

**FY 2020-2021  
SCOPE OF SERVICE**

**ENTRY, ADVOCACY AND OVERSIGHT– APPRISE**

**I. PURPOSE**

Entry, Advocacy and Oversight (EAO) includes information and assistance, outreach services, and APPRISE services. Each CONTRACTOR'S workstatement will specify which of these services are part of CONTRACTOR'S COUNTY AGREEMENT.

**APPRISE Program**

The purpose of the APPRISE Program is to help ensure that Allegheny County's Medicare beneficiaries and other older adults fully understand their health insurance / healthcare benefits and options. The goal is to assist consumers in making informed decisions about what is best for them by providing an objective analysis of their choices.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

In addition to the definitions in Pennsylvania Department of Aging Program Directives (APD) referenced in this Scope of Service, and the definitions in the COUNTY AGREEMENT, the following definitions will be used:

- A. **ACDHS/AAA** – Allegheny County Department of Human Services/Area Agency on Aging: Provides services to adults age sixty (60) and over to help them maintain their independence.
- B. **Allegheny Aging Portal Website:** The Allegheny Aging Portal is a one-stop shop for all Aging related information and/or support. One can access aging related documentation like the ACDHS/AAA Housing Information Guide For Senior Adults, as well as other valuable information.  
<https://allegheny.agingsupportportal.com/Login.aspx>
- C. **Annual AGREEMENT Year Service Day:** A day that the CONTRACTOR is open and offers APPRISE services to the public and submits contract year service days annually to the Allegheny County Department of Human Services Area Agency on Aging (ACDHS/AAA) for verification and validation.
- D. **Annual Provider Planning Document:** An ACDHS/AAA document completed by the EAO CONTRACTOR on an annual basis that informs the ACDHS/AAA of

the CONTRACTOR'S organizational and programmatic changes for the next contract year.

- E. **The APPRISE PROGRAM:** APPRISE is the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) for Pennsylvanians on Medicare. The APPRISE PROGRAM seeks to find ways to work, with targeted associations, organizations, and businesses, using specially trained volunteer counselors to inform, educate, and answer questions for residents of Allegheny County who are enrolled in Medicare. This includes questions about original Medicare, Medicaid, Medigap and managed-care options, long-term-care insurance, eligibility for special financial assistance programs to assist those with low incomes, and about related information and resources.
- F. **Consumer:** Any adult, age 60 or older who is in contact with ACDHS/AAA or an ACDHS/AAA CONTRACTOR and/or who register and participate in services offered through the CONTRACTORS. CONTRACTOR'S particular attention should be given to engaging low income, minority, isolated and/or those with disabilities.
- G. **CONTRACTOR:** An agency, government entity or organization under contract with the ACDHS/AAA which provides services to older adults in the community.
- H. **CONTRACTOR Annual Service Emergency Preparedness Plan:** An annually updated plan outlining emergency operation and emergency closure procedures as specified by ACDHS/AAA.
- I. **CONTRACTOR Annual Validation Process:** An ACDHS/AAA monitoring activity undertaken by the CONTRACTOR and content reviewed by ACDHS/AAA to determine the extent to which the program is in compliance with applicable aging program policies (Pennsylvania Department of Aging, ACDHS/AAA.)
- J. **Informational Events:** Refers to public speaking engagements or informational fairs held or attended, used to promote information about services and/or resources.
- K. **Master Provider Enterprise Repository (MPER):** A repository of key CONTRACTORS' demographic data for all CONTRACTORS who provide services for DHS. DHS applications use MPER to validate AGREEMENT, services, facilities, rate information and document program funded budgets and invoices to facilitate documentation of services rendered and claims information

by CONTRACTORS. CONTRACTORS are required to keep all agency information including but not limited to contacts, facilities and service offering information up to date.

L. **OPTIONS Care Management (CM) Program:** OPTIONS Care Management offers a broad range of CM services tailored to the specific care needs and preferences of older adults who choose to live in their own homes and communities. CM may be offered as either part of a continuum of services or a separate social work service. CM can also be provided to support caregivers of older adults, regardless of program.

M. **Report of Need/RON:** A RON is a formal assessment document developed by Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA) which summarizes the who, what, where, when, and how concerning an allegation of ANEA (abuse, neglect, exploitation, or abandonment). At a minimum, contents should contain the name, age, address, phone number, if statement available, and problem statement, as well as reporter information if given.

N. **Resource Diversification:** A method of obtaining funding or resources for APPRISE from non-ACDHS/AAA funding.

O. **Service Unit:** A Service Unit represents one service provided by an APPRISE CONTRACTOR for a consumer documented in STARS (SHIP Tracking and Reporting System), the Pennsylvania State database for APPRISE services.

### III. AGING PROGRAM DIRECTIVES (APD) / FEDERAL / STATE REGULATORY REFERENCE AND COMPLIANCE:

Organizations providing services outlined in this Scope of Service will comply with all federal and state directives listed below.

The primary source of requirements for the Entry, Advocacy and Oversight – Program Scope of Services are established by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging and may be accessed by visiting the [Pennsylvania Department of Aging / Aging Program Directive webpage](#). From this webpage, select the Program Area link as identified by the middle two numbers in the APD number, or follow the links below:

[Program Area 29 – Other](#)

06-29-03 Minimum Performance Standards for the APPRISE TeleCenters

APPRISE Programs must also adhere to the Volunteer Risk and Program Management (VRPM) policies set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging.



VRPM Document for  
Local Programs-Janua

**Laws:**

[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 \(29 U.S.C. § 794\)](#)

[Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 \(42 U.S.C. § 12101-12213\)](#)

This Scope of Service is subject to change based on changes to the above Directives.

**IV. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

Each contract year the ACDHS/ACDHS/AAA will outline clear standards of acceptable performance to which the CONTRACTOR will be held. These standards relate to compliance with applicable policies, regulatory guidelines, Scopes of Service, Contract workstatements, and Performance Based Contracting (PBC), where applicable. Standards are set to support quality service that meets or exceeds the needs of the consumer, and to optimize the impact of the service provided.

The CONTRACTOR is responsible for adhering to the timelines in reporting its compliance to the Scopes of Service and using findings to build on its strengths and develop strategies on opportunities, through a continuous quality improvement process.

Monitoring tools outlining acceptable evidence are used in evaluating compliance with regulatory requirements, service standards, documentation, and reporting requirements. The monitoring tool applicable to this Scope of Service is:

Allegheny County Department of Human Services  
Area Agency on Aging  
Entry, Advocacy and Oversight – APPRISE Monitoring Tool

The CONTRACTOR is expected to meet the annual benchmarks set by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging under the APPRISE Performance Enhancement Initiative.

## V. SERVICE STANDARDS, REPORTING AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The CONTRACTOR will ensure that all standards and requirements of the APPRISE PROGRAM are met. This includes all aspects of supervision of volunteers/counselors, including recruitment and training.

### A. The APPRISE Program includes:

1. Information and Counseling: Direct provision of information, both verbally and through printed materials, to facilitate understanding Medicare benefits and making informed choices about Medicare and related-coverage options. Counseling includes the provision of assistance and guidance to consumers in accessing needed services, resolving healthcare-coverage problems, Medicare Advantage plan selection, Medicare part D assistance, and, identifying and assisting eligible persons to benefit from special financial assistance programs. Federal funding for the APPRISE program requires that the program provide Medicare Part D assistance to the Medicaid / Medicare enrolled individual with a mental health diagnosis.
2. Community Education: CONTRACTOR initiated contacts with the general public and community information hubs / locations such as senior community centers and libraries performed on an ongoing basis to facilitate: understanding Medicare benefits; making informed choices about Medicare and related-coverage options; resolving healthcare-coverage problems; and, identifying and assisting eligible persons to benefit from special financial assistance programs, application for assistance and outreach to enroll people in low income assistance programs for Medicare premiums and long-term care insurance.
3. Other special initiatives as funded.
4. At a minimum the APPRISE Coordinator agency shall:
  - a. Act as the lead agency for Allegheny County to provide APPRISE PROGRAM services.
  - b. Make efforts to partner with targeted associations, senior community centers, organizations, and businesses to ensure APPRISE consumers fully understand their health insurance/healthcare benefits.
  - c. Facilitate and promote training opportunities for APPRISE counselors.

- d. Determine and plan the appropriate type of counseling / assistance needed.
- e. Provide Consumer Information on:
  - i. Medicare benefits and claim filing
  - ii. Medicaid eligibility, benefits and claim filing
  - iii. Medicare Health Plans and Supplemental Insurance benefits comparison and claim filing
  - iv. Long Term Care Insurance benefits and considerations
  - v. Other types of health insurance / healthcare benefits; and
  - vi. Low-income subsidy options
- f. Perform Counseling Activities including Consumer Protection and Advocacy. This may occur in person as a face-to-face meeting at a counseling location, or be provided in the consumer's home or community, by telephone, or by correspondence (including fax and electronic means). This may include:
  - i. Providing paperwork assistance, as needed, including filling out forms and / or applying for benefits and sorting and filing of paperwork; and
  - ii. Coordinating with, referring to, and recommending other community sources including local, state and federal agencies that may assist in health-insurance / healthcare related matters
- g. Engage in Community Education:
  - i. To improve the public's understanding of the APPRISE PROGRAM and services available
  - ii. To perform publicity and other special efforts to identify and attract potential APPRISE consumers and provide information and assistance on health insurance issues
  - iii. Sponsoring and facilitating, at a minimum, two (2) highly publicized events during the contract year

- iv. Providing six (6) presentations to consumer groups per month on average, within a wide geographic spread of Allegheny County
  - v. Partnering with other health and human service organizations to collaboratively participate in community events, information fairs, presentations etc.
- h. Ensure Accessibility: The APPRISE PROGRAM shall be accessible to the community during normal working hours.

5. TeleCenter: Per the direction of the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, APPRISE will operate the Statewide APPRISE TeleCenter one (1) day per week.

B. Pre-scheduled closings for holidays or other reasons are listed on the schedule presented in the Provider Planning document to the ACDHS/AAA prior to the start of the contract year. The schedule is reviewed by the ACDHS/AAA and approved in a written notification from the ACDHS/AAA to the CONTRACTOR.

All unscheduled closures throughout the year are reported to the EAO Division by the CONTRACTOR via e-mail or by a phone call with a follow-up e-mail. The Division e-mails back acknowledgement of the closure(s) and notifies other ACDHS units as outlined in the Emergency Plan.

1. For weather related closures, the CONTRACTOR notifies the Division via e-mail to the SeniorLine e-mail at [SeniorLine@AlleghenyCounty.US](mailto:SeniorLine@AlleghenyCounty.US) as soon as the decision to close is made.
2. For other unplanned closures, the CONTRACTOR notifies the Division contacts the same day as the closure.
3. For other administrative closures during the contract year the CONTRACTOR notifies the Division contacts as soon as the decision to close is made.

### C. Consumer Service Intake Referrals

Upon identifying an older adult's need for ongoing, in-home services, the CONTRACTOR staff member receives approval from the older adult to make a referral. If such approval is granted, staff e-mail a completed ACDHS/AAA Intake

Referral Form to the SeniorLine e-mailbox at [SeniorLine@alleghenycounty.us](mailto:SeniorLine@alleghenycounty.us) or fax it to 412-350-3091.

D. Reports of Protective Services Need

Upon Identifying possible cases of abuse, neglect, exploitation and abandonment, CONTRACTOR staff contacts ACDHS/AAA Protective Services by calling 412-350-6905 and initiating a Report of Need.

E. ACDHS/AAA OPTIONS Care Management Coordination

CONTRACTOR will work with the ACDHS/AAA during 2020-2021 to develop a collaborative effort with Care Management Agencies to assure consumer access to services and information for 2020-2021.

F. Aging Network and CONTRACTOR Specific Information / Print and or Electronic Formats

Print and / or distribute information on APPRISE and Aging Services through electronic / print media to local agencies, organizations, religious organizations, and other groups; collect and display informational pamphlets / brochures of interest and use to older adults, their families and care givers. Provide aging network and provider specific information on the agency website.

G. Cooperate with ACDHS/AAA and other community entities and organizations in participating / developing initiatives, collaborations, quality standards, pilots and / or programs.

H. Contract Compliance: CONTRACTOR complies with the requirements of the AGREEMENT and this Scope of Service. CONTRACTOR / Agency Level: On an annual basis, the CONTRACTOR submits a Provider Planning document to the ACDHS/AAA. This document presents the CONTRACTOR's organizational and programmatic intentions for a contract year. The ACDHS/AAA reviews the Provider Planning document, meets with the CONTRACTOR as needed and issues a written acceptance of all or part of the Provider Planning document as submitted by the CONTRACTOR, either in the original or revised version.

ACDHS/AAA uses the following to determine compliance to this contract requirement:

- Provider Planning Document must be approved in writing by ACDHS/AAA through the Annual Provider Planning Process.

I. Electronic Information Management

1. The CONTRACTOR has the capacity to receive and send electronic communications. Failure to receive or read ACDHS/AAA communications sent to CONTRACTOR MPER e-mail address in a timely manner does not absolve the CONTRACTOR from knowing, responding to or complying with the content of the communication.
2. CONTRACTOR refers consumers requiring TDD/TTY equipment to the ACDHS/AAA SeniorLine TDD/TTY 412.350.2727.
3. CONTRACTOR uses Aging Web Portal resources as appropriate, using system log-in and password.  
<https://alleggheny.agingsupportportal.com/Login.aspx>
4. The APPRISE CONTRACTOR is responsible for validating consumer service and program data in the appropriate information management system.

J. Annual APPRISE Validation: The CONTRACTOR submits all required documentation, satisfactorily completes validation criteria and any corrective actions noted per ACDHS/AAA process and timeline.

K. Annual Service Emergency Preparedness Plan: CONTRACTOR has and uses a Service Emergency Preparedness Plan that meets the current ACDHS/AAA Criteria.

L. Quality Improvement Initiatives: CONTRACTOR participates in quality initiatives, such as customer satisfaction and program evaluation.

M. Meeting Attendance: CONTRACTOR attends and / or participates in applicable ACDHS/AAA meetings. CONTRACTOR is responsible for content if not able to attend.

N. Resource Diversification

1. CONTRACTOR develops collaborative and current working relationships with other agencies and shares resources and information with other

community agencies both within their designated service area and with the ACDHS/AAA CONTRACTOR network as documented in the annual Validation process.

2. CONTRACTOR allocates additional resources, cash, program income and / or in kind, in support of the APPRISE services per CONTRACTOR submitted annual budget.
- O. CONTRACTOR Staff Training: CONTRACTOR encourages staff to participate in professional development activities and the ACDHS/AAA continues to offer an array of training and educational opportunities through conferences, meetings, webinars and other activities for the CONTRACTOR network. In support of this, CONTRACTOR encourages staff to utilize the opportunity to participate in annual training as time and resources allow in the areas of:
1. Health and Safety
  2. Customer Service
  3. Special needs of consumers with physical and mental disabilities
  4. Marketing strategies to reach diverse and / or isolated older adult populations within communities
  5. Diversity
  6. Confidentiality
  7. Community Resources
  8. Normal and abnormal aging issues
  9. Emergency Plan Preparedness
  10. Other aging related training

These training opportunities can also include ACDHS/AAA training, workshops and conferences.

- P. Quarterly Report: The CONTRACTOR submits a report to ACDHS/AAA for October, January, April and July by the last working day of the following month with the exception of July, in which it is due the end of the second work week.

The report includes:

1. Organizational and/or program (days, times of operation, emergency closures, etc.) changes during the quarter
2. Key staff changes - CEOs, Program Directors, APPRISE Coordinators, Fiscal contacts

3. Other critical organizational and programmatic changes that alter the CONTRACTOR'S approved Annual Provider Planning document

## VI. RESPONSIBILITIES / EXPECTATIONS OF THE PROGRAM OFFICE (AREA AGENCY ON AGING)

- A. The ACDHS/AAA works in a collaborative manner with CONTRACTORS to develop the AGREEMENT Scopes of Services. The ACDHS/AAA provides the interpretation of the Scopes and related technical assistance regarding implementation, performance and accountability.
- B. The ACDHS/AAA reviews and approves CONTRACTOR budgets and budget revisions.
- C. The ACDHS/AAA administers grant funds as funding is available for such purposes.
- D. The ACDHS/AAA serves as a conduit for new or revised local, state or federal policy.
- E. The ACDHS/AAA reviews the APPRISE Service Units and Consumer Counts with CONTRACTORS on a quarterly and annual basis.
- F. The ACDHS/AAA reviews the following reports / information as indicated:  
  
APPRISE Quarterly Reports
- G. On an annual basis, ACDHS/AAA distributes a Planning document to collect CONTRACTOR'S organizational and programmatic intentions for the following contract year. The ACDHS/AAA reviews and approves the CONTRACTOR'S schedule and intentions.
- H. The ACDHS/AAA forwards requests to provide community education via speaking engagements or information fairs to CONTRACTOR.
- I. The ACDHS/AAA reviews the record of CONTRACTOR participation in developing initiatives, collaborations, quality standards, pilots and / or programs.
- J. ACDHS/AAA posts resources on the Aging Web Portal, a system which CONTRACTORS access with a system log-in and password provided by

ACDHS/AAA. Web Portal address is  
<https://allegheny.agingsupportportal.com/Login.aspx>

- K. CONTRACTOR Validation: ACDHS/AAA distributes an Annual Validation Process E-Packet; completes content review of all CONTRACTOR submitted Validation Documentation, distributes a summary of best practices and / or corrective actions and informs CONTRACTOR agencies of their final status.
- L. ACDHS/AAA offers technical assistance / education as appropriate in the CONTRACTOR Quality Improvement Process and the CONTRACTOR Validation Process.
- M. ACDHS/AAA hosts meetings, conference calls, trainings, orientations, conferences, and webinars involving CONTRACTORS.
- N. ACDHS/AAA monitors core services by site visits, data validation and CONTRACTOR reports.
- O. ACDHS/AAA monitors CONTRACTOR attendance and / or involvement at trainings.
- P. ACDHS/AAA meets upon request of the CONTRACTOR to evaluate and plan innovative and creative approaches to APPRISE services.
- Q. ACDHS/AAA is responsible for developing interim policies and procedures that meet Pennsylvania Department of Aging and local requirements arising during the term of the AGREEMENT.
- R. The ACDHS/AAA retains the ability to hold the CONTRACTOR accountable to comply with reporting requests when and however they may emerge.