**Idaho Commission on Aging (ICOA) Technical Guidance**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Policy Subject** | **Policy #** |
| **ICOA Technical Guidance**  Access to the Ombudsman Program through Technological means as provided by, The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES ACT**)** for residents of long-term care facilities | **TG.OM.01** |

# Title: AAA implementation of The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES ACT)

# This formula grant award is issued under the authority of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, P.L. 116-136 for activities authorized under Title VII of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended through P.L. 116-131, enacted March 25, 2020

**REQUIREMENTS:**

Fiscal Resource Management (OOA section 712(a), 45 CFR 1324.11(e), Idaho Long Term Care Ombudsman Program Manual 9.3.5

Funds expended from the CARES Act are to respond to the Coronavirus Emergency. The Ombudsman program will seek to expand their virtual presence to residents and their families and continue to promote the health, safety welfare and rights of residents in the context of COVID-19. Funds must be expended on allowable Older Americans Act activities as defined by the Older Americans Act, State and local policy and as directed in this technical guidance.

**Title of Program:** (OMC3) CARES Act for Ombudsman Program under Title VII of the Older Americans Act

**Award Authority:** P.L. 116-136 (CARES Act) under P.L. 116-131 (OAA)

**Grant Award:** 2001DOMC3-00

**Project Period:** 04-01-2020-09-30-21

# ICOA Implementation Guidance:

The Older Americans Act at 712(b)(1)(A), provides that Long-Term Care Ombudsmen and their representatives have “private and unimpeded” access to long-term care facilities and residents. Ombudsman programs must consider the term “continuing direct access” in the context of a historic pandemic that has limited freedom of movement and rights for all members of society. The greatest impact being those seniors residing within long term care facilities.

Local Ombudsman are required to oversee their budgets and assure that funds are expended on allowable Older Americans Act activities as defined by the Older Americans Act and State and local policy. The State Ombudsman is prioritizing the Use of the **(**OMC3) CARES Act for Ombudsman Program under Title VII of the Older Americans Act funds as follows;

**Use of Funding:**

Funds expended from the CARES Act are to respond to the Coronavirus Emergency. As a priority, local ombudsman programs will seek to expand their virtual presence to residents and their families and continue to promote the health, safety welfare and rights of residents in the context of COVID-19. Appropriate technology will be purchased for local ombudsman to use while telecommuting for work to assure staff have the capacity to perform their duties as required. Funds must be expended on allowable Older Americans Act activities as defined by the Older Americans Act and State and local policy. Purchase of equipment and associated technologies will allow for remote work and enhance Ombudsman presence in facilities while they cannot physically visit due to the COVID crisis.

Listed below are prioritized COVID-19 specific use of funds;

* Purchase of Laptops, Smart phones, hot spots, Software to facilitate video conferencing and virtual meetings, to be used when working remotely so ombudsmen are using work equipment and not personal computers or phones for HIPPA and security purposes.
* Acquiring personal protection equipment and supplies for program use, as appropriate, once in-person visits resume.
* Costs associated with community outreach including, advertising, postage, printing of brochures, and similar educational materials, as related to the ombudsman program.
* Training costs related to COVID-19 including additional costs associated with advertising, recruiting, certifying or providing continuing education (both remote and in-person) to current and prospective representatives of the Office.
* Paying for Ombudsman staff extended hours, or hiring of additional Ombudsman staff, including associated personnel costs. Note: this funding is time limited.

**Distribution of Funding:**

Funds will be distributed to each AAA based on the federally approved intrastate funding formula. Funds were appropriated to remain available until September 30, 2021, to prevent, prepare for, and respond to Coronavirus.

**Guidance Updates:**

This ICOA Technical Guidance may be updated as additional information or reporting requirements are received from the Administration for Community Living.

**Record Keeping**

The Administration for Community Living is requiring all funds to be fully accounted for. The AAA must consider all record keeping and fiscal tracking requirements to ensure funds are spent in accordance federal and state rules and regulations. AAA’s will be required to provide documentation on how moneys were used for review by the State Ombudsman during annual AAA program reviews.