



GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT: AOA PAST ANNOUNCEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS) Administration on Aging Fiscal Year 1998 Program Announcement (AoA-98-4) and Application Kit

SUMMARY: The Administration on Aging (AoA) announced in the *Federal Register* of March 5, 1998 that it will hold a competition for grant awards to support National Legal Assistance and Elder Rights Projects, as authorized by Title IV, Section 424 of the Older Americans Act, as amended (P.L. 89-73). The accompanying set of materials comprises the application kit for preparing and submitting grant proposals to compete for these project awards.

This program announcement consists of two parts. *Part I* provides background information and describes the priority area, National Legal Assistance and Elder Rights Projects, under which the AoA is inviting applications to be considered for funding. *Part II* describes, in detail, the process governing the consideration of project applications for funding and provides guidance on how to prepare and submit an application.

All of the forms (Standard Form 424), Assurances, and Certifications necessary to complete the application are included following Part II. Grant awards to be made under this priority area are subject to the availability of funds.

DATE: The *deadline date* for the submission of applications is *May 18, 1998*.

ADDRESS: Application receipt point: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging, Office of Administration and Management, 330 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 4643, Washington, DC 20201, Attn: AoA98-4.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging, Office of Elder Rights Protection, 330 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 4274, Washington, DC 20201, telephone: (202) 619-0769 or (202) 619-0556.

Part I. Background Information and Priority Area Description

A. Statutory Authority

The statutory authority for awards made under this program announcement area is contained in Title IV of the Older Americans Act, (42 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.), as amended by the Older Americans Act Amendments of 1992, Pub.L.102-375, September 30, 1992.

B. Eligible Applicants

Public and/or nonprofit agencies, organizations, and institutions are eligible to apply under this program announcement. To be considered for funding, however, Title IV, Section 424 (c) prescribes that applicants be national nonprofit legal assistance

organizations experienced in providing support, on a nationwide basis, to local legal assistance providers.

Any nonprofit organization applying under this program competition that is not now a DHHS grantee should include, with its application, Internal Revenue Service or other legally recognized documentation of its nonprofit status. A nonprofit applicant cannot be funded without proof of its status.

C. Priority Area Description

AoA is soliciting applications under this program announcement to carry out National Legal Assistance and Elder Rights Projects. AoA expects these projects to further build and support a national system of legal assistance support activities for state and area agencies on aging and their legal assistance providers which will assist them in developing an elder rights system and providing, developing and supporting legal assistance for older people.

AoA now funds national resource centers to develop knowledge and apply research findings, provide training and technical assistance, disseminate information, and conduct related activities in support of the *Long-Term Care Ombudsman and Elder Abuse Prevention (Chapters 2 and 3 of Title VII)*. Therefore, these two programs are outside the focus of this program announcement.

Awards under this program announcement are made under the authority of Title IV, Section 424 of the Older Americans Act and are aimed at building and strengthening the national system of legal assistance in support of the vulnerable elder rights protection activities of State and area agencies on aging and of improving the quality and accessibility of the legal assistance provided to older people.

Proposed projects should have two principal objectives. First, enhance the leadership capacity of state and area agencies on aging to support elder rights activities through such efforts as:

- Assisting in the development of a state-wide elder rights advocacy system, involving a range of agencies engaged in elder rights activities;
- Assisting in the development of responsive state-wide systems of legal assistance, including support for AAA supported legal assistance projects;
- Assisting area agencies on aging in integrating legal assistance programs for older people into existing community based service delivery systems;
- Assisting state agencies on aging to develop methods to ensure that legal counsel is available to all Long-Term Care Ombudsmen.
-

Second, improve the quality and accessibility of the legal assistance provided to older people through such efforts as:

- Providing training to state and area agencies on aging, legal assistance providers, elder rights advocates, and other staff providing assistance to older people;
- Providing training to staff responsible for benefits, insurance, and pension counseling to vulnerable older people;
- Providing substantive assistance, including case consultation and advice on systems development and implementation, to those agencies and staff that provide legal assistance to older people; and
- Publish written information on a periodic or one time basis for legal assistance and other elder rights providers.

New and innovative approaches to improving legal assistance will be viewed positively in evaluating grant applications. AoA also views positively project proposals that focus in whole, or in part, on the effective dissemination of existing and new information on legal assistance and elder rights.

Title IV, Section 424 of the Older Americans Act specifies four component activities of a national legal assistance support system. Each activity is a valuable resource in developing systems of legal assistance for older people, and in improving the quality and accessibility of such services, as part of the overall system of services for older people. AoA expects that the projects funded under this program announcement will encompass at least these four components:

(1) *Case consultations.* Appropriate case consultation will be made available to those legal assistance programs funded under Title III of the Older Americans Act. Building on the results of case consultations, grantees should provide such follow-up activities as: documenting the resolution of those cases and issues which have precedent-setting implications; and making that documentation and analysis available to providers of legal assistance to older people and state agencies on aging nationwide;

(2) *Training.* AoA expects the applicant to propose a strategy for meeting the training and technical assistance needs of legal assistance providers, benefits counselors, elder rights advocates, and other appropriate persons, as identified by state agencies on aging. That strategy should describe the training and technical assistance to be provided; the intended target audience; the materials and curricula which will be utilized and made available to State agencies for the replication of such training; and any follow-up activities to assist those who have been trained;

(3) *Provision of substantive legal advice and assistance.* AoA expects the applicant to provide substantive information in areas where legal assistance can assist older people to maintain their independence. The applicant should analyze the substantive issue area, explain its importance to older people, and identify a suitable reporting format (policy paper, newsletter, etc.) and dissemination plan. The substantive areas could include, but are not limited to, such important areas as: income; health care; longterm care; nutrition; housing; utilities; protective services; abuse and neglect; guardianship; age discrimination; pension and health benefits; insurance; consumer protection; surrogate decisionmaking; public benefits; and dispute resolution.

(4) *Assistance in the design, implementation, and administration of legal assistance delivery and elder rights advocacy systems to local providers of legal assistance for older individuals.* The applicant should show how it will assist state and area agencies on aging to work toward the development of a system for providing legal assistance and elder rights protection to older persons throughout the state. Areas for assistance could include the identification of alternative approaches to meeting legal needs and the design of and assistance in implementing strategies for supporting area agencies on aging in their work with local providers. The applicant is expected to show how regular ongoing assistance and consultation in systems issues will be provided in such areas as: targeting; access; evaluation; selection of providers; priority setting; use of pro bono resources; use of volunteers; issues advocacy; and relationships with other parts of the services system. For each of the activities it proposes to undertake, the applicant should:

- present the current state of knowledge and experience and document what it perceives to be serious gaps in information and practice;
- specify the nature and scope of efforts needed to close those gaps, and how those efforts will advance the rights of older people;
- Indicate its plan for achieving national coverage of the assistance to be provided; and
- Provide detailed descriptions of specific products or outcomes proposed for development or modification.

AoA expects to fund approximately 4-6 projects under this program announcement. The federal share of project costs is expected to range from \$75,000 to \$150,000 per year depending upon the scope of the component elements of the national legal assistance support system proposed by an approved applicant. Projects may not exceed three years.