

<p>Michigan Community</p>  <p>ACTION</p> <p><i>Helping member agencies change lives</i></p>	<p>Michigan Community Action 2173 Commons Pwky Okemos, MI 48864</p> <p>p: 517.321.7500 f: 517.321.7504 michigancommunityaction.org</p> <p>February 2016</p>
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ISSUE BRIEF: Aging in Michigan

Meeting the needs of Michigan's aging population will remain a top issue for policymakers and social services providers. An estimated 24 percent of Michigan's population will be age 60 or more by 2030, a 32 percent increase from 2012, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Seniors as a group need extra help with transportation, health and personal care and housing. Also, 17 percent of Michigan seniors live below the poverty line and may lack adequate food, which leads to health problems such as diabetes, heart disease and obesity. Many pockets of Michigan, especially rural areas, lack medical care and public transportation that can take seniors to medical appointments. Affordable housing is inadequate; demand for low-income senior housing outstrips the supply due to cuts in government subsidies for housing developments. Living independently in a home or apartment is far less costly than nursing home care, thus the need for home- and community-based services.

Community Action Agencies' Role

Michigan's Community Action Agencies recognize the challenges of aging in our modern society. Their programs and services for seniors help to ensure a higher quality of life, and allow aging residents to remain in their homes as long as possible to be near friends, families and other supports. Community Action Agencies provide an array of non-medical services for senior needs that are essential to safe, comfortable independent living, including the following:*

- Adult day care
- In home services
- Respite care for family caregivers
- Nutrition programs (Meals on Wheels, congregate meals, food pantries)
- Help in accessing Medicaid/Medicare
- Free tax preparation assistance
- Affordable senior housing options
- Chore services (yard maintenance, minor repairs)
- Volunteer opportunities in their communities

The Aging & Adult Services Agency (AASA) within the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has primary oversight of programs for older adults. The AASA administers federal funds that finance local programs implemented by Community Action Agencies. Those include the Foster Grandparent program, which gives volunteers age 55 or older a way to stay active by serving children and youth in their communities; and Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance, which provides health benefit information and counseling. Older adults also benefit from Michigan's federally funded Weatherization Assistance Program, which provides free home energy conservation services to low-income homeowners and renters, and saves money for seniors with fixed incomes.

* Programs differ by agency. Contact your local Community Action Agency to find specific aging programs offered.

Funding

CAAs receive funding for senior programs and services from state, federal and local government and private sources. Eligibility varies based on the source, but is generally provided to low-income individuals and families that meet federal poverty guidelines.