



State of South Carolina
Department on Aging

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PROGRAM INSTRUCTION FOR: POPULATIONS TARGETED FOR SERVICE UNDER THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM FOR: Area Agencies on Aging

SUBJECT: PROGRAM INSTRUCTION (PI) for POPULATIONS TARGETED FOR SERVICE UNDER THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT POLICY

DATE: August 10, 2026

AAA COMPLIANCE DATE: July 1, 2027

POPULATIONS TARGETED FOR SERVICE UNDER THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT	POLICY NUMBER
REFERENCE(S): 45 CFR 1321.9(c)(iv)(v)	
RELEASE DATE: July 1, 2026	AAA COMPLIANCE DATE: July 1, 2027

Policy Statement

The South Carolina Department on Aging and AAAs shall ensure that preference for service is given to those older persons and their family caregivers in greatest social and/or economic need, with particular attention to: older individuals with low income; low-income, minority individuals; older individuals with limited English proficiency; older individuals residing in rural area; and older individuals at risk for institutional placement.

"Minority older persons" are defined for data reporting by ACL as:

- African American, Not of Hispanic Origin – a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa;
- Hispanic Origin – a person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish/Portuguese culture or origins, regardless of race;

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- Native Americans (Indian) or Alaskan Native – a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition; and
 - Asian American/Pacific Islander – a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands (which include China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, Samoa, and the Hawaiian Islands).

SCDOA defines “Rural Area” by referencing information from the Census Bureau. Rural areas include all geographic areas that are not classified as urban. Geographic areas that are not rural are, by definition, urban. The Census Bureau defines “urban areas” as either:

- Urbanized areas, which contain 50,000 or more people.
- Urban clusters, which have at least 2,500 people but fewer than 50,000 residents.

For reporting purposes of rural to ACL via the Older Americans Act Performance System (OAAPS), SCDOA uses the required guidance of Geographic Distribution, defined as “type of developed environment in which the consumer lives as defined by the rural-urban commuting area (RUCA) codes defined at the zip code level.”

The SCDOA Client and Family Caregiver Assessments utilize a data-driven, standardized approach to ensuring service delivery to priority older adult and family caregiver populations across South Carolina. The SCDOA aims to ensure uniform implementation of priority-based assessments and waitlist procedures; this is accomplished by providing training and technical assistance to the AAAs, and through program monitoring. The Client Assessment utilizes a tiered method of prioritization, targeting older adults who meet the SCDOA criteria for greatest economic and social need. The Family Caregiver Assessment uses a scoring system for prioritization, with weighted questions related to economic and social need.

By collecting data related to greatest economic and social need, the SCDOA is able to monitor service usage and demographic representation, address gaps in outreach, and modify definitions of “greatest economic and greatest social need” to reflect South Carolina’s unique demographic and social landscape.

SUA Procedure

The SCDOA is responsible for:

- Monitoring service usage in relation to target populations. If noted that target populations are not adequately represented in service data, work with AAAs to develop targeted outreach plans.
- Providing and maintaining the means for AAAs to prioritize client service, including a standardized assessment with tiering and scoring criteria based on priority areas, and the data system associated with this process
- Training the AAAs on the Assessment process, ensuring uniform assessments are completed throughout the state.

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- Monitoring assessment tiers and scores by region and staff; reviewing for relative uniformity. If a region or staff person has a notably higher or lower assessment score average, SCDOA will conduct further investigation and, if needed provide technical assistance and/or training.
 - Implementing and monitoring waitlist usage to ensure that those with highest scores/priority are being served first.
 - Encouraging and performing outreach for underserved communities/populations.
 - If needed, further define “greatest economic” and “greatest social” needs beyond federal definitions, to meet the unique needs of South Carolina.

AAA Procedure

South Carolina AAAs are responsible for:

- Using best available data, identifying and performing outreach to targeted populations in locations and through means accessible to those older adults.
- Conducting assessments, using state-provided assessment instruments and prescribed processes, including wait list management requirements, to prioritize service delivery for prioritized populations.
- Monitoring service usage data to determine if service utilization is in line with available data on targeted populations; Conducting targeted outreach as needed to enhance alignment.

See also: (related/cross-referenced policies and/or forms – use hyperlinks)

Client Eligibility and Priority

Assessment Policy

Family Caregiver Support Program



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