

What is the Aging Network? **Fact Sheet**

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The Aging Network is the partnership between federal, state, tribal and local agencies which supports the work of those who provide assistance to all older Americans including American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Elders and their families nationwide. This partnership is the result of the 1965 Older Americans Act (OAA) which established the Administration on Aging (AoA) within the Department of Health and Human Services.

The goal of the Aging Network is to develop plans to meet the needs of Elders at a national, state, and local level to ensure that Elders receive the care they need to remain securely in their homes and community. Agencies within the Aging Network are tasked with implementing such plans to ensure that Elders can age with dignity and independence.

The different types of agencies involved in the Aging Network are:

- **Administration on Aging (AoA):** The AoA was established pursuant to the Act. The AoA is an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is headed by the Assistant Secretary for Aging. The office of American Indians, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians is also housed here.
- **State Units on Aging (SUA):** Each state makes its own plan to show how it will deliver services to Elders. Funding from the federal government is based upon the number of Elders 60 or older in the state. There are 56 SUAs, including all 50 US states and Washington DC.
- **Area Agencies on Aging (AAA):** AAAs were formed by dividing each state by geographic area. These AAAs provide important data to the state about trends and events at the local level. There are 655 AAAs across the country. The AAAs work closely with local service providers who provide care, make meals, drive vans and perform other vital tasks.
- **Title VI Programs:** The need for programs that focused specifically on American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Elders gave rise to the creation of the Title VI Amendment to the OAA in 1978. Presently, 241 eligible Tribal organizations receive grants in support of the delivery of home and community-based supportive services for AI/AN Elders.

The OAA has been changed through reauthorizations several times, adding specific programs for AI/ANs in several of these reauthorizations. The OAA is divided into "titles" that are like chapters in a book, with each title covering a different area of service. The most widely used titles for tribal programs are Title II, establishes the Office for American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian Programs.

Title V, establishes the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which is a community service and work-based job training program for older Americans, NICOA serves as one of 15 national non-profit agencies and operates through an American Indian set aside grant from the Department of Labor; and Title VI, which establishes grants to Native Americans for nutrition services, supportive services, and family caregiver support services. Title III is also important because it provides grants to states for similar services and makes them available to AI/AN Elders statewide.



To access services in the Aging Network, visit: www.TribalFootprints.org, an online directory of local resources available to AI/AN Elders in their own communities. To learn more about the types of services the Aging Network helps to deliver, please visit: NICOA.org/resources.