



## PROGRAM INSTRUCTION

SUA-25-PI-16

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**TO:** Sub-recipients of the State Unit on Aging

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**SUBJECT:** SUA requirements for serving individuals with the greatest social and economic need

**CONTENT:** The OAA requires services are prioritized to individuals with the greatest economic need and greatest social need.

The definition of the greatest economic need is as follows:

*Greatest economic need*, as used in this part, means the need resulting from an income level at or below the Federal poverty level and as further defined by State and area plans based on local and individual factors, including geography and expenses.

The definition of greatest social need **was updated** as follows:

*Greatest social need*, as used in this part, means the need caused by noneconomic factors, which include:

- (1) Physical and mental disabilities.
- (2) Language barriers;
- (3) Cultural, social, or geographical isolation, including due to:
  - (i) Racial or ethnic status;
  - (ii) Native American identity;
  - (iii) Religious affiliation;
  - (iv) Sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex characteristics;
  - (v) HIV status;
  - (vi) Chronic conditions;
  - (vii) Housing instability, food insecurity, lack of access to reliable and clean water supply, lack of transportation, or utility assistance needs;
  - (viii) Interpersonal safety concerns;
  - (ix) Rural location; or
  - (x) Any other status that:

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- (A) Restricts the ability of an individual to perform normal or routine daily tasks; or
- (B) Threatens the capacity of the individual to live independently; or
- (4) Other needs as further defined by State and area plans based on local and individual factors.

For OAA Title III-E services, please note prioritization should also be given to:

(1) Caregivers who are older individuals with greatest social need, and older individuals with greatest economic need (with particular attention to low-income older individuals); (2) Caregivers who provide care for individuals with Alzheimer’s disease and related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunction; and (3) If serving older relative caregivers, older relative caregivers of children or adults with severe disabilities.

The SUA requires specific actions that each agency must use to target services to meet the needs of those in greatest social and greatest economic need.

The SUA makes the following *requirements* for agencies to target services to meet the needs of those in greatest social and economic need:

Develop and maintain a policy and procedure for service prioritization for services funded under the Older Americans Act. The policy must outline service priority procedures based on the above noted definition of greatest social and economic need.

The SUA makes the following *recommendations* for agencies to target services to meet the needs of those in greatest social and economic need:

Establish offices or contracts with providers in rural counties to provide services specifically to those counties and consider higher provider rates or other incentives for services in rural counties.

Focus Outreach efforts and services on counties that are the *most* rural where clients may be the *most* isolated. This can include events which describe the services available in the *most* rural communities and how these services will benefit the older adults.

Focus Outreach efforts on topics that may be relevant to older adults and caregivers with the greatest economic and social needs (as defined above).

Ensure that the governing board and/or advisory council is a group of individuals with diverse backgrounds.

Allocate specific percentages of service units for different services to be provided to rural clients to ensure that clients in the more metro areas aren’t overrepresented.

Work with churches, religious, or social organizations to find out about the needs of the community and possibly even about individuals in the community who may need services the most.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact the SUA at 402-471-2307 or via email at [DHHS.Aging@nebraska.gov](mailto:DHHS.Aging@nebraska.gov).