

Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County

AGING IS SOMETHING WE ALL HAVE IN COMMON

June 17, 2025

Hon. Supervisor David Haubert, President
Hon. Supervisor Lena Tam, Vice-President
Alameda County Board of Supervisors
1221 Oak Street, 5th floor
Oakland, CA 94607

Re: Request for Stabilization Funding for Aging Services

Dear Supervisor Haubert and Supervisor Tam,

The Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County respectfully requests that the Board appropriate \$2 million in one-time stabilization funding in the County's FY 25/26 budget to backfill reductions that the Alameda County Social Services Agency is currently planning to make to 11 programs administered by the Area Agency on Aging.

The current funding allocations for FY 25/26 reflect the sunset of American Rescue Funding Act (ARPA) dollars that was the primary cause of last year's cuts that required Board of Supervisors' intervention to backfill. The requested funding will enable the 23 affected organizations to maintain service capacity and avoid reducing or eliminating services for well over 3,600 low-income older adults who rely on them.

The total planned reduction for 25/26 is \$2.08 million across 11 of the programs administered by the AAA, affecting 23 contracted organizations.¹ The programs represent a wide range of community-based supportive services for older adults, and the funding reductions will cause significant loss of service capacity in a time of high need.

Program	FY26 vs FY25	(Decrease)	# CBOs Impacted
Health Promotion	(\$108,484)	(40%)	2
Information & Assistance	(\$279,309)	(30.7%)	8
Family Caregiver Support Program	(\$454,342)	(30.4%)	10
Transportation	(\$4,417)	(26.9%)	1
Visiting	(\$82,606)	(26.7%)	7
Senior Center Activities	(\$133,096)	(25.9%)	11
Telephone Reassurance	(\$22,647)	(25.5%)	3
Case Management	(\$254,311)	(24.3%)	8
Legal Services	(\$124,072)	(21.2%)	1
Senior Injury Prevention	(\$52,688)	(11.2%)	7
Home-Delivered Nutrition	(\$572,635)	(9%)	6
TOTAL:	(2,088,607)		

¹ The funding details in this letter are based on a spreadsheet that SSA Finance Dept. kindly shared with SSC.

Thanks to SSA's improved processes and communications, this year CBOs were alerted about pending cuts many months in advance, giving them time to plan for a more orderly transition. This does not mean that CBOs will be able to make up for the loss of county funding. The cuts are significant, hitting some CBOs harder than others. The cuts will be especially devastating for organizations that provide multiple programs, and arrive at a time when other funding sources have been cut or are in jeopardy due to federal policy changes. The cuts will result in thousands of clients losing access to services.

While the primary reason for the significant year-over-year reduction in funding for aging services contracts is the ending of American Rescue Plan Act funding, this is not a question of simply returning to pre-pandemic service levels; it is a question of meeting the need.

The number of economically insecure older adults in Alameda County has grown significantly over the last five years.² More older people are at risk now and need the supportive services that AAA-administered programs provide to live safely in the community. In addition, the cost of doing business has risen steeply over the last five years, outpacing the Consumer Price Index rise of 19.9% since 2019.

Local Impacts

SSC has surveyed organizations affected by the pending cuts and has assembled the following snapshot of the impact on service providers and the older adults they serve should the County fail to backfill the cuts:

- In the Tri-Valley, the 9.3% cut to Stanford Hospital's meal prep contract will eliminate 7,000 meals, and Spectrum Community Services estimates that 150 clients will be cut from five meals per week to 2-3 meals per week, harming clients identified as high need who should be receiving two meals a day. The reduction in the number of deliveries will reduce the number of wellness checks, putting clients at greater risk. (Impacting Districts 1 & 2)
- Also at Spectrum Community Services, the cuts will reduce the number of Fall Prevention classes that meet 2-3 days per week from 13 to 8. As a result, up to 125 seniors each quarter will have no access to the education, exercise and group support that is so effective in preventing falls. (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5)
- At the Afghan Elderly Association, cuts will force staff reductions and significant loss of services to the 400 Afghan seniors who rely on cultural and language appropriate information & assistance, injury prevention, telephone reassurance and visiting programs. (Districts 1 & 2)
- At City of Fremont the cuts represent 30% of funding and will result in a severe reduction in services to the low-income, often vulnerable older adults with complex health needs who

² The number of Alameda County residents age 65+ grew from 204,503 in 2017 to 246,841 in 2023, and the number of people living below 100% Federal Poverty Level grew from 19,201 (9.4%) in 2017 to 29,488 (12%) in 2023. American Community Survey 2017 and 2023.

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rely on case management, senior center services, information & assistance, and family caregiver support. (Districts 1 & 2)

- At a Family Bridges, the cuts represent a 58% reduction in funding for I&A, and will mean 1,740 monolingual, low-income Asian seniors will not have access to Information and Assistance services. In addition, 232 monolingual, low-income Asian seniors will not have access to Senior Center Activities, and 50 socially-isolated, monolingual, low-income Asian seniors will not receive Friendly Visiting services (1,450 fewer visiting hours). (Districts 3 & 4)
- At Vietnamese American Community Center of the East Bay, the 37.9% cut to I&A will necessitate reducing the staff who provide help to hundreds of Vietnamese, Chinese, and Spanish-speaking monolingual clients, compromising their ability to access and maintain public benefits and health coverage. The 26% cut to Senior Center Activities will reduce the number of days that the senior community room provides services – from three days per week to two days per week. (Districts 3 & 4)
- At the Unity Council's Fruitvale/San Antonio Senior Center, the cuts will reduce staff and service hours, and 51 seniors who are monolingual, low-income and often living alone will lose access to hot meals, bilingual assistance with benefits applications, information and referrals, culturally tailored wellness activities and social connection. (Districts 3 & 4)
- At SOS Meals On Wheels, the cuts will widen an existing gap in funding for all eligible homebound seniors. SOS could be forced to reduce service levels to only those covered by AAA contracts, resulting in an estimated 450 home-bound elders losing their meals-on-wheels service. SOS will not have the capacity to serve new clients or respond to the needs of increasing numbers of food insecure, homebound seniors. (Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5)
- At J-Sei, reductions in funding will create a critical gap in support for over 725 elderly Japanese Americans. 426 fewer Case Management hours will compromise care coordination and benefits assistance; the loss of 185 Friendly Visitor hours means that extremely isolated seniors will be visited less frequently; 727 fewer senior center hours will affect seniors who rely on health and wellness classes and cultural activities; 2,300 fewer culturally appropriate meals will put home-bound seniors at risk. (Districts 3 & 5)
- At DayBreak, cuts will force reductions in case management staff that will mean turning away 40 elders who need help to navigate crises and regain stability. The cuts will also result in a 40% reduction in support services for family caregivers, and resulting staff turnover will further compromise the organization's ability to serve clients in need. (Districts 2, 3, 4 & 5)

Conclusion

Without intervention, the county will lose service capacity that is needed to meet demand, and that will be costly to replace. The services provided by CBOs are a necessary part of the equation in helping older adults live stably in the community. They complement medical care, decrease 911 calls, help seniors maintain health and economic stability, provide life-line interventions, and prevent displacement, institutionalization, and homelessness. These

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programs are the community-based supportive services that APS and other county programs, health plans and hospitals coordinate with and refer seniors to.

We know that the Board of Supervisors recognizes that the County has a stake in keeping our growing population of low-income seniors stable and safe. On behalf of the 40+ members of the Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County, I urge the Board to support this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy Peterson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "W" and "P".

Wendy Peterson

Director, Senior Services Coalition of Alameda County

CC: Supervisor Nate Miley; Supervisor Elisa Márquez; Supervisor Nicki Fortunato Bas; Director Andrea Ford