



Connecting Older Adults with Community-based Resources and Options

Fiscal Years 2020-2022

Nutrition Services Congregate Meals Home Delivered Meals Request for Proposals March 2019

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RFP Materials available on AgeOptions Grants Portal

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

AgeOptions does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act; the U.S. Civil Rights Act; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act; The Age Discrimination Act; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; and the U.S. and Illinois Constitution. If you feel you have been discriminated against, you have the right to file a complaint with the Illinois Department on Aging. For information, call (800)252-8966 (Voice and TTY) or contact AgeOptions at (708)383-0258

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In addition, these materials are part of this Request for Proposal and are available on the AgeOptions Grants Portal: Requirements for Recipients of Older Americans Act Title III funds, Service definitions and standards, menu standards, appendices, applications and scoring tools.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. AgeOptions

In accordance with the Older American's Act of 1965 and associated Regulations, AgeOptions is designated by the Illinois Department on Aging as the Area Agency on Aging for suburban Cook County, Illinois. AgeOptions is responsible for administering federal and state-funded programs and services for individuals age 60 and older in suburban Cook County.

AgeOptions was established in 1974 as a 501(C) (3) not-for-profit corporation to serve the older adults of suburban Cook County. Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and counseled by an Advisory Council comprised of older adults and community representatives, AgeOptions identifies the concerns of older adults and those who care for them, develops and implements programs to meet their needs, and advocates for necessary resources.

AgeOptions develops a three-year comprehensive plan (Area Plan on Aging), which is reviewed annually. The Area Plan provides detailed information about the growing population aged 60 years and over in suburban Cook County and establishes service needs and funding priorities. AgeOptions is guided by the Area Plan to fund a network of more than 70 local community-based service providers, working to bring resources and service options to older adults and their caregivers throughout the Cook County suburbs. The current Area Plan is for FY 2019 through FY 2021. All funding under this request for Proposal is contingent upon the acceptance of AgeOptions Area Plan on Aging and annual amendments to that plan by the Illinois Department on Aging.

B. Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposals is to solicit grant applications for the site management of nutrition services to older persons age 60 and over in suburban Cook County, Illinois for the following services:

- Title III-C1 of the Older Americans Act, Congregate Meal Services
- Title III-C2 of the Older Americans Act, Home Delivered Meals

Funds are available from the Federal Older Americans Act, State of Illinois General Revenue funds, and Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP). These funds are referred to as "AgeOptions Funds."

C. Goals for Delivery of Services

As outlined in the Older Americans Act, the purpose of the Nutrition Program (OAA Section 330) is to:

1. Reduce hunger and food insecurity,
2. Promote socialization of older adults, and
3. Promote the health and well-being of older adults and delay the onset of adverse health conditions through access to nutrition and other disease prevention and health promotion services.

Services are not intended to reach every individual in the community. Programs target adults age 60 and older who are in greatest social and economic need, with particular attention to the following groups:

- Low income older adults
- Minority older individuals
- Older individuals with limited English proficiency
- Older adults at risk of institutional care

In keeping with the intent of the Older Americans Act, the Illinois Act on Aging and the mission of AgeOptions, funds will be awarded in accordance with the following goals and objectives:

1. To promote independence and dignity for older persons capable of remaining in their own homes, with appropriate help.
2. To develop and implement comprehensive, coordinated systems, for home and community based services. This may be accomplished by collaborating, coordinating and consulting with other agencies responsible for formulating, implementing and administering long term care programs.
3. To remove social, economic, and personal barriers to independence for older individuals.
4. To provide services for the most vulnerable older adults that meet their individual needs.
5. To provide assistance to the caregiver to help maintain the older person at home.

D. Available Funds

AgeOptions awards will be based on revenue projections for FY 2020. These estimates include funding from the Federal Government and the State of Illinois to suburban Cook County. Annual Federal and State appropriations and any changes in the Illinois Department on Aging funding formula for the distribution of funds may decrease or increase available revenues for Fiscal Year 2020. AgeOptions reserves the right to revise any or all projections and awards based upon the actual award and receipt of sufficient funds to meet legislative, administrative, or judicial

rule/order or regulation requiring and/or necessitating a revision or reconsideration of funding decisions. AgeOptions will not support an applicant with funds under this request when another funding source is supporting the total costs of the same service in the proposed service area.

As of the date of this document, AgeOptions estimates a 3% increase in Congregate funding and estimates level funding for Home Delivered Meals compared to FY 2019. Estimated Fiscal Year 2020 funds are:

Program	ESTIMATED AgeOptions Funds (combined Federal/State/NSIP Dollars)
Congregate Meals for new and existing sites	\$2,140,000
Home Delivered Meals	\$5,680,350

AgeOptions will use a grant system to reimburse successful applicants. Each service and site will have a separate grant. A grant will promote partnership and collaboration and place emphasis on the program being “more than just a meal”. Grantee costs will be budgeted by the categories of Personnel/Fringe, Equipment and Supplies, Travel, Other, Delivery and Food. During the grant period, agencies may request a revision to re-allocate costs between line items, with the exception of Food and Delivery line items which cannot be moved to a different expense.

Any reference to “grantee” responsibilities will be binding on the applicant organization upon the award of the grant.

Grantees must have a minimum match of 15% in local cash and/or in-kind services. Grantees are also required to solicit voluntary contributions (project income) from participants with a suggested donation per meal. Applicants should budget the “project income” for their food costs.

The Earned Federal Share is “earned” only when the organization obtains and reports both local cash and in-kind match which balances with appropriate expenses. The AgeOptions share is based on net expenses (expenses minus project income) and the extent the grantee has met the budgeted local match.

The provisions included in this RFP and associated documents will be incorporated into the Notification of Grant Award (NGA) for nutrition services that result from this competitive procurement process. The grant

will contain service delivery, administrative, and financial terms and conditions, and provisions which, when taken together, define the services that the Grantee will provide. The accepted proposal will become a binding part of the grant and the Grantee will be monitored to ensure compliance with the proposal in accordance with AgeOptions requirements and policies set forth in: AgeOptions Fiscal Year 2020-2022 Definitions and Standards, FY 2020 Title III Requirements, AgeOptions, FY 2020-2022 Request for Proposals, AgeOptions 2020 Conditions of Award and Performance Deficiencies for Grantees Policy.

E. Eligible Agencies

AgeOptions invites applications from public, governmental, private not-for-profit or proprietary organizations. Funding of proprietary organizations must be pre-approved by the Illinois Department on Aging. Grantees are prohibited from receiving a profit from the grant award.

The requirements in this document are from the Older Americans Act and the Uniform Grant Rule (2 CFR Part 200). Any further amendments to the law, actions required by other Federal or State laws, court order, and/or administrative/executive directives, will be binding on all applicants. AgeOptions has adopted as policy all requirements stated in this document and will enforce the same during the grant period, except as directed by the Federal and State governments, or Court of Law.

AgeOptions does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation or familial status in employment or the provision of services.

Agencies are not permitted to subcontract or assign any part of the work covered under the scope of the agreement without prior written consent of AgeOptions.

II. AWARDS AVAILABLE

AgeOptions will only fund services identified in this Request for Proposals (Congregate and Home Delivered meals). Please refer to the Definitions and Standards for a complete description of each service.

We seek proposals to provide meals in a manner that is flexible and responsive to consumer needs and preferences and is also cost effective. We are interested in proposals that include innovations in meal types, service delivery models and consumer input.

A. Background

Nutrition plays a very important role in our lives. What we eat significantly affects our health, quality of life and longevity. Good nutrition is essential in maintaining cognitive and physical functioning. For older adults, proper

and balanced nutrition is particularly critical for the maintenance of health, wellness and independence. Unfortunately, studies show many older adults are not meeting their nutritional needs on a regular basis. Inadequate diets can contribute to chronic health conditions, quicken the advance of age-related degenerative disease, and delay recovery from illness. For minority older adults who tend to have a higher incidence of chronic disease, inadequate diets can be even more detrimental.

AgeOptions nutrition program is not a stand-alone program but functions as part of a home and community based service system. Services are to be part of a comprehensive and coordinated service system designed to secure and support maximum independence and dignity in the home environment for older adults (Bernstein & Mumoz, 2012). The nutrition programs' specific purposes are to:

1. Reduce hunger and food insecurity – On a national basis (56 percent of congregate nutrition service participants and 60 percent of home-delivered nutrition service participants) report that these meals make up one-half or more of their food intake for the day.
2. Reduce social isolation - The research indicated that those receiving daily-delivered meals were more likely to report improvements in mental health, self-rated health, and reductions in feelings of isolation as well as less worry about being able to remain at home (Thomas & Dosa, 2015).
3. Promote health and well-being - Among people currently receiving congregate nutrition services, 43 percent are also receiving one or more other HCBS. Likewise, among people receiving home-delivered nutrition services, 59 percent reported receiving one or more additional HCBS.
4. Delay adverse health conditions - Because the prevalence of multiple chronic conditions is higher among congregate and home-delivered program participants (see next section) than the general Medicare population, the provision of healthy meals, access to lifestyle modification programs and nutrition education and counseling are important to promoting health, modifying risk, helping to treat these multiple chronic conditions, helping to maintain functionality, and reducing health care utilization.

B. Congregate Meals: Funded by the Older Americans Act Title III-C1¹ and Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP).

[Congregate Meals](#) help to keep older Americans healthy and prevent the need for more costly medical interventions. In addition to serving healthy meals, the program presents opportunities for social engagement, information on healthy aging, and meaningful volunteer roles, all of which contribute to an older individual's overall health and well-being.

The Congregate Nutrition program serves individuals age 60 and older, and in some cases, their caregivers, spouses, and/or persons with disabilities.

In the past 27 years (FY 1991), Congregate meals in suburban Cook County decreased by 50% while home delivered meals have increased by 72%.

AgeOptions is committed to reversing the trend of decreasing participation at Congregate Meal sites

1. Program Design Options

- a) Applicants may propose a “traditional” dining site which would serve meals five days per week, typically at lunch but other times will be considered.
- b) Applicants may operate a program at **multiple locations** (rotating sites) to increase access to the service. If using multiple locations, the total program may not operate more than seven (7) days per week. All program criteria for Congregate Meal Programs must be met and participants must be made aware of meals options at all locations.
- c) Applicants may propose congregate meals in a **restaurant setting**. However, in order to promote socialization, restaurant programs should designate set gathering times, assign staff or volunteers present to welcome guests, provide programs and ideally have a separate dining area.
- d) AgeOptions may consider **restaurant voucher programs** (programs that do not require set times of service and staffing at participating restaurants) on a limited basis if a compelling rationale and a high level of local match are provided.

2. Productivity

Applicants should aim to serve at least twenty-five (25) meals to older adults daily at each site. For sites that propose or have a history of serving less than 25 meals per day, AgeOptions may choose not to fund the site or may work with the applicant to develop a cost effective option.

3. Distribution of Congregate Sites

AgeOptions seeks to fund Congregate Nutrition sites in high-need areas throughout suburban Cook County. AgeOptions defines high-need areas based on the following factors:

1. The number of older adults living below poverty,
2. the number of limited English speaking older adults, and/or the number of minority older adults residing in an area.
3. the total number of 60+ (older adults),
4. areas of food insecurity such as food deserts or food swamps
5. areas with risk factors for social isolation such as limited English, minority, LGBTQ older adults.

After maintaining existing sites with average daily participation greater than 25 meals, our first priority is additional high need areas that meet the above factors and are in unserved areas.

Target Areas for potential new sites

- Priority #1: Nutrition sites which target Limited English Speaking older adults in any area of suburban Cook County with a high concentration of that population. Preference would be in the Niles and Maine Townships.
- Priority area #2: Maywood or nearby areas
- Priority area #3: Robbins, East Hazel Crest, Hazel Crest, or Posen
- Priority area #4: Orland Park or Tinley Park

Applicants may propose other areas for sites. AgeOptions will consider the strength of the application, past performance of the site or grantee, and other factors when determining which sites to fund. Priority for funding may be given to these areas or other areas that meet our definition of high-need.

4. Connection with Health Promotion

AgeOptions recognizes the connection between Nutrition services and Health Promotion (Title III-D). AgeOptions will continue to require congregate nutrition sites to host health promotion sessions provided under the Title III-D program.

C. Home Delivered Meals– Funded by the Older Americans Act Title III-C2 and Illinois General Revenue Funds¹ and Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP).

The Home Delivered Meals program serves frail, homebound or isolated individuals who are age 60 and over, and in some cases, their caregivers, spouses, and/or persons with disabilities. This program serves much more than food. It provides a safety check, and sometimes the only opportunity for face-to-face contact or conversation that day. The Program also assists clients with accessing additional services and benefits for which

they may be eligible and require, helping them to regain or maintain their independence. Care Coordination Units or Managed Care Organizations (Assessing Organization) must determine eligibility and refer the client to the appropriate meal provider.

AgeOptions will fund home delivered meals in the following priority order:

1 st priority	Monday – Friday meal regular diet – we will seek to have all of suburban Cook County covered.
2 nd priority	Monday – Friday meal special diet – we will seek to have all of suburban Cook County covered.
3 rd priority:	Weekend meal or extra meal delivered on Friday for weekend consumption – (based on need established in nutrition assessment)
4 th priority	Second meal delivered Monday - Friday (based on need established in nutrition assessment e.g. high nutrition risk or care manager discretion)

Applicants will be able to apply for townships for their delivery areas. Applicants must be willing to service the entire township. We want each township to have access to regular diet home delivered meals and special diet home delivered meals. If an applicant cannot provide both meal types, through a combination of on-site food preparation and/or central kitchen food preparation and/or catered food (see Section D below) then the applicant is encouraged to collaborate with another applicant to ensure that both home delivered meal types are being proposed for a township. Exception: An applicant that is proposing ethnic home delivered meals does not need to propose special diet ethnic home delivered meals.

AgeOptions prefers hot daily delivery of Home Delivered Meals. However, AgeOptions allows the use of frozen or cold meals when the Assessing Organization assessment affirms that the recipient is able to prepare the meal. Providers must always ensure that if frozen/cold meals are used, the client is capable of managing preparation of the meal. If a client cannot manage frozen meals, the provider must find an alternate option. If frozen meals are provided, the provider must offer a mechanism for a personal contact with the client to assure their wellbeing daily, Monday through Friday.

Successful applicants will commit to serving the current home delivered meal recipients. AgeOptions recognizes that not all client needs are

currently met through this program and that due to funding and logistical issues, waiting lists for meals may occur.

D. Catering/Food Preparation Costs for both Congregate and Home

Delivered Meals

Applicants may propose one of the following methods for preparing food:

1. On-site preparation by applicant, or
2. Central Kitchen (food is prepared off-site by applicant and transported to the nutrition site), or
3. Catered

An applicant may use on-site or Central Kitchen food preparation for some meal types (for example, regular diet Home Delivered Meals) and may use a caterer for a different meal type (special diet Home Delivered Meals). Or an applicant may use more than one caterer to allow for variety during the week (for example, Caterer A on Monday/Wednesday/Friday and Caterer B on Tuesday/Thursday).

Because rising costs related to food and food preparation affect the number of older adults who can receive a nutritious meal, AgeOptions conducted a caterer application process to have the most cost effective high quality food. **Nutrition applicants who propose to use a caterer must select a caterer from the AgeOptions “eligible caterer” list, included in the appendices. AgeOptions selected caterers for the “eligible list” after a caterer application process that included tasting receptions and reference checks.**

Applicants who propose “on site” food preparation or catering from their organization’s central kitchen are exempt from using a caterer from the “eligible caterer” list. Targeting to Culturally Isolated Persons (TCLIP) or other culture-based agencies proposing ethnic meals may provide a justification for not using a caterer from the approved list. Congregate programs based in a restaurant setting also may provide a justification for not using a caterer from the approved list. It is in AgeOptions sole discretion to determine the agencies exempt from this requirement.

The Grants Portal Application Resources section includes the FY2020 “eligible caterer” list.

III. AWARD TERMS

A. Period of Award

The time period of this agreement is for Fiscal Year 2020 beginning October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020. Awards will be for one year. AgeOptions has the option of offering successful applicants one (1) or two (2) one-year extensions for FY 2021 and FY 2022 as specified in this document.

B. Renewal Considerations

Renewals may be granted for each service, each Congregate Site or Home Delivered Meals Service area in the grant, providing the following conditions are met:

1. AgeOptions' determination that the grantee's performance meets service level projections and AgeOptions standards.
2. The continuing availability of Older Americans Act Title III-C funds.
3. The mutual agreement on grant terms between AgeOptions and the applicant.
4. There are no changes in program mandates and/or requirements by AgeOptions funding bodies that would result in a revision of the plan for funding allocations.

Additional extensions will be considered if a Request for Proposal is postponed by AgeOptions in the best interest of the program.

AgeOptions reserves the option to grant exceptions to the above renewal considerations.

C. Funding for Extension Years

AgeOptions will try to maintain funding at the original levels for extension years and will determine allowable increases or decreases in Federal unit cost based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Increase in Funding - If there is an increase in available funding between extension years for Congregate and Home Delivered Meals, AgeOptions will determine the amount of funds to be made available either by area, by service and/or for targeted populations, using one of the following options/combination of options in awarding those funds:

For Congregate Meals and Home Delivered Meals:

1. Eliminate or prevent waiting lists
2. Expand special diets, weekend and/or second meals.
3. Develop new innovations to improve the programs.
4. Award funds to applicants whose applications were approved through this process but not funded due to insufficient funds.
5. Allow Grantees to submit formal requests and rationale to expand current services within the amounts determined available by AgeOptions. Decisions regarding increases shall be made after considering the rationale, overall performance and support provided to the community by the Grantee.
6. Develop special initiatives for distribution of increased funds.

Reductions in Funding: If funding to the suburban Cook County region is reduced, and it is necessary to reduce Grantee award levels, AgeOptions will take a multi-pronged approach:

1. Reduce grants to programs that are not serving at their budgeted productivity levels. If there is an unmet need in the area, AgeOptions may fund another grantee to meet the need.
2. For Home delivered meals, decrease client's second and/or weekend meals if the independent assessment agency determines the clients are not at a high level of need for these meals.
3. Reduce home delivered meals in the following order: second meals, weekend meals and/or special diets.
4. Review each grant based on service levels and/or other performance factors to assure that there will be cost effective service provision which best meets the needs of older adults.

D. Termination of Grant

AgeOptions reserves the right to terminate a grant with an applicant as outlined in the "AgeOptions Performance Deficiencies of Grantees Policy," due to noncompliance with the standards set forth in this Request for Proposals and/or due to significant nonperformance by the grantee. The grant/designation may also be terminated due to: insufficient funds; changes in federal or state mandates; circumstances beyond the control of the grantee such as natural disasters and fires that prevent complying with the terms of the grant/contract. In addition, the grant/designation may be terminated by either party upon thirty days written notice and explanation to the other party. Upon termination, the grantee/designation shall be paid for work satisfactorily completed prior to the date of termination if funds are available.

IV. APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Creation of Grants Portal Account

AgeOptions will widely advertise this Request for Proposals. Interested organizations must create an organizational account on AgeOptions' Grants Portal. The application, budget and required attachments can be found on and must be submitted via AgeOptions' Grants Portal*.

- Organizations that currently receive funding through AgeOptions were asked to confirm their organizational information and then were sent log-in information to access their organizational accounts. It is the potential applicant's total and sole responsibility to assure receipt of the log-in information.

- Organizations that do not currently receive funding through AgeOptions must register with AgeOptions. To register, e-mail rfp@ageoptions.org with the following information:
 - Legal Name of Organization
 - Address (street address, city, zip code)
 - Phone number
 - Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)
 - Full name, title, e-mail address and phone number of the designated contact person

AgeOptions will create your organizational account and send an e-mail to your designated contact person with the log-in information. It is the potential applicant's total and sole responsibility to assure receipt of the log-in information. **The deadline to register is April 5, 2019.**

**If you need a reasonable accommodation, please e-mail RFP@ageoptions.org or contact Paula Bartolozzi, Grants Administrator at 708-383-0258. Requests for reasonable accommodations will be accepted up to seven (7) business days prior to the proposal deadline.*

B. Submission of Applications

After you have created a Grants Portal account (see previous section):

1. Complete your organization profile
Once you have access to your organizational account, you must provide information about the organization and download several attachments.
2. Complete your proposal(s)
You will complete one proposal for each nutrition program (for example, 1 congregate site plus one HDM site = 2 proposals; or 2 congregate sites = 2 proposals).

For each proposal you will enter:

- Narrative responses
- Projected demographics of clients to be served
- The proposed Budget
- Budget justification
- Reimbursement schedule
- Program-specific attachments

The proposal must be submitted using AgeOptions Fiscal Year 2020 application via the AgeOptions Grants Portal.* Proposals must be complete and legible. The application and all other accompanying documents are available on the Grants Portal – <https://ageoptions.smartsimple.com>. **To receive a log-in, contact RFP@Ageoptions.org by April 5, 2019.**

**If you need a reasonable accommodation, please e-mail RFP@ageoptions.org or contact Paula Bartolozzi, Grants Administrator, at 708-383-0258. Requests for reasonable accommodations will be accepted up to seven (7) business days prior to the proposal deadline.*

Before submitting a proposal, the applicant shall carefully examine this document (RFP) and specifications. If the proposal is accepted, the applicant will be responsible for all errors and costs associated with the proposal resulting from failure or neglect to comply with instructions and specifications. AgeOptions will in no case be responsible for any of the errors resulting from such failure or neglect.

Applications may be withdrawn by providing written notice to AgeOptions no later than Tuesday, June 4, 2019. AgeOptions is not responsible for the costs of preparing an application by an applicant and will not reimburse applicants for these costs.

AgeOptions reserves the right to accept or reject any application, in whole or in part, submitted in response to this Request for Proposals. Also, AgeOptions reserves the right to reject proposals that are determined by AgeOptions to be proposing insufficient costs to cover all or any necessary service components.

The applicant is reminded that the competitive application process is governed by laws and regulations enforced by Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies. If there is an indication of any formal or informal effort by competing applicants to influence proposed costs of services and/or service areas, AgeOptions shall ask appropriate agencies to investigate.

C. Technical Assistance Sessions on the RFP and application process

New Applicant Technical Assistance Session	
Suggested Participants:	New applicants should send a representative. This session is also open to applicant staff new to writing grants or any interested applicant
Agenda:	AgeOptions will share “best practices” with new applicants, provide a general overview of the process, as well as cover how to complete the application.
Date:	March 7, 2019 9:30am - Noon
Location:	AgeOptions, 2nd floor Training Room 1048 Lake Street Oak Park, IL 60301
To register:	RSVP to rfp@ageoptions.org

Identical Technical Assistance Sessions – REQUIRED (choose 1 of the 3 sessions below). NOTE: New applicants who attended the March 7 th “New Applicant Technical Assistance Session” are NOT required to attend one of these Identical TA sessions.	
Suggested Participants:	All potential applicants should attend one of these identical technical assistance sessions.
Agenda:	REQUIRED Identical Technical Assistance Sessions on completing the grant application.
Date #1: Location:	March 7, 2019 1:30 - 4:00pm AgeOptions, 2 nd floor Training Room 1048 Lake Street Oak Park, IL 60301
To register:	RSVP to rfp@ageoptions.org
Date #2: Location: To register:	March 11, 2019 1:30 - 4:00pm WEBINAR https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1520860272860083457 After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.
Date #3: Location: To register:	March 12, 2019 9:30am - Noon WEBINAR https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2533080572995576321 After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Final Technical Assistance Session - OPTIONAL	
Suggested Participants:	Any interested applicants
Agenda:	There is no formal presentation of information. Format will be questions and answers.
Date: Location: To register:	April 16, 2019 3:00 - 4:00pm WEBINAR https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4864941325857363969 After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

To request reasonable accommodations for the Technical Assistance Sessions, please submit your request to rfp@ageoptions.org or 708-383-0258. Requests for reasonable accommodations will be accepted up to two (2) business days prior to the event.

D. Training Sessions on the Grants Portal

Identical Grants Portal Training Sessions – REQUIRED	
Suggested Participants:	All potential applicants should attend one of these identical training sessions.
Agenda:	How to access and navigate through the Grants Portal. No technical assistance on the content of the Nutrition RFP will be provided.
Date #1: Location: To register:	March 15, 2019 10:00 - 11:30 am WEBINAR https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6603995986890259203 After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.
Date #2: Location: To register:	March 20, 2019 10:00 - 11:30 am WEBINAR https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8604728917444186370 After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

E. Ongoing Technical Assistance

AgeOptions reserves the right to issue clarifications and/or changes to any part of this Request for Proposal process. These will be published on AgeOptions Grants Portal. Clarifications and changes will be binding on successful applicants.

All questions about how to create or access an account on the AgeOptions Grants Portal should be directed to RFP@ageoptions.org.

All questions regarding the Request for Proposal should be submitted via AgeOptions’ Grants Portal.

Each week, AgeOptions will publish a summary of the questions and responses to all potential applicants, via AgeOptions’ Grants Portal. These summaries will be published up to one week before the submission deadline. After that point, AgeOptions will respond to questions to the inquiring agency as needed and as time permits.

Applications will not be reviewed prior to submission, but reasonable questions on applications, service criteria, standards and service areas will be addressed by an Area Agency staff member upon request and as time permits.

F. Due Date for Applications

The proposal must be submitted by 11:59 pm on April 23, 2019. **[Please note**

the deadline to register for a Grants Portal account – necessary to create an application-- is April 5, 2019.]

Late and “draft status” responses shall not be accepted and shall automatically be disqualified from consideration. Applicants will receive a confirmation e-mail once they successfully submit an application. Additionally, the status of applications listed in the Grants Portal will change from “Authorized Representative Approval” to “Submitted to AgeOptions.” Please verify that you have both received a confirmation e-mail and that the status of the application has changed to “Submitted to AgeOptions” in order to verify your application has been successfully submitted.

V. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

The evaluation of applications will be based on, but not limited to, the funding considerations, summary of technical criteria, application format and evaluation, and competition.

A. Funding Considerations

AgeOptions will consider applications requesting funding for services based upon proof of need, community support, availability of funds, and assurance of equitable access by older adults residing in the service area. Actual funding levels and unit rates will be based on several factors, including but not limited to, the available funding, the strength of the applicant’s rationale for the proposed service, cost effectiveness, reasonableness of proposed costs, level of match proposed, proposed unit rate and when applicable the applicant’s prior AgeOptions unit rates.

AgeOptions will only fund services identified in this Request for Proposals. Please refer to the Service Standards for a complete description of the allowable services.

AgeOptions reserves the right to decrease or increase funding levels based upon available funding and/or utilization of resources as identified by AgeOptions prior to and during the grant period. The effective date for such actions shall be the date of notification by AgeOptions. The grantee shall be required to act on such notification immediately. Once a grant is established, AgeOptions reserves the right to award the grant for a particular site to a new provider if the current Grantee will not accept a grant revision to increase/decrease meals.

AgeOptions reserves the right to delay reimbursements to grantee agencies during the grant/contract period in the event payment to AgeOptions is delayed by its funding agencies.

Our priority is to assure that program efforts and funding are appropriately targeted to those with greatest social and economic need. AgeOptions requires

that proposals target older adults who face barriers to receiving services due to racial, cultural, economic or other reasons documented by the applicant.

The following circumstances may influence AgeOptions decisions regarding the award of funds:

1. AgeOptions may respond to community needs or established service provider relationships to justify granting for a service at variance to some standards.
2. AgeOptions may identify methods for providing services to meet the needs of communities, especially for the low-income racially/ethnically diverse population, and limited English speaking population.
3. AgeOptions may set aside funds until an appropriate application is received.
4. AgeOptions may negotiate with an applicant to increase or narrow the scope, geographic area, or purpose of a proposed program as needed.
5. AgeOptions reserves the right to transfer funds between Federal Older Americans Act funding sources as permitted under the law which may increase or decrease the total funding available.

Proposals will be evaluated by AgeOptions. Awards will be made to the highest scoring applicants proposing services that meet the criteria outlined in this Request for Proposal and Service Definitions and Standards. Note: Even if an applicant is successful, there is no guarantee that they will receive the full funding requested. In some situations, there may not be sufficient resources to initiate the grant and it would be held until funding becomes available.

An organization may apply for multiple sites and/or to provide both congregate and home delivered meal services from the same location. Each site and each service application will be evaluated separately.

B. Competitive Applications

AgeOptions will attempt to avoid duplicate provision of Title III-C services in the awarding of funds. AgeOptions reserves the right to award funds so there are sites geographically spread throughout suburban Cook County.

- 1. Congregate Meals** – When requests for funds are made in the same area to serve the same population by two or more applicants, the applications will be considered to be in competition. The grant will be awarded to the applicant receiving the highest total score. In the event of a tie, the service will be awarded to the current grantee. If there is no current grantee, the final decision will be made by the AgeOptions Board of Directors as advised by the Program Committee. The awarding of funds will be contingent upon availability.
- 2. Home Delivered Meals** – If two or more applications are received for the provision of home delivered meals for the same township, the grant

will be awarded to the applicant receiving the total highest score. In the event of a tie, service will be awarded to the current grantee. If there is no current grantee, the final decision will be made by the AgeOptions Board of Directors as advised by the Program Committee. The awarding of funds will be contingent upon availability. **AgeOptions may provide exceptions to this competition definition to address ethnic or special diet home delivered meals.**

C. Summary of Technical Criteria

Technical criteria and planning principles outlined in this Request for Proposals will also be considered in determining grant awards/contract levels. Applications will be reviewed to determine if they:

1. Meet the “Requirements for Recipients of Older Americans Act Title III Funds” and Service Definitions and Standards
2. Provide a clear, complete, and accurate portrayal of the applicant organization including work plan, budget, staff costs, and non-Area Agency funding sources. AgeOptions will consider if an agency has made similar commitments in the past but not achieved them in other grant periods.
3. Demonstrate the following:
 - a. Evidence of the need for the services requested for funding
 - b. Ability to provide the proposed service(s) in a manner consistent with AgeOptions requirements and service standards
 - c. Assurance that Federal funds will not be used to assume costs previously accrued by the local agency or other funding source
 - d. Provide a local share of costs which meets cash match and in-kind requirements of AgeOptions
 - e. Reasonable unit rates compared to the applicant’s history as well as the average for the area

D. Minimum Requirements

Applications that do not meet minimum requirements will be deemed unresponsive and will not be considered. Appeals will not be considered for unresponsive applications.

1. The application and all accompanying documents are submitted on AgeOptions grants management portal. The applicant demonstrates the ability to administer programs in compliance with AgeOptions requirements as described in the Request for Proposal (RFP). Consideration will be given to all of the following items:
 - a. Proposed service activities are allowable (see service standards, definitions, and basic requirements).
 - b. Match (Local Cash and In-Kind) is identified and allowable.
 - c. Match is, at a minimum, 15% of the applicant’s cost less project income.

AgeOptions will conduct a brief review of all applications for completeness only and will notify any applicant that has missing application components. Applicants will have until April 26, 2019 (midnight) to submit any missing information into the Grants Portal.

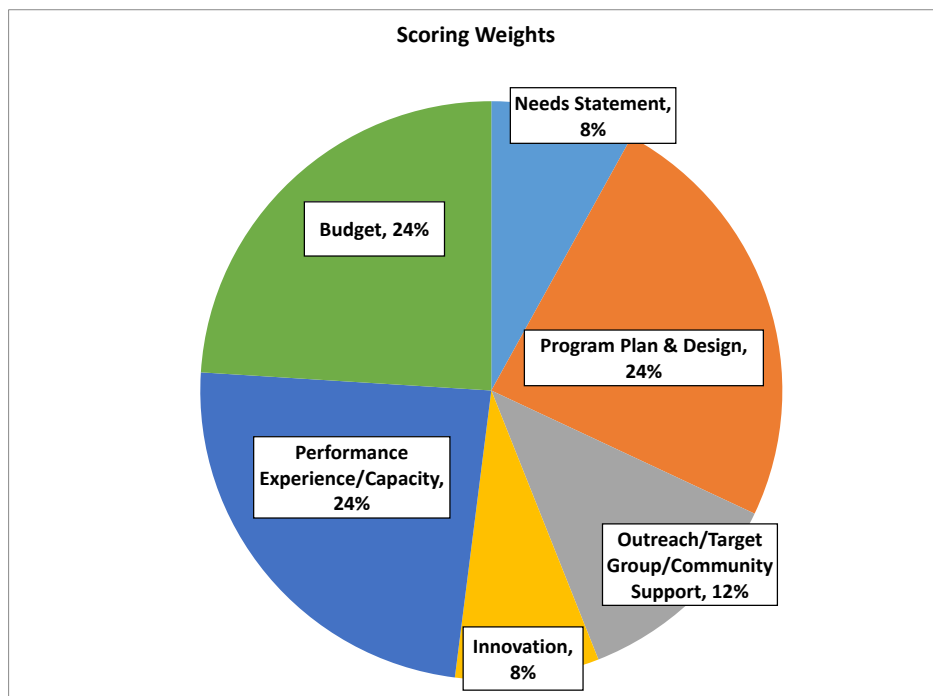
E. Application Format and Evaluation

Applicant’s proposals will be evaluated in the following categories:

1. Needs Statement
2. Program Plan and Design (Quality)
3. Outreach, Target Group, Community Support (Access)
4. Innovation (related to Social Isolation and Food Insecurity)
5. Performance Experience and Capacity
6. Budget

AgeOptions staff will review proposals and determine a “consensus” score for each question and for each service. Each question will receive a numerical score. The consensus points will be totaled for each service.

The weight of each category of the application is displayed in the following tables:



Summary – Scoring Tool

Section	Possible points	% of total points
Needs Statement	4	8%
Program Plan & Design	12	24%
Outreach, Target Group, Community Support (Access)	6	12%
Innovation	4	8%
Performance Experience and Capacity ¹	12	24%
Budget	12	24%
Total	50	100%

¹ An Agency on Corrective Action Plan or Notice of Deficiency at the time applications are scored loses maximum 4 possible points for this section; An Agency on Notice of Probation or Notice of Suspension at the time applications are scored loses maximum 5 possible points for this section.

F. Rejection of Proposals

AgeOptions reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals, to waive technical defects, and to accept or reject any part of any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.

Proposals must be presented in the format and sequence detailed in this RFP. Failure to do so, and/or to respond to specific questions or requirements is sufficient for a proposal's automatic disqualification.

In order to be considered, all proposals must be submitted independently and without collusion with any other contractor.

G. All Applications

Prior to a funding decision, AgeOptions staff may:

- Request a special presentation by the applicant(s)
- Conduct a site visit
- Request references
- Assess community support, additional level of match, infrastructure, and history of providing client centered services, etc.
- Consider AgeOptions experience with the provider, including, but not limited to, history of monitoring and compliance
- Request additional clarification of information

H. Notification and Appeal Process

Decisions on applications will be communicated to the applicant on or around July 1, 2019. An applicant not satisfied with the application process may file a

written appeal as outlined in the “AgeOptions Appeal Procedures.”

An appeal hearing may be arranged with the applicant if questions arise that call for further information to assist the AgeOptions Board of Directors in considering the appeal.

I. Debriefings

Applicants whose applications are not funded may also request a debriefing, which will provide feedback that can assist applicants in developing applications for future funding. Debriefings will take the form of advice to applicants on the strengths and weaknesses of their application in terms of the evaluation and review criteria. Debriefings are not part of the Appeal Process.

Requests for debriefing must be made in writing (via e-mail) and submitted within seven (7) calendar days after receipt of notice. Debriefing requests will not be granted if there is an active appeal, administrative action, or court proceeding. The written debriefing request shall include at minimum the following information:

- Name and address of the requesting party
- Identification of grant program.
- Reasons for the debrief request

Please send requests to:

Paula Bartolozzi, Grants Administrator
RFP@Ageoptions.org
Subject: Debriefing request

J. Agreements

Revised budgets that reflect actual awards must be submitted through the AgeOptions Grants Portal by August 16, 2019 at 11:59 pm. Please note that successful applicants may be asked to submit an additional or revised work plan, further clarifying certain components of their program(s). Final approval will take the official form of a notification of grant award with AgeOptions. A Notification of Grant Award for signature by the project and AgeOptions will be issued prior to October 1, 2019, subject to AgeOptions receipt of an award from the Illinois Department on Aging. Service shall begin on October 1, 2019. AgeOptions may issue Letters to Proceed prior to final execution of the Notice of Grant Awards.

**Questions or concerns should be sent via
AgeOptions' Grants Portal.**