supplement)

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<b>Service</b>	<b>Merit &amp; Merit Grant Positions</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>
Annual Number of Home Delivered Meals	These services are provided by the staff noted above	227,138	178,248	215,002	227,925
Annual Congregate Clients	1 MA II and 1 MA I	2,309	2,265	2,184	2,260
Annual Number of Congregate Meals	These services are provided by the staff noted above	253,007	239,281	228,863	231,290
Number of Volunteers	7.5 Social Services Specialists and 1 Supervisor	2,640	2,819	3,789	4,037
Volunteer Hours	These services are provided by the staff noted above	72,367	108,556	103,721	105,415*

\*These volunteer hours are valued at \$2,624,834 using the 2015 Virginia Average Hourly Volunteer rate.

### Grant Support

**FY 2016 Total Projected Funding:** \$6,160,211, including \$3,392,625 in Federal/State revenue, \$2,148,658 in Local Cash Match, and \$618,928 in Other revenue. Funding supports 27/26.5 FTE grant positions.

The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging is an entity within the Adult and Aging Division of the Department of Family Services. Services and staff in the County's general fund are described separately. The Area Agency on Aging's budget previously was in a separate fund, reflective of its once operating as an independent agency. With its joining the Department of Family Services, and subsequently, the implementation of FOCUS, the Area Agency on Aging's budget was moved to the grant fund. The Area Agency on Aging does not actually apply for grant funds in the typical sense, but rather signs an annual contract with the Virginia Department on Aging and Rehabilitative Services. The Area Agency on Aging's contract is based upon the federal fiscal year. The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging is comprised of programs with revenue from the county, state, and federal governments. In addition, there is revenue from the Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church and from clients' donations for home delivered and congregate meals. The federal funding is authorized with the Older Americans Act. For the Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman program, there is revenue from Alexandria City, Arlington and Loudoun Counties. The operating funds for home delivered meals and congregate meals are in the grant stream, but the positions are in the General Fund. Descriptions of the home delivered meals and congregate meals programs are in the narrative section.

**Care Network (Care Coordination)** provides assessment and comprehensive case management for adults age 60+ who are at risk of institutional placement. Services are initiated through the Aging, Disability and Caregiver Resources (intake), and clients may receive home delivered meals and/or volunteer services. The Care Network program is unique in that the staff includes two Public Health nurses who are employees of Family Services. The Care Network provides a multi-disciplinary approach for complex situations involving deteriorating physical and mental health and caregivers' need for support. An individual care plan for each client is determined. The Care Network program has been in place for approximately 25 years. Eight positions are located in the Pennino Office. In FY 2015, 410 clients received services from the Care Network unit.

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**Caregiver Support** provides education and support services for caregivers of persons age 60 and older, or older adults caring for grandchildren. Services in FY 2015 included respite care (42 participants), assisted transportation (39 participants), support groups (33 participants), discretionary fund for medical equipment and other support (72 participants), public education through an e-newsletter and topic based forums targeting caregivers.

**Homemaker/Fee for Service** provides for a select group of persons who are living in congregate apartments to receive assistance with housekeeping and laundry; this service is being phased out, but there are currently about 30 recipients. ElderLink, the partnership with Inova, provides the case management services for the persons receiving housekeeping and laundry. ElderLink is also providing home safety assessments (36 in FY 2015) and case management services for (23 in FY 2015) persons who have participated in fall prevention and chronic disease self-management and who indicate that they would like to have individual follow-up. Limited in-home assistance is being provided to assist individuals and caregivers (23 individuals in FY 2015) whose incomes are too high for general fund home based care and too low to be able to privately purchase assistance. The premise of the limited in-home assistance is to stabilize acute situations caused by illnesses and need for respite. During 50+ information gathering forums, the public voiced concerns about not meeting eligibility criteria for in-home assistance, but not being able to afford to pay the market rates.

**Legal Assistance** services are required by the Older Americans Act to be provided by the Area Agency on Aging. Legal Services of Northern Virginia provides those services under contract for older adults needing help with wills, Powers of Attorney, housing issues, Social Security and Medicare issues, etc. In FY 2015, over 300 older adults received assistance.

**Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman** is a regional program serving the City of Alexandria and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun. The goal of the program as stipulated by the Older Americans Act is to seek resolution of problems and advocate for the rights of residents of long-term care facilities with the aim of enhancing the quality of life and care of the residents. The program resolves complaints about nursing and assisted living providers through counseling, negotiation, and investigation. The community is provided education about long-term care issues and provides information to assist the public to make informed choices. In FY 2015, 47 trained volunteers were assigned to 52 facilities to provide additional on-site assistance. For the four jurisdictions, at any given time, almost 10,000 people are living in long-term care facilities. Seven positions are located in the Pennino office.

**VICAP** is the Virginia Insurance Counseling Assistance Program. Under the supervision of one position located in the Pennino office, trained volunteers help with issues with Medicare and other types of insurance. Public education through workshops is provided throughout the year.

**Volunteer Solutions** provides volunteer management for clients of the Adult and Aging division and for the adult day health and senior center programs of the Health Department and Neighborhood and Community Services respectively. Recruitment of volunteers is provided through multiple mediums coordinated by the Communications position and by direct contact to businesses by Volunteer Solutions staff. During the course of the year, 18 businesses made donations, and seven partnerships were developed. Recruitment must be done continuously to meet the needs of the various service programs. Potential volunteers have the option to submit on-line applications. For the protection of vulnerable clients, volunteers who are working individually with clients and not under the direct supervision of County staff must have background checks. In conjunction with the 50+ Community Action plan, in the last year, volunteers to provide in-home technology assistance were recruited and matched with clients needing one or two visits to set up equipment and to teach how to use equipment. Volunteers were also recruited for group projects to provide home upkeep. In addition to technology assistance and home upkeep, as well as providing services in the senior centers and the adult day health centers, volunteers: deliver meals and oversee the routes, provide transportation to medical appointments and for shopping, provide respite for caregivers, and provide companionship visiting. For FY 2015, there were 4,037 volunteers. Of that number, 661 were new. Eight positions are located in four County offices.