

Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 11:27 PM

Subject: Follow-Up Info: HHS Announces Grants to Provide Meals for Older Adults

Importance: High

Dear Tribal Health Leader:

This email is in regards to a previous email (included below) and provides **information on funding for elder meals and considerations for protecting the wellbeing of elders as programs respond to Coronavirus (COVID-19)**. Of the \$250 million appropriated to the Administration for Community Living (ACL), there is \$10 million in Tribal set aside that has been distributed to current Title VI grantees using existing funding guidelines – these funds were distributed earlier today.

Tribes should contact their states to ask if additional funds can be made available for the remainder of the \$250 million. ACL anticipates that Tribes who already receive Title III funds will likely be included in the state's allocation.

ACL is also working on developing a list of shelf-stable and frozen meal vendors that will be sent to Title VI programs tomorrow, March 26th. It is also recommended that Tribes contract with local restaurants to help with meal preparation or delivery. Tribes can expect a webinar sometime next week on meeting nutritional needs during COVID-19. NIHB will share the webinar information when it becomes available.

As a reminder, Title VI funds for the 2020-2023 project period will be released on April 1, 2020. Tribes should note that the number of grantees has increased slightly – as a result, *Tribal grantees will see a 6% reduction* so that all grantees can receive funding. Current grantees with unexpended balances will be granted a no-cost extension through December 31, 2021 and should contact ACL. **No-cost extensions may be used for COVID-19 response.**

During this time of public health emergency, there is **flexibility from Tribal Title VI programs to use part C (family caregiver) funds on nutrition (Part A) to serve caregivers and their frail elders**. ACL has also relaxed requirements regarding separate congregate and home-delivered meals clients by allowing programs to provide curb-pick-ups and home-delivered meals to all eligible clients. Programs that wish to use the new flexibilities should maintain separate records for frail home-bond clients and for other seniors who would be regular congregate meals clients.

Additional considerations for Tribal Elders:

- Title VI funds can be spent on activities, and some programs are delivering emergency kits to elders with tea, books, magazines, socks, food, cleaning supplies, etc.-for example, a program could purchase fabric and have their elders sew their emergency bag kit;
- Now is a good time to think about protecting Tribal Elders from abuse and neglect during this crisis;
- Often elders are caregivers for younger children and may be at risk if children are left to care for grandchildren, some may even be fearful of receiving visitors;
- Some elders may be the only family members receiving income as more businesses close;
- Program staff may be unavailable to make home visits, is the food/supplies reaching the elder and remaining in their home?

Sent: Wednesday, March 25, 2020 10:27 AM

Subject: HHS Announces Grants to Provide Meals for Older Adults

Dear Tribal Health Leader:

Please see the message announcing \$250 million in grants from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) to help provide meals to elders during this time of public health emergency. Efforts to stop the spread of Coronavirus have increased the need for delivered and packaged food so that elders can continue receiving meals. Please see below for the announcement from ACL.

Funding has been provided to states, territories, and Tribes for subsequent allocation to local meal providers. Grant amounts are population-based formulas as identified in the Older Americans Act.

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March 24, 2020

HHS Announces Grants to Provide Meals for Older Adults

Today, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is announcing \$250 million in grants from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) to help communities provide meals for older adults.

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, signed into law by President Trump on March 18, 2020, provided the additional funding for the nutrition services programs authorized by the Older Americans Act (OAA) of 1965. These programs provide meals to more than 2.4 million older adults each year, both through home delivery and in places like community centers. The need for these services, particularly home-delivered and packaged meals, has increased as community measures to slow transmission of COVID-19 have closed meal sites and have left many family caregivers unable to assist their older loved ones.

“The Trump Administration recognizes that the measures needed to protect older Americans from the serious threat of COVID-19 have been disruptive for many of our most vulnerable,” said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. “Getting more funds to community organizations that deliver meals to older adults, such as Meals on Wheels, is another example of the Trump Administration’s whole-of-government, whole-of-America approach to combating the COVID-19 pandemic.”

In addition to meals, Older Americans Act programs provide a wide range of services, such as help with bathing and dressing, rides to doctors’ offices, education on managing chronic illnesses, support for family caregivers, and much [more](#). Provided by a network of community-based organizations, such as Area Agencies on Aging, local community and senior centers, faith-based organizations, and other non-profit service providers, these

programs work together to help millions of older adults each year stay healthy and continue living independently.

“The network of community-based organizations that provide Older Americans Act services has an exceptional capacity to coordinate services, bring together service providers, and adapt to overcome challenges, and they are employing innovative solutions to continue meal services,” said ACL Administrator Lance Robertson. “This additional funding will help communities across the country provide older adults, especially those at greatest risk, with the healthy meals they need.”

Funding has been provided to states, territories, and tribes for subsequent allocation to local meal providers. [Grant amounts](#) are determined based on the population-based formulas defined in the Older Americans Act.

Older adults who need assistance can contact the Eldercare Locator to find services available in their community. The Eldercare Locator can be reached at 1-800-677-1116 or eldercare.acl.gov.

For more information about COVID-19, please visit [CDC's website](#). For more information about the [Older Americans Act nutrition programs](#), please visit ACL.gov.

ACL.GOV/COVID-19



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