

2024-2028 Local Area Plan
MONROE COUNTY AREA AGENCY ON AGING
Planning and Service Area (PSA) 48

October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2028



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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Monroe County Area Agency on Aging is charged by the Monroe County Commissioners with providing services and programs to older adults (ages 60 and over) and aims to support individuals, families, and caregivers within the County. Staffed by professionals in the field of aging and guided by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, the Area Agency on Aging strives to improve the quality of life of Monroe County's older adults through the coordination of existing services and the development of essential programs.

Every four years, the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging is required to develop an Area Plan in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Aging's State Plan in an effort to target the increasing and changing needs of older adults of Monroe County. This plan is for the period of October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2028.

The goals and objectives of the Plan have been developed based on feedback and both qualitative and quantitative data. The Monroe County Area Agency on Aging will commit the necessary resources to accomplishing these goals and objectives over the next four years and will regularly track their progress and evaluate their success through implementing and monitoring preestablished performance measures.

Community Outreach & Needs Assessment

The Monroe County Area Agency on Aging participated in a Community Needs Assessment for 2022-2025 as part of the Monroe County Community Action Agency Board. This Needs Assessment took a look at Monroe and Pike Counties and utilized a focus group and published data from the Census Bureau and HUD.

As part of the Pennsylvania Department of Aging's *Aging Our Way, PA* ten-year plan, the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging hosted a listening session and accepted feedback from stakeholders and the community.

5 Goals

1. Protect older adults and promote healthy aging
2. Address social needs of isolated individuals
3. Create an environment where diversity, equity, and inclusion are prioritized
4. Empower older adults to safely remain in their homes and be active in the community
5. Continue to grow and develop the Caregiver Support Program

These goals will guide us through the next four years, and the strategies we have created to meet our goals will provide us with the direction necessary to be successful.

Agency Overview

Mission Statement, Vision, and Values

The mission of the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging is:

- 1) To Strengthen Family Life.
- 2) To Assist Individuals in Attaining or Maintaining Independence and Self Care in the Setting of their Choice.
- 3) To Protect Adults in Danger of Neglect, Abuse, or Exploitation.

The Monroe County Area Agency on Aging currently provides the following programs and/or services:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| *Care Management | *Older Adult Protective Services |
| *Consumer Reimbursement | *Ombudsman Program |
| *Emergent Services | *OPTIONS Program |
| *Functional Eligibility Determinations (FED) | *PA Caregiver Support Program |
| *In-Home Meals | *PA MEDI |
| *Health and Wellness Programs | *Personal Care / Home Support |
| *Information and Referral | *Personal Emergency Response System |
| *Legal Assistance | *Transportation |
| *AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP Volunteer Program | |
| *Outreach and Education | |
| *Senior Centers / Congregate Meals | |
| *Publications: monthly newsletter and local benefits booklet | |

Vision: Aligning this plan with the Department of Aging's four-year State Plan on Aging and *Aging Our Way PA*, the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging will work collectively with our Aging Network to provide older adults with the resources they need to age with dignity and respect and to continue to be vital, active members of their communities. The Monroe County Area Agency on Aging joins in the commitment to creating a state in which every Pennsylvanian, and especially older adults, can experience happiness, dignity, and fulfillment.

The Monroe County Area Agency on Aging's core values include:

- Treating all individuals with dignity and respect.
- Respecting the choices and preferences of older adults regarding their decisions.
- Respecting and understanding the unique circumstances of each individual.
- Valuing our relationships with community partners.
- Operating as responsible stewards of all resources entrusted to us.
- Valuing the efforts made by those who work, advocate, and volunteer for the needs of older adults.
- Maintaining a high level of professional integrity, responsibility, and accountability.

Description of the Area Agency on Aging (AAA)

The Monroe County Area Agency on Aging (MCAAA) is the Department of Aging's designated Planning and Service Area (PSA) provider for older adults in Monroe County, Pennsylvania. As a result of the Older Americans Act of 1965, a designated Tri-County Planning and Service Area brought together Wayne, Pike and Monroe Counties in 1974. Due to the increase in population, the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging separated from the Tri-County Planning and Service Area on July 1, 1978 and was designated by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging as the 48th Planning and Service Area.

The Monroe County Area Agency on Aging has the responsibility of fulfilling the requirements of PA Act 70 and the Older American's Act of 1965, as amended.

The three-member Monroe County Board of Commissioners have the final authority within the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging organization. Bound by contractual agreement, the County Commissioners have final responsibility for the Agency's budget. This is due to the federal and state funding which goes directly to the county.

The Administrator of the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging is responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the agency. It is the Administrator's responsibility to ensure the entire staff observes and complies with all state and federal mandates, as well as organizational and county policies and procedures. The Administrator is obligated to represent the interests of the consumers, programs, and Agency.

Staff of the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging sit on various boards and committees within the local community and statewide, such as LINK/ADRC, the Homeless Advisory Board, the Northeast Pennsylvania Council on Aging, the Monroe County Transit Authority, the Monroe County Human Services Planning Team, the Community Services Administrative Board, the Department of Aging Outcomes Committee, the Crisis Intervention Team, and the Inter-Agency Council of Monroe County.

The Monroe County Area Agency on Aging was integral to the creation of its Elder Abuse Task Force and continues to host its meetings. Established in 2015 with the cooperation of the Monroe County District Attorney's Office, the Task Force brings together a variety of professionals in the community committed to increasing awareness of elder abuse and how to report it. They work to educate the community about how to keep themselves, and the older adults they come in contact with, safe.

The Monroe County Area Agency on Aging works in conjunction with a twelve (12) member Advisory Council. The members are volunteers appointed by the County Commissioners, and they represent various geographical areas of the county and the diversity of the population. The purpose of the Advisory Council is to assist the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging and the County Commissioners in establishing priorities, monitoring services, acting as advocates, and making recommendations. The Advisory Council conducts formal monthly meetings and chairs public meetings as required by mandates and/or as needed. In addition, the Advisory Council members are participants in various committees in an effort to identify, develop, initiate, and/or evaluate plans, programs, or actions sponsored by the Council or Agency. Representatives from the Monroe County Transit Authority, State Representatives' offices, and Senator's office are also in regular attendance at Council meetings.

Presently, the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging has a staff of 33 which includes an Administrator, five supervisors, an Administrative Officer and 26 staff. The Agency is part of the Human Service infrastructure of Monroe County; it is Civil Service and an SEIU union shop.

The Area Agency on Aging is developing a comprehensive framework to effectively coordinate emergency preparedness activities and create a long-term emergency preparedness plan. This will be achieved through collaboration with the Monroe County Office of Emergency Management, state emergency response agencies and relief organizations, local and state governments, and other disaster relief service delivery institutions. The plan's goal is to ensure the older adult population's needs are adequately identified and met during emergencies through timely, efficient, and coordinated efforts.

To achieve an effective, long-range emergency preparedness plan, the AAA will conduct awareness campaigns to inform older adults and their caregivers about emergency preparedness measures. The AAA emergency plan outlines a structured approach to enhance the preparedness and response capabilities of the AAA in collaboration with key partners. By prioritizing the needs of the older adult population and ensuring their inclusion in the planning and response activities, the established plan will mitigate the impact of emergencies on this population.

The Monroe County Area Agency on Aging coordinates required services for consumers by contracting with service providers and other agencies. AmeriCorps RSVP volunteers have been an integral part of the Area Agency on Aging since 1990, sharing their skills and experience at over eighty sites around the county. Five senior centers are located throughout the county, with one operating five days per week.

In 2018, due to changes in how determinations of an adult's (18 and older) level of care are made, the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging contracted with Aging Well PA, LLC to continue to do Functional Eligibility Determinations (FEDs) for home and community-based services, as well as for facility placement.

December of 2019 saw the end of the Monroe County Area Agency on Aging's provision of service coordination to older adults who met the clinical and financial eligibility of the Aging Waiver program. Those consumers were transitioned to Managed Care Organizations and are served by independent service coordination entities.

PSA Demographics

Monroe County has sixteen (16) townships and four (4) boroughs in its 611 square miles. The total population in 2021 was 169,273 with 44,704, just over 25%, being 60+ years old. 3,960 of those aged 60+ in this population live at or below poverty level (American Community Survey).

Just over 10% of the 60+ population is African American; 9 ½% are Hispanic (Penn State Data Center). Affordable housing remains the top concern discussed at any feedback sessions. Most of the total population of Monroe County reside in single-family homes (77.7%). Rental costs for the county have been on the rise, and at present, nearly 30% of renters spend more than half their income on housing (Center for Rural PA data).

Community Outreach & Needs Assessment

As a result of the aforementioned Community Needs Assessment, there were five key areas identified as top needs, and while the Needs Assessment did not focus specifically on the older population, number one on that list is affordable, high-quality housing.

Though the population growth Monroe County had seen over the past several years appears to be leveling off or even declining slightly (less than 1% from 2010 to 2020), what has been interesting is the number of households has increased while household size has been decreasing, with over 50% of Monroe County households having one or two members.

The Community Needs Assessment also marked that while the number of housing units has remained fairly stable in Monroe and Pike counties over the past ten years, the number of housing units in Monroe County decreased while Pike County's increased.

During listening sessions, over half the respondents indicated property taxes for older adults have increased to the point where they are uncertain they can maintain their homes. Due to the lack of affordable housing in the county, many older adults are struggling to remain at home or looking to relocate out of the area. Homes are falling into disrepair while owners must choose between maintenance and property tax.

Quality Management

Utilizing SAMS and Protective Services reports from the Department of Aging, data collection of ongoing services is reported to prevent major gaps in services. These reports, provided regularly to supervisors, allow one to track and monitor consumers so their needs are addressed within the mandated timeframes.

Transportation and affordable housing are critical unmet needs in Monroe County. Property tax increases have dramatically impacted older adults around the county and create significant stress on planning for the future and their ability to age in place.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Outcome Measures

Goals

Goal 1: Commit to focusing on healthy aging by supporting or expanding Health & Wellness programs and education for elder abuse prevention and reporting.

Goal 2: Reduce social isolation by engaging more older adults, reducing barriers to their participation in community activities.

Goal 3: Embrace diversity and inclusion to include outreach to engage the LGBTQ+ community and honor individual choice. Embrace diversity and inclusion to include outreach to Latino/Hispanic, NAACP and other groups in our community.

Goal 4: Empower older adults to advocate on their own behalf to direct their individual aging in place goals

Goal 5: Educate the community about the Caregiver Support program and encourage caregivers to utilize resources to assist themselves and those they care for.

Objectives & Strategies

Goal 1: Commit to focusing on healthy aging by supporting or expanding Health & Wellness programs and education for elder abuse prevention and reporting.

- Objective 1.1: Expand community health & wellness programs.
 - Providing Tai Chi and other special programs in the community in locations outside of senior centers: township community centers, libraries, Monroe County Emergency Management building.
 - Partner with local university to have students trained to provide evidence-based programs.
 - Objective 1.2: Health Education
 - Utilize our already robust social media platforms and our newsletter to educate older adults about health issues and connect them to community partners that offer health services and education.
 - Objective 1.3: Elder Abuse Prevention
 - Educate community partners about elder abuse and when it should be reported.
 - Encourage attendance at Monroe County's Elder Abuse Task Force meetings.
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Goal 2: Reduce social isolation by engaging more older adults, reducing barriers to their participation in community activities.

- Objective 2.1: Link older adults to transportation
 - Work closely with the local transportation authority to educate older adults regarding availability of fixed routes, Shared Ride, and other options.
 - Farmer's Market vouchers will contain bus route information to get older adults to the local markets.
 - The marketing department for the transit authority will continue to advertise Shared Ride registration and updated ease of use applications/QR codes to utilize.
 - Objective 2.2: Encourage volunteerism.
 - Promote AmeriCorps RSVP to engage older adults to volunteer at one of the many sites or to be a friendly phone caller.
 - Objective 2.3: Broaden the scope of our newsletter, social media, and other advertising to include community activities of interest to everyone.
 - Include information about events at local libraries, concert venues, colleges, and historical societies that may not necessarily be senior-specific.
 - Analyze the number of strikes at particular posts to determine where interests lie.
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Goal 3: Embrace diversity and inclusion to include outreach to engage the LGBTQ+ community and honor individual choice. Embrace diversity and inclusion to include outreach to Latino/Hispanic, NAACP, and other groups in our community.

- Objective 3.1: All staff will participate in SAGE training and the office will be SAGECare certified.
 - Utilizing PDA LMS training for all staff and supervisors.
 - Objective 3.2: The Aging Office will be a presence at events in Monroe County, to include:
 - Monroe County annually holds a Pride parade and festival, and the office will be a participant.
 - Monroe County annually holds a Pocono Latin festival, and the office will be a participant.
 - Monroe County annually holds a Monroe County Community Night, and the office will be a participant.
 - Monroe County annually holds a Pocono United Way Day, and the office will be a participant.
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- Objective 3.3: Education to the community regarding laws specific to marginalized groups.
 - Collaborate with the local Bar Association to find speakers who may be able to address specific issues.
 - Objective 3.4: Work with nutrition provider and interested seniors in developing more culturally appropriate meals for ethnic seniors.
 - Focus events and menus at senior centers, exposing attendees to culturally diverse meals and traditions.
 - Objective 3.5: Prioritize and support community partnerships to cultivate a diverse aging network to support more equitable service delivery to older adults in the community.
 - Provide and encourage racial equity training for all staff.
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Goal 4: Empower older adults to advocate on their own behalf to direct their individual aging in place goals.

- Objective 4.1: Educate older adults about long-term care planning.
 - Educate AAA staff and older adults in the community about long-term care options, rights, and protections.
 - Objective 4.2: Recognize the AAA as a reliable entity to connect older adults with the many community partners designed to assist at whatever stage of life.
 - Market the AAA as a 'no wrong door' program to connect community members to partner organizations.
 - Partner more with local United Way, LINK/ADRC, and AARP as referral sources.
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Goal 5: Educate the community about the Caregiver Support program and encourage caregivers to utilize resources to assist themselves and those they care for.

- Objective 5.1: Promote the Caregiver Support Program.
 - Create and distribute CSP-specific information at local events.
 - Work with community partners who could potentially host memory cafes in the county for caregivers and care receivers coping with dementia.
 - Objective 5.2: Provide caregivers with information about available community support, specifically for those caring for individuals with Alzheimer's, dementia, and other related brain disorders.
 - Maintain a list of available caregiver support groups.
 - Educate/train caregivers on stress management and reduction.
 - Objective 5.3: Advocate with local resources to reintroduce Older Adult Day Centers for caregiver respite.
 - Contact local hospital (who pre-COVID had an OADLC in neighboring county) to advocate for them opening locally.
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Outcome Measures

Definition and description of outcome measures and target dates identified under each goal, objective, and strategy.

Goal 1: Commit to focusing on healthy aging by supporting or expanding Health & Wellness programs and education for elder abuse prevention and reporting.		
Objective 1.1: Expand community health & wellness programs		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Providing Tai Chi and other special programs in the community in locations outside of senior centers: township community centers, libraries, Monroe County Emergency Management building.	Increase by three (3) programs annually at locations beyond senior centers.	September 30, 2028
Partner with local university to have students trained to provide evidence-based programs.	Engage one (1) group from a particular field of study in fall and spring.	September 30, 2028
Objective 1.2: Health Education		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Utilize our already robust social media platforms and our newsletter to educate older adults about health issues and connect them to community partners that offer health services and education.	Increase the number of followers to Facebook by 4% annually.	September 30, 2028
Objective 1.3: Elder Abuse Prevention		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Educate community partners about elder abuse and when it should be reported.	Increase the number of community presentations including elder abuse and exploitation by three (3) annually.	September 30, 2028
Encourage attendance at Monroe County's Elder Abuse Task Force meetings.	The number of attendees at Task Force meetings will increase by two (2) annually.	September 30, 2028

Goal 2: Reduce social isolation by engaging more older adults, reducing barriers to their participation in community activities.		
Objective 2.1: Link older adults to transportation		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Work closely with the local transportation authority to educate older adults regarding availability of fixed routes, Shared Ride, and other options.	Increased number of Shared Rides	Ongoing
Farmer’s Market vouchers will contain bus route information to get older adults to the local markets	Information included in Farmer’s Market vouchers	November 30, 2024
The marketing department for the transit authority will continue to advertise Shared Ride registration and updated ease of use applications/QR codes to utilize.	Increased number of new registrations for Monroe County Transit Authority.	Ongoing
Objective 2.2: Encourage volunteerism		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Promote AmeriCorps RSVP to engage older adults to volunteer at one of the many sites or to be a friendly phone caller.	Increase number of new volunteers by five (5) annually.	September 30, 2028
Objective 2.3: Broaden the scope of our newsletter, social media and other advertising to include community activities of interest to everyone.		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Include information about events at local libraries, concert venues, colleges, and historical societies that may not necessarily be senior-specific.	Include event non-senior specific every month	Immediately
Analyze the number of strikes at particular posts to determine where interests lay.	Review Facebook statistics	Monthly

Goal 3: Embrace diversity and inclusion to include outreach to engage the LGBTQ+ community, and honor individual choice. Embrace diversity and inclusion to include outreach to Latino/Hispanic, NAACP, and other groups in our community.		
Objective 3.1: All staff will participate in SAGE training, and the office will be SAGECare certified.		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Utilizing PDA LMS training for all staff and supervisors.	Completed trainings resulting in credentialing	December 31, 2024

Objective 3.2: The Aging Office will be a presence at events in Monroe County, to include:		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Monroe County annually holds a Pride parade and festival, and the office will be a participant.	Attendance at festival	December 31, 2025
Monroe County annually holds a Pocono Latin festival, and the office will be a participant.	Attendance at festival	December 31, 2025
Monroe County annually holds a Monroe County Community Night, and the office will be a participant.	Attendance at event	December 31, 2025
Monroe County annually holds a Pocono United Way Day, and the office will be a participant.	Attendance at event	December 31, 2025
Objective 3.3: Education to the community regarding laws specific to marginalized groups.		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Collaborate with the local Bar Association to find speakers who may be able to address specific issues.	Two speakers at locations within the county.	December 31, 2025
Objective 3.4: Work with nutrition provider and interested seniors in developing more culturally appropriate meals for ethnic seniors.		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Focus events and menus at senior centers, exposing attendees to culturally diverse meals and traditions.	Event and menu specific to this strategy at least quarterly at centers.	Quarterly
Objective 3.5: Prioritize and support community partnerships to cultivate a diverse aging network to support more equitable service delivery to older adults in the community.		
Provide and encourage racial equity training for all staff	Staff will annually attend an in-service or training.	Annually

Goal 4: Empower older adults to advocate on their own behalf to direct their individual aging in place goals		
Objective 4.1: Educate older adults about long term care planning		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Educate AAA staff and older adults in the community about long-term care options, rights, and protections	Presentations attended or literature provided	Ongoing

Objective 4.2: Recognize the AAA as a reliable entity to connect older adults with the many community partners designed to assist at whatever stage of life.		
Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Market the AAA as a 'no wrong door' program to connect community members to partner organizations.	Increased intake calls to the AAA	Quarterly
Partner more with local United Way, LINK/ADRC, and AARP as referral sources	Attendance at events and meetings sponsored by these groups	December 31, 2024

Goal 5: Educate the community about the Caregiver Support program and encourage caregivers to utilize resources to assist themselves and those they care for.

Objective 5.1: Promote the Caregiver Support Program

Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Create and distribute CSP-specific information at local events.	Distribute information	Ongoing
Work with community partners who could potentially host memory cafes in the county for caregivers and care receivers coping with dementia	Two memory cafes in Monroe County	September 30, 2028

Objective 5.2: Provide caregivers with information about available community supports, specifically for those caring for individuals with Alzheimer's, dementia, and other related brain disorders.

Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Maintain a list of available caregiver support groups	List updated	Semi-annually
Educate/train caregivers on stress management and reduction	Two trainings offered	Annually

Objective 5.3: Advocate with local resources to reintroduce Older Adult Day Centers for caregiver respite.

Strategies	Performance Measure	Target Date
Contact local hospital (who pre-COVID had an OADLC in neighboring county) to advocate for them opening locally.	Meet with St. Luke's Hospital administration	December 31, 2025

Appendix 1: Assurances

AREA PLAN PART B

Section 1. Signature Page/Standard Assurances Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Department of Aging

FY 2024-2028 Area Agency on Aging

Four-Year Area Plan on Aging

Monroe County Area Agency on Aging

724 Phillips Street, Suite 102

Stroudsburg PA 18360

570-420-3735

I/we certify that I/we are authorized to submit this Plan on behalf of the designated Area Agency on Aging and agree to abide by regulations issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Department of Labor. I/we further certify that the general public has had the opportunity to review and comment on this Plan through the public hearing process and that written policies, procedures or agreements, as appropriate, have been developed in accordance with Part A, Section 307 of the Older Americans Act, and are on file for review and approval, as appropriate, by Department of Aging officials.

I/we assure that services and programs of the Area Agency on Aging will be managed and delivered in accordance with the Plan submitted herewith. Any substantial changes to the Plan will be submitted to the Department of Aging for prior approval.

I/we hereby expressly, as a condition precedent to the receipt of State and Federal funds, assure:

That in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990; The Pennsylvania Human Relations Act of 1955, as amended; and 16 PA Code, Chapter 49 (Contract Compliance regulations):

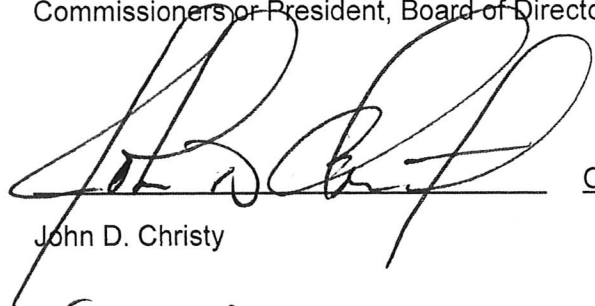
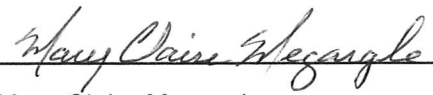
- 1) I/we do not and will not discriminate against any person because of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, or handicap:
 - a) In providing services or employment, or in its relationship with other providers.
 - b) In providing access to services and employment for handicapped individuals.

2) I/we will comply with all regulations promulgated to enforce the statutory provisions against discrimination.

I/we further hereby agree that all contracts for the provision of services addressed herein will require contractors to comply with these same provisions.

I/we certify that the advisory council of the Area Agency on Aging has participated in the development of this Plan and has reviewed the Plan as herewith submitted.

Signature(s) of Governing Authority
Official(s), e.g., Chairman of County
Commissioners or President, Board of Directors.

	Title	Date
 John D. Christy	<u>Chairman</u>	<u>6-17-24</u>
 David C. Parker	<u>Vice-Chairman</u>	<u>6/17/24</u>
 Sharon S. Laverdure	<u>Commissioner</u>	<u>6/17/24</u>
 Mary Claire Megargle	<u>Administrator</u>	<u>6/17/24</u>

Name of Person to Contact Regarding the Contents of This Plan:

Mary Claire Megargle
(Name)

570-420-3735
(Area Code and Telephone)

Part B. Section 2

**DOCUMENTATION OF PARTICIPATION BY THE
AREA AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL**

PSA NO. 48

NAME OF AAA: MONROE COUNTY AREA AGENCY ON AGING

PLAN PERIOD FROM OCTOBER 1, 2024 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2028

In accordance with 6 PA Code, Section 35.23, a. (1) and (2) and the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, I certify that the Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council has had the opportunity to assist in the development of this Plan. I further certify that the Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council has participated in at least one Public Hearing held on this Plan.

The Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council (does / does not) not recommend approval of this Plan.



Signature of the Chief Officer of the Area
Agency on Aging Advisory Council

Todd Martin, President

Typed Name and Title

4-15-2024

Part B. Section 3

Listing of Plan Assurances and Required Activities

Older Americans Act, As Amended in 2016

ASSURANCES

The Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, requires each Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to provide assurances that it will develop a Plan and carry out a program in accordance with the Plan. Each AAA must comply with the following provisions of the Act. Written policies, procedures, or agreements, as appropriate, must be on file in the AAA office and available for review and approval by Department of Aging officials.

Area Plans

- Assurances that an adequate proportion, as required under section 307(a)(2), of the amount allotted for part B to the planning and service area will be expended for the delivery of each of the following categories of services:
 - Services associated with access to services (transportation, health services (including mental and behavioral health services), outreach, information and assistance (which may include information and assistance to consumers on availability of services under part B and how to receive benefits under and participate in publicly supported programs for which the consumer may be eligible) and case management services.
 - In-home services, including supportive services for families of older individuals who are victims of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunction.
 - Legal assistance
- Assurances that the AAA will report annually to the State agency in detail the amount of funds expended for each such category during the fiscal year most recently concluded.
- Assurances that the AAA will:
 - Set specific objectives, consistent with State policy, for providing services to older individuals with greatest economic need, older individuals with greatest social need, and older individuals at risk for institutional placement.
 - Include specific objectives for providing services to low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas; and
 - Include proposed methods to achieve the objectives.

- Assurances that the AAA will include in each agreement made with a provider of any service under this title, a requirement that such provider will:
 - Specify how the provider intends to satisfy the service needs of low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas in the area served by the provider.
 - To the maximum extent feasible, provide services to low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas in accordance with their need for such services.
 - Meet specific objectives established by the AAA, for providing services to low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas within the planning and service area.

- Each AAA shall identify the number of low-income minority older individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas in the planning and service area, describe the methods used to satisfy the service needs of such minority older individuals, and provide information on the extent to which the AAA met the objectives described in clause (a)(4)(A)(i).

- Assurances that the AAA will use outreach efforts that 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)
 - Older individuals at risk for institutional placement

- Assurance that the AAA will ensure that each activity undertaken by the agency, including planning, advocacy, and systems development, will include a focus on the needs of low-income minority older individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas.

- Assurances that the AAA will coordinate planning, identification, assessment of needs, and provision of services for older individuals with disabilities, with particular attention to individuals with severe disabilities, and individuals at risk for institutional placement, with agencies that develop or provide services for individuals with disabilities.

- Assurances that the AAA, in carrying out the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program under section 307(a)(9), will expend not less than the total amount of funds appropriated under this Act and expended by the agency in fiscal year 2000 in carrying out such a program under this title.

- Information and assurances concerning services to older individuals who are Native Americans (referred to in this paragraph as "older Native Americans"), including:
 - Information concerning whether there is a significant population of older Native Americans in the planning and service area and if so, an assurance that the AAA will pursue activities.
 - Outreach, to increase access of those older Native Americans to programs and benefits provided under this title.
 - Assurance that the AAA will, to the maximum extent practicable, coordinate the services the agency provides under this title with services provided under title VI.
 - Assurance that the AAA will make services under the area plan available, to the same extent as such services are available to older individuals within the planning and service area, to older Native Americans.

- Assurances that the AAA will maintain the integrity and public purpose of services provided, and service providers, under this title in all contractual and commercial relationships.

- Assurances that the AAA will disclose to the Assistant Secretary and the State agency the identity of each nongovernmental entity with which such agency has a contract or commercial relationship relating to providing any service to older individuals, and the nature of such contract or such relationship.
- Assurances that the AAA will demonstrate that a loss or diminution in the quantity or quality of the services provided, or to be provided, under this title by such agency has not resulted and will not result from such contract or such relationship.

- Assurances that the AAA will demonstrate that the quantity or quality of the services to be provided under this title by such agency will be enhanced as a result of such contract or such relationship.

- Assurances that the area agency will, on the request of the Assistant Secretary or the State, for the purpose of monitoring compliance with this Act (including conducting an audit), disclose all sources and expenditures of funds such agency receives or expends to provide services to older individuals.

- Assurances that preference in receiving services under this title will not be given by the AAA to particular older individuals as a result of a contract or commercial relationship that is not carried out to implement this title.

- Assurances that funds received under this title will be used to provide benefits and services to older individuals, giving priority to older individuals identified in paragraph (4)(A)(i); and in compliance with the assurances specified in paragraph (13) and the limitations specified in section 212.