

ARROWHEAD AREA AGENCY ON AGING  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**



Arrowhead Area  

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Agency on Aging

**FOR QUALIFIED APPLICANTS TO  
PROVIDE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES  
TO OLDER ADULTS**

**2024 AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN  
SUPPORTIVE SERVICES FUNDING**

December 2023

## 2024 American Rescue Plan Act III-B Supportive Services Funding

### I. Background and Purpose

Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging (AAAA) received approximately \$170,000 in Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding to disperse to the seven county Arrowhead Region of Northeastern Minnesota.

With funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, the AAAA is seeking proposals from public and private non-profit organizations and units of government interested in developing or expanding supportive services that maintain an older adult's independence and safety in their community. For-profit organizations are granted funds only after dispensation of a waiver from the Minnesota Board on Aging.

The accepted proposal will become a binding part of grant/contract award agreement and the applicant will be monitored to ensure compliance with the proposal.

This is a solicitation for applications and is not to be construed as an offer, a guarantee, or promise that the proposed services will be funded by the AAAA.

### II. Use of Funding and Grant/Contract Period

The ARDC AAAA will fund supportive service projects within the geographic boundaries of Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake and St. Louis Counties. Supportive Services provided must follow the Older Americans Act Title III-B services definitions (Appx. 1).

The following services will be given the highest priority for funding:

- **Assisted transportation & Transportation**
- **Chore**
- **Homemaker**
- **Legal Assistance**, Note: One region-wide legal assistance project (federally mandated service) will be funded.
- **Legal Education**, Note: The provider of legal assistance must also provide legal education.

Other fundable services include: technology, personal care, consultation, self-directed supportive services, etc. (see Appx.1 for all fundable services)

Funds will be available January 1, 2024 through September 30, 2024. Approximately \$105,380 of American Rescue Plan Act funds are available for supportive service projects serving older adults age 60 and older in the seven county Arrowhead Region (amount subject to change). . AAAA is accepting proposals for grants/contracts up to **\$24,999** in size.

Applicants are required to contribute a local match of fifteen (15%) percent of the project's net cost. Legal assistance and legal education services have a 15% local match requirement.

The applicant's match contribution must be from non-federal sources and can be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions.

**Projects should make the best use of existing resources:** incorporating the "informal network" into the service design, using volunteers and other available local resources as appropriate; leveraging support from local municipalities, foundations, school districts, civic groups, fundraising, etc. to increase funds available and create stronger local ownership of the programs; coordinating and complementing the existing formal service network - public, non-profit and for-profit. **It is expected that organizations will coordinate service with other providers in order to avoid duplication of services.**

### III. Target Populations

The federal Older Americans Act, Sec. 306 (a)(4)(A) requires Title III services to be targeted to older individuals further defined as an individual who is 60 years of age or older, and requires an assurance that providers will identify individuals eligible for assistance under this Act, *with special emphasis on:*

- older individuals residing in rural areas;
- older individuals with greatest economic need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);
- older individuals with greatest social need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);
- older individuals with severe disabilities;
- older individuals with limited English proficiency;
- older individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunction (and the caretakers of such individuals); and
- older individuals at risk for institutional placement ("at risk for institutional placement" means having a limitation in two or more Activities of Daily Living).

### IV. Agreements

All applicant agencies must sign an agreement stating they are aware of and intend to comply with a number of federal and state assurances and certification requirements, as listed in the American Rescue Plan Act supportive services project application package (i.e., civil rights, rehabilitation act and data privacy compliance). These assurances are to be considered as part of the application and are binding upon the applicant agency and the conduct of the project subsequent to the award of any funds by the Area Agency on Aging.

In addition to the conditions in this Request for Proposal and the assurances that are signed as a part of the application package, grant/contract recipient must also agree to:

1. Notify staff and volunteers that they are not allowed to solicit contributions (except program income), sell anything to clients, or encourage acceptance in a belief or philosophy by service participant.

2. Give visible recognition to AAAA and the American Rescue Plan Act on all materials made available to the public which are paid for with American Rescue Plan Act funds (e.g. brochures, annual reports, videos and other printed material) with the following phrase, “Funded by the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging as part of the American Rescue Plan Act.” If ARPA funds paid for a portion of materials the following phrase may be substituted, “Funded in part by the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging as part of the American Rescue Plan Act.”
3. Provide the organization’s service information on the Minnesota Board on Aging’s online resource information directory, [www.MinnesotaHelp.Info](http://www.MinnesotaHelp.Info).
4. Participate in local, regional and state disaster preparedness efforts as appropriate.
5. Have a written policy for reference checks, annual reviews and criminal background checks for staff and volunteers.
6. Participate in site visits as scheduled by the AAAA or the MBA.
7. Maintain records of actual program revenues and operating costs for the grant/contract period and five additional years after notification of project period closeout from ARDC.
8. Participate in data collection process as required by the AAAA and/or federal and state regulations.
9. The project shall carry and maintain in effect for the duration of the grant/contract, general liability insurance with a limit, at a minimum in aggregate of \$2 million, workers compensation, fidelity bonding insurance and other appropriate insurance. Depending on the nature of the service, this limit may be negotiable.

## VI. Reporting Requirements

ARPA projects are required to complete quarterly financial and service progress reports. Quarters end on March 31, June 30, and September 30. Reports are to be submitted to AAAA staff on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the next month following the end of the quarter (April 8, July 8, and October 8). These reports consist of the following components:

- Financial Report and Request for Payment
- Narrative of Quarterly Events
- Characteristics of Persons Served Report (for unregistered services)

## VII. Application Process

Organizations interested in applying for American Rescue Plan Act funds must submit a complete application, using forms and instructions provided by the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging. Forms are available on <https://aaaa.us-1.smartsimple.com>

If you have questions while completing the application via SmartSimple please contact Gina Marsalla at [gmarsalla@ardc.org](mailto:gmarsalla@ardc.org)

## VIII. Proposal Evaluation

Each proposal will be reviewed, evaluated and scored based on how it meets the needs of the identified targeted populations in addition to the following information:

- Proposed service design is clear and logical.
- Project provides evidence of collaboration or cooperation with other agencies to develop services, maximize resources and to address duplication of services.
- Outreach efforts to inform the public of the service in order to develop a referral network in addition to recruiting participants who meet one or more of the targeting criteria are appropriate.
- Project cost is reasonable
- Application is accurate and complete (all requested information is completed and submitted).

Any attempt to influence members of the evaluation committee, AAAA staff, AAAA Advisory Committee on Aging members, or otherwise to affect the outcome of the award shall be grounds for disqualification.

## IX. Selection Process

The AAAA reserves the right to select or reject any proposal. Successful applicants may be asked to further define and/or refine the services proposed. The AAAA may conduct a site visit as part of the review process to verify the applicant's service capacity.

An evaluation team composed of AAAA Advisory Committee on Aging Review Task Force members, community members and/or outside consultants will review and rate the proposals based on the evaluation factors listed in the RFP. Funding recommendations from the evaluation team's review will be prepared for the AAAA Advisory Committee on Aging. The Committee will review the recommendations and will, in turn, make recommendations for funding to the ARDC Board of Directors. The ARDC Board, at its sole discretion, will select final projects.

Both successful and non-successful applicants will be notified by AAAA. No information shall be made public about applicants until after the agreements are signed. Only information about successful proposals shall be disclosed. Unsuccessful applicants have the right to appeal in accordance with AAAA's Agency Appeal Process.

## X. Appeal Process

It is the policy of the AAAA to provide unsuccessful applicants with an opportunity to appeal a funding decision made by the AAAA Advisory Committee on Aging. A hearing before the AAAA Executive Committee will be provided to an applicant upon written request received no

later than ten (10) days after receipt of notification of the Advisory Committee's funding decision. Because all proposals are evaluated on the written materials submitted, appeals must be based only on information provided in the applicant's written proposal and may not include additional information about the applicant organization or its project.

#### AAAA Hearing

An applicant wishing to appeal the AAAA decision must submit their request in writing to AAAA's Director within ten (10) working days from the receipt date of the notice that their proposal will not be funded. The request should state the reason(s) for the appeal. Upon receipt of the written request for a hearing, the Director will set a date for a hearing with AAAA's Executive Committee. The hearing will be held within thirty (30) days after receipt of the request. All interested parties will be notified in writing of the date, time and place of the hearing.

During the hearing, the applicant should present the reason(s) why they have appealed the Committee's decision based on relevant information contained in their original proposal, and information about their evaluation scores referenced in the previous section. Upon the conclusion of the hearing, the committee will make its decision and will notify the applicant in writing. The Executive Committee ruling serves as AAAA's final decision on the matter. The written notice shall include instructions to the applicant of their right to a State Unit Hearing (Minnesota Board on Aging).

#### State Unit Hearing – Minnesota Board on Aging (MBA)

The applicant has the right to request a hearing from the MBA in the event that they are dissatisfied with the AAAA decision. Pursuant to Section 2.15, Provider Hearing Requirements, MBA Operations Manual, the hearing shall consider procedural grounds only and shall not consider issues of merit. The applicant's request must be in writing and received by MBA within ten (10) working days of the receipt of AAAA's notice.

## **XI. Proprietary Information**

All materials and information submitted become the property of the AAAA, and the proposals of the selected applicants will be considered public information (per Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Chapter 13 of the Minnesota Statutes, including [Section 13.05, Subd. 11](#), unless specific sections are labeled as proprietary and a bona fide proprietary reason exists for the protection of that specific information. The entire application will not be considered proprietary as a whole. AAAA will not disclose any material until execution of the Notification of Contract Award, and limits disclosure to the successful proposals or other information required by law.

## XII. Proposal Procedure and Timeline

Organizations interested in applying for American Rescue Plan Act supportive services funding must submit a completed application, using forms and instructions provided by the Arrowhead Area Agency on Aging.

Request for Proposals and application packets available on AAAA's website at <a href="https://aaaa.us-1.smartsimple.com/">https://aaaa.us-1.smartsimple.com/</a> . Materials may also be requested from Gina Marsalla, AAAA staff, at <a href="mailto:gmarsalla@ardc.org">gmarsalla@ardc.org</a> (e-mail).	January 11, 2024
Informational Webinar	January 11-26, 2024
Proposals due to AAAA by 3:00 PM	February 1, 2024
Applicants will be notified of funding decision	February 9, 2024
Grant/Contract Period Begins *project may begin January 1 if deemed appropriate by AAAA staff	April 1, 2024