



O4AD COVID 19 Response - March 2020

- 1. General Fund to support Older Adult Meals programs - \$570,000** These funds will allow the aging network to provide shelf-stable food kits (**approximately \$20 per person for 5 day shelf stable meal kit**) for older adults who need to shelter in place, are under quarantine or are self-isolating as a highly vulnerable population. This will also **allow for the distribution of 'take out' meals** for the home delivered meals programs as well as increasing home delivered meals for those who are generally receiving meals via a congregate meal site such as a senior center. Currently senior centers have had to close due to the mandates from the Governor to lower the spread of the virus. For some seniors, this is not only their source of a healthy meal but also combats social isolation. There are plans being implemented to provide 'to-go' and 'drive thru' options to continue to meet the needs of our vulnerable older adults - and there is a tremendous increase in new clients seeking meals in the last three weeks - in some areas **more than 200 new requests in one week**. Currently there are 7,500 older adults receiving home delivered meals and 7,500 older adults receiving meals via congregate meal sites within Oregon under the Older Americans Act.
- 2. Staffing allocation for Information & Resource and Options Counselor support** for the public during the outbreak. (**Up to \$50,000 per Area Agency**) People are seeking information in overwhelming numbers. The ADRC, Aging & Disability Resource Center, is working to answer those questions and inquiries as quickly and thoroughly as possible. However, the demand for information has dramatically increased due to the virus. Other information network systems in the state are already overwhelmed by inquiries and reaching out to the ADRC for help and support. Aging Network partners need increased spending capacity to meet this need specific to response to the pandemic. This would be limited duration and follow the same criteria for services and reporting as currently in place. This would be an allocation to Area Agencies who are currently providing these services within the ADRC.
- 3. Delivery/Driving support for Meals programs** - With the current virus, many volunteers are not able to fulfill their volunteer positions supporting home delivered meals programs. Many volunteers are older adults themselves and are self isolating to avoid spreading or contracting the virus. However the need for delivery of home delivered meals has dramatically increased. As a state we need to be creative at this time to meet those gaps in service. **Meal delivery serves another key function - an impromptu wellness check on our vulnerable and homebound seniors.** While observing proper social distancing, a person delivering a meal has the ability to confirm the well-being of an individual, either through a phone call at drop off, through the window or other options. This is critical at this time of social isolation for healthcare purposes. Options to meet this need may include:
 - **Short term stipends for drivers.** Develop a stipend for temporarily unemployed restaurant/bar workers to assist meal delivery, that would not interfere with unemployment benefits.
 - **Short term education credits and/or tuition credits** for university and college students to provide delivery support during this time.
 - **Developing a partnership with courier delivery companies** such as Uber Eats and Postmates to purchase delivery services as available in cities with these companies operating for home delivered meals.
- 4. Legislative direction to the Department of Human Services** regarding regulation for services and supports to



older adults. During this pandemic, it is important that the Aging Services Network is able to exercise maximum flexibility with Federal funds - the Older Americans Act and Medicaid - in order to meet the present needs of individuals served. Currently there are various restrictions on how Older Americans Act funds can be used, with various silos in place. Under a “Major Disaster” declaration by a state, those restrictions are loosened for the period of time for emergency and disaster. Without that declaration by the State, action by the Legislature may be able to allow for a similar type of action within Oregon.

5. **General Fund support for older adult emergency response supplies** while sequestered in their homes. **(approximately \$85 per person for response supplies, non-food)** Older adults on services that need to shelter in place may not only not have the supplies necessary to remain home but are likely not to have the resources to purchase those supplies or a way to travel to a store for those purchases. To continue to flatten the curve, we need to be sure our vulnerable older adults have the necessary supplies to weather this storm.
6. **Technology support (Dollar Amount TBD).** The Aging Network has been required to change office hours and protocol due to the pandemic response and Governor’s direction. In order to continue to provide services including Meals, Medicaid long term services and support, SNAP benefits, and Oregon Project Independence, telecommuting has become necessary. These expenditures are necessary to meet the needs of vulnerable individuals but are an additional and unanticipated cost right now during this crisis.

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