

HOMEMAKER
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR AGING AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES (DARS)
SERVICE STANDARD

Definition

Homemaker services provide assistance to persons with the inability to perform one or more of the following activities of daily living: preparing meals, shopping for personal items, managing money, using the telephone or doing light housework.¹

Eligible Population

Homemaker services are targeted to persons 60 years of age or older who are frail, have disabilities, or who are at risk of institutional placement. Priority shall be given to persons who are in the greatest economic or social need and/or residing in rural or geographically isolated areas, with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and individuals with limited English proficiency.²

Service Delivery Elements

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) must perform all of the following components of homemaker services:

Service-Specific Assessment:

A service-specific assessment using Part A of the Uniform Assessment Instrument shall be performed by the Area Agency on Aging on each potential client to determine whether the individual is eligible for the service, the amount of the individual's service-specific need, and the individual's level of priority for service delivery.

- Federal Poverty should be determined and documented. The Federal Poverty/VDA form may be used.
- Any fee for service charge to the client shall be determined by the applicable sliding fee scale.

Care Plan:

A written individualized care plan must be developed by the Area Agency on Aging that identifies the service components to be provided to meet the client's assessed need. The plan must be developed prior to service commencement with involvement from the client or an authorized representative or family member. When "client" is used throughout the standards, it can also mean authorized representative or family member, as deemed appropriate by the agency and/or the client. The client shall be afforded the opportunity to participate in the implementation and evaluation of the plan. The plan may be modified to reflect any change in the client's needs. Each plan must include:

- identified service needs
- services to be delivered by the service provider or other sources
- goals and objectives of service to be provided
- the quantity of service units to be provided

¹ National Aging Program Information System Reporting Requirements – State Program Report Definitions

² Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended 2006, Section 306(a)(4)(A)(i)

Service Agreement:

A service agreement shall be completed between the client and the service provider. If the Area Agency on Aging is the service provider, the AAA will complete the service agreement. A copy of the Service Agreement will be maintained at the Area Agency on Aging. The agreement will explain the service arrangement to the client. The client shall receive a copy of the agreement. The agreement shall include:

- services to be provided
- scheduled hours and days of service
- information regarding voluntary contributions
- emergency contacts
- severe weather policy

Service Activities:

Service activities provided by the provider agency may include:

- Basic housekeeping and home management skills necessary to ensure safe, sanitary conditions in the client's home, such as dusting, vacuuming, sweeping and mopping. Housekeeping is performed only for the client;
- Instructing client in home management, including maintaining an orderly environment, proper food storage, preparation of shopping lists, meal planning and preparation;
- Shopping assistance with or without client;
- Personal laundry and mending of clothing;
- Client transportation may be provided only when other transportation services are unavailable and for scheduled appointments. Need must be clearly documented. Routine transportation is not permitted.

Client assistance may include:

- Assistance with eating, including set up, opening containers, and cutting food. Feeding is not permitted.
- Assistance with bathing of areas that the client cannot reach. Bed baths or transferring are not permitted.
- Assistance with dressing of ambulatory clients, such as the fastening of clothing on the client. Lifting or putting on braces or other supports is not permitted.
- Assistance with personal grooming, such as combing hair, brushing dentures and shaving with an electric razor. Cutting nails or shaving with a blade is not permitted;
- Supportive assistance with ambulation, such as providing stabilization to the client while walking. Lifting and transferring are not permitted.

Service Record:

A service record or log, signed by the client, shall record the date and duration of each time the service is provided. The service record or log shall be maintained at the Area Agency on Aging. Service units must be recorded in the approved DARS electronic data reporting system.

Service Reassessment:

A review of the client's need for services, the amount of services provided and the appropriateness of the care plan shall be performed by the Area Agency on Aging when the client's condition or situation changes, but at least annually.

- Federal Poverty Level should be determined and documented. The Federal Poverty/VDA form may be used.
- Any fee for service charge to the client shall be determined by the applicable sliding fee scale.

Service Termination Policy:

Homemaker services can be terminated at the discretion of the Area Agency on Aging, the service provider or the client. The client shall receive a copy of the termination policy when service begins. The policy shall have provisions for: appropriate advance notice to client, preferably of ten business days; a service summary, and referrals to other community service programs, as appropriate.

Administrative Elements

Area Agency on Aging Staff Qualifications:

- Knowledge: Area Agency on Aging staff should have an awareness of the biological, psychological, and social aspects of aging; an awareness of the impact of disability and illness on aging, and a knowledge of community resources and consumer rights.
- Skills: Area Agency on Aging staff should have skills in establishing and sustaining interpersonal relationships and in problem solving.
- Ability: Area Agency on Aging staff should have the ability to communicate with persons of different socioeconomic backgrounds and to work independently and in groups. Staff should have the ability to determine specific household tasks necessary to improve the environment and living conditions of the client.

Job Description:

For each paid position, an Area Agency on Aging shall maintain:

- A current and complete job description which shall cover the scope of a the staff member's duties and responsibilities, and
- A current description of the minimum entry-level standards of performance for each job.

Service Provider Staff Qualifications:

- Knowledge: Service provider staff should have an awareness of the biological, psychological, and social aspects of aging; an awareness of the impact of disability and illness on aging, and an awareness of community resources and consumer rights.
- Skills: Service provider staff should have skills in establishing and sustaining interpersonal relationships and in assessing what skills and equipment are essential to performing needed household tasks.
- Ability: Service provider staff should have the ability to perform household tasks needed by the client.

Units of Service:

Units of service must be reported in the approved DARS data system for each client receiving the service. Service units can be reported by a client on a daily basis, but not aggregated (summarized) more than beyond one calendar month.

- Hours (All hours spent assessing the need for, arranging and delivering homemaker services for the client.)
- Persons served (unduplicated)

Program Reports:

- Aging Monthly Report (AMR) to DARS by the twelfth (12th) of the following month. If the Area Agency on Aging supports the homemaker service, this report must be updated and submitted even if no expenditures or units of service occurred.
- AIM or PeerPlace client level data transmitted to DARS by the last day of the following month.
- A completed and properly maintained electronic/digital Part A of the Uniform Assessment Instrument (UAI) is a mandatory requirement.
- The question “Client in Federal Poverty?” (Answer Yes or No) must be asked and recorded.
- A written Policies and Procedures Manual must be maintained for the service.

Consumer Contributions/Program Income:

The Area Agency on Aging shall formally adopt written policies and procedures, approved by the agency’s governing board, regarding the collection, disposition, and accounting for program income.³ There must be a written policy on handling of Client Program Income (CPI) and other gratuities and donations.

Cost Sharing:

An Area Agency on Aging is permitted to implement cost sharing for recipients of this service.⁴

Voluntary Contributions:

Voluntary contributions shall be allowed and may be solicited for this service, provided that the method of solicitation is non-coercive. Such contributions shall be encouraged for individuals whose self-declared income is at or above 185 percent of the poverty line, at contribution levels based on the actual cost of services.⁵

Quality Assurance

Criminal Background Checks:

DARS strongly recommends that the agency and its contractors protect their vulnerable older clients by conducting criminal background checks for staff providing any service when said staff goes to or into a client’s home.

³ 22 VAC 5-20-410, Grants To Area Agencies On Aging, Department for the Aging Regulations, Virginia Administrative Code

⁴ Older Americans Act of 1965 as amended 2006, Section 315(a)

⁵ Older Americans Act of 1965 as amended 2006, Section 315(b)

Staff training:

Each homemaker service provider agency providing the above mentioned service activities shall comply with the following:

- At hiring, homemakers should receive orientation on agency policies and procedures, community characteristics and resources, and procedures for conducting the allowable activities under this service;
- All homemakers shall have a minimum of 16 hours basic training within the first year of employment; training topics should include, but are not limited to ethics and confidentiality in patient care, home safety precautions, working with diverse populations, and home management.
- Workers should receive a minimum of 8 hours per year of in-service training based on the need for professional growth and upgrading of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Supervision/Case Review:

- Consultation, supervision and case review shall be available to all staff providing the service.
- The Case Monitor Section for this service must be completed in the approved DARS electronic data system

Program Evaluation:

The Area Agency on Aging should conduct regular and systematic analysis of the persons served and the impact of the service.

- Service providers must be monitored annually. A written copy of the monitoring report must be maintained by the agency.
- Anonymous client surveys shall be conducted annually. A file of annual anonymous client surveys with a summary of the surveys shall be maintained by the agency.

Client Records:

Area Agencies on Aging must maintain specific program records in the approved DARS electronic data system that includes:

- Part A of the Uniform Assessment Instrument
- Federal Poverty Level
- Care Plan
- Service Reassessment, as needed
- Progress Notes
- Consent to Exchange Information Form
- A Caregiver Form, if this service is funded by OAA Title III E.

Area Agencies on Aging are to maintain the following additional client records:

- Service plan/documentation, including any fee charged the client
- Signed Client Bill of Rights/ Appeals Process
- Denial or Termination of Service Notice