



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR AGING  
AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

# COVID-19 Response

## April 24 Call: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

April 29, 2020

*DARS provides these FAQs in response to questions asked on the April 24, 2020 COVID-19 call with Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs).*

### **Can you address the spending start date for CARES Act funds?**

- The start date for these funds is April 1. We did not go back further since the March AMRs have already been submitted. If you need to adjust your March AMR, please contact Maurice Talley.

### **For CRIA2, could you give a scenario when to choose COVID-19 under "Funding Source" and the same for FFCRA?**

- FFCRA (Families First Coronavirus Response Act) funds are to be used for congregate and home delivered meals. Use this funding first, then CARES Act funding. Once this is depleted, then you can use traditional (original) OAA funds from any funding bucket. Keep in mind that COVID-19 is not a new funding source. It simply means that you can use any of your OAA funding buckets for disaster relief activities as long as the Major Disaster Declaration (MDD) is in effect. In addition to any allowable OAA services, a variety of activities could be provided under emergency services, such as grocery shopping or hotel rooms for at-risk homeless older adults.

### **I did not know CARES Act funds were received by DARS. When will each AAA know the specific amount of CARES Act funds for our AAA?**

- The funds will be awarded to each AAA this week.

### **Can we do a verbal consent to access locked files in PP instead of written consent during the emergency?**

- DARS sought guidance on using verbal consent for referrals in NWD at the beginning of COVID-19. We have not received a definitive answer, yet.

### **Can you expense FFCRA funds for emergency meals for congregate and HDM clients and record the units under emergency services, since there is no emergency under the FFCRA? Or, should you just record them as regular meals?**

- Emergency congregate and home delivered meals should be recorded as Families First Congregate Meals or Families First Home Delivered Meals in PeerPlace. They should not be recorded as emergency services. Grocery shopping for an individual would be recorded under emergency services.

## **Can we use funding to purchase SMART phones for individuals over 60 to stay connected with their doctor, social worker etc..?**

- Yes. This would be permissible to address social isolation; assist in ordering food, meals, and medications; facilitate access to health care providers; and provide virtual caregiver support. They can also be purchased to facilitate virtual visitation of facilities by LTC Ombudsmen. You need to consider whether you will provide them on loan during the public health emergency or permanently; who will cover monthly usage fees, upgrades , and lost or stolen devices; and whether they can be used by Individuals in the home who are younger than age 60. This is also true for internet/Wi-Fi or broadband access.

## **Do we have flexibility in timelines to record and track information in PeerPlace? We usually try to get everything in within 30 days but this may be an issue as we are all in crisis response.**

- Unfortunately, the AMR is still due on the 12<sup>th</sup> of the month for the previous month. Please do the best you can to get all service units entered.

## **What is the difference between COVID Money, FFCRA Money, and CARES Act Money?**

- COVID is the expenditure of traditional OAA funds for disaster relief services provided under Title III, while we are under the MDD.
- FFCRA is related solely to Meals
- CARES Act funding (with the exception of Ombudsman) will be allowed for usage for all Title III services while we are under the MDD. Once the MDD expires, CARES ACT Funding will be limited to services within the original funding sources.
- Please remember the priority for spending is FFCRA, CARES Act and then original OAA funding.
- These funds can be used for all clients, including those who were receiving services prior to the state of emergency, clients requesting temporary services, and new clients requesting services that may be unrelated to the pandemic.

## **What can we expect CARES Act funds to go toward - what programs, services, or supplies?**

CARES Act funds can go for the following services:

- CARES Act Emergency
- CARES Act Checking
- CARES Act Care Coordination
- CARES Act CG Other Supplemental
- CARES Act CG Other Respite
- CARES Act Transportation
- CARES Act Home Delivered Meals
- CARES Act Congregate Meals

- CARES Act Assisted Transportation
- CARES Act Care Transitions
- CARES Act CDSME
- CARES Act CG Individual Counseling
- CARES Act CG Support Groups
- CARES Act Chore
- CARES Act CRIA
- CARES Act Disease Prevention
- CARES Act Employment
- CARES Act Homemaker
- CARES Act Options Counseling
- CARES Act Personal Care
- CARES Act Socialization Recreation
- CARES Act Volunteer