



## Memorandum

To: AAA Directors

From: Patty Ducayet, State Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Subject: Title VII COVID-19 Ombudsman Funding Allocation

Date: May 8, 2020

You have received a Notice of Funding Award for Title VII COVID-19 Ombudsman funds. Using the FY2020 allocation formula described in rule, \$1 million was allocated according to [26 TAC §88.105\(b\)\(1\)\(B\)](#). In accordance with the CARES Act, these funds must be expended on ombudsman services to prevent, prepare for, and respond to Coronavirus. Funds must be expended on allowable activities and purchases. This is awarded to a host agency, as defined in Title 26 of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Part 1, Chapter 88, relating to the State Long-term Care Ombudsman Program, for the operation of a local ombudsman entity, as defined in the same chapter. COVID-19 Ombudsman funds must be expended no later than September 30, 2021.

### Guidance from the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL)

On April 17, 2020, ACL released a frequently asked questions document, "[LTC OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM-FISCAL AND PROGRAMMATIC FAQs, The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act \(CARES ACT\)](#)". In the document, ACL included a list of allowable expenditures, which are described immediately below.

"Below are examples of COVID-19 specific use of funds for consideration; these do not replace existing fiscal requirements.



- Purchase of equipment and associated technologies that will allow for remote work and enhance Ombudsman presence in facilities while they cannot physically visit during to COVID crisis.
- This may include reimbursement of expenses related to remote work; such as
  - purchase of laptops,
  - smart phones,
  - electronic tablets,
  - iPads, and
  - similar products including:
    - Software to facilitate video conferencing and virtual meetings; and
    - Purchase of hardware and software to develop equipment lending libraries to facilitate resident complaint handling and development of virtual resident and family councils.
  - Costs associated with community outreach including, advertising, postage, printing of brochures and similar educational materials.
  - Paying for staff extended hours, or hiring of additional staff, including associated personnel costs. Note: this funding is time-limited.
  - Training costs related to COVID-19 including additional costs associated with advertising, recruiting, certifying or providing continuing education (both remote and in-person) to current and prospective representatives of the Office.
  - Funds for travel once personal visits to facilities resume.
  - Acquiring personal protection equipment and supplies for program use, as appropriate, once in-person visits resume.”

Purchases substantially similar to the examples above are allowable. If a host agency has questions about the appropriateness of an expense, a staff member of the agency is encouraged to submit a question via email to Patty Ducayet at [patty.ducayet@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:patty.ducayet@hhsc.state.tx.us). A purchase of any capital expense or a controlled asset purchase greater than \$500 requires prior HHSC approval using the CE/CA request form.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Patty Ducayet at 512-438-4356 or 737-704-9075 or [Patty.Ducayet@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:Patty.Ducayet@hhsc.state.tx.us).