



TOMPKINS COUNTY
OFFICE FOR THE AGING

Aging Better, Together

Tompkins County Office for the Aging Survey, 2024 Proposed Plan Abstract and Public Hearing Announcement

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging is asking the public for input regarding the services that we provide to the community. Your feedback will provide a snapshot of the current needs in our community and will be used in developing our plan for 2024.

We invite members of the public to read the attached abstract for the 2024 plan and provide input through a very brief survey. Please access this survey by visiting <https://www.surveymonkey.com/COFA> or by calling 607-274-5482. A staff person at the Office for the Aging will record your feedback over the phone. The survey questions are located on the following page.

The 2024 Proposed Plan Abstract of the Tompkins County Office for the Aging will be presented on, **Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 11:00am at the Danby Community Church, 1859 Danby Road, Ithaca.** The public hearing will be recorded and available to view on our YouTube channel. The Public Hearing provides a venue for community members to learn about programs and services provided by the Office for the Aging. It is also an important opportunity for the public to offer feedback about issues affecting older adults in our community and to provide input for the department's plan for 2024.

Please call 607-274-5482 to answer the survey questions over the phone **OR**

This survey is also available to complete online at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/COFA>

Thank you.

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging appreciates your feedback on the following questions. To answer these questions online please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/COFA> To answer these questions over the phone with a staff member at the Office for the Aging please call 607-274-5482.

The Office for the Aging provides a wide variety of services for older adults to help them remain independent in their home and community.

1. The following services are provided by the Office for the Aging. Do you have any suggestions on ways we could improve these services to meet the needs of the community? If yes, please identify the service and provide comments below.

Transportation

In Home Services i.e., housekeeping, personal care, respite

Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)

Caregiver Services, i.e., support groups, trainings, respite

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Health Insurance Counseling (HIICAP)

Information, Referral and Counseling

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

Project Care Friendly Visiting Program

Food and Nutrition Services

Small Home Repair Services

CAPS Evaluations and Falls Prevention

Legal Services

Technology Services i.e., access, training

2. Are you in need of additional services that you have not been able to find offered in our community? If so, what are those services?
3. Do you have any other comments related to future services for older adults?



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Mission: Our mission is to assist older adults and persons with long term care needs to live independently in their homes and communities with quality of life and dignity.

The 2024 Proposed Plan Abstract of the Tompkins County Office for the Aging will be presented at our public hearing, **11:00am, Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at the Danby Community Church, 1859 Danby Road, Ithaca.** The plan will also be posted on the Tompkins County Office for the Aging website. In addition, a survey link will be provided for people to access to respond to the plan and provide feedback. If you are unable to access the internet you can provide your feedback and questions by calling our office at 607-274-5482. Questions and feedback regarding the plan will be received throughout the month of February. The final Plan will reflect comments and suggestions made by the public.

The Proposed Plan Abstract includes findings from the following sources: the 2019 Needs Assessment of Tompkins County Individuals Age 60+, the 2016 and 2022 Age Friendly Ithaca and Tompkins County Action Plans, the 2023 Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults in Tompkins County, direct consumer feedback, programmatic trends, program evaluations, satisfaction surveys, information from state agencies and community partners, literature in the field of aging, observations and gaps identified throughout the year and from the sage advice from the Advisory Committee of the Tompkins County Office for the Aging.

Current Services: For a complete list, please see our 2022 Annual Report at <http://tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa> or contact our office directly to request a copy.

Directly Provided Services

- ❖ NY Connects Information, Referral and Options Counseling
- ❖ Health Insurance Counseling
- ❖ Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
- ❖ Personal Care Aide
- ❖ Falls Prevention Home Safety Assessments/CAPS Evaluations
- ❖ Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)
- ❖ Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program
- ❖ Public Information and Outreach
- ❖ Caregivers Resource Center and Alzheimer's Support Unit
- ❖ Project CARE/Project Generations
- ❖ Gadabout Transportation Tickets
- ❖ Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program serving Tompkins, Chemung, and Schuyler Counties
- ❖ Social Engagement Innovations
- ❖ Yard Work/Snow Shoveling List

Subcontracted Services

- ❖ INHS:
Small Home and Safety Repair Program
- ❖ Foodnet Meals on Wheels:
Senior Nutrition Program
- ❖ Lifelong:
Senior Circle Newsletter, Mosaic Program, Health Insurance Counseling, Aging Mastery Program, Senior Planet & Tech Hotline, Virtual Senior Center
- ❖ Finger Lakes Independence Center:
Home Care Registry and Consumer Directed Personal Care Services
- ❖ Caregivers, Home Instead Senior Care:
Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP) Non-Medical Home Care Services
- ❖ DSS Long Term Care Services:
Long Term Care Information & Assistance, EISEP Assessment and Case Management
- ❖ LawNY Legal Services:
Legal Assistance
- ❖ Human Services Coalition:
Coordination of the Long-Term Care Committee

Tompkins County Office for the Aging Plan for 2024

Contracts—The Office for the Aging intends to maintain all its current contracts assuming continuing availability of funds.

NY Connects—The Office for the Aging will continue to administer the NY Connects Program. This program provides residents of all ages with objective and comprehensive information about long term care services and supports available in Tompkins County. The Office for the Aging will adhere to the NY Connects Program Standards.

Age Friendly Ithaca and Tompkins County/Tompkins County Age Friendly Center for Excellence – Tompkins County and the City of Ithaca are part of the AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities, an initiative of the World Health Organization intended to help municipalities prepare for rapid population aging. The initiative is designed to help communities and local governments incorporate healthy, age friendly principles into relevant policies and programs. The Office for the Aging is collaborating with several community organizations to continue implementing age friendly initiatives. In 2019, we were designated as one of five Centers for Excellence in New York State funded to support the NYS Health Across All Policies Initiative by promoting Age Friendly, the NYS Prevention Agenda and Smart Growth Planning principles. The primary goal of the Tompkins County Age Friendly Center for Excellence (TCAFCFE) is to create livable communities for all ages to promote healthy aging by transforming the social and physical environment to support health and well-being for community members across the lifespan. In 2024, we will continue to work on our goals and tasks and begin to implement some of the work of the students in Professor Mildred Warner’s City and Regional Planning Class on Age Friendly Planning from Cornell. The students conducted research on action items from the Tompkins County Age Friendly Action Plan. They have developed a guidebook on age friendly planning for local planning boards. They have created specific reports on home modifications, transportation safety, delivery services, the role of libraries and fire stations in age friendly service delivery, and ways to increase childcare supply.

Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) Program— The Office for the Aging contracted with Doyle Medical Monitoring to offer Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS) to Tompkins County residents. The contract improved the technology used in people’s homes, assuring compatibility with landline, digital phones, and cell phone towers. The Office for the Aging continues to maintain its involvement in the customer service aspect of the program, with staff continuing to install PERS units in clients’ homes and be available for any troubleshooting. The Office for the Aging will continue to expand new and improved GPS device technology and work to increase the number of clients served through the PERS program by 10% and maintain those numbers in 2024.

Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program- The Office for the Aging will continue to cultivate relationships and partnerships in Tompkins, Schuyler, and Chemung Counties. Currently, we have 3 full time staff who are certified Ombudsmen: a Program Coordinator, an Outreach and Ombudsman Program Specialist, and a Project Assistant. The Ombudsman Program received additional funding in 2023 and will be hiring 2 new full time Outreach and Ombudsman Program Specialists in 2024. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman program’s

efforts will be focused on increasing coverage at all facilities through increased staffing and recruiting of additional volunteers. Efforts will also be made to ensure residents continue to have unobstructed visits and the ability to participate in resident councils, group dining, and other activities that have been restricted during covid.

Policy Trends— We will work to continue to strengthen community options that make it possible for older adults to age well and safely at home and in the community. The Aging Network plays a pivotal role in addressing the social determinants of health and bridging the gap between the acute care and long-term services and supports systems. The Office for the Aging will be partnering with the Human Services Coalition and Cayuga Health in the first cohort of social care providers on the Community Health Network Transformation grant. This collaboration will build an integrated network of healthcare and social care providers to work towards improving health outcomes and community health equity. The Office for the Aging will continue to monitor the effects of current policy and legislation that affect the lives of older adults. Examples include addressing social isolation and loneliness, supporting, and strengthening our resources for caregivers which includes home care aides and the direct care workers challenges, as well as informal and family caregivers. We will monitor the information on the Master Plan on Aging process and investments in funding for programs and services. We will continue to review issues that affect the LTSS delivery system and how populations navigate it and serve as a catalyst to advance changes in the LTSS system to ensure the availability of appropriate, quality community services.

Supporting Social Engagement- We were already aware of the struggle that many older adults face with loneliness, isolation, and lack of regular companionship. As aging professionals, it is one of our goals to address and ease social isolation and loneliness and the associated health risks. This has been even more challenging as a result of the pandemic. In attempts to mitigate some of the devastating effects of social isolation we began to look for innovative ways to reach people:

Project CARE Friendly Visiting Program- Project CARE matches older adults in our community with volunteer friendly visitors. These volunteers provide weekly visits to the older adult and provide socialization and engagement. This program is an important resource to combat loneliness and isolation for many older adults. In 2024, the Office for the Aging will continue to enhance Project CARE by implementing easy to use websites for volunteers and participants, utilizing volunteers for respite for caregivers where personal care is not required, focus on, and grant special requests by participants such as assistance with a small project, running errands, etc., and increasing recruitment of volunteers.

Innovations sponsored by the New York State Office for the Aging

ElliQ-



ElliQ is a digital care companion that helps older adults remain active, engaged, and independent. Designed for individuals that spend most of their day alone, ElliQ empowers older adults to take control of their physical, mental, and social health. The Office for the Aging will continue to offer these out to older adults in the community in 2024.

Joy For All Companion Pets-



In 2024, the Office for the Aging will continue to match and provide socially isolated clients with robotic companion pets. There is compelling evidence that shows these lifelike robotic pets increase meaningful interactions between family and friends, can facilitate intergenerational connection, stimulate conversation and communication, calm anxiety and soothe those who are agitated. These pets can increase quality of life for those with dementia or who are socially isolated. We have several cats and dogs and Walker Squawker animatronic birds that are available for "adoption". These interactive animatronic pets offer support, comfort, and companionship to older adults.

VSC (Virtual Senior Center)-



The Virtual Senior Center (VSC) gives older adults a place to go, learn, explore, and socialize without having to go anywhere. An active online community with live courses 12 hours a day, 365 days a year, the VSC is a constant and welcoming companion to

help make meaningful connections. The Office for the Aging will continue to partner with our local Senior Center, Lifelong, to provide this service.

Client Satisfaction/RBA– In 2023, the Office for the Aging worked with student interns and measured client satisfaction with the following services: NY Connects, Personal Emergency Response System (PERS), Home Delivered Meals, and Personal Care Services. Overall satisfaction with these programs was positive. Through Tompkins County’s Results Based Accountability (RBA) initiative, these particular services will be measured annually. In 2024, the Office for the Aging will measure client satisfaction for the additional services of the Health Insurance Information, Counseling, and Assistance Program (HIICAP) and the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). This data will also be used for the purposes of funding and will be incorporated into our office’s yearly budget.

The Caregiver’s Resource Center and Alzheimer’s Support Unit- Is designed to help caregivers provide quality care for older adults and persons with disabilities while also maintaining the quality of their own lives and the lives of their family member. In 2021, we expanded our Caregiver Support Group to a bi-weekly basis and enhanced our resource materials and library. We will continue to enhance our support and offerings in 2024, including promoting the following innovative resources to assist and empower caregivers.

Trualta-

The New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) and Association on Aging in New York (AgingNY) have partnered with Trualta to offer Trualta’s web-based caregiver education and support platform at no cost to any unpaid caregiver in New York State.

Archangels-

ARCHANGELS is a national movement and a platform that is reframing how caregivers are seen, honored, and supported using a combination of data and stories. We believe shining a light on caregivers, so they feel seen, honored, and supported is the first line of care. The Caregiver Intensity Index (CII) is designed to engage all caregivers, even those who do not see themselves in that role.

TCARE-Tailored Caregiver Assessment and Referral-

Starting October 1, 2023, the Office for the Aging has been utilizing TCARE, an evidence-based program which is designed to serve our caregivers more effectively. TCARE provides screening, assessment, intervention, and support for caregivers. It begins with a dynamic screening tool and a personalized evaluation conducted by our caregiver coordinator to individuals providing uncompensated care to someone else, such as family members or other loved ones. This assessment delves into critical areas such as identity, stress, depression, and the delicate balance between caregiving and life objectives, capturing the impact on the caregiver’s relationship. The evaluation also highlights the positive, uplifting aspects of their caregiving journey. This specialized platform and database allows our caregiver coordinator to track progress and identify needs in order to provide the most effective interventions and support.

Volunteer Respite Project-NYS Caregiving and Respite Coalition (NYSCRC) AmeriCorps Senior Demonstration Project (SDP) sponsored by Lifespan of Rochester-

In 2024, the Office for the Aging will work in partnership with Lifespan to execute this opportunity for caregiver respite in Tompkins County. This program is a volunteer-to-workforce program with a stipend, for people aged 55+. COFA will serve as a volunteer station for volunteers who are recruited and trained to provide respite and matched with a caregiver in the community.

Transportation- GoGo Grandparents Partnership-In 2024 the Office for the Aging will be participating in NYSOFA's Supplemental Transportation Funding Opportunity in partnership with GoGo Grandparents to provide additional transportation options in the county. GoGo Grandparents uses sources like Uber and Lyft, with specially trained drivers and technology to offer a variety of services. For our purposes, this service will provide on demand rides for older adults and people with disabilities. This funding partnership from NYSOFA and GoGo Grandparents will allow our office to provide a limited number of rides to people for medical appointments.

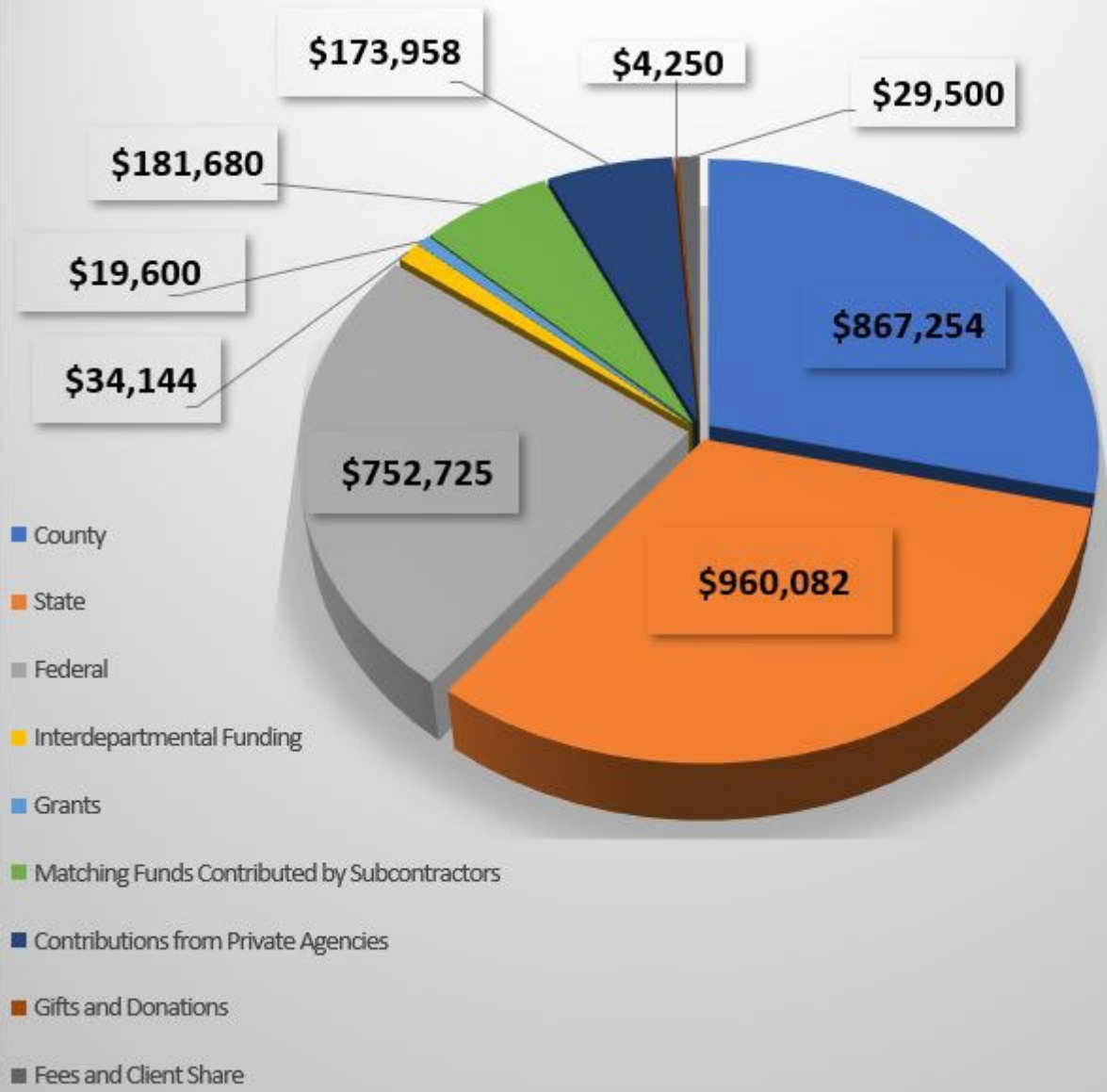
Personal Home Care Aide-In November 2022, the Office for the Aging began directly providing a Personal Home Care Aide as a result of the crisis in the workforce that we are experiencing here locally and across the state. We have been able to serve between 15 to 20 people on a regular basis, helping them to stay safely and independently in their homes. In this past year we have discovered that while we are doing a good job serving people on our waiting list, many of the clients on the list have increasingly complex needs that require additional coordination and triaging of information between the Personal Home Care Aide, Case Managers and the appropriate services and supports to support their independence. In 2024, we hope to be hiring an additional Personal Care Aide.

Targeting- The Office for the Aging will continue its efforts to target its services to underserved populations including non-English speakers and racial/ethnic minorities. We will strive to maintain racial and socio-economic diversity on our Advisory Committee and include older adults from all areas of Tompkins County. Outreach staff members will continue to direct efforts to older adults of lower income, those who are isolated, and those living in rural portions of the County, as well as continue to engage Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender older adults.

Unmet Needs: The Office for the Aging maintains a list of “unmet needs.” These are requests for services which are currently in short supply or unavailable in Tompkins County. Efforts are currently underway among service providers, including the Office for the Aging, to address several unmet needs on this list.

- ❖ Home health aides and certified nurse aides
- ❖ Affordable, accessible housing, both subsidized and private sector
- ❖ Transportation services on evenings and weekends as well as out of town medical appointments
- ❖ Transportation escorts and scribes (accompanying for appointments or after procedures)
- ❖ Medicaid funded Assisted Living Program (ALP)/Enhanced Assisted Living option, including a dementia unit, for low- and moderate-income individuals
- ❖ Increase in the Medicaid personal needs allowance for residents of skilled nursing facilities
- ❖ Power of Attorney and Health Care Proxy representation for individuals who lack family & friends
- ❖ Assistance for de-cluttering homes for low-income individuals
- ❖ Geriatricians and geriatric nurse practitioners
- ❖ Geriatric Care Managers
- ❖ Legal assistance to assist low-income individuals understand and address code violations
- ❖ Behavioral health care for older adults in long term care facilities
- ❖ Assistance with bill paying/check book balancing services
- ❖ Public benches and resting spots for older adults who walk
- ❖ Quality, affordable dental care, especially for those with Original Medicare, Medigap or Medicaid

Sources of Funding 2024 COFA Budget



<u>FUNDING SOURCE</u>	<u>2024 AMOUNT</u>
County Funding	\$867,254
State	\$960,082
Federal	\$752,725
Interdepartmental Funding	\$34,144
Grants	\$19,600
Matching Funds Contributed by Subcontractors	\$181,680
Contributions	\$173,958
Gifts and Donations	\$4,250
Fees and Client Share	\$29,500
Total	\$3,023,193

Comparison of Funding Sources 2023-2024	2023	2024
Alzheimer's Association of CNY Respite Grant	\$20,000	\$19,600
Federal Balancing Incentives Program: Expanded NY Connects	\$306,759	\$300,922
Federal Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program	\$33,937	\$39,478
Federal Home Energy Assistance Program	\$34,144	\$34,144
Federal Medicare Improvements Patients and Providers Act	\$16,344	\$16,344
Federal Nutrition Services for the Elderly Program	\$110,000	\$110,000
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIIB	\$400,068	\$397,967
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIIC	\$612,872	\$456,811
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIID	\$5,790	\$5,562
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIIE	\$54,010	\$74,310
Locally Funded Small Home and Safety Program	\$26,525	\$26,525
Locally Funded Personal Emergency Response Program	\$35,533	\$35,373
NYS Caregiver Resource Center	\$20,036	\$21,471
NYS Community Services for the Elderly Program	\$248,336	\$222,399
NYS Unmet Needs Program	\$172,803	\$172,803
NYS Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program	\$403,013	\$393,895
NYS Ombudsman Program	\$164,915	\$208,155
NYS Wellness in Nutrition	\$397,362	\$487,434
TOTAL	\$3,062,447	\$3,023,193