



# SeniorAge Area Agency on Aging **WHO WE ARE**





SeniorAge Area Agency on Aging is a mission-led, not-for-profit Area Agency on Aging serving 17 counties in southwest Missouri including Barry, Christian, Dade, Dallas, Douglas, Greene, Howell, Lawrence, Oregon, Ozark, Polk, Shannon, Stone, Taney, Texas, Webster, and Wright.

The Older Americans Act (OAA)  
In 1965, this national act established helpful services for seniors and their families under the Administration on Aging.

The Aging Services Network  
The Administration on Aging sends OAA funding to State Agencies on Aging. Funds are then distributed to the regional Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) within each state.

AAAs are the stewards for initiating and maintaining OAA programs. There are 10 AAAs in Missouri. SeniorAge is one of them. Each AAA is closely monitored by strict federal and state authority.

### *Our Mission*

Working together.  
Finding options.  
Bettering lives.

### *Our Vision*

Opportunities, answers,  
and freedoms for all seniors.



## Who we are and how we got here.

In March 2016, Southwest Missouri Office on Aging officially became SeniorAge Area Agency on Aging. This fresh rebranding of our name has helped people more easily understand who we are and who we serve. It is easy to say, easy to explain, and easy to remember.

When rebranding, we kept the word “age” in our title. We don’t believe age is something to be ashamed of. “Age” is something every person is—whether it is child age, teenage, driving age, voting age, or senior age.

Because of this, we have cast a new image of celebration in who we are, who we are becoming, and where we are going on life’s journeys with you. We are SeniorAge!



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# A Complex Challenge

The goal set for Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) by the Older Americans Act is clear: develop a comprehensive network of services that work together to encourage optimal health and independence for seniors. Because the range of capabilities among seniors varies, this is a complex challenge. At one extreme, a senior may be in excellent health without any challenges to independence. At the other extreme, a senior may be very frail and require significant help. In between these two extremes are diverse economic, social, and medical conditions.

An older person may need help from others. Many have family, friends, and neighbors to provide this help. But some seniors don't have an informal network of help and must increasingly draw upon support from the larger community. This support may include a hot meal enjoyed with friends in a senior center dining room and transportation to the doctor or, if more help is needed, meals delivered to the home and housekeeper visits.

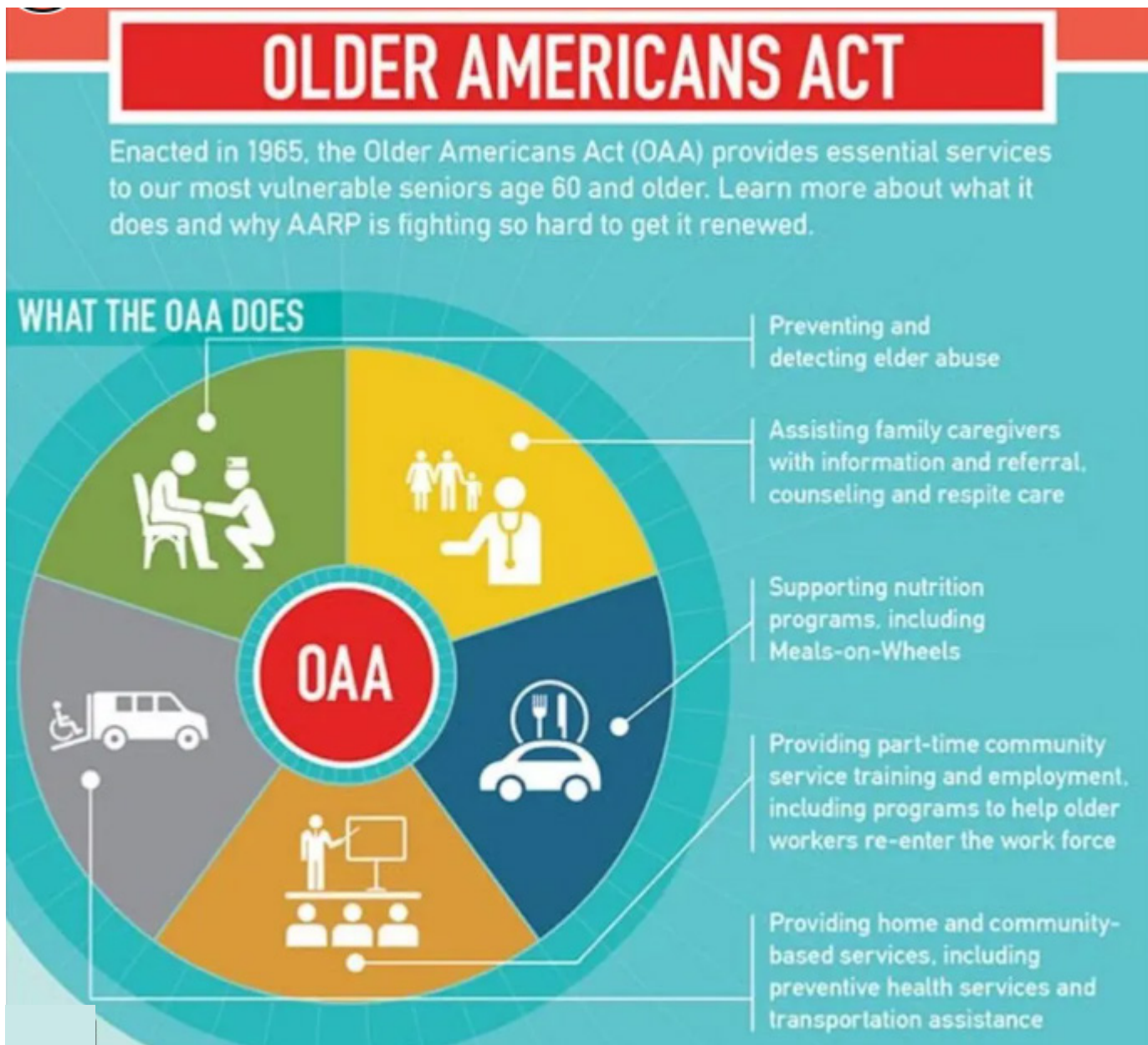
The strength of SeniorAge Area Agency on Aging is our ability to match services to individual needs. This is the calling of an Area Agency on Aging.





# We Are Part of a National ‘AAA Family’

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) launched the Administration on Aging (AoA) in 1965 with the passage of the Older Americans Act. In 2012, the AoA became part of HHS’ new Administration for Community Living (ACL). ACL brings together AoA, AIDD, and HHS office on Disability. There are over 620 Area Agencies on Aging across the United States and over 250 tribal organizations. When seniors need help within their own communities, AAAs are the first call. We encourage, coordinate, and deliver community-based services that link local, public, private, voluntary, and corporate resources. We also monitor the performance of all services funded by the federal Older Americans Act (OAA) within our territory.



# We Are Part of a Missouri ‘AAA Family’

Missouri’s State Unit on Aging is DHSS. They oversee Missouri’s 10 AAAs. SeniorAge serves Region I which includes 10,000 square miles of 17 counties in southwest Missouri.

The Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging (ma4) is the collective voice for all 10 AAAs in our state. Ma4 hosts a state-wide senior conference each year called The Summit on Aging and Health.



## How We Are Funded

**Federal Older Americans Act funds are distributed three times:**

- The federal ACL allocates funds to each State Unit on Aging (SUA) using an interstate funding formula. (The Department of Health and Senior Services is Missouri’s State Unit on Aging.)
- State Units on Aging then distribute the funds to the Area Agency on Aging divisions within their state, using an intrastate funding formula. These formulas are based on senior census, economic need, and other factors.
- Area Agencies on Aging then distribute funding across their local programs and services, wherever gaps are identified. Besides federal Older Americans Act funds, Missouri’s Area Agencies on Aging receive additional funds from:
  - Missouri General Revenue
  - USDA Cash and Commodities
  - County Senior Citizens’ Services Funds
  - Individual, Local, and Federal Grants
  - Social Service Block Grants
  - Missouri Medicaid
  - Customer Contributions
  - Local Donations



# Our Funding and Performance is Under Watchful Care

Every Area Agency on Aging writes an area plan and submits it to their State Unit on Aging. If it is approved, the state and the AAA enter into a contract. Under that contract, the AAA provides Older Americans Act services compliant with all regulations.

Missouri’s State Unit on Aging, the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), monitors our performance through monthly financial and performance reports, and they conduct extensive annual financial and management audits to ensure we meet all federal or state regulations and good stewardship.

Public hearings, annual reports, local advisory councils, and governing boards add public scrutiny to track success in meeting the challenges and responsibilities within our mission.

## Our Organizational Structure

Eight of Missouri’s Area Agencies on Aging, including SeniorAge, are mission-led 501(c)3 corporations under a governing board of directors. Two Missouri AAAs have other forms of government: Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), based in Kansas City, is part of a Council of Governments; and the St. Louis AAA is operated by the City of St. Louis.

SeniorAge’s policy is established by a 12-member Board of Directors. Each member is democratically elected from one of our six regions comprised of 17 counties. This board sets all policies, and evaluates performance. Our board members are elected for three-year terms and may serve as many times as they are elected.

No more than three board members shall be under the age of 60. Staggered terms assure that we maintain a core of experienced members.

Region 1 Dallas, Polk, Webster	Region 4 Ozark, Stone, Taney
Region 2 Barry, Dade, Lawrence	Region 5 Douglas, Texas, Wright
Region 3 Christian, Greene	Region 6 Howell, Oregon, Shannon

An Advisory Council is appointed by our Board of Directors, in compliance with federal regulations. This council submits recommendations to the board. A diverse group of consumers, service providers, elected officials, and minorities may serve on this board.

The administration and management of our Area Agency on Aging is the responsibility of our Chief Executive Officer. Our co-CEOs are directly responsible to the Board of Directors for all programs.

SeniorAge currently provides services through 34 Senior Centers and one customer service site in Springfield. We also provide service in other community locations and gatherings.

The majority of our Senior Centers are “direct service sites.” We provide the employees and direct payment of operational expenses for these centers. A few of our Senior Centers are “grant contract sites.” We provide a grant to an oversight organization who is responsible for operations and grant deliverables. In addition to direct employees and contract partners, our organizational structure relies heavily on a network of extraordinary volunteers who make many of our services possible.

## **Our Area Plan**

It takes good planning to develop and coordinate the right senior services for our communities. During each area plan cycle, we redefine the current needs of our communities, and identify resources and gaps in meeting those needs. Based on this study, we prepare an Area Plan, detailing needs, how funds will be allocated cost-effectively to meet needs, and how gaps will be bridged with quality care.

In developing our plan, we are careful to work with community service partners to effectively meet needs and avoid duplication. These coalitions inspire creative ways to meet identified needs.



# We Follow Through with Service



To fulfill area plans, Area Agencies on Aging sometimes develop new services. For those programs, we must find financial and staff support, train staff, coordinate with existing programs, and educate the community about the new service.

To be good stewards of resources, we offer services two ways. Our own employees and volunteers provide some direct services, like information and assistance, nutrition, and care coordination. We provide other contract services through community providers. These contract services include in-home personal care, respite, foot care clinics, light housekeeping, and transportation.

Community providers may offer proposals for our contract services through Request for Proposals (RFPs) or Request for Qualification (RFQs). Our governing Board assesses who can best deliver efficient, quality service, then SeniorAge closely monitors the performance of each contract partner through site visits, audits, reports, and customer satisfaction surveys.

Most of our Older Americans Act programs are considered *alternative services* because they are designed to give seniors alternate choices to institutional care—choices that help them remain independent. For seniors already in long-term-care facilities, we provide the nursing home ombudsman program. Trained individuals in this program (contracted through the Council of Churches), help resolve concerns residents have with care.

## Who Can Access Our Services?

We primarily serve seniors age 60+ and their caregivers. Seniors qualify for our services on the basis of need, not income. Those who receive our help have the opportunity to contribute toward the cost of their services. This opportunity to contribute is required under the Older Americans Act; however, services are not affected by whether or not contributions are received. All contributions are voluntary and confidential.

Some programs have special qualifications. To participate in our meal program, a person must be 60+, or be the spouse of a person 60+. The Senior Community Service Employment Programs (SCSEP) accept persons 55 or older who meet income guidelines. Several of our supplemental grants serve all ages—like our Affordable Health Care Navigator grant which provides assistance with enrollment in Marketplace insurance.

# A Solid Team: SeniorAge and Senior Center Boards

During the early 1980s, the SeniorAge Board of Directors made a standing commitment to help senior organizations achieve local ownership of activity centers. This would guarantee a future for senior centers, even if our funding ceased.

To fulfill this commitment, SeniorAge began encouraging senior boards to purchase senior center activity buildings, with the assurance that we would then rent or lease the building from them for services. The income from our rent or lease payments has helped senior communities successfully work toward debt-free ownership of their buildings. Once facilities are debt free, we maintain services for a nominal lease consideration. We also continue assistance with utility expenses. Our Senior Centers are generally open from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and they are managed by an employee of SeniorAge or contract employee.

Center Administrators are responsible for developing and organizing activities, programs, and services to benefit community seniors. The administrator also develops resources and recruits volunteers within the community to meet local needs.

Senior Center Boards work with SeniorAge in many ways to determine what services are needed and how to best deliver them to the local community. Through their efforts, they add senior programs and services that SeniorAge cannot fund; they fundraise to help support the expenses of operating a senior center. Many own their own building and serve as the leasing manager.

SeniorAge employees and local senior boards need good lines of communication to assure the most effective outreach to seniors within the community. To maintain a balance of power, neither has authority over the other. SeniorAge and local senior center boards are separate 501(c)3s. SeniorAge works with each facility through a lease arrangement.





# Remember When?



# How We Got Here ... A Legislative Timeline

Although Social Security was enacted in 1935, further help for older persons was slow in following.

In the late 1950s, national leaders realized decreasing birth rates and increasing life expectancy would transform American society. In 1900 only one in 20 Americans was 65 years or above, but the count would be one in eight by 2000 and it is expected to be nearly 1 in 5 by 2025.

In response to this big picture, the first White House Conference on Aging called for community alternatives to institutional care. Congress unanimously passed the Older Americans Act in 1965 to empower this initiative.

Following are the highlights that led to the passage of the OAA, and the national and state progress made since its appearance: (Missouri highlights in red)

**1920 Civil Service Retirement Act** is passed for government employees.

**1935 Social Security Act** becomes law; includes Old Age Assistance, Aid to the Blind, the Permanently Disabled, and Dependent Children.

**1937 Railroad Retirement Act** provides pensions for retired railroad employees and spouses.

**1950** First National Conference on Aging under Truman elevates aging issues to national recognition.

**1952** Federal Council on Aging created by President Eisenhower; first-time federal funds are appropriated for social service programs for older persons under the Social Security Act.

**1956 Special Staff on Aging** is established within the Office of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), to coordinate responsibilities for aging.

**1958** Legislation calls for a **White House Conference on Aging**.

**1959 Housing Act** authorizes a low-interest loan program for non-profit senior rental projects, and lowers eligibility age to 62 for women in low-income public housing.



**1960** Social Security Administration eliminates age 50 as the minimum age for disability benefits, and makes the retirement test and full-insured status more liberal.

**1961 1st White House Conference on Aging** establishes the precedent of a conference every 10 years, sponsored by the President. Conferences serve to promote the dignity, health, and economic security of senior Americans. 1961 was the best known of all White House conferences.

Social Security amendments lower the retirement age for men from 65 to 62, broaden the retirement test, increase minimum benefits, and increase benefits to aged widows.

**1962** Legislation establishes an independent and permanent **U.S. Commission on Aging**.

**1965 Older Americans Act** is signed into law; State Units on Aging are created; the Administration on Aging (AoA) is established within Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW).

**Medicare**, Title 18 of the Social Security Act, passes to provide older adults affordable health care; **Medicaid**, Title 19 of the Social Security Act, passes to provide a health insurance program for low-income persons.

**1967** OAA is extended for two years; the **Age Discrimination Act** is signed into law.

AoA moves into newly created **Social and Rehabilitative Service Agency**.

**1969** OAA amendments provide funds for model projects, **Foster Grandparents**, and **Retired Senior Volunteer Programs** (RSVP).

**1971** 2nd White House Conference on Aging.

**1972** A new **Title VII** is created under the OAA, authorizing funds for a national nutrition program for the elderly.

Medicare eligibility extends to people with disabilities and end-stage renal disease.

**1973** OAA **Comprehensive Services Amendment** establishes AAAs.

**New Title V** is created under OAA, authorizing grants for multi-purpose senior centers.

**Community Service Employment grants** are created for low-income persons age 55 and above; Comprehensive Employment and Training Act expands to include older persons.

**1974 Title XX** of the Social Security Amendments authorizes grants to states for protective senior services, homemaker, transportation, adult daycare, employment training, information and referral, nutrition assistance, and health support.

OAA amendments add **transportation** under Title III model projects.

**The Housing and Community Development Act** provides for low-income housing for seniors and persons with disability.

**National Institute on Aging** created to conduct research and training related to the aging process, including diseases and problems of an aging population.

Title V of the Farm and Rural Housing Program of 1949 expands to include the rural elderly as a focus group.

**1974-1975** National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A) was organized.

**The Missouri Housing Tax Credit was established.**

**1975** OAA amendments authorize grants under Title III to tribal organizations. Access, in-home care, and legal services are mandated as OAA priorities.

**1976** First n4a Conference.

**1977** OAA amendments require changes in Title VII nutrition programs, primarily related to the availability of surplus commodities through the Department of Agriculture.

**Missouri sales tax on pharmaceuticals was deleted, in part due to Missouri Silver-Haired Legislature efforts.**

**1978** OAA amendments consolidate Title III AAA administration and social services, Title VII nutrition services, and Title V multi-purpose senior centers into a new Title III.

**Congregate Housing Services Act** authorizes contracts with local public housing agencies and non-profit corporations, to provide congregate independent living programs.

OAA amendments require each state to establish a **long-term care ombudsman program** to serve nursing home residents.

**1979 Education splits from U.S. Dept of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) and becomes a separate Department of Education (ED). HEW is renamed the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).**



**1981** 3rd White House Conference on Aging. OAA reauthorized with emphasis on supportive services to help older persons remain independent in the community.

AAAs granted multi-year planning cycles under Area Plans.

OAA expands ombudsman coverage to “board and care” homes.

**1983** Missouri Silver-Haired Legislature was incorporated and the governing board for SeniorAge was expanded to 17 members.

**1984** OAA is reauthorized, clarifying and reaffirming the roles of States and Area Agencies on Aging in coordinating community-based services, and in maintaining accountability for the funding of national priority services.

**Alzheimer's** and other neurological and organic brain disorders receive special project emphasis.

**1987 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act** provides nursing home reform in the areas of nurse aide training, survey and certification procedures, pre-admission screening, and annual reviews for persons with mental illness.

This act also mandates **direct and immediate access to ombudsmen volunteers** for nursing home residents when protection and advocacy is needed.

States are charged to guarantee ombudsman access to facilities and patient records; state Ombudsmen are authorized to designate local ombudsman programs; adequate legal counsel is required for ombudsman programs. AAAs granted multi-year planning cycles under Area Plans.

OAA is reauthorized with distinct appropriations for six more services: in-home services; long-term care ombudsman; health education and promotion; prevention of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation; outreach activities for persons who may be eligible for benefits under supplemental security income (SSI), Medicaid, and food stamps; and assistance for special needs.

Emphasis is given to serving those in the greatest economic and social need, including low-income minorities.

**1989** Senior Citizens Services fund County Mill Tax made available for Missouri county votes under House Bill 351.

**1990 National Affordable Housing Act** reauthorizes HUD Elderly Housing Program and provides for supportive service demonstrations.

**Americans with Disabilities Act** extends protection from discrimination in employment and public accommodations to persons with disabilities.

**Age Discrimination in Employment Act** makes discrimination against older workers with regard to employee benefits illegal, in most cases.

**Lawrence County passes the first County Tax initiative.**

**1992** OAA is reauthorized with **increased focus on caregivers**, intergenerational programs, and protection of elder rights.

Commissioner on Aging is elevated to **Assistant Secretary for Aging**.

OAA amendments add a new Title VII Vulnerable Elder Rights Activities which includes the long-term care ombudsman; prevention of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation; elder rights and legal assistance development; and benefits outreach, counseling, and assistance programs. Legislation emphasizes the value of coordinating all four programs.

OAA amendments highlight the role of local ombudsman programs.

**1993** Fernando M. Torres-Gil sworn in as the first Assistant Secretary for Aging in the Department of Health and Human Services.

**1995** 4th White House Conference on Aging; 30th anniversaries of Older Americans Act, Medicare, Medicaid, and the Foster Grandparent Program.

**1996** OAA funding cut by 5%.

**1997** OAA expires; AAAs begin a history of operating under continuing resolutions.

**1999** International Year of Older Persons: A Society for All Ages.

**2000** OAA is reauthorized with the creation of the National Family Caregiver Program.

**2001 — Creation of Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services to provide social services to the elderly and disabled adults through a variety of in-home support services, and direct and protective services.**

**2002 — Missouri's State Pharmacy Assistance Program (MoRx) is created by the 93rd Missouri General Assembly to provide prescription drug assistance to Missourians.**

**2005** 5th White House Conference on Aging; Nationa Council on Aging Falls Free Initiative.

**2006** OAA is reauthorized for five years with amendments that provide flexibility to states to customize programs to meet the needs of their seniors. Other amendments call for evidenced- based prevention programs and self-directed programs.

Medicare benefits expand to provide **Medicare D** to prescription drug coverage.

**2007** Summit on Global Aging.

**2009 — Missouri General Revenue Core Budget for Missouri AAAs cut by \$3 million.**

**2010 — Affordable Care Act enacted.**

**2011** National Alzheimer's Project Act signed into law.

**2012 — Creation of Administration on Community Living - bringing together the Administration on Aging, Office of Disability, and Administration on Development Disabilities.**

**2014 — ma4 (Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging) is the first AAA to be awarded a federal Affordable Health Care Navigator Grant.**

**2015** 6th White House Conference on Aging.

**2019 — Missouri passes Senior Growth and Development, funded out of insurance premium revenue.**





# Reviewing the Older Americans Act

Today the Older Americans Act is considered to be the major vehicle for the organization and delivery of services to seniors and their caregivers.

## The Older Americans Act (OAA) is sectioned into Seven “Titles”

### Title I — Declaration of Objectives: Definitions

**Sec. 101.** In keeping with the traditional American concept of the inherent dignity of the individual in our democratic society, the older people of our Nation are entitled to the full and free enjoyment of the following objectives:

- Adequate income in retirement for the American standard of living.
- The best possible physical and mental health which science can make available and without regard to economic status.
- Suitable housing, independently selected, designed and located with reference to special needs, and available at costs which seniors can afford.
- Full restorative services for those who require institutional care, and a comprehensive array of community-based, long-term care services adequate to appropriately sustain older people in their communities and in their homes. [This includes] support to family members and other persons providing voluntary care to older individuals needing long-term care services.
- Opportunity for employment with no discriminatory personnel practices because of age.
- Retirement in health, honor, and dignity after years of contribution to the economy.
- Participatory activity within the widest range of civic, cultural, educational, training, and recreational opportunities.
- Efficient community services with emphasis on a continuum of care for vulnerable seniors, including: low-cost transportation, choice in supported living arrangements, and coordinated social assistance – readily available when needed.
- Immediate benefit from proven research which can sustain and improve health and happiness.
- Freedom, independence, and the free exercise of individual initiative in planning and managing their own lives; full participation in the planning and operation of community-based services provided for their benefit, and protection against abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

## Title II: Administration on Aging (AoA)

Establishes the U.S. Administration on Aging (within the Department of Health Education and Welfare and later renamed the Department of Health and Human Services), the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs, and the Federal Council on Aging.

## Title III: Grants for State and Community Programs

Provides grants to State Units on Aging for programs including:

**III B Programs:** Supportive Services Information & Assistance, Transportation, In-Home, Case Management, Public Information & Education, Legal Services, Recreation

**III C1 Programs:** Congregate (Group) Nutrition

**III C2 Programs:** Home-Delivered Meals

**III D Programs:** Disease Prevention Health Screening and Medication Management

**III E Programs:** Family Caregiver Services Information, Education, Assistance, Care Coordination, Individual Counseling, Adult Day Care, Respite, Durable Medical, Minor Home Modification, Utility Assistance.





## **Title IV: Training, Discretionary Projects**

Funds training, research, and career preparation for the field of aging; projects for the protection of elders; health care projects in rural areas; computer training; technical assistance to improve transportation for seniors; multi-generational activity projects; Native American programs; multi-service centers; senior legal assistance projects.

## **Title V: Community Service Employment for Older Americans**

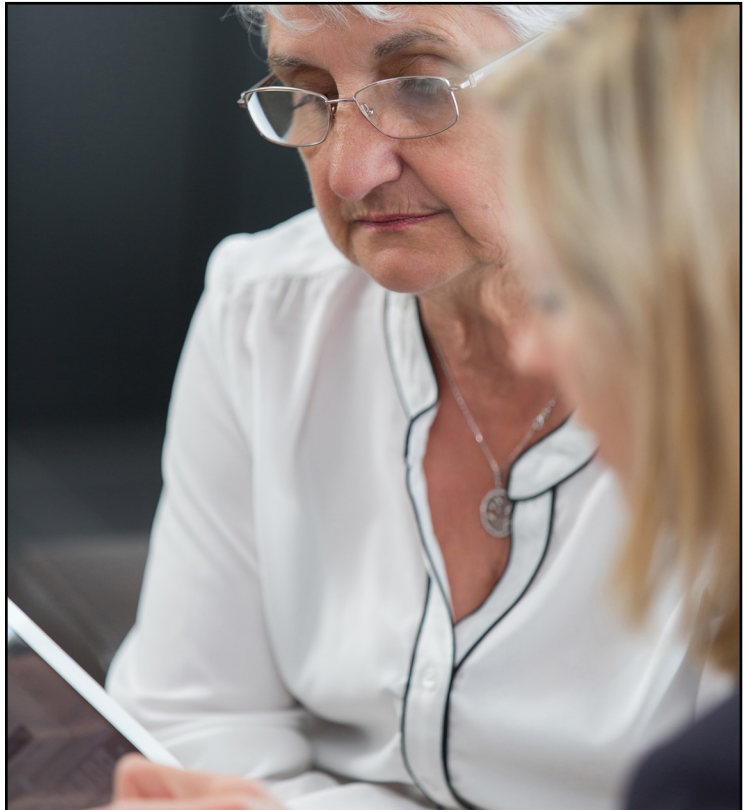
Funds programs for unemployed, low-income persons 55+.

## **Title VI: Grants for Native Americans**

Provides grants for social, nutritional, and caregiver support services for older Native Americans.

## **Title VII: Grants for Vulnerable Elder Rights Protection Activities**

Includes ombudsman programs, prevention of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation, and legal assistance programs.





# Understanding the Older Americans Act

## **It belongs to us all.**

This act has strong support from all political parties and all generations.

## **It extends independence.**

It funds home-delivered and Senior Center dining room meals, multi-purpose activity centers, elder abuse prevention, transportation, light housekeeping assistance, senior employment, adult day care, and outreach to minority and rural populations.

## **It helps families stay together.**

OAA programs help seniors stay healthy and active in their communities and families through options for independence.

## **It saves taxpayers money.**

OAA community programs meet local senior needs, often through the cost-efficient support of volunteers. Federal OAA funds are strengthened by state and local support and contributions. Keeping seniors healthy and independent through OAA services drastically reduces the amount of tax dollars spent on Medicare/Medicaid institutional care.

## **It inspires volunteerism.**

Volunteers make so much more possible! They deliver home meals to frail elderly, drive seniors to doctor visits, prepare taxes, and help activity centers thrive.

## **It braves challenges.**

More of us are older and more of us are living longer. The fastest growing age group is 85+. Since 1980, OAA programs have lost 40 percent of their capacity because of increased costs, increased service population, and reduced funding. The waiting list for services is growing.



# SeniorAge History

When the OAA Older Americans Act passed in 1965, State Units on Aging (SUAs) were formed to receive each state's share of funding. Missouri's first State Unit on Aging was the Office of Special Services within the Division of Family Services.

In 1972, Missouri was divided into 21 planning and service areas (PSAs) called Regional Councils on Aging. Each council received a planning grant to identify local senior needs, and then to coordinate grass-roots services to meet those needs.

The University of Missouri secured a state contract to organize the Regional Council in southwest Missouri. They hired **Winston Bledsoe** to lead it, and **Dorothy (Rambo) Knowles** to be his secretary. On October 1, 1972, the **Lakes Country Regional Council on Aging** opened in a leased building at 1824 South Stewart in Springfield, Missouri.

The Lakes Country Regional Council on Aging served ten counties: Barry, Christian, Dade, Dallas, Greene, Lawrence, Polk, Stone, Taney, and Webster. We determined the two greatest needs for these counties were nutrition services and transportation.

To meet these needs, we immediately helped organize a volunteer County Council on Aging in each of our counties. These County Councils then applied to us for funds to begin services. Today, three of these County Councils are still active - Polk, Lawrence, and Barry counties.





## 1973 — Creation of Nine Area Agencies on Aging and Silver-Haired Legislature

In October, 1973, an OAA amendment required State Units on Aging to create Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) within their state. Each AAA would receive a portion of the state's OAA funding to serve the communities within their geographical area.

The amendment also limited administration costs for all AAAs to 8.5% of the total OAA state funding. In good administrative stewardship, the 21 Regional Councils were consolidated into nine Area Agencies on Aging. Elaine Reiter, Division of Aging, was instrumental in implementing the transition of Regional Councils to AAAs.

Southwest Missouri Area Agency on Aging (now SeniorAge), designated to serve 21 counties, was created by merging the following Regional Councils: Lakes Country Regional Council (10 counties) Ozark Gateway Regional Council (4 counties) South Central Ozark Regional Council (7 counties). Three employees from the original Regional Councils were retained for the newly consolidated AAA: Winston Bledsoe, Executive Director Dorothy Knowles, Secretary, and W.E. Elmore.

Four board members from each of the previous Regional Councils formed the first twelve-member AAA Board of Directors. This Board of Directors approved five administrative staff positions: Dorothy Knowles, Social Services; Larry Tucker, Field Services Director; Jerena Staley, Accountant; Charles Fago, Nutrition Project Director; and Lora Jordan, Administrative Assistant

A state-wide organization, Missouri Alliance of Area Agencies on Aging Administrators (MA5), was created to provide a unified voice for all nine of Missouri's new AAAs. The executive directors from each AAA participated in its joint advocacy work.

The name of this collaborative was later changed to Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging (ma4), and that name remains the same today.

## 1974 — Eleven Senior Centers Open

During our first year as an Area Agency on Aging, we began establishing meal facilities and senior centers, and we expanded the Older Americans Transportation System (OATS) from the central part of the state into our territory.

In 1974, SeniorAge opened 14 meal facilities, including Neosho, Joplin, and Lamar, and we opened 11 senior activity centers.





### **1975 — DHSS Assumes Silver-Haired Legislature**

Missouri's Silver-Haired Legislature (SHL) was the first senior legislative group to be established in the nation. It was first sponsored by the Jaycees until 1975 when it was then sponsored by the Missouri Division of Aging (now the Department of Health and Senior Services) and the Area Agencies on Aging.

### **1976 — Moving Forward**

In 1976 Winston asked a commission from the University of Missouri to evaluate our AAA performance. **They recommended a restructuring of our 12-member Board of Directors to include one member from each of our 21 counties.** The conversion was made.

Winston Bledsoe, president of our state MA5 at that time, was the visionary for the first N4A conference in St. Louis, held in 1976.

**In 1976, our agency also received its first grant to establish a model project.** With it, we were to increase the availability of information and legal services in rural areas. Becky Quinn and Gregg Hartley, in turn, managed this mobile information and assistance project.

### **1977 — Administrative Offices Relocate**

On July 4, 1997, we moved our administrative offices into a three-story building at 317 Park Central East in downtown Springfield. Based on the census, this downtown locale aligned our services with a concentration of senior population and need. As an added benefit, rent was affordable. Ten years later, in 1987, we purchased this building from a family-help ownership.

We converted the first floor of this building into a senior center; the second floor into a training and program center; and the third floor into expanded administrative offices. On average, more than 175 seniors came each day for lunch.

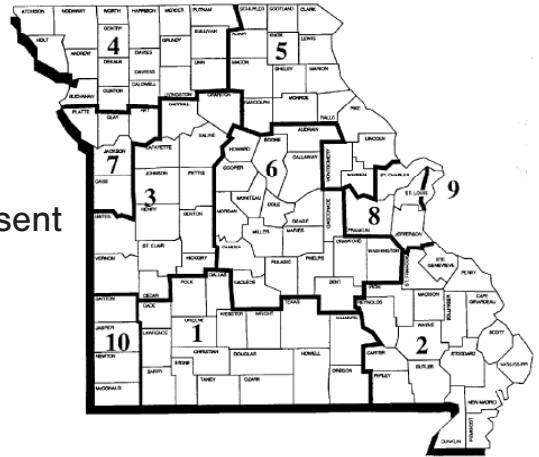
### **Senior Centers Double**

Between 1976 and 1978 we opened 12 more senior centers.



## 1978 — Division of Planning and Service Area

In 1978, four of our western counties (Barton, Jasper, Newton, and McDonald) separated into an independent AAA, reducing our service area to 17 counties.



The number of Missouri's AAAs rose from nine to the present number of ten, and we changed our corporate name from SMOA to Southwest Missouri Office on Aging.

**1983** A 17-member Board of Directors was created for SeniorAge.

## 1989 — Creation of SWMOA Foundation

The SWMOA Foundation was created to help fund the needs of seniors and senior centers not covered by Older Americans Act funding. The name changed to Senior Foundation of the Ozarks in 2016. It transitioned from a Foundation to a specialty fund in the Community Foundation of the Ozarks (CF0) in 2019.

## 1990 to Present — 21 New Senior Centers

Since 1990 we have opened 21 additional senior centers. We also contracted to provide services through six additional Senior Centers.

In 1993 our 10-year building lease for West Side Senior Center (adjoining Greene Haven Nursing Home) came to a close and was not renewable, so we closed this center.



## **1990 to 2016 — County Senior Citizen's Services Fund Boards Created**

Senior Citizens' Service Funds are established to help provide basic services and nutrition to seniors who need a helping hand. The governing body of any county, upon approval of a majority of the qualified voters of such county or city voting thereon, levy and collect a tax not to exceed five cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation. Currently within the SeniorAge Territory, there have been 11 Senior Citizens' Service Funds established:

1990 Lawrence County	2006 Barry County
1992 Oregon County	2006 Polk County
1992 Stone County	2007 Webster County
2000 Shannon County	2010 Taney County
2002 Christian County	2016 Dallas County
2005 Greene County	



## **1997 — Administrative Office Moves**

Over the years, the senior population in downtown Springfield began to decline, and modifications to streets and parking areas made access difficult. By 1997 the senior center was drawing less than 20 daily participants.

After 20 years downtown, we transferred our Springfield senior center to the South Side Senior

Center on Fremont, and we built a new administrative and customer service site at 1735 S. Fort in Springfield. The benefits of these new locations included convenient parking at the door and quick access from all corners of Springfield.

Since this move, customers have vastly increased, and major new programs and services have been added.

**2015 —** The South Fort service site is remodeled to offer HIPPA-compliant spaces for counseling.





**2016 — Southwest Missouri Office on Aging Changes Name to SeniorAge Area Agency on Aging**

SWMOA will forever hold a place in our history books, but from here forward we are the new **SeniorAge Area Agency on Aging**.

Being the trusted best call for seniors and their families is a challenge we embrace. We work diligently to keep pace with many exciting challenges.





**Missouri Seniors are just “one incident away” from a life event that threatens their stability of independent living.**

**Area Agencies on Aging are here to help.**

## **“Lena’s” Story . . .**

Lena is a spunky 88-year-old lady, living in her own home in the community where she grew up. Because of a sudden illness, she finds herself in the hospital. After several weeks of expensive treatment, Lena’s doctor says she’s ready to go home, but Lena has no one at home to help her. He offers her two options: She can go to a nursing home or arrange sufficient help in her home.



Although she’s not in the best health, Lena longs to remain independent and return home. The Area Agency on Aging is called upon to help make this possible.

Lena is released within a week and experiences the relief of being home again. An Area Agency on Aging Care Coordinator sets up a plan with Lena. Five days a week, a friendly volunteer delivers a hot, nutritious lunch from the local AAA senior activity center. Twice a month a homemaker comes to Lena’s home to do essential tasks like laundry, and shopping for groceries.

A home-health nurse comes on Mondays to check on Lena and report to her doctor. A physical therapist comes on Tuesdays to supervise her exercises.

Because of all these community support services, Lena’s hope to remain in her home is a comforting reality.

**We serve as a doorway to help—identifying the needs of community seniors and matching each need to a quality, cost-effective service.**



## “Jim’s” Story ...

Jim, age 75, lost his wife last year. His daughter Sheila, who lives in another state, is concerned because her father’s physical and mental wellness has deteriorated since her mother’s death. While visiting her father, she makes an appointment for him with the family physician.

The doctor diagnoses Jim’s primary medical problem as malnutrition. In addition, Jim is suffering from moderate depression, a common condition following the death of a spouse.



The doctor prescribes medication for Jim and suggests a balanced diet. He also encourages Jim to make friends in the community, but Jim can’t drive because of recent eye surgery. Luckily, the doctor’s receptionist knows about the local Area Agency on Aging because they help her mother. She refers Sheila to the Area Agency on Aging where she learns about the community AAA senior center in her father’s town.

Now Jim is at the senior center nearly every day because he has friends there. A van takes him. He eats with his friends, watches the calendar for social activities, and feels secure knowing the Center Administrator is watching out for other services he might need. After a few months, he chooses to volunteer as a greeter because he says it ‘keeps him young.’

*Jim’s daughter is relieved. Her father is happy and well again.*

### **We are Catalysts.**

We serve as primary leaders in the community for advancing new services.

### **We are Planners.**

We assess, analyze, facilitate, and improve existing service systems.

### **We are Coordinators.**

We encourage local service providers to link together.

### **We are Advocates.**

We assure seniors and their families access to comprehensive systems of care in the community.



# Our Tapestry of Senior Centers

## A History of Establishment

### 1974

Feb 4 Northview (Spfd)  
 Feb 5 YWCA (Spfd)  
 Feb 11 Boy's Club (Spfd)  
 Feb 11 Houston  
 Feb 13 Ozark  
 Feb 18 Aurora  
 Feb 25 Marshfield  
 Mar 4 West Plains  
 Mar 14 Seymour  
 Mar 15 Nixa  
 Mar 18 Forsyth  
 June 15 Republic

### 1976

July 1 Cabool  
 July 1 Crane (closed in 2010)  
 July 1 Licking  
 (now independent)  
 July 1 Willow Springs

### 1977

Feb 10 Alton  
 Mar 18 Forsyth  
 Apr 4 Buffalo  
 Apr 11 Greenfield  
 June 1 Ava (now independent)  
 June 1 Mtn. Grove  
 July 1 Park Central, Spfd  
 (converted to  
 South Side in 1997)

### 1978

Nov 1 Mtn. View

### 1980

June Winona

### 1982

Apr 19 Bolivar

### 1983

Jan 3 Westside Center  
 (Spfd)  
 Apr 18 Cassville  
 Apr 18 Gainesville

### 1984

Mar 26 Cabool Senior  
 Housing auxiliary site

### 1985

Apr 1 Ash Grove  
 Apr 3 Branson  
 May 28 Thayer  
 Oct 7 Monett

### 1987

July 21 Stillwell Senior  
 Housing Complex (Satellite  
 Center). Converted to home-  
 delivered meals in 2005.

### 1989

Sept 5 Kimberling City  
 Oct 1 Mt. Vernon

### 1995

Jan 17 Rogersville  
 Apr 14 Eminence  
 July 13 Summersville  
 (Now independent)

### 1997

Jan 29 South Side (Spfd)  
 Nov 17 Birch Tree  
 (converted to  
 home-delivered  
 meals in 2013)

### 1999

Apr 19 Strafford  
 Nov 9 Shell Knob

### 2000

July 3 Humansville  
 (now independent)

### 2012

Rogersville moves into their  
 new building

### 2015

Began assisting Fair Grove  
 Senior Center

### 2016

Central Crossing Senior  
 Center expands

### 2017

New Marshfield senior-  
 owned Senior Community  
 Center built

Ozark County Senior Center  
 obtains new building

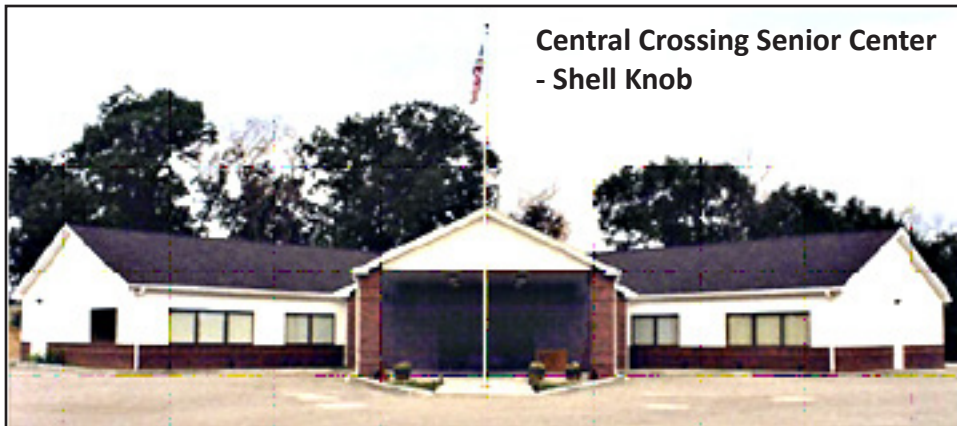
### 2019

Fair Grove

# Touring Our Towns







**Central Crossing Senior Center  
- Shell Knob**



**Engles Memorial Senior Center -  
Buffalo**



**Monett Senior Center**



**Mt. Vernon Senior Center**



**Republic Senior Friendship  
Center**



**Kimberling Area Senior Center**



**Eminence Senior Center**

## **A difference that only we can make.**

- We make it easier for seniors to live at home.
- We serve within our communities as the first call of help and hope for seniors and their caregivers.
- We work hard to identify the needs of seniors within our communities and then coordinate services to meet those needs.
- We direct seniors to helpful service choices, regardless of income.
- We improve services for seniors with diverse income and health situations.
- We help seniors and their families navigate a complex system of services.
- We advocate on behalf of older persons. When public policies or programs discriminate against seniors, we educate and mobilize seniors on the issue.
- We provide help on a voluntary, anonymous contribution basis. Services are not based on whether or not contributions are possible.





Ash Grove Senior Center

Fair Grove Senior Center



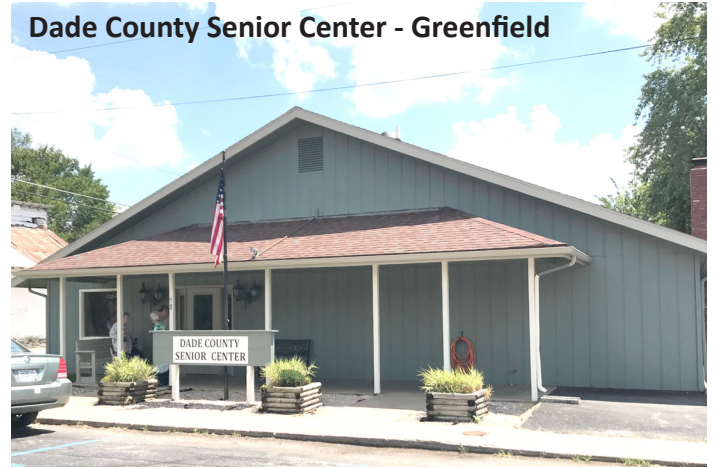
R. Clyde Trieman Senior Center - Mt. View



The Center - Ozark County, Gainesville



Administrative Office - Springfield



Dade County Senior Center - Greenfield



South Side Senior Center - Springfield



Polk County Senior Center - Bolivar



Strafford Senior Center



Douglas County Senior Center - Ava



**Marshfield Senior Center - New Building 2017**



**Thayer Senior Center**



**Winona Senior Center**



**West Plains Senior Center**



**Forsyth Senior Center**



**Cabool Senior Center**



**Mt. Grove Senior Center**



**Branson-Hollister Senior Center**



**Northview Senior Center - Springfield**



# We Offer Service

When senior services are needed, we're the best call. No other agency has a comparable number of employees who are trained in one-on-one options counseling about diverse resources and services. Initially, Area Agencies on Aging focused on establishing community senior activity centers across planning and service areas. These centers provided meals and friendships. Soon, homemaker and transportation programs were added, and the network of centers reached into smaller, rural neighborhoods. Today, AAAs respond to all kinds of needs, generally under four objectives:

## 1. Access Services (Pg. 36)

We help seniors find the services and resources they need.

- We answer questions. (Information and Assistance)
- We help match seniors with the assistance they need. (Care Coordination)
- We help link seniors to public benefits that help with financial challenges.
- We help provide transportation.

## 2. Community-Based Services (Pg. 38)

We provide local health and social programs to prolong and enrich senior independence. Our services include:

- ♦ Senior Center activities
- ♦ Referral to legal services
- ♦ Advocacy for senior wellbeing
- ♦ Pension Rights assistance
- ♦ Fraud/scam education
- ♦ Elder abuse prevention
- ♦ Affordable Health Care Coverage assistance (Navigator program)
- ♦ Nursing home ombudsman (Volunteers who address the concerns of seniors in care facilities.)
- ♦ Senior Center dining room meals
- ♦ Volunteer opportunities
- ♦ Health promotion and screening
- ♦ Holiday programs
- ♦ Help with tax and rebate filing
- ♦ Fitness/evidence-based wellness opportunities

## 3. In-Home Services (Pg. 40)

Our programs assist seniors who are limited to home environments, to delay or prevent the need for institutional care. We offer:

- ♦ Home-delivered meals
- ♦ Home safety modification
- ♦ Telephone reassurance
- ♦ Home repair
- ♦ Light housekeeping (when funding is available)
- ♦ Checks and balances paperwork assistance
- ♦ Personal care

## 4. Caregiver Services (Pg. 40)

We support and encourage caregivers through:

- ♦ Information/resource linking
- ♦ Home safety programs
- ♦ Respite time away
- ♦ Counseling programs
- ♦ Education programs



# Our Access Services

## Information & Assistance

Seniors and their families rely on us for information and help in every kind of situation. We tackle it all! If we don't have the answer, we find out who does.



Our qualified, committed staff provide counseling on:

- ♦ Housing options (in residential communities, or within independent, assisted, and skilled facilities)
- ♦ Retirement planning
- ♦ Finding resources for basic needs
- ♦ Pharmaceutical drug assistance
- ♦ Tax questions
- ♦ Relief assistance for caregivers
- ♦ Transportation options
- ♦ Missouri RX enrollment
- ♦ Or anything else that comes our way!

Many know us best for our unbiased, free-of-charge Medicare A-B-C-D, Advantage Plan, and medigap health insurance expertise, education, and help with enrollment.

## Care Coordination

Sometimes seniors and their families just feel lost. They aren't sure what they need, who to call, or what help is available.

Our Care Coordinators help them identify problems, both large and small, talk through alternatives, and guide them in finding appropriate solutions.

Once we look at a senior's 'whole picture' situation, we link the senior and family members to health and social services available locally.

Careful follow-up helps us make sure the right services were found.

## Public Benefits Outreach

We educate seniors about which public benefits they may be eligible to receive.

We also help them understand the application processes. If they need help applying ... we provide one-on-one assistance.



## Information Through an Electronic Newsletter and Social Media,

Our SeniorAge newsletter is distributed electronically to thousands of seniors across all of our 17 counties six times per year. It's packed with news, answers, and current events, and is available for home delivery, free of charge. It's also available on our website at [www.senioragemo.org](http://www.senioragemo.org).

Access to current news is available via our Facebook page at [facebook.com/senioragemo](https://facebook.com/senioragemo).



## Transportation Services

Transportation can be a serious problem for many. Taxis are expensive and often the public bus system is overwhelming. Without family or driving friends, many seniors need help getting to places of importance.

We fund programs that provide door-to-door transportation to local business, healthcare, and essential shopping locations.

We contract with many transportation providers, including:

- OATS
- On-the-Go Transportation
- SMTS
- Consumer-directed wellness rides
- Springfield, West Plains, and Houston public bus transit
- In Greene County, we receive funding transportation through the Greene County Senior Citizens' Service Fund.



# Our Community-Based Services

## Senior Center Activities

Senior Centers are comfortable gathering places for food, friendship, and activity. Center staff and volunteers create a place of trust to deal with needs. Each center hosts Area Agency on Aging services, providing the help local communities most need.

## Dining Room Meals

We serve lunch in 34 partnering senior center dining rooms.

## Legal Assistance

We provide legal assistance to seniors through contract partners. These agencies advise seniors and their families on financial and non-criminal legal concerns and rights.

## Volunteer Excellence

We encourage active seniors to continue working within their community. All of our services are better because of the time and skills invested by volunteers at each of our senior centers.



## Advocacy through Silver-Haired Legislature (SHL)

Missouri's SHL is comprised of 150 volunteers: 12 representatives, and 3 senators from each of the 10 AAAs. Each May, we hold democratic elections within legislative districts. During their two-year terms, SHLs vote on the top five priority legislative concerns for Missouri seniors, and they promote legislation in the best interest of Missouri's older adults

## Health and Evidence-Based Wellness

Senior Centers offer health education and screenings throughout the year, with emphasis on wellness and nutrition. Currently, wellness programs include Chronic Disease and Self Management Education, foot care clinics, Diabetes Education, and Walk for Life.



### **Help with Tax/Rebate Filing**

Each year, we help seniors file for millions of dollars in federal and state rebates and refunds, without charge. We train certified volunteers with the help of a Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) grant from the IRS. These volunteers complete federal and state tax forms, and housing expense rebates (MO-PTC Property Tax Credit).

### **Elder Abuse Prevention**

We educate the public about ways to recognize, improve, report, and prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

### **Long-Term Care Ombudsmen**

These well-trained volunteers regularly visit nursing home residents to address any concerns or needs.

### **Holiday Programs**

Year-end holidays can be lonely for many seniors. Our community partners help us bring cheer to these seniors through hand-delivered holiday dinners and hand-picked gifts. SeniorAge also plays host to Santa's Little Helper, a program that encourages community support for seniors who are alone during the holidays and who might need a helping hand.

### **Navigator**

The Affordable Care Act was designed to increase health insurance quality and affordability, lower the uninsured rate by expanding insurance coverage and reduce the costs of healthcare. SeniorAge helps individuals who need insurance navigate the insurance marketplace to find acceptable, qualifying insurance. For more information, contact us at 417-862-0762.

### **Pension Rights**

South Central Pension Rights Project (SCPRP) helps people of any age within their coverage area find lost pension plans, appeal benefit denials, correct miscalculations, and understand pension rights. Funded primarily by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, SCPRP's coverage area includes Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. The project also extends services to the retiree's spouse and other individuals if their pension plan or relative employment is located in the SCPRP coverage area.

### **Scam and Fraud Education (Senior Medicare Patrol - SMP)**

SeniorAge and our Senior Centers offer educational programs to help protect seniors against fraud and scams. We bring in experts to talk about the many ways that seniors are financially exploited, and we have a team that will bring a Scam Jam session to a Center near you.

# Our In-Home Services

A little help goes a long way toward maintaining independence. County senior citizens' service funds help increase our resources for these services.

## Meals Brought to You

Each year, 5,000+ seniors look forward to one of our 800,000+ volunteer-delivered meals. The best part of the day may be the smiling volunteer coming through the door with meals.

## Help with the Basics

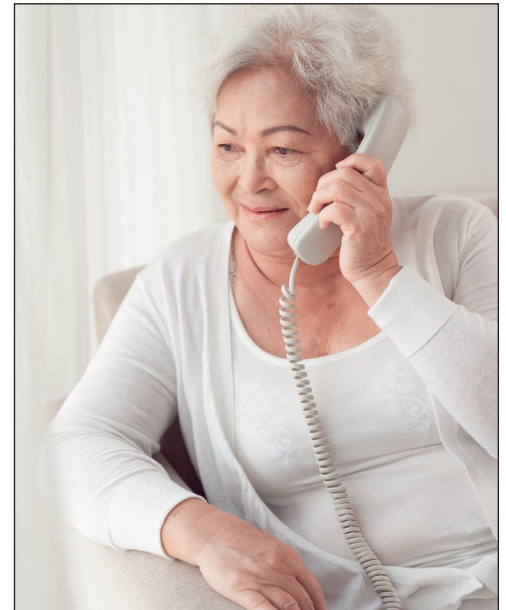
Our HomeWorks program helps with basic cleaning, meal preparation, and errands.

## Help with Personal Care

Personal care helps with eating, dressing, grooming, bathing, walking, medication management, laundry, and meal preparation.

## Telephone Reassurance

The Telephone Reassurance Program is designed to help individuals age 60 and over live independently in their home for as long as possible by providing reassuring telephone calls, social support, and safety checks. Knowing someone cares about your well being or the wellbeing of a senior you care about is simply...reassuring!



# Our Caregiver Services

If you're a caregiver, you need support. We help you know which direction to turn when managing your many concerns and overwhelming responsibilities. We offer a listening heart and an expertise about support services within the community. Our caregiver encouragement resources reassure and give hope.

## Respite Care

Our respite programs provide care for loved ones to allow caregivers a few hours away for essential chores, their own healthcare needs, and mental wellness.

# Winston Bledsoe

## Executive Director

### 1972-1999



The birth of a special needs son was motivation for change in Winston's life. Certain that it would take more than a high school football coach and shop teacher's salary to meet his family's needs, he created a successful insurance business. When Nixon's wage freeze reduced insurance benefit packages, he moved again into an administrative position at the federal prison in Springfield, Missouri.

In 1972, a University of Missouri steering committee chose Winston to launch the newly created Lakes Country Regional Council. Ann Ruscha and Jim Summers, who became important figures in SeniorAge's future, both served on the committee that hired Winston. Shortly after Winston's hire, Dorothy (Rambo) Knowles became his right-hand 'man,' and he mentored her into her own rite of leadership. In 1999 Winston retired, and can often be found on the golf courses—and serving on SeniorAge committees.

In 1989, Winston launched the SWMOA Foundation (now Senior Foundation of the Ozarks) to help assure the well being of our work within each community we serve. As a partner organization, the Foundation encourages community individuals and businesses to help support local senior services and senior centers through sponsorships, participation in fundraising events, and gift giving.

- ♦ Secured First Model Project
- ♦ President of ma4
- ♦ Coordinated First National AAA Conference
- ♦ First AAA to Fund In-Home Services
- ♦ Established Advocacy for Home-Owned Senior Centers
- ♦ First AAA to Establish Adult Day Cares
- ♦ First AAA to pass Senior Citizens' Tax Fund (Lawrence and Stone)
- ♦ Built SWMOA (now SeniorAge) administrative office on Fort Avenue in Springfield



# **Dorothy (Rambo) Knowles**

## **Executive Director**

### **1999 – 2013**



In 1972, 26-year-old Dorothy Rambo was working at Ozark Wholesale Grocers, routing trucks. When she read about a secretarial opening at a new Lakes Country Regional Council, she presented herself to the hiring committee and met her future boss Winston Bledsoe.

Winston gave Dorothy's ego a big boost when he told her why he recommended her hire: "You were the only one who applied who wasn't related to one of the committee members."

But Dorothy quickly proved her value to the growth and success of the agency. After her first position as the Social Service Director, she worked her way through nearly all SeniorAge positions.

In 1977 she was appointed Deputy Director. In 1999 Dorothy accepted the baton of leadership for SeniorAge from her predecessor, mentor, and great friend Winston Bledsoe.

Dorothy retired in 2013.

- ♦ Implemented Family Caregiver Programs
- ♦ Established Medicare D and Missouri RX Outreach
- ♦ Published First I & A Directory and Senior Solutions Directory
- ♦ President of MA4
- ♦ Expanded Case Management
- ♦ Successfully Supported the Passage of Eight Senior Service Tax Boards during her tenure
- ♦ Secured and Implemented Model Grants
- ♦ Secured and Administered Greene, Stone, and Taney County Senior Service Tax Grants
- ♦ Chosen as one of Springfield's Most Influential Women by 417 Magazine

# **Starr Kohler**

## **Executive Director**

### **2013 – 2021**



Starr became involved in the Area Agency's work in 1976 when her Aunt Nonie said, "Come with me tomorrow to serve meals at the Aurora Senior Citizens' Center." Her response was, "What's a Senior Citizens' Center?" But, of course, she went. Because Aunt Nonie said so.

Soon after, Starr's mother, Irene Hamby, launched a 22-year career with the Area Agency, first as the local center's Assistant Cook, then the Administrator, then the Area Agency's Information and Assistance Director. Starr, and her sister Deborah, served as support volunteers. Deborah continues as one of the organization's most beloved volunteers to this day.

As a volunteer, Starr learned to appreciate and respect both Winston Bledsoe and Dorothy Knowles—two legends of the agency. She vividly recalls a day when she was 29, critically ill in the hospital, unable to see. Someone slipped into the room, leaned down to her ear, and said very kindly, "Starr, I'm Dorothy Knowles and I work with your mother. . . You're a strong woman. You'll get through this."

Dorothy would repeat those life-giving words 17 years later when Starr's husband was diagnosed with ALS. In the 17 intervening years Starr had continued as a volunteer, transitioning to a receptionist, grant writer, and Information and Assistance associate. Later, she completed her Masters in Organizational Leadership, moved into Resource Development, Foundation advocacy, Silver Haired Legislature, then Chief Operations.

Starr respects, daily, the foundation of her 'legendary predecessors' and the work done by colleagues in every position of the organization. She is committed to senior-centered services that meet seniors where they are, a workplace of team support, values that invest in the wellbeing of her colleagues and community, and mission sustainability in a business acumen world. Starr speaks humbly of her path and the joy her daughter Teej continues to bring to that journey.

Starr retired at the end of 2021.



## **Becca Fields**

### **Co Executive Director**

### **2022 – Present**

Becca Fields' tenure with SeniorAge has progressed through many leadership opportunities, each increasing in responsibility and supervisory scope. Having chosen a career path of service to seniors in high school, that life mission continues to resonate ever more strongly each year.

In 2004, Becca joined SeniorAge as Director of Information and Assistance/Project Management. For 13 years, this position set the groundwork for exceptional leadership and knowledge of operations and management. In 2018, she became the Chief Compliance officer, learning all aspects of compliance, contracts, technical support and much more.

In 2020, Becca became Chief Operations Officer where she would develop, execute, and attain strategic operational goals; ensure mission-driven operations; assist with problem solving and change management; as well as implement, coordinate, and supervise a variety of services.

In 2021, as Starr Kohler worked towards retirement, Becca stepped into the role of Interim Deputy Executive Officer, assisting in daily operations, outreach, compliance and organizational planning. This would pave the way for her current position in a new model of management as co-CEO.

Life apart from work finds Becca spending time with her children at their activities—on ball field bleachers, at volleyball courts or swim meets, or at home for quiet family evenings. As a family, we also enjoy being very involved in our church community.



# **Liz McClelland**

## **Co Executive Director**

### **2022 – Present**



Liz McClelland joined the SeniorAge team in October 2010 as Grant Administrative Support for Greene County Services. Her gracious nature helped build a prosperous relationship with the Greene County Senior Tax Board, helping us secure millions of grant dollars over the years. In June of 2011, she became an Information and Assistance Specialist/Grant Coordinator, a role that put her in face-to-face contact with seniors. She became a client advocate for those she served.

Four years later, Liz moved into the role of In-Home Services Manager, overseeing the operations and partnerships with our providers in all 17 counties. Here, she was introduced to financial side of the business by assuring accurate intake documentation and reimbursement for contractors. In February of 2020, Liz moved into the ranks of Care Coordination Development Director, supervising Care Coordination and Information and Assistance outreach. She would hire, supervise, train, and advise employees and work collaboratively to develop and strengthen community partnerships. Liz would also monitor performance of Senior Services Funds' Board programs, team build customer care across our service locations, and support assistance to all leadership levels.

She, herself, was becoming a leader.

In May of 2021 Liz was promoted to Deputy Chief Operations Officer and began supervising operations of senior center and nutrition programs; coordinating, leading, and executing the goals and programs of the area plan and progressive pilots; and assist with audit compliance. All of these new roles helped groom Liz for what she was about to face next.

With Starr's retirement in 2021, Liz was also named co-CEO. Through 11 years of tenure, she has built strong relationships across all employee groups and a host of community partners. Her leadership anchor: "Actions speak louder than words."

# Acronyms and Definitions In This Book

The following acronyms and terms are commonly used in our work. Definitions are, in part, taken from <http://wikipedia.org> and are provided in the context of our work.

**Advocacy** To plead for or act on behalf of an individual or group to obtain a service or to assist older persons in maintaining their rights.

**AAA** Area Agency on Aging . . . That's us! There are 629 in the U.S. — 10 of which are located in the state of Missouri.

**ACL** Administrative for Community Living Part of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

**AoA** Administration on Aging The Older Americans Act established this federal agency. It distributes OAA grants annually to 57 state government and territorial SUAs and 230 Title VI Native American programs.

**DHSS** Department of Health and Senior Services is the state agency that channels federal funding to Missouri AAAs.

**HUD** The U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development is a U.S. cabinet department that now focuses primarily on housing.

**I&A** Information and Assistance Services include responding to questions and referring seniors to more in-depth care coordination when appropriate.

**ma4** Missouri Association of Area Agencies on Aging (Previously MA5 - Missouri Alliance of AAA Administrators) The state voice for Missouri's 10 AAAs. Its mission is to support the collaborative work of Missouri Area Agencies on Aging in developing full-range services.

**N4A** National Association of AAAs is the national voice for all AAAs. Now called USAging [www.usaging.org](http://www.usaging.org)

**OAA** Older Americans Act established in 1965 embodies our nation's commitment to support the dignity and independence of our older citizens.

**OATS** Originally the Older Adults Transportation System, OATS is now a transportation system for all ages, partially funded by AAAs.

**Ombudsman** A volunteer who works to resolve disputes on behalf of residents in long-term care facilities without necessarily ascribing fault to individuals or administration.

**PSA** Planning and Service Area is the geographical territory served. Our PSA is the 17 counties of southwest Missouri covering 10,000 square miles.

**RSVP** Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, created in the 1969 by the OAA, this program supports the development of volunteer resources for local communities.

**SCSEP** Senior Community Service Employment Program is a Title V program of the Older Americans Act.

**SMTS** Southeast Missouri Transportation System is one of our transportation contract providers.

**SUA** State Unit on Aging, the organization that receives federal OAA funds and distributes them to the state's Area Agencies on Aging. In Missouri, the State Units on Aging is the Department of Health and Senior Services.

**SSA** Social Security Administration is a federal agency that administers Social Security, a social insurance program for retirement, disability, and survivors' benefits.

**SSI** Supplemental Security Income, managed by SSA, makes payments to people with low income who are age 65 or older, visually impaired, or have a disability. SSI is paid for by U.S. Treasury general funds, not SS taxes or trust funds. The basic SSI amount is the same nationwide, but many states add money to the basic benefit.

**SWMOA** Southwest Missouri Office on Aging . . . Now SeniorAge! We are one of the 622 AAAs in the nation, one of 10 in the state of Missouri.

**501(c)** A designation in the United States IRS Code that lists 27 types of non-profit exemptions from some federal income taxes. In Missouri, 501(c) organizations are also exempt from state tax. The number behind the (c) identifies the type of organization.

SeniorAge is a 501(c)3 organization. The '3' refers to "various charitable, non-profit, religious, and educational organizations."



# SeniorAge Area Agency on Aging

## Planning and Service Area

The following are the counties served by SeniorAge: Barry, Christian, Dade, Dallas, Douglas, Greene, Howell, Lawrence, Oregon, Ozark, Polk, Shannon, Stone, Taney, Texas, Webster, and Wright



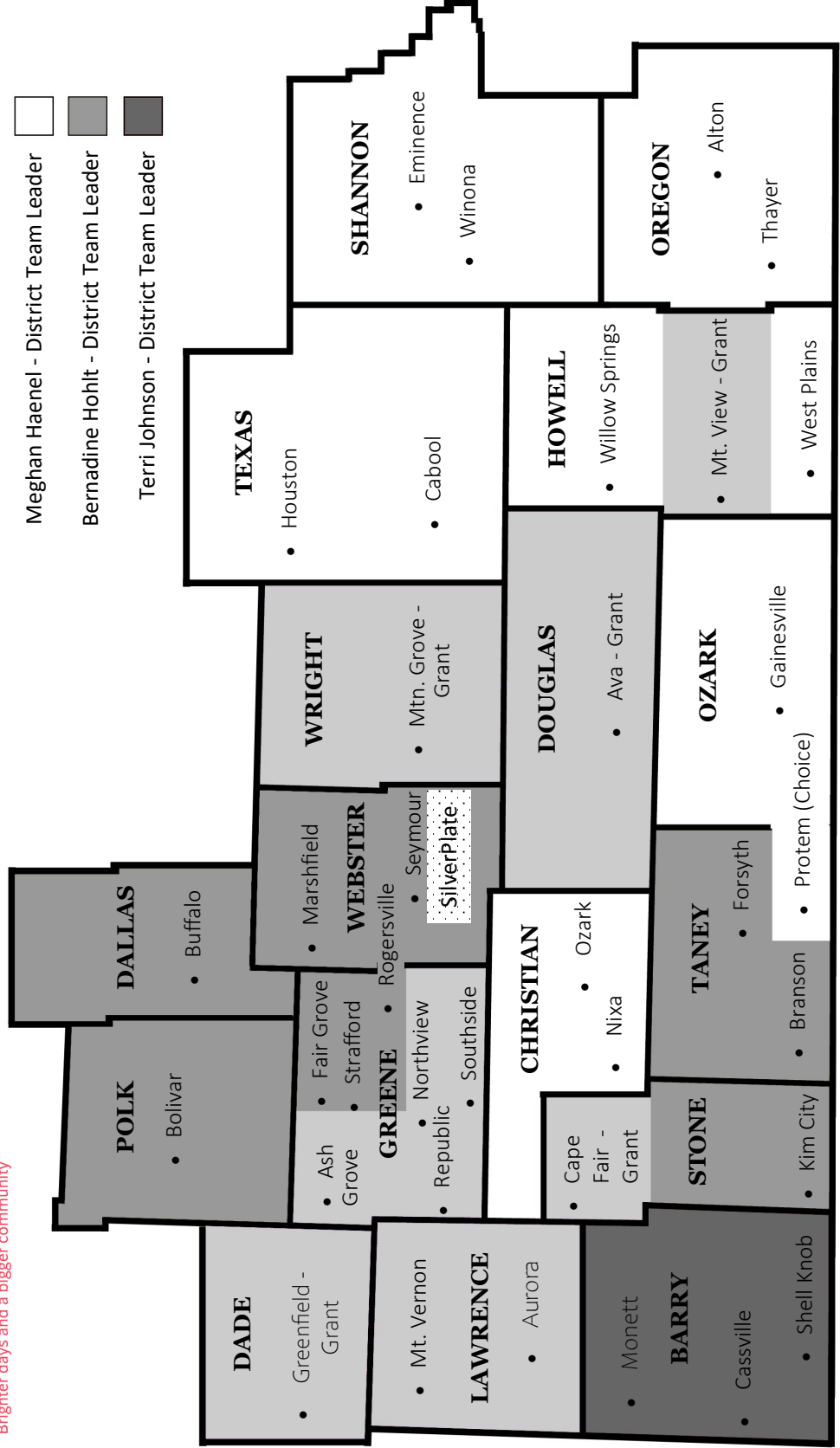
Cindy Bailey - Field Services Senior Director

Charlotte Davis - District Team Leader

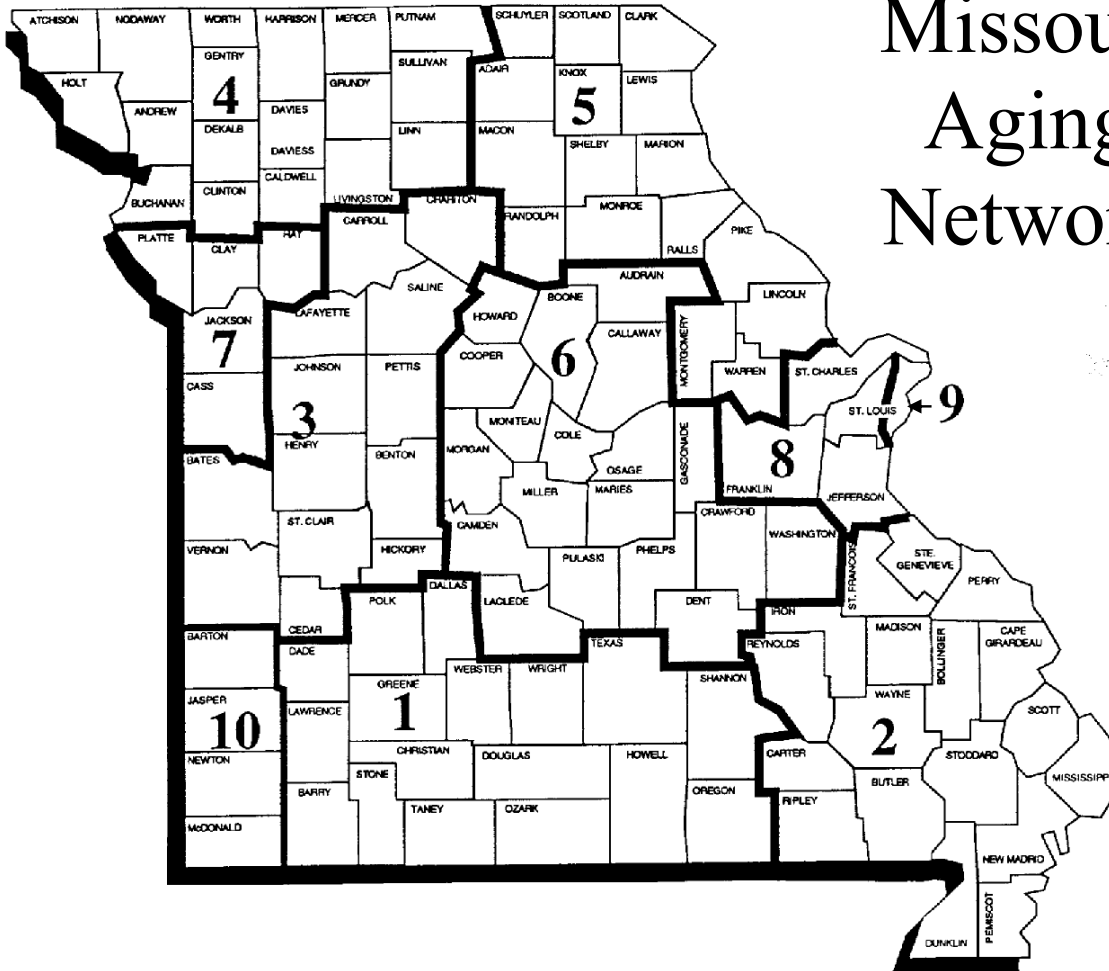
Meghan Haenel - District Team Leader

Bernadine Hohlt - District Team Leader

Terri Johnson - District Team Leader



# Missouri Aging Network



1. Becca Fields & Liz McClelland, co-CEOs  
SeniorAge AAA  
1735 South Fort Avenue  
Springfield, MO 65807-1204  
(417) 862-0762  
[www.swmoaa.com](http://www.swmoaa.com)
2. Lana Johnson, Exec. Dir.  
Aging Matters  
1219 N. Kingshighway, Suite 100  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
(573) 335-3331  
[www.semoaa.org](http://www.semoaa.org)
3. Diana Hoemann, Exec. Dir.  
Care Connection  
106 W. Young Street, PO Box 1078  
Warrensburg, MO 64093  
(660) 747-3107  
[www.goaging.org](http://www.goaging.org)
4. Michael Stopka, CEO  
Northwest MO AAA  
P.O. Box 265  
Albany, MO 64402  
(660) 726-3800  
[www.nwmoaaa.org](http://www.nwmoaaa.org)
5. Nerissa Pinkston, Exec. Director Northeast  
MO AAA  
815 N. Osteopathy  
Kirksville, MO 63501  
(660) 665-4682  
[www.nemoaaa.com](http://www.nemoaaa.com)
6. Rebecca Nowlin, CEO  
Central MO AAA  
1121 Bus. Loop 70 E. Suite 2A Columbia,  
MO 65203  
(573) 448-5823  
[www.cmaaa.net](http://www.cmaaa.net)
7. James D. Stowe, Dir. of Aging Svcs.  
Mid America Regional Council 600  
Broadway Ste. 200  
Kansas City, MO 64105-9990  
(816) 701-4240  
[www.marc.org](http://www.marc.org)
8. Lisa Knoll, Exec. Director Aging Ahead  
14535 Manchester  
Manchester, MO 63011-3690  
(636) 207-0847  
[www.agingahead.org](http://www.agingahead.org)
9. Anneliese Stoever, Exec. Dir.  
St. Louis AAA  
1520 Market St. Rm 4086  
St. Louis, MO 63103  
(314) 612-5918  
[www.slaaa.org](http://www.slaaa.org)
10. Jennifer Shotwell, Executive Dir.  
Region X AAA  
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Updated 8/2022

# SeniorAge Senior Center Directory

## **Alton Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

204 S. Main, Box 403 65606 ..... 417-778-7342

## **Ash Grove Sunshine Center**

310 Perryman, Box 72 65604 ..... 417-751-3826

## **Aurora - Heritage Harmony House**

700 Hudson, P.O. Box 229 65605 ..... 417-678-5383

## **Ava Grant Center**

109 N.E. Second, Box 1166 65608 ..... 417-683-5712

## **Bolivar - Polk County Senior Center**

1850 W. Broadway 65613 ..... 417-326-5570

## **Branson Senior Center**

201 Compton Drive 65616 ..... 417-335-4801

## **Buffalo Senior Center**

303 Maple St. 65622 ..... 417-345-8277

## **Cabool Senior Center**

910 Cherry 65689 ..... 417-962-3860

## **Cassville Senior Center**

1111 Fair Street 65625 ..... 417-847-4510

## **Eminence Senior Center**

108 Grey Jones, Box 513 65466 ..... 573-226-3839

## **Fair Grove Senior Center**

122 S Orchard Blvd. 65648 ..... 417-833-3467

## **Forsyth - Senior Friendship Site**

13879 Hwy. 160 N, Box 248 65653 ..... 417-546-6100

## **Gainesville - The Center**

516 CR 800, Box 122 65655 ..... 417-679-4746

## **Greenfield Grant Center**

58 North Allison St. 65661 ..... 417-637-2626

## **Houston Senior Center**

301 S. Grand 65483 ..... 417-967-4119

## **Kimberling Area Senior Center**

63 Kimberling. Box 873 65686 ..... 417-739-5242

## **Marshfield Senior Center**

427 W Washington PO Box 305 65706 417-859-3555

## **Monett Senior Center**

405 Dairy 65708 ..... 417-235-3285

## **Mt. Vernon Senior Center**

425 N. Main, Box 51 65712 ..... 417-466-2072

## **Mtn. Grove Grant Center**

700 East State St. 65711 ..... 417-926-5867

## **Mtn. View Grant Center**

903 E. 5th St. 65548 ..... 417-934-6504

## **Nixa Senior Center**

404 S. Main Street 65714 ..... 417-725-2322

## **Ozark Senior Center**

727 N. 9th St., Box 681 65721 ..... 417-581-2538

## **Republic - Gerry Pool Senior Center**

210 E. Hines 65738 ..... 417-732-7672

## **Rogersville Area Senior Center**

197 Marshall, Box 52 65742 ..... 417-753-7800

## **Seymour Senior Center**

205 Commercial, Box 26 65746 ..... 417-935-2211

## **Shell Knob - Central Crossing Senior Center**

20801 YY-15 Rd., Box 707 65747 ..... 417-858-6952

## **Springfield: Northview**

301 E. Talmage 65803 ..... 417-864-8606

## **Springfield: South Side**

2215 S. Fremont 65804 ..... 417-890-1313

## **Strafford Senior Center**

201 W. Bumgarner 65757 ..... 417-736-9898

## **Thayer - Fun & Friends Senior Center**

100 Chestnut, Box 222 65791 ..... 417-264-7354

## **West Plains Senior Citizens Center**

416 East Main 65775 ..... 417-256-4055

## **Willow Springs Senior Center**

501 Senior Center Lane 65793 ..... 417-469-3892

## **Winona Senior Center**

212 Sapper St., Box 7 65588 ..... 573-325-4636







# AND YOU HELP MAKE THE DIFFERENCE



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