

From: [DADS Help-AAA](#)
To: [DL HHSC AES - OAAA - AAA Directors \(O365\)](#); [DL HHSC AES - OAAA - AAA Executive Directors \(O365\)](#)
Cc: [DADS Help-AAA](#)
Subject: HHSC Access and Eligibility Services AAA COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions
Date: Friday, March 20, 2020 12:27:00 PM
Attachments: [AES AAA COVID-19 FAQ.pdf](#)
[Emergency Plan - OAA Programs Impact Template.docx](#)

The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) is working closely with the Office of the Governor, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) and additional state agencies to ensure Texans have the information and guidance they need to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

HHSC Access and Eligibility Services (AES) appreciates the questions submitted from the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and would like to share the attached COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document. This document includes important information about the COVID-19 virus and its impact on Older Americans Act (OAA) programs. In developing this document, HHSC has relied on guidance from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) to offer the greatest flexibility possible in meeting the needs of older Texans across the state. These responses are based on the most recent information available and will be updated as new guidance is provided and to address new inquiries from AAAs.

To allow AAAs and providers to focus on COVID-19 activities, the Home Delivered Meals 2020 Pilot project is being delayed. The requirements under the Pilot to enter meals using sub-services (effective February 3) and to complete a Determination of Type of Meal (effective April 1) are also delayed. AAAs may continue to enter meals using sub-services (hot, chilled, frozen or shelf-stable) if they choose to eliminate the need to prepare new rosters. AAAs may also choose to enter meals without sub-services.

AES has received several questions regarding flexible delivery options for congregate meal providers. Based on [guidance](#) provided by ACL on March 12, 2020, it has been determined meals that are delivered or consumed in the home cannot be paid for by Title III C-1 (congregate) funds. Title III C-1 funds are for meals which are designed to be consumed in congregate settings. Shelf-stable, frozen, grab and go, drive-up, and drive-through meals may be paid for from Title III C-2 (home delivered) funds if program requirements are met. Additional details regarding this can be found in the COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions document.

To address immediate needs due to congregate meal site closures and ensure AAAs and meal providers can continue to meet the nutrition needs of vulnerable Texans, AES is implementing waivers for the following requirements:

- Time of day for meal delivery
 - The requirement to deliver HDMs between 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. is waived.
- Delivery of one hot meal five days a week
 - Hot, chilled, frozen or shelf-stable meals (or a combination of types of meals) may be delivered.
 - Multiple meals may be delivered at one time. A minimum of five

meals a week must be provided, regardless of the types of meals delivered, however, meal providers may deliver multiple meals at least once a week or once every two weeks during the emergency period.

- Socialization contacts
 - Socialization contacts for people who receive a delivery of meals fewer than three times a week may be completed by phone, text, email or Skype. A person may opt out of socialization contacts if that choice is documented in the person's file.
- Volunteer training
 - Training requirements for volunteers are reduced.

During this time, it is critical that stakeholders continue to ensure adequate staffing, provide required services, and protect vulnerable Texans. AES intends to communicate regularly with our partners to ensure continuity of service.

To ensure AES has up-to-date information regarding the local impact and can track the impact of COVID-19 on OAA programs, each AAA must:

- Complete and submit the attached Emergency Plan – OAA Programs Impact Template to the Help Desk; and
- Upload your current emergency or contingency planning documents to the secured FTP site.

Please submit these documents no later than Monday, March 23, 2020, at 4 p.m.

We encourage all stakeholders to stay safe during this critical time and follow the precautions found on the [DSHS website](#), and on DSHS's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram at @TexasDSHS. Additional information is also available on the CDC's website at cdc.gov/coronavirus.

-AAA Help Desk-

HHSC - Access & Eligibility Services (AES)
Office of Area Agencies on Aging
aaa.help@hhsc.state.tx.us