

Division of Aging and Adult Services

October 2021 Newsletter

A Message from the Director



H.B. 365 State Agency Realignment was passed in the 2021 Legislative Session. This consolidates the Utah Departments of Health and Human Services and moves components of Medicaid eligibility from Department of Health to Department of Workforce Services by July 1, 2022. The intent is to improve the delivery of critical services to Utahns.

The primary goals for the realignment are to:

- More efficiently and effectively manage health and human services programs that are the responsibility of the state;
- Align health and human services policy for the state; and
- Promote health and the quality of life for individuals accessing services in the health and human services field.

The Division of Aging and Adult Services is actively supporting consolidation efforts. We are looking forward to additional opportunities to collaborate in this new structure. We believe these changes will lead to better coordination between agencies that will ultimately lead to better services for our partners and clients.

We are grateful to the aging network for the tremendous efforts during this pandemic and season of change. Thank you for all that you do!

Jacob Murakami
Assistant Division Director



Centenarian Day in Utah

In need of some inspiration and good news? You can get both from our 2021 Governor's Century Club of Utah Yearbook, in which the amazing team of Michelle Gregory and Charlotte Vincent in DHS Aging & Adult Services work all year to gather stories, words of wisdom and photos for many of Utah's oldest residents. These lighthearted pages are sure to put a smile on your face. View the yearbook: bit.ly/utcenturyclub2021.

The Centenarians fought and survived six large-scale wars, the Great Depression and 13 recessions, and now two global pandemics. With Governor Cox's declaration of Centenarian Day in Utah on September 18, the state honored a total of 164 known residents ranging from 100 years to its senior member, Lilian Jones, who is 111 years old! They truly embody the wisdom of one of our centenarians, Richard Fay, who says, "Success is measured not by what you can get from society but what you can give back."

If you know a Utah resident who you'd like to see in the 2022 yearbook, you can submit biographies at daas.utah.gov/centenarian or contact Michelle Gregory at mgregory@utah.gov or 801-538-3910.



Program Highlight: Legal Services Program

Utah Aging Website

The Utah Commission on Aging (UCOA) sponsors and manages UtahAging.org as Utah's official statewide virtual resource center for older adults. UCOA convenes expert stakeholders to share resources from our community providers, public policy makers, educators, and researchers to help Utahns navigate the opportunities and challenges of the aging experience. UCOA prepares older adults by improving access to knowledge to empower decision makers, fostering new ideas and research pathways, promoting effective policy, and applying best practice models for improving outcomes in our communities.

Senior legal assistance is one of the three priority services required by the Older Americans Act. States must utilize a minimum of 2% of the Title IIIB funding for Legal Assistance; they can increase that amount if desired. The Act requires each state to employ a Legal Services Developer to ensure priority for senior legal assistance programs. The Act requires the establishment of legal services related to income assistance, health care, long-term care, nutrition, housing, utilities, protective services, defense of guardianship, abuse, neglect, exploitation, and age discrimination.

The Legal Services Developer doesn't supply direct legal services. Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) funds providers statewide under the Title III Older Americans Act. Currently the AAA's have contracted with Legal Services Corporation to provide the services statewide. Legal Services as a Title III Legal Service Provider should assist seniors regardless of income if they fall within the targeted legal services of the Older Americans Act. Additionally, they can facilitate pro bono services as needed if available.

The Legal Services Developer's role is to (1) provide state leadership in securing and maintaining the legal rights of older persons; (2) coordinate the provision of legal assistance programs; and (3) improve the quality and quantity of services by developing a comprehensive system of legal services targeting older persons in greatest social and economic need while providing an array of legal services to all older Utahns.

The Legal Services Developer tries to help facilitate additional provision of services. This is done through grant writing and outreach to law schools and pro bono legal providers. Recently Utah State University completed a Legal Needs Assessment under the aegis of the Adult Protective Services Multi-Disciplinary Teams and Financial Exploitation grants. Among several issues of note, the Assessment highlighted the need for more accessible legal and financial services for vulnerable adults. The data highlights the need for these services to be free or low-cost to meet the needs of these senior populations. 62% of respondents cited inadequate legal services in their area as an issue.

Currently the Legal Services Developer is working on advocating for initial funding to set up a Utah customized Legal Risk Detector online with software from Probono.net. The only cost projected is the customization of the software for Utah and a minimal amount to host it. The software will allow community partners to assist clients who wish to participate in completing the risk detector and provide a warm handoff to Legal Services, who will then contact clients in need of further advice or assistance.

AAA Recognition

The Bear River Area Agency on Aging received an Innovation Award from the National Area Agency on Aging for their work providing resources to veterans through the "Cover to Cover" grant. AAA staff became certified as Veteran Benefit Specialists and Veteran Service Offers in order to assist veterans, including filing claims with the VA. Having the knowledge of veteran resources and benefits, the AAA has made it possible to connect veterans to VA benefits they were not aware of. For more information visit utadrc.org



Community Partner Spotlight

Utah Legal Services, Inc. (ULS) was organized in 1976 as a non-profit law office and is Utah’s largest civil legal services provider. ULS offers free legal assistance to qualified individuals statewide. ULS has handled the legal problems of seniors for more than 35 years. It has been the legal services provider under Title IIIB of the Older Americans Act for many years to all the Area Agencies on Aging in Utah.

ULS serves the entire state with offices in Salt Lake City, Ogden, Provo and St. George. Specialized units also serve groups with special legal needs including farm workers, American Indians and Senior Citizens. Utah has over 360,000 persons eligible for legal help from ULS. Many of these families live great distances from the Wasatch Front and are dependent upon the outreach programs of ULS.

ULS has a statewide intake system and seniors can call-in Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to speak directly to an advocate about their legal questions. The telephone number is 801-328-8891. The toll-free number (outside S.L. County) is 800-662-4245. Seniors can also visit the ULS website at utahlegalservices.org for information and resources on a wide variety of legal topics.

DAAS would like to thank ULS for the valuable services they provide to our communities and their collaboration on a number of important initiatives. They play a crucial role in the aging community’s effort to serve the most vulnerable in our state, and we extend our sincere appreciation for their service.



Upcoming Events

- 2021 National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) Annual Conference: Nov. 8-10, San Diego, CA; register at: <https://web.cvent.com/event/305f3e39-a9a7-4071-8256-25af06669fe3/summary>
- Medicare Open Enrollment: Oct. 15 - Dec. 7. Local Senior Health Insurance Information Program counselors are available to help - call 800-541-7735.

Medicare Enrollment Events		
Cedar City Oct. 15 th	Beaver Nov. 1 st	Roosevelt Nov. 17 th
Moab Oct. 18 th	Cedar City/Milford Nov. 2 nd	Vernal Nov. 18 th – 19 th
San Juan County Oct. 19 th – 22 nd	Escalante Nov. 3 rd	Huntington Nov. 22 nd
Ferron Oct. 25 th	Kanab Nov. 4 th	Green River/Moab Nov. 23 rd
Castle Dale Oct. 26 th	St. George Nov. 5 th	Emery/Price Nov. 24 th
Price Oct. 27 th	Six County Nov. 8 th – 11 th	Vernal Nov. 29 th – 30 th
East Carbon Oct. 28 th	Duchesne Nov. 15 th	Randolph Dec. 1 st
Vernal Oct. 29 th	Manilla Nov. 16 th	

Division Director

Nels Holmgren
nholmgren@utah.gov
801.538.3921

Older Americans Act

Jacob Murakami
jmurakami@utah.gov
801.538.4641

APS

Nan Mendenhall
nmendenh@utah.gov
801.538.4591

Public Information

Katie England
katieengland@utah.gov
385.228.9616

Legal Services

Developer
Jean Boyack
jboyack@utah.gov
801.538.4263

DAAS Main Line

801.538.3910

Toll Free

1.877.424.4640

To report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult:

Report by Telephone

Monday - Friday
8:00 am - 5:00 pm
1-800-371-7897

Report Online 24/7

daas.utah.gov