

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Department of Community and Cultural Affairs

OFFICE ON AGING

P.O. Box 502178, Saipan MP 96950



CNMI FOUR-YEAR STATE PLAN ON AGING

FY 2015 – 2019

Prepared by: Walter A. Manglona

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I. VERIFICATION OF INTENT

The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs (DCCA), Office on Aging (OoA), hereby submits the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) State Plan for the Office on Aging for the period of four years covering October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2019. The Office on Aging will serve as the State Unit on Aging and has the authority to develop and administer the State Plan on Aging in compliance with the requirements of the Older Americans Act P.L. 109-365. The State Agency is primarily responsible for the coordination of all State activities related to the purpose of the Act, including but not limited to the development of comprehensive and coordinated care systems for the delivery of services. These services include supportive services, protective services, multi-generation programs, multi-purpose senior centers, and nutrition services. The State Agency will serve as the effective representative and visible advocate for the older population of the CNMI. For purposes of this State Plan, the CNMI is a single planning and service area (SPSA), and is 100% rural and 100% minority community.

The State Plan on Aging hereby submitted has been developed in accordance with applicable Federal statutory and regulatory requirements.

DATE: _____

Laura T. Ogumoro
Secretary
Department of Community and Cultural Affairs

I hereby approve the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Island's (CNMI) State Plan on Aging that constitutes authorization to proceed with activities under the Plan and is submitted to the Assistant Secretary on Aging for review and approval.

DATE: _____

Eloy S. Inos
Governor, CNMI

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Office on Aging (OoA) under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs (DCCA) is charged with the direct responsibility of assisting the CNMI elderly and people with disabilities to secure equal opportunity to the full and free enjoyment of objectives declared under Title I Section 101 of the Older Americans Act of 1965 as amended in 2006 (Public Law 109-365). As per requirement of the aforementioned Act, the OoA hereby submits the CNMI Four-Year State Plan on Aging, covering the period of October 01, 2015 to September 30, 2019.

The CNMI Four-Year State Plan on Aging will provide direction for the development of a comprehensive and coordinated system of home and community based services that allow senior citizens and older persons with physical disabilities to continue to live in their homes and communities. The State Plan will serve as a comprehensive document that provides direction for the OoA as it plans and implements long-term care reform efforts. These reforms will assist elderly individuals and people with disabilities to maintain independence and dignity in their homes and communities. It is the intent of the State Plan to strategically guide the agency to address the challenges of an aging and disabled population in the CNMI. The CNMI, like other states and jurisdictions, is facing a rapidly growing new generation of long-term care consumers. It is the desire of the CNMI OoA to preserve the closely-knit family tradition that values caring for the elderly and those with disabilities at home among their nuclear and extended families. The islands take pride in their elderly and those with disabilities staying with their families despite their old age and/or disabilities as they become the source of wisdom and are role models to perpetuate the island culture for the younger generations.

The CNMI Four-Year State Plan on Aging is aligned to the national goals and objectives of the Administration for Community Living (ACL) Strategic Action Plan of 2013-2018. The State Plan will continue to pursue the core programs provided for by Title III such as supportive services and senior centers, nutrition service, disease prevention and health promotion services, national family caregiver support program, and transportation services.

The CNMI's State Plan references the coordination and the collaborative efforts in working relationships with our partnering agencies such as the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), Northern Mariana Island Protection Services, Inc. (NMPASI), Community Guidance Center (CGC), Medicaid Office, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Residential Energy Assistance Challenge Program (REACH), Division of Energy, Office of the Attorney General, Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP), and the Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD Council).

In addressing the needs of the CNMI's aging population, the Office on Aging sets forth the following goals and objectives as aligned with those of the Administration on Aging (AOA):

Goal 1: Provide information to the general public on the programs and services available at the Office on Aging, to include Title III-B, Title III-C, Title III-D, Title III-E, Title VII, and Title V.

Goal 2: Enable people with disabilities and older adults to live in the community through the availability of and access to high-quality long-term services and supports, including supports for families and caregivers.

Goal 3: Work with older adults and people with disabilities as they fully engage and participate in their communities, make informed decisions, and exercise self-determination and control about their independence, well-being, and health.

Goal 4: Protect and enhance the rights; and prevent the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults and people with disabilities.

Goal 5: Advocate to ensure the interests of people with disabilities, older adults, and their families are reflected in the design and implementation of public policies.

Goal 6: Implement management and workforce practices that support the integrity and efficient operations of programs serving people with disabilities and older adults and ensure stewardship of taxpayers' dollars.

The State Plan on Aging includes a provision in consideration of emergency preparedness in view of natural or man-made disaster and health emergencies. Coordination with other agencies, such as the CNMI Governor's Office and the CNMI Department of Homeland Security, is a factor in the aforementioned provision.

To engage public participation in the review of the State Plan on Aging, a formal Public Hearing on Saipan, Rota, and Tinian will be conducted prior to the final submission of the plan. The OoA Director will conduct the public hearing in Saipan, while OoA Coordinators in Rota and Tinian will conduct public hearings on their respective islands to solicit comments from the elderly, people with disabilities, and community members. Copies of the State Plan will be made available to the public at the Senior Centers on all three islands a week prior to the public hearings. An announcement will be made public on the local newspapers (Marianas Variety/Saipan Tribune) a week before the public hearings.

The Office on Aging will monitor the implementation of existing programs and services, the realization, and the achievements of the State Plan on Aging goals and objectives through semi-annual and annual written reports to be submitted to the Secretary of the Department of Community & Cultural Affairs. Such reports will be open for public view.

III CONTEXT

A. A Brief History

The Northern Mariana Islands possess a long and fascinating history. The islands were first settled approximately in 1800 BC by seafaring immigrants from the islands of Southeast Asia. These settlers, who are ancestors of the modern Chamorro people, constructed their villages and buried their dead throughout the islands, particularly in coastal beach areas on Saipan, Tinian and Rota. Late in prehistoric times, Chamorros began building their houses atop stone pillars and caps, which are called latte. This distinctive and unique architectural form is now the most important cultural symbol of modern Chamorros. It was also during this time that most of the rugged islands to the north of Saipan were settled permanently as was the rugged, beach-less island of Aguiguan.

In the early sixteenth century, the islands were visited by Spanish explorers and, by the late 1500s; Rota became a repositioning stop for Spanish galleons carrying silver from New Spain to the trading center of Manila in the Philippines. A century and one half later, a Jesuit mission was established on nearby Guam. Within forty years, the priests had converted the islanders to Catholicism, a process that led to the collapse of the traditional Chamorro social order and to the relocation of the surviving islanders into small mission villages. In spite of a tremendous drop in population and the imposition of western customs, the Chamorros were able to maintain their indigenous language.

For the next two hundred years, the Northern Marianas were administered as an isolated outpost in the Spanish colonial empire. In the early decades of the nineteenth century, immigrants from several small atolls and islands in the Central Carolines settled on Saipan and Tinian to escape their storm-ravaged homes. Their descendants, known as the Carolinians, now constitute the Commonwealth's second indigenous population.

Following the Spanish-American War, Germany purchased the Northern Marianas from Spain. The United States retained Guam, thus splitting the administration of the archipelago, a situation that has continued until the present. Germany concentrated on infrastructure and economic development during its fifteen-year rule of the Northern Marianas. Its administration was brought to an abrupt end at the outbreak of World War I when a Japanese naval squadron seized the Archipelago. Japan focused on commercial development and by the early 1930s; large sugar cane plantations and refining mills were operating on Saipan, Tinian and Rota. At the height of operations, the Northern Marianas produced tons of processed sugar, alcohol, and other products, which were shipped to markets in Japan. Japanese agriculture settlements were also established on several of the Northern Islands and Aguiguan, as well. In pursuing their development priorities, the Japanese cleared virtually all of the tillable land on Saipan, Tinian, Rota and Aguiguan and tens of thousands of Japanese and Okinawan agricultural and factory workers were brought in to meet the growing labor demands. By the late 1930s, the foreign population in the Marianas numbered more than 40,000, roughly ten times the size of the indigenous population. During this period, the Northern Marianas and its people were assimilated as integral parts of the Japanese empire.

Economic prosperity came to an end in 1941 with the outbreak of World War II in the Pacific. Airfields on Saipan were used during the Japanese attack on American-held Guam but it was not until early 1944 that the Japanese military began to fortify the islands in anticipation of amphibious landings by American marines. Over the course of four months, hundreds of defensive positions were constructed and the islands were reinforced by over 40,000 Japanese combat troops. These efforts proved unsuccessful, however, and the islands fell to American troops in the summer of 1944 following weeks of bloody fighting which claimed thousands of Japanese and American casualties. After their capture, Saipan and Tinian were transformed into giant airbases needed for the strategic American bombing campaign against Japanese home islands. In addition to airfields, the Americans constructed harbors, road systems and supply bases needed to support the anticipated invasion of the Japanese home front. Lacking a good harbor, Rota was bypassed and its small Japanese garrison stranded. The costly Pacific war was brought to an abrupt end following the atomic bomb attacks launched from Tinian in the summer of 1945.

Following the war, the islands were administered by the Department of the Navy under a Trusteeship Agreement created by the United Nations. In the 1950s and early 1960s Saipan was used as a secret training base for Nationalist Chinese guerrillas, an operation reportedly directed by the Central Intelligence Agency. In 1962, military control over the Marianas District ended, and Saipan became the capital of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The Northern Marianas became one of the six districts administered by the Trust Territory government.

Later in the 1960s, Chamorros and Carolinians made their desires known regarding their future political status. Many people sought reunification with Guam and a referendum was held in 1969. Although the reunification objective was supported by a majority of Northern Marianas voters, the voters on Guam rejected it. Not wishing to remain part of Micronesia, and desiring close political association with the United States, a Northern Marianas political delegation began direct negotiations with the U.S. Government. These negotiations were undertaken to separate the Northern Marianas from the Trust Territory government and to establish a permanent political union with the United States. After several years of negotiations, a Covenant to establish a Commonwealth was approved by the Northern Marianas District Legislature in 1975. This document was also approved by both houses of the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President Gerald Ford on March 24, 1976. The Covenant created the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and provided residents with self-government and U.S. citizenship. Under this agreement, the Commonwealth is entitled to participate in a wide range of federal programs. The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands benefits from substantial subsidies and development assistance from the federal government of the United States.

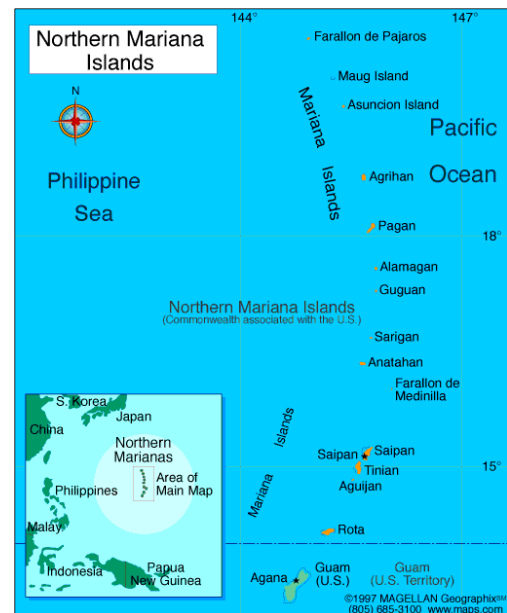
Shortly after attaining Commonwealth status, the Northern Marianas, particularly Saipan, became the focus of tourist related developments. Throughout the boom years of the 1980s and early 1990s, outside developers, initially from Japan, and later from Korea and China, leased thousands of hectares of public and private land and constructed a wide range of tourist-related facilities including resort hotels, golf courses and commercial buildings. To keep up with the rapidly expanding economy, the Commonwealth government expended

millions of dollars on needed infrastructure such as roads, utilities, sewers, harbors and airports. During this relatively brief period, Saipan went from a quiet, rustic island of 14,000 to a heavily developed tourist destination with a population of nearly 69,221. This rapid development significantly increased economic prosperity and raised the local standard of living to a level unmatched in the islands' history. These advancements, however, were not achieved without significant costs.

After the 9/11 attacks, three major developments adversely affected the economy of the CNMI. From that day onwards, the exodus of the major garment manufacturing companies that were once a major source of the CNMI's revenue effected a short fall in the CNMI revenue. The garment factories, owned by foreign investors, relocated to other places in the globe. Then tourism, the second major source of revenue, suffered setbacks. It is worthy to note that in the past Saipan, Rota, and Tinian of the CNMI were favorite destinations of Japanese tourists. The weakening of the Japanese economy has affected the influx of tourists causing a marked decrease in island revenues. In November 2009, the federal takeover of the CNMI immigration and labor took place leading to the remaining foreign business investors leaving the Commonwealth and moving their businesses elsewhere. The event caused the majority of our citizens and nonresident workers to be jobless. Presently because of the continuous rise in cost of basic commodities and less income being received by families, even with the minimum wage of \$6.05 per hour, majority of affected families have ended up living from paycheck to paycheck making it difficult for them to make ends meet.

B. The Northern Mariana Islands and Its People

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands comprises fourteen separate islands arranged in two gently curving arcs between 13 and 21 degrees north latitude and approximately 145 degrees east longitude. The islands lay roughly 1,491 miles east of the Philippines and 1,553 miles southeast of Japan. They are the northernmost group in a region of the Pacific commonly referred to as Micronesia. Although the island of Guam is a part of the Mariana archipelago, it is politically separated from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and is administered as an unincorporated territory of the United States. The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' climate is marine tropical with distinct dry and wet seasons. Located in the primary storm track of the western Pacific, the archipelago routinely is affected by tropical storms and typhoons, the most powerful of which may pack winds of over 200 miles per hour. Large storms generate high winds and storm surge, which greatly impact vegetation, destroy buildings and structures, and reconfigure coastal environments.



The Commonwealth's population is concentrated on the main southern islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota. Saipan is by far the most populous and developed, with a total population of 48,220. The island is about 12 miles long and 5.5 miles wide and is the principal commercial center of the Northern Mariana Islands. In Saipan you will find a balanced mix of beautiful nature with modern hotels and shopping. As with all the islands in the CNMI, in Saipan you will find beautiful white sandy beaches with crystal clear water and pure, fresh air. Some popular sites on the island include Forbidden Island, known for its stunning views, great snorkeling, hidden pools, and cave; Banzai Cliff and Suicide Cliff, where hundreds of Japanese civilians and soldiers jumped to their deaths near the end of WWII, rather than surrendering to American troops; The Grotto, a unique diving spot with a collapsed limestone cavern and pool of cobalt-blue seawater filled by three underwater passageways, and more. Annual festivities on the island of Saipan include the Flame Tree Arts festival, Marianas March against Cancer, Taste of the Marianas, Liberation Day Carnival and Parade, village Fiestas, Tagaman Triathlon, and others.

Saipan also serves as the seat of the Commonwealth government. The CNMI is a bicameral legislature that includes the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House of Representatives comprises of 18 members for Saipan, 1 for Rota, and 1 for Tinian. The Senate consists of 9 Senators, with 3 seats each for Saipan, Rota, and Tinian.

Tinian, lying only three miles south of Saipan, has a much smaller population, with a total population of 3,136 which occupies the southern one-third of the island. The northern two-thirds of Tinian are leased by the U.S. government and used for military training exercises. Tinian currently possesses little resort development, with the exception of a large casino that was built in 1999 called the Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino. Each year Tinian celebrates fiestas and other festivities such as the San Jose Fiesta and the Pika Festival. Pika means hot or spicy in the Chamorro language. Tinian is famous for its hot pepper. The Tinian "Pika" Festival revolves around the "Donni Sali" (wild hot pepper), indigenous to the island. Tinian's potent hot pepper has become popular and has been making its way to different parts of the world as more tourists bring them back to their home countries. There is a variety of marine life and coral reefs surrounding the island. Tinian's clear, warm waters are ideal for snorkeling, scuba diving and sport fishing.

Rota is the southernmost island of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and is the second southernmost of the Marianas Archipelago. It lies approximately 40 nautical miles (74 km) north-northeast of the United States territory of Guam. Sinapalo village is the largest and most populated village followed by Songsong village. Rota has slightly less people than Tinian, with a total population of 2,527. Rota has been called "Nature's Treasure Island" or the "Friendly Island" due to its remarkable island features and friendly gestures by its people. In the island of Rota people routinely wave at passer-byers even while driving. Warm smiles and nice hospitality are very common among the island's residents. Rota has many unique features such as its wedding cake-shaped mountain called the "Wedding Cake Mountain" and bright blue lagoon called the "Coral Garden". Locally grown sweet potatoes and other crops make Rota an ideal place to find fresh produce. Each year the island celebrates the Kamuti (Sweet Potato) Festival. The biggest annual events on Rota are the San Francisco de Borja Fiesta held every October, and the San Isidro Fiesta held in March.

Visitors from the CNMI and Guam visit the island to enjoy the daylong celebration. Great local food and lots of entertainment makes each event in the CNMI special. Rota’s blue lagoon, waterfalls, locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables, wildlife, and its friendly people makes the Island of Rota truly “Nature’s Treasure Island.

The other islands in the southern arc are the small, terraced island of Aguiguan, situated 5 miles south of Tinian. Aguiguan is uninhabited, although there are plans for its commercial development. Farallon de Mendinilla located 40 miles north of Saipan is leased to the military and is used as a target for aerial bombardment training.

To the north of Farallon de Mendinilla lie nine islands commonly referred to as the “Northern Islands”. These islands are geologically more recent and are volcanic in origin. Several possess active volcanoes. In general, they are small, rugged, and lack beaches. Flat land, developed reef systems, and protected anchorages are additional characteristics that greatly limit their development potential. Currently, only three of these islands- Agrigan, Alamagan and Anatahan- possess tiny communities of 20 people each. Long standing plans have been proposed to significantly expand infrastructure on several islands to accommodate a proposed government-sponsored homesteading program.

Size and Elevation Data for the Northern Mariana Islands chain from the southernmost island to the north.

Island	Area in Square Miles	Peak Elevation in Feet
Rota	32.97	1591
Aguiguan	2.74	583
Tinian	39.29	580
Saipan	44.55	1551
Farallon de Mendinilla	.32	265
Anatahan	12.05	2582
Sariguan	1.92	1797
Guguan	1.49	987
Alamagan	4.29	2440
Pagan	18.24	1866
Agrigan	16.80	3162
Asuncion	2.82	2919
Maug	.82	744
Urracas	.98	1046

The indigenous residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Chamorros, are the descendants of the original settlers who successfully colonized the archipelago nearly 4,000 years ago. A second indigenous population, established in the mid-1800s, comprises the descendants of immigrants from the Central Caroline Islands, small atolls and islands which lay to the south of the Marianas archipelago between Chuuk and Yap. Due to rapid economic development and the resulting demand for outside labor,

indigenous residents are now a minority population in the Commonwealth. Reflecting the multi-cultural make-up of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Commonwealth Constitution established three official languages; English, Chamorro, and Carolinian. Official government business is conducted in the English language.

Although the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is tiny in terms of population and land area when compared to mainland jurisdictions, it is both culturally and ethnically diverse and physically spread out over thousands of square miles of ocean.

C. Demographic Trends

The following is a comparison of the total population in the CNMI based on 2005 Census and the latest Census conducted in 2010:

Total Population by Age	2005	2010	% Change
0 to 4 years	5,335	4,827	- 10%
5 to 9 years	5,244	4613	- 12%
10 to 14 years	5,621	4921	- 13%
15 to 19 years	4,971	4250	- 15%
20 to 24 years	6,260	2670	- 57%
25 to 29 years	6,238	3027	- 52%
30 to 34 years	6,576	3898	- 41%
35 to 39 years	6,562	5057	- 23%
40 to 44 years	6,000	5766	- 4%
45 to 49 years	5,148	5009	- 3%
50 to 54 years	3,207	4123	+ 29%
55 to 59 years	2,124	2612	+ 23%
60 to 64 years	1,174	1544	+ 32%
65 to 69 years	662	699	+ 6%
70 to 74 years	308	440	+ 43%
75 years and over	<u>498</u>	<u>427</u>	- 14%
Total	65,692	53,883	

In 2010, the total population of the CNMI declined by 18%. The total number of senior citizens from age 60 and up increased by 18% which also comprises 5.8% of the total population in 2010. The overall decline of the CNMI population is caused primarily by the economic downturn that led to the dwindling of the tourism industry and the closure of the garment factories. The CNMI started to experience the downturn when the World Trade Organization lifted the restrictions to Chinese imports to the U.S. in 2005 that put the Commonwealth-based trade under pressure, leading to a number of garment factories closure. In addition, due to the U.S. imposed scheduled wage increases, the garment industry in the CNMI became extinct in 2009, which led to mass exodus of migrant workers that comprised majority of CNMI population.

Due to continuous economic hardships, most of our own indigenous people are forced to migrate to Guam and the U.S. mainland for better opportunities.

D. The CNMI Office on Aging (OoA)

1. OVERVIEW

The mission of the OoA is to develop, coordinate, and deliver support services to the elderly, people with disabilities, and their families and caregivers. The OoA focuses on maximizing clients' independence, well-being, and health. It is the Office's intent to provide opportunities for seniors to play an active role in the community and to proactively implement a wide range of functions relative to planning and advocacy for a system designed to assist the elderly persons to live their lives with meaning and dignity. The mission clearly directs the pathway of the Office, thereby complying with the philosophy that senior citizens and people with disabilities should enjoy quality independent living to the greatest extent possible.

The vision of the OoA is for the elderly and people with disabilities to have the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of society and community life and be continuously productive, be able to maintain their health and independence for as long as time allows, and remain in their own homes and communities for as long as possible without the isolation of life in institutions such as nursing homes. Such vision is based on the American values of independence, productivity, and family. The same vision is in consonance with the CNMI's customs, traditions, and culture cognizant that dignity is inherent to all individuals in our democratic society and that caring for older people and people with disabilities is not looked at as a chore but more of a duty out of gratitude for their contribution to both the family and the community.

As the Administration on Aging reinforces its commitment to State and local flexibility in crafting and executing programs that fulfill the mission and vision of AOA, the CNMI OoA will do its part in meeting that mission and vision by expanding its connectivity with other local public agencies and community partners to provide services to ensure that they can best meet the unique needs of our elderly within the context of the AOA.

The Office on Aging is under the auspices of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, a member of the Executive Branch. DCCA is comprised of 9 divisions and programs to include:

- 1) Division of Youth Services-** the Division of Youth Services (DYS) has the responsibility to promote the well-being of children, youth, families, and the community as a whole. DYS focuses on awareness and prevention efforts for child abuse and neglect, parent education, and more.
- 2) Child Care Licensing Program-** the Child Care Licensing Program (CCLP) ensures the health, safety and well-being of children in licensed day care centers and group home care

providers throughout the CNMI by establishing appropriate rules, monitoring for compliance, offering technical assistance and training to caregivers, and providing consumer education.

3) Historic Preservation Office- the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) has the responsibility to promote the preservation and protection of all significant historic and archaeological properties in the CNMI and the important duty of educating the public in facets of the islands' cultural heritage and historic preservation.

4) Nutrition Assistance Program- the Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) in the CNMI, also known as the Food Stamp Program, was established to promote the general welfare and to safeguard the health and wellbeing of Commonwealth residents by raising the levels of nutrition among low-income, zero-income and needy families and individuals. Moreover, NAP supports and stimulates the local economy by ear-marking 30 percent of the Monthly Food Stamp Allotment (commonly known as Local Coupons) for each Household Case or family household and individual strictly for the purchase of foods grown, raised, caught, or processed in the CNMI as a finished food product for family consumption. In addition, the other 70 percent of the latter is referred to as the U.S. Regular Coupons, which are considered "flexible" coupons in that they may be used for purchases of imported food commodities as well as local products.

5) Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture- the Commonwealth Council for Arts and Culture (CCAC) is responsible in providing arts programs for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Since 1981, the CCAC has served as the CNMI State Arts Agency. As such, it is eligible for and receives funding from the U.S. federal arts granting agency, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

6) Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program- the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) accommodates and improves services for low-income families, the elderly, and people with disabilities who are eligible to receive power subsidy and mini weatherization. LIHEAP focuses on providing assistance in increasing efficiency of energy use and reduce home energy cost.

7) Child Care & Development Fund- the Child Care & Development Fund Program (CCDF) assists low income families in accessing quality child care for children while parents work or participate in education or job training.

8) Chamorro/Carolinian Language Policy Commission- the Chamorro and Carolinian Language Policy Commission (CCLPC) is mandated to conduct study on the languages and cultures of the Chamorro and Carolinian in the CNMI; describe the grammar and prescribe good usages for the two indigenous languages; prepare a modern and updated version of the Chamorro/Carolinian English Dictionary; represent the Northern Mariana Islands in meetings and conferences on matters dealing with both languages; make recommendations to the Legislature on standard orthography to be used in schools; research both languages and its people and to provide such resources in the Commonwealth library; and to make recommendations to the Legislature on policies governing the usage of both languages in the public and private sectors.

9) Office on Aging- the Office on Aging (OoA) is designated to assist the CNMI elderly persons and people with disabilities and to secure equal opportunity to the full and free enjoyment of objectives of the Older Americans Act of 1965 as amended in 2006. The Office on Aging extends services to those elderly known on the islands as *Man Amko*’ identified as most in need of assistance due to their frail condition, belonging to the low income group, belonging to the minority group, or those who are socially and economically disadvantaged. The OoA provides services such as transportation services, access assistance, and legal services to registered clients in the CNMI. To help meet the nutritional needs of the elderly and people with disabilities, the Office on Aging provides healthy and nutritious meals to eligible clients. Through the National Family Caregiver Support Program under Title III- E, the OoA assists family members caring for individuals who are 60 years of age and older, grandparents and other family members caring for children with developmental disabilities. Services such as respite care, information services, and counseling is being offered to help relieve stress and provide important information and trainings to registered caregivers. The Office on Aging also receives funding through the Department of Labor for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) also known as the Title V program of the Older Americans Act. In order to be eligible for this program an individual must be 55 years and older and must meet the low-income poverty guidelines. This program, through the Office on Aging, yearly provides certain number of jobs depending on the availability of funding for eligible senior citizens throughout the CNMI. This program is designed to aid senior citizens in gaining job skills for employment and allowing each client to be paid federal minimum wage for 20 hours of employment each week. The participants of this program are employed and placed in various host sites within the CNMI government and non-profit agencies. The purpose of the Title V program is to help senior citizens stay financially independent and to eventually place them in unsubsidized employment.

2. STAFFING

The Office on Aging has a total of 22 full-time employees. Fourteen (14) are federally funded and eight (8) are locally funded.

OoA employees are as follows:

1. **Director (1)** – Responsible for overseeing all AOA funded programs consisting of the entire Title III and Title VII programs and is also charged with the responsibility to coordinate the Senior Community Service Employment Program also known as the Title V program of the Older Americans Act. Oversees the operations of all three Senior Centers in Saipan, Rota & Tinian. Works directly with ACL Region IX Offices in receiving instructions, guidance, and training. Assists in working with developing positions that are federally funded and to provide proper trainings to help meet the proposed goals and objectives. The Director handles the National Aging Program Information Systems (NAPIS) State Program Reports through the State Reporting Tool (SRT), and monitors, reports, and concurs all expenditures made by the program. This position is fully funded by the State and stationed in Saipan.

2. **Community Development Specialist III (2)** – Assists the Director in overseeing all program and activities at the Senior Centers. Ensures that the active participants have access to different types of exercises, information, and other services while at the center. Works closely with the Director in enforcing all outreach operations that are being tasked to the Community Development Technicians, and assists caregivers to access the respite care program, compiles daily meal counts from the 3 islands and performs other duties as assigned by the Director. This position is 100% federally funded and stationed in Saipan.
3. **Administrative Officer III (2)** Serve as Program Coordinators for the islands of Rota and Tinian Senior Centers. Works closely with the Director in overseeing and monitoring all operations for the Senior Centers in their respective islands. Compiles documentation for reporting to the main office in Saipan each month and monitors all client activities. Reports directly to the Director but is supervised by the DCCA Resident Director of their respective islands. This position is fully funded by the state.
4. **Secretary II (1)** – Serves as a secretary for the Director and as front office receptionist for all incoming clients looking for different types of referral information. Disseminates all incoming information to everyone involved in the referral process. Compiles and organizes all purchase orders, memorandums, travel authorizations, and other official documents. This position is stationed in Saipan and is 100% federally funded.
5. **Administrative Assistant (1)** –Assists and monitors all administrative matters for the Office on Aging Center in Rota. Documents daily activities and assist in other areas as needed. This position is fully funded by the state.
6. **Account Clerk I (1)** – Monitors transportation mileage, and fuel consumption and compares both documentation to ensure that there is no waste in fuel consumption for all 3 islands; compiles and inputs all “Meals on Wheels” delivery documentation for reporting; and is in charge of processing and filing of all communication expenses. Handles all other account billings and submits them to the Director for review. This position is stationed in Saipan and is 100% federally funded.
7. **Community Development Specialist I (1)** – Conducts assessment on homebound clients’ needs. Creates fun activities for the enjoyment of active clients and also serves as the Time Keeper for the Office on Aging. This position is stationed in Saipan and is fully funded by the state.
8. **Community Development Technician (3)** – Assists clients in renewing their Medicaid applications. Refers clients to agencies in which they may be eligible to receive assistance or benefits. Coordinates with bus drivers in transporting clients to and from their hospital appointments. This position is stationed in Saipan and is 100% federally funded.
9. **Cook III (1)** – Prepares and cooks daily breakfast and lunch for active and home bound clients. This position is stationed in Tinian and is fully funded by the state.

10. **Cook II (1)** – Prepares and cooks daily breakfast and lunch for active and home bound clients. This position is stationed in Rota and is 100% federally funded.
11. **Bus Driver (7)** – Responsible for picking up and dropping off active participants to and from the Senior Centers. Transports clients to their medical appointments, banks, stores, and more. Six of the Bus Drivers are stationed in Saipan and one in Rota. Four are federally funded while three are funded by the state.
12. **Custodial Worker (1)** – Monitors all cleaning and operational supplies and makes sure that the Senior Center is kept clean at all times. Also does other related duties as assigned. This position is stationed in Saipan and is fully funded by the State.

3. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The CNMI Office on Aging offers home and community-based services which include the Older Americans Act Core, Title III and Title VII programs. These services are offered to elderly individuals and persons with disabilities and consist of: Supportive Services, Nutrition Services, Transportation Services, National Family Caregiver Support Program, Elder Abuse Prevention Program, and the Senior Community Service Employment Program.

Title III-B Support Services Program

The Office on Aging offers a variety of services to assist in the physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being of elderly clients and people with disabilities. The OoA continuously provides a number of supportive services and activities that include:

1. Multi-Purpose Senior Center

The Office on Aging has established Multi-Purpose Senior Centers on Saipan, Rota, and Tinian where elderly individuals and people with disabilities can gather together and participate in various activities offered on a daily basis. Our elders have full access to the Senior Center, a public building with modern amenities. These centers provide a supervised venue where elders can congregate according to their needs and interests. The Senior Centers on all 3 islands are open Monday thru Friday from 7:30am to 4:30pm and are closed on weekends and holidays. In meeting the basic needs of elders, the center provides nutritional meals, physical exercise, health check-ups, and accessibility to stores, payment offices, social service offices, and more. It also provides an opportunity for seniors to socialize, have new experiences, and share lessons learned. "Bingo" is the most popular activity among the clients, however other recreational activities such as arts and crafts, sports, and music are also offered. Off-island guests and school children frequently visit the centers to spend time with and story-tell with our Man Amko'.

2. Transportation Services

The Office on Aging provides transportation services for the elderly and people with disabilities over the age of 60. OoA staff transport the senior citizens to pick-up their bi-weekly pension checks, monthly food stamp coupons from the Nutrition Assistance

Program, and Social Security and SSI checks. They are also afforded transportation by OoA staff to make utility payments, bank transactions, market runs, library visits, and other routine errands as necessary. The Office may provide an escort for medical and other appointments as requested.

3. Recreational and other services such as:

- **Computer Literacy** – There is no doubt that knowing how to operate a computer is a useful skill in today’s world. It is our goal at the Office on Aging to introduce basic technological efforts to the elders and people with disabilities. The CNMI Office on Aging offer tutorials on how to operate a computer, create documents on Microsoft word, excel, and power point, surf the internet, and are also encouraged to create email accounts and access social media. By providing access to computers and the internet, our elders are able to remain intellectually active as well as cater to their social and emotional needs by keeping in touch with friends and family members living abroad via email, social media, and video chat.



- **Music** – There are many opportunities at the Senior Centers for the elders and people with disabilities to engage in musical activities. The Saipan Senior Center has formed a Senior Citizen Band, complete with a lead singer, guitarist, bass man, and drummer. There is also a separate area designated for karaoke. During gatherings and performances, our Man Amko’ are always given the opportunity to perform for the audience.



- **Arts & Crafts** – Cultural Arts & Crafts is highly regarded among the elderly and people with disabilities. Our Man Amko’ are encouraged to stay creative and maintain the island custom of weaving, carving, beading, and more. Our elders often act as presenters to school children, teaching them the art of these traditional crafts.
- **Water Therapy** – We offer therapeutic water exercises at the swimming pool of a participating hotel and/or beach at least once a month. On Saipan, seniors are brought to the Hyatt Regency Hotel, on Rota they are brought to the Rota Resort, and on Tinian they visit the beach. Many of our elders find it more effortless and enjoyable to exercise in water since it is easier on their joints.

- **Morning Stretching/Health Walk** – Every morning, we begin our daily program with a simple stretching routine that allows our Man Amko’ to become physically ready and energized for the rest of the day. We encourage them to take a walk at least once a week.

- **Recreational Activities** - We provide various games and activities that are available daily to allow our elders to remain active while at the Senior Centers. Such activities include bingo, billiards, board games, foosball, softball, basketball, ground golf, gym, karaoke, movies, gardening, and more.



- **Movie Production** – On occasion, our elders are given the opportunity to act in short films/commercials for the promotion of the Senior Centers and its services. The most recent production was entitled “The Man Amko’ Movie Project” which was used as a fundraising mechanism for the Saipan Seniors’ Advisory Council, a non-profit organization that uses its funds for the benefit of the elderly clients and people with disabilities enrolled at the Office on Aging.
- **Cultural Tutorial** – The Office on Aging provides opportunities for the elders and people with disabilities enrolled at the program to visit schools to do storytelling, dancing, singing, arts and crafts, and more. These cultural tutorials also enable opportunities for the elders and people with disabilities to discuss the history and use of traditional crafts.
- **Traditional and Contemporary Dance Class** – Our Man Amko’ at the Senior Centers enjoy dancing. A few times a week, the elders and people with disabilities are given the opportunity to enjoy themselves with dancing and music in the dining hall. Multiple dance groups have already been formed. These groups usually perform during special occasions and fundraisers.
- **Cultural Variety Shows** - Each year the Man Amko’ showcase their talent at the Annual “Cultural Variety Show” that takes place during the Older Americans Month celebration in May. During this performance, they perform traditional dances, musical acts, dramatic interpretations, and more.
- **Man Amko’ King & Queen** - The “*Man Amko’* King and Queen Fundraiser” takes place every year during the month of May to help raise funds for upcoming off-island trips and/or other celebrations.
- **Off-Island Trips** – Our Man Amko’ enrolled in the program are given the opportunity to go on trips to our neighboring islands of Tinian, Rota, or Guam, upon the availability of raised funds by the Saipan Seniors’ Advisory Council, a nonprofit

organization consisting of our elders and people with disabilities enrolled in our program. A weekend hotel getaway or hotel celebrations are also considered.

Title III-C Nutrition Services Program

To help meet the nutritional needs of elderly persons and those with disabilities in the CNMI, the Office on Aging provides hot packaged-meals under its nutrition services program. There are two types of meals available: Congregate Meals (C1), which is for active clients who partake in the activities offered by the Senior Centers; and Home Delivered Meals (C2), which is for homebound clients whose circumstances hinder their full participation at the Senior Centers. Meals are served



five days a week, excluding holidays. In Saipan, the nutrition program is outsourced to a private company. This company is tasked to prepare and deliver lunch to all active and homebound clients on Saipan. On Tinian and Rota, meals are prepared by the office cooks and distributed to active and homebound clients by OoA personnel. Tinian and Rota, due to its small number of clients, are able to afford breakfast and lunch for its clients five days a week, excluding holidays. The OoA nutrition program provides a minimum of 33 and 1/3 percent of the current daily recommended dietary Allowance (RDA) as established by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Academy of Sciences, National Research Council. All meals are approved by a registered dietician, and special menus are available for clients with renal failure. Meals and ingredients are vigilantly supervised to ensure utmost quality and freshness.

Title III- D Preventive Health

The CNMI Office on Aging focuses on health risk assessments, routine health screenings, health promotion programs, physical fitness, prevention of age-related diseases and chronic disabling conditions.

The CNMI Office on Aging contracts health care providers to routinely conduct blood pressure checks, blood sugar counts, and weight checks, of our Man Amko' at the Senior Center. Should additional appointments be needed, the OoA provides transportation services to and from the appointments. Health advocate groups, doctors, and other professionals frequently visit the Senior Centers to offer lectures and counseling on proper diet, importance of exercise, disease information and prevention, diabetes control, and more.

The Office on Aging promotes healthy living of older persons and people with disabilities, and prevention of disease using evidence-based practices such as:

1. Tai Chi - is designed to improve the strength, balance, and physical functioning of individuals with diminished physical abilities, including older adults and those with Parkinson's disease. Tai Chi is a nontraditional form of exercise, which is used to help participants improve postural stability, control of body positioning, gait initiation and locomotion, movement symmetry, and coordination; increase the range of motion around ankle joints; and build strength in lower extremities. Tai Chi also can be used to enhance mental health, improve sleep quality, and reduce blood pressure.
2. Therapeutic Yoga – is designed to increase muscle tone, balance, strength, and improve mood. It has also been shown to improve sleep quality and improve depression, reduce stress, help control blood sugar in people with diabetes, enhance respiratory function, help alleviate arthritis pain, and increase bone density and prevent osteoporosis.
3. Diabetes Education & Counseling – is designed to teach people with diabetes how to manage their diabetes in order to live a healthy life. It focuses on healthy eating, being active, monitoring, problem solving, healthy coping, and reducing risks. Diabetes education is not a lecture on what not to do. It's real-life guidance, coaching and support proven to help people understand exactly how to best manage their diabetes, and to feel less alone while doing it.
4. Nutrition Education- is any combination of educational strategies, accompanied by environmental supports, designed to facilitate voluntary adoption of food choices and other food and nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well-being.



Title III-E National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP)

Through the National Family Caregiver Support Program under Title III E of the Older Americans Act, we assist caregivers of individuals who are 60 years of age and older, and grandparents or other family members caring for children with developmental disabilities. This program ensures that those family members and other caregivers are able to provide adequate services to individuals in need. The OoA has outlined the following activities as part of the implementation plan under the National Family Caregiver Support Program.

1. **Information Services** – The Office on Aging offers information and other resources to caregivers that may be useful to them, including tips on how to deal with stress, and more. Print-outs are available at the Office on Aging and are also disseminated to

caregivers. Media outlets such as radio stations, television networks, and newspapers are also used to promote the NFCSP to recruit other caregivers and elderly clients.

2. Access Assistance – Is a service that assists caregivers in obtaining access to the services and resources available within the communities. The Office on Aging coordinates with a network of agencies such as various social service networks, public safety, and others that will be readily accessible to caregivers if needed.

3. Counseling – Is a service that assists caregivers in decision-making and problem solving related to caregiver roles. This includes counseling to individuals, support groups, and caregiver training. OoA staff, along with trained healthcare providers will conduct visits to the homes of the caregivers to provide necessary training and counseling.

4. Respite – Is a short term accommodation to provide temporary relief to those caring for elder persons and people with disabilities. This service is provided once a month per client, for a minimum of one hour. The Office on Aging contracts a nursing company to provide temporary relief for caregivers to allow them time to rest and prevent burnout.

Title VII – Elder Abuse Prevention Program and Ombudsman

Elder Abuse Prevention Program - CNMI Public Law (Public Law No. 9-21) provides for the protection of elders from physical, financial, and mental cruelty. The Elder Abuse Prevention Program upholds this law. In deterring abuse and protecting the interests of elders, this program protects those who may be especially vulnerable due to physical or mental capacity. Investigations are conducted by the staff from Attorney General's Office (AGO) and referrals are made by the Office on Aging and Department of Public Safety to appropriate agencies. In support of the program the following are in place:

- 1. Legal Assistance Service**– This service provides appraisal of elders' legal rights and provides options to elders to help protect those rights. This service includes legal representation and education on legal issues in the best interest of the clients, such as wills, land titles, benefits, and finances. This service is provided in collaboration with the CNMI Attorney General's Office.
- 2. Multi-Disciplinary teams** of law enforcement agencies, older adults and consumer organizations such as the Attorney General's Office and the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy System, Inc. (NMPASI) to inform elderly persons and people with disabilities of fraudulent consumer practices and how to pursue legal action when exploitation has occurred.

Ombudsman Program – There are no nursing homes or adult day care services in the CNMI. With the above referenced services, the Office on Aging provides protection, rights, and entitlement to the elderly and people with disabilities of the CNMI.

Title V - Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

SCSEP is also known as the Title V program of the Older Americans Act. SCSEP is a training program for older individuals 55 and above needing additional skills in order to join the workforce. Participants work 20 hours a week, and cannot be in the program longer than 48 months before transitioning to unsubsidized employment. The goal of the program is to provide the necessary training and guidance to eligible individuals so that they may enter the workforce outside the SCSEP program, while maintaining their financial independence. The OoA currently has 34 slots for SCSEP participants: 24 in Saipan, 5 in Rota, and 5 in Tinian.

IV. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

Goal 1: Provide information to the general public on the programs and services available at the Office on Aging, to include Title III-B, Title III-C, Title III-D, Title III-E, Title VII, and Title V.

Objective

- Provide informational brochures to the community to help promote our programs and services.
- Advertise our programs and services and other important information on the radio, television, newspapers, and internet in the quest to reach out to more elderly individuals and people with disabilities in our community.
- Organize the Annual CNMI Conference on Aging with the intent to provide updated information to our elders and people with disabilities.

Measurement

- Informational brochures will be available year round at the Senior Centers and distributed during special events held outside the Senior Centers. A goal of approximately 1,000 brochures will be disseminated to the community by the end of each year in the hopes of educating community members about the programs and the services we provide.
- Media advertisements through cable television (Flame Tree T.V./Docomo Pacific), newspapers (Marianas Variety/Saipan Tribune), radio stations (KKMP/Sorenson Media Group) and our website (dcca.gov.mp) will be available year round to people in the CNMI to further promote the programs and services of the CNMI Office on Aging.
- The CNMI Conference on Aging will be held annually during the Older Americans Month in May. The CNMI Conference on Aging is usually held at a major hotel in Saipan.

Outcome

- Increased public knowledge of OoA programs and services to ensure that more senior citizens and people with disabilities will benefit from those programs and services.
- Increased number of participants availing of OoA programs and services.

Goal 2: Enable people with disabilities and older adults to live in the community through the availability of and access to high-quality long-term services and supports, including supports for families and caregivers, and access to emergency management.

Objective

- Provide nutritional meals to the elderly population, both active and homebound, including caregivers.
- Continue transportation services to and from the Senior Centers, appointments, personal errands and other destinations as necessary.
- Provide support for caregivers to include respite care, information services, access assistance, and counseling.
- Disseminate contact information of the OoA Director and staff to all senior citizens and people with disabilities, to include government cellular numbers, for use in case of an emergency.
- Consolidate the contact information of all senior citizens and people with disabilities, to include telephone numbers (home and cell phones), physical address and map of residence, email address, and list of individuals for emergency contacts. This will be done for all 3 senior centers, and for both active and homebound clients to be used in case of emergency.
- Consolidate the contact information of all OoA employees on all three islands and distribute to the OoA Director and OoA staff in both digital and hard copies for use in case of emergency.

Measurement

- Nutritional meals will be given to the elderly and caregivers daily, excluding weekends and holidays. The approximate number of days per year in which meals will be served is two hundred and forty six (246). Approximately 21,156 meals will be served in Saipan for active participants and 47,970 for home delivered meals. In Tinian, approximately 10,332 for active participants and 13,038 for home delivered meals. In Rota, approximately 16,236 for active participants and 13,038 for home delivered meals.
- Transportation services will be available Monday thru Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. excluding holidays. Approximately 15,744 rides will be given annually in Saipan, 7,872 in Tinian, and 3,936 in Rota.
- Respite care, information services, access assistance, and counseling for caregivers will be given once monthly. Approximately 47 caregivers on Saipan avail of respite care each month. Certified home care specialists are not available on Rota and Tinian to provide respite care to caregivers. An estimated 40 caregivers will avail from information services, access assistance, and counseling each year.
- All contact information of registered elderly clients and persons with disabilities will be collected upon registration and will be updated annually every January or as needed.
- Contact information for all OoA staff will be compiled and updated every January or as needed.

Outcome

- Healthy, nutritious meals provided to the elderly and people with disabilities will encourage healthy eating habits and help alleviate food costs.
- Our elders and people with disabilities will have a means to transportation to help them in their daily lives.
- Encourages self-sufficiency by allowing the elderly and people with disabilities to independently perform their own errands.

- Prevent burnout of caregivers by providing a break from care giving duties, receive important information, obtain caregiver trainings, and a chance to speak to a counselor for any concerns.
- Easier access to OoA staff and management during an emergency.
- The OoA will be able to communicate with the elderly and people with disabilities in the event that an unexpected emergency or disaster occurs.

Goal 3: Work with older adults and people with disabilities as they fully engage and participate in their communities, make informed decisions, and exercise self-determination and control about their independence, well-being, and health.

Objective

- Maintain collaborative strategies with health care providers in promoting evidence-based disease and disability prevention programs to include health lectures and physical fitness activities such as yoga, tai chi, swimming, and more.
- Coordinate/schedule health screenings and other services on a regular basis to include eye check-ups, blood sugar checks, blood pressure checks, and more.

Measurement

- Health lectures will be conducted monthly at the senior centers on all three islands. Approximately 86 active participants will avail of this service in Saipan, 21 in Tinian, and 33 in Rota.
- Activities that promote physical fitness such as Tai Chi and Yoga under the Preventive Health Program (Title IIID) will be conducted weekly at the senior centers on all three islands. Approximately 86 active participants will avail of this service in Saipan, 21 in Tinian, and 33 in Rota.
- Health checks for our elders and people with disabilities will be conducted weekly at the senior centers on all three islands. Approximately 86 active participants will avail of this service in Saipan, 21 in Tinian, and 33 in Rota.

Outcome

- Increased knowledge of healthcare information and strategies so that elders and people with disabilities will be able to make informed decisions pertaining to their health and wellness.
- Elderly clients will feel more energetic and stress-free due to increased physical activity.
- Better control of age-related illnesses such as diabetes and hypertension.

Goal 4: Protect and enhance the rights; and prevent the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older adults and people with disabilities.

Objective

- Coordinate and collaborate with the CNMI Attorney General's Office and/or the Northern Marianas Protection and Advocacy System, Inc. (NMPASI) through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to provide legal assistance and information to safeguard the rights and entitlement of elderly persons and people with disabilities. Currently, an MOA is in place

with the Attorney General's Office. The Office on Aging is also planning to develop an MOA with NMPASI for this purpose.

- Disseminate information on the existence of the CNMI Elder Abuse Prevention Law, Public Law No. 9-21. Information will be available at the senior centers on all three islands and during special events such as Talent Shows at the Multi-Purpose Center, the Annual King & Queen activity, the Conference on Aging, and more. Conduct outreach assessments to homebound elderly to look for possible signs of elder abuse and/or neglect. There are currently 148 homebound elderly in Saipan, 35 in Tinian, and 37 in Rota. Homebound elderly may be more vulnerable to abuse and/or neglect due to their frail nature and deteriorating health. .

Measurement

- An Attorney from the CNMI Attorney General's Office or a representative from NMPASI will visit the Office on Aging in Saipan monthly.
- An Attorney will also visit both Rota and Tinian Senior Centers quarterly.
- Informational brochures and pamphlets on elder abuse prevention will be available year round at the senior centers. A goal of approximately 1,000 pamphlets should be distributed by the end of every year.
- Office on Aging staff will conduct outreach to homes quarterly to ensure the safety of elderly individuals and people with disabilities on all three islands and look for possible signs of elder abuse and/or neglect.

Outcome

- Elderly individuals will be more informed of their rights and have access to legal opinion.
- Increased public knowledge on elder abuse prevention and neglect so that people will be well informed on how to deal with and report elder abuse and neglect in the CNMI.
- Overall decrease in cases of elder abuse and neglect in the CNMI.

Goal 5: Advocate to ensure the interests of people with disabilities, older adults, and their families are reflected in the design and implementation of public policies.

Objective

- Solicit comments from the elderly, people with disabilities, and their families on issues related to Aging and public policy.
- Document any concerns from the elderly, people with disabilities, and their families and forward it to the Governor and the CNMI Legislature.

Measurement

- A survey related to the design and implementation of public policies will be conducted at the end of every fiscal year at the Senior Centers to ensure that elders and people with disabilities are heard and will be forwarded to the appropriate agency. Focus groups or satisfaction surveys will be created annually to solicit such things.
- Concerns/comments from the elderly and people with disabilities will be forwarded to the appropriate individuals as needed.

Outcome

- Interests of people with disabilities, older adults, and their families will be well protected.

- A sense of significance and value will be afforded to elders and people with disabilities as their opinions will matter.

Goal 6: Implement management and workforce practices that support the integrity and efficient operations of programs serving people with disabilities and older adults and ensure stewardship of taxpayers' dollars.

Objective

- Conduct participant survey (written or verbal) evaluating program effectiveness and services provided. One survey will be given to all participating elderly, active and homebound, at all three senior centers yearly.
- Compile participant data for active and homebound clients, and caregivers for reporting. Data on number of participants, services availed, meals served, and more will be kept on file at the Office on Aging and used for annual reports and the National Aging Program Information Systems (NAPIS) State Program Report.
- Improve the quality of legal services through regular evaluations, and investigations of complaints. Evaluations will be made by the elderly and people with disabilities on the legal services received by the CNMI Attorney General's Office/Northern Marianas Protection Advocacy System Inc.

Measurement

- Participant surveys on the effectiveness of OoA programs will be distributed at the end of every fiscal year to all elderly, active and homebound, on all three islands.
- Data collection of participants and services provided will be compiled semi-annually, every December and June, on all three islands.
- Legal services evaluation surveys will be given to each participating elderly or person with disability at the end of every fiscal year for the purpose of ensuring that they are satisfied with the legal services provided.

Outcome

- Increased effectiveness and efficiency of all OoA programs and services.
- Monitor changes in data of elderly participants and people with disabilities to be able to focus on areas in most need.
- Improved quality of legal services provided to the elderly and people with disabilities.

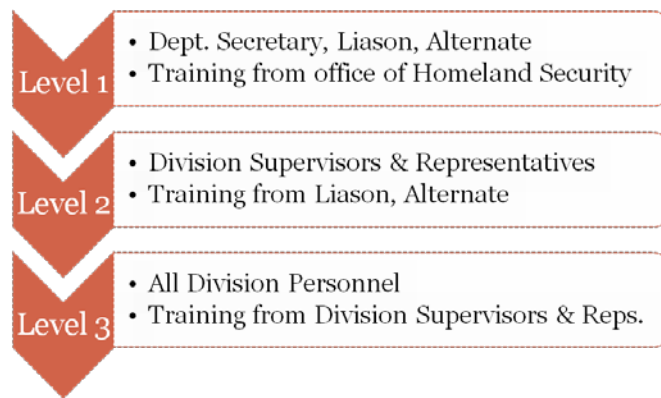
V. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Northern Marianas, due to its geographical location, is open to nature-caused disasters that include typhoons, earthquakes, and tsunamis. The CNMI Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (HSEM) through the Governor provides warnings when impending disasters are imminent. Warnings are given through weather bulletins, radio broadcasts and cable television inserts. The Department of Public Safety (DPS) sends officers on patrol to verbally disseminate the warnings to the general public through a public address system.

Cognizant of the vulnerability of the elderly and people with disabilities whether the disaster is nature-caused or man-made, it becomes imperative for the OoA to craft a standard operation procedure to specifically assist them during emergencies including health-related incidents. The Office on Aging operates on the same emergency preparedness procedures as the other divisions under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs (DCCA).

The Secretary of DCCA appoints a liaison from its department to communicate any crucial information with HSEM. A Disaster Preparedness Committee is assembled to collaboratively engage key people in discussion for providing quality and effective services to the community. The Office on Aging currently has 2 staff assigned to the DCCA Disaster Preparedness Committee.

Training will be conducted in three folds to minimize disruption in each division’s daily functions. However, it should happen every time there is new information or changes to procedures or policies pertaining to disaster preparedness.



In the case of a disaster where emergency shelters have been assigned, the Office on Aging, together with the DCCA Disaster Preparedness Committee, will assist in the transportation of individuals to nearby shelters. Two OoA staff have been assigned to the DCCA Disaster Preparedness Committee for this purpose. Office on Aging vehicles may be utilized to assist with transportation when all active and homebound clients have been secured, and with the approval of the OoA Director. The use of OoA vehicles should prioritize elderly individuals and people with disabilities. The Rota Senior Center has been designated as an emergency shelter should a disaster become imminent. In Saipan and Tinian, designated shelters include public schools and other establishments.

The CNMI Office on Aging understands the reality that emergencies and disasters occur when we least expect it. In order to ensure that OoA operations continue in case the senior centers are demolished during a disaster, the OoA will create a plan so that staff and the elderly and people with disabilities will be able to contact one another. The Office on Aging will consolidate the contact information of all senior citizens and people with disabilities, to include telephone numbers (home and cell phones), physical address, email address, and list of individuals for emergency contacts. This will be done for all 3 senior centers, and for both active and homebound clients. The OoA will also compile the same listing for its employees on all three

islands. These listings will be held by the Director and OoA staff, in both digital and hard copies. In addition, all senior citizens and people with disabilities will be given the office contact information as well as government cellular numbers held by OoA staff, including the OoA Director, to be used in case of emergency.

In the case of an impending disaster, the Office on Aging will first contact all elderly active and homebound clients to inquire if they need assistance either to go to the stores to purchase emergency supplies and food, or if they would like to be transported to a nearby shelter. The OoA staff assigned to the Disaster Preparedness Committee will keep a log of this activity. After the disaster, OoA staff will again transport the elderly clients to their homes to assess any damages. The same will be done in Tinian and Rota. Should the Senior Centers be rendered inoperable after the disaster, every effort will be given to ensure that meals are still delivered to the homes of each senior citizen and person with disability.

When the elderly and people with disabilities seek shelter, it is important to work with them individually to assess their needs and to determine the best way to meet those needs. Many individuals find mass care shelter arrangement difficult, being separated from their personal items and familiar surroundings. This can be more difficult, and often frustrating, for an individual with a disability who, as a result of a disaster, has been cut off from people and equipment that he or she relies on for assistance.

Disaster Health Services such as the Commonwealth Health Care Corporation are valuable resources when trying to determine ways to meet the needs of an individual with a disability. In all cases, coordination between the Office on Aging, shelter management, Disaster Health Services, HSEM and the client will determine the solution that best meets the needs of the individual and other shelter residents.

VI. INTRASTATE FUNDING FORMULA

The Intrastate Funding Formula is not applicable to the CNMI OoA State Plan.

STATE PLAN ASSURANCES AND REQUIRED ACTIVITIES Older Americans Act, As Amended in 2006

By signing this document, the authorized official commits the State Agency on Aging to performing all listed assurances and activities as stipulated in the Older Americans Act, as amended in 2006.

ASSURANCES

Sec. 305(a) - (c), ORGANIZATION

(a)(2)(A) The State agency shall, except as provided in subsection (b)(5), designate for each such area (planning and service area) after consideration of the views offered by the unit or units of general purpose local government in such area, a public or private nonprofit agency or organization as the area agency on aging for such area.

(a)(2)(B) The State agency shall provide assurances, satisfactory to the Assistant Secretary, that the State agency will take into account, in connection with matters of general policy arising in the development and administration of the State plan for any fiscal year, the views of recipients of supportive services or nutrition services, or individuals using multipurpose senior centers provided under such plan.

(a)(2)(E) The State agency shall provide assurance that preference will be given to providing services to older individuals with greatest economic need and older individuals with greatest social need, (with particular attention to low-income older individuals, including low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas) and include proposed methods of carrying out the preference in the State plan;

(a)(2)(F) The State agency shall provide assurances that the State agency will require use of outreach efforts described in section 307(a)(16).

(a)(2)(G)(ii) The State agency shall provide an assurance that the State agency will undertake specific program development, advocacy, and outreach efforts focused on the needs of low-income minority older individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas.

(c)(5) In the case of a State specified in subsection (b)(5), the State agency and area agencies shall provide assurance, determined adequate by the State agency, that the area agency on aging will have the ability to develop an area plan and to carry out, directly or through contractual or other arrangements, a program in accordance with the plan within the planning and service area.

States must assure that the following assurances (Section 306) will be met by its designated area agencies on agencies, or by the State in the case of single planning and service area states.

Sec. 306(a), AREA PLANS

(2) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that an adequate proportion, as required under section 307(a)(2), of the amount allotted for part B to the planning and service area will be expended for the delivery of each of the following categories of services-

(A) services associated with access to services (transportation, health services (including mental health services), outreach, information and assistance (which may include information and assistance to consumers on availability of services under part B and how to receive benefits under and participate in publicly supported programs for which the consumer may be eligible), and case management services);

(B) in-home services, including supportive services for families of older individuals who are victims of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunction; and

(C) legal assistance;

and assurances that the area agency on aging will report annually to the State agency in detail the amount of funds expended for each such category during the fiscal year most recently concluded.

(4)(A)(i)(I) provide assurances that the area agency on aging will—

(aa) set specific objectives, consistent with State policy, for providing services to older individuals with greatest economic need, older individuals with greatest social need, and older individuals at risk for institutional placement;

(bb) include specific objectives for providing services to low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas; and

(II) include proposed methods to achieve the objectives described in items (aa) and (bb) of subclause (I);

(ii) provide assurances that the area agency on aging will include in each agreement made with a provider of any service under this title, a requirement that such provider will—

(I) specify how the provider intends to satisfy the service needs of low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas in the area served by the provider;

(II) to the maximum extent feasible, provide services to low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas in accordance with their need for such services; and

(III) meet specific objectives established by the area agency on aging, for providing services to low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas within the planning and service area; and

(4)(A)(iii) With respect to the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which such plan is prepared, each area agency on aging shall--

(I) identify the number of low-income minority older individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas in the planning and service area;

(II) describe the methods used to satisfy the service needs of such minority older individuals; and

(III) provide information on the extent to which the area agency on aging met the objectives described in clause (a)(4)(A)(i).

(4)(B)(i) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency on aging will use outreach efforts that will identify individuals eligible for assistance under this Act, with special emphasis on--

(I) older individuals residing in rural areas;

(II) older individuals with greatest economic need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);

(III) older individuals with greatest social need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);

(IV) older individuals with severe disabilities;

(V) older individuals with limited English proficiency;
(VI) older individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunction (and the caretakers of such individuals); and
(VII) older individuals at risk for institutional placement; and
(4)(C) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurance that the area agency on aging will ensure that each activity undertaken by the agency, including planning, advocacy, and systems development, will include a focus on the needs of low-income minority older individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas.

(5) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency on aging will coordinate planning, identification, assessment of needs, and provision of services for older individuals with disabilities, with particular attention to individuals with severe disabilities, and individuals at risk for institutional placement, with agencies that develop or provide services for individuals with disabilities.

(6)(F) Each area agency will:
in coordination with the State agency and with the State agency responsible for mental health services, increase public awareness of mental health disorders, remove barriers to diagnosis and treatment, and coordinate mental health services (including mental health screenings) provided with funds expended by the area agency on aging with mental health services provided by community health centers and by other public agencies and nonprofit private organizations;

(9) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency on aging, in carrying out the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program under section 307(a)(9), will expend not less than the total amount of funds appropriated under this Act and expended by the agency in fiscal year 2000 in carrying out such a program under this title.

(11) Each area agency on aging shall provide information and assurances concerning services to older individuals who are Native Americans (referred to in this paragraph as "older Native Americans"), including-

(A) information concerning whether there is a significant population of older Native Americans in the planning and service area and if so, an assurance that the area agency on aging will pursue activities, including outreach, to increase access of those older Native Americans to programs and benefits provided under this title;

(B) an assurance that the area agency on aging will, to the maximum extent practicable, coordinate the services the agency provides under this title with services provided under title VI; and

(C) an assurance that the area agency on aging will make services under the area plan available, to the same extent as such services are available to older individuals within the planning and service area, to older Native Americans.

(13)(A) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency on aging will maintain the integrity and public purpose of services provided, and service providers, under this title in all contractual and commercial relationships.

(13)(B) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency on aging will disclose to the Assistant Secretary and the State agency--

- (i) the identity of each nongovernmental entity with which such agency has a contract or commercial relationship relating to providing any service to older individuals; and
- (ii) the nature of such contract or such relationship.

(13)(C) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency will demonstrate that a loss or diminution in the quantity or quality of the services provided, or to be provided, under this title by such agency has not resulted and will not result from such non-governmental contracts or such commercial relationships.

(13)(D) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency will demonstrate that the quantity or quality of the services to be provided under this title by such agency will be enhanced as a result of such non-governmental contracts or commercial relationships.

(13)(E) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency will, on the request of the Assistant Secretary or the State, for the purpose of monitoring compliance with this Act (including conducting an audit), disclose all sources and expenditures of funds such agency receives or expends to provide services to older individuals.

(14) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that funds received under this title will not be used to pay any part of a cost (including an administrative cost) incurred by the area agency on aging to carry out a contract or commercial relationship that is not carried out to implement this title.

(15) provide assurances that funds received under this title will be used-

(A) to provide benefits and services to older individuals, giving priority to older individuals identified in paragraph (4)(A)(i); and

(B) in compliance with the assurances specified in paragraph (13) and the limitations specified in section 212;

(17)Each Area Plan will include information detailing how the Area Agency will coordinate activities and develop long-range emergency preparedness plans with local and State emergency response agencies, relief organizations, local and State governments and other institutions that have responsibility for disaster relief service delivery.

Sec. 307, STATE PLANS

(7)(A) The plan shall provide satisfactory assurance that such fiscal control and fund accounting procedures will be adopted as may be necessary to assure proper disbursement of, and accounting for, Federal funds paid under this title to the State, including any such funds paid to the recipients of a grant or contract.

(7)(B) The plan shall provide assurances that--

- (i) no individual (appointed or otherwise) involved in the designation of the State agency or an area agency on aging, or in the designation of the head of any subdivision of the State agency or of an area agency on aging, is subject to a conflict of interest prohibited under this Act;
- (ii) no officer, employee, or other representative of the State agency or an area agency on aging is subject to a conflict of interest prohibited under this Act; and
- (iii) mechanisms are in place to identify and remove conflicts of interest prohibited under this Act.

(9) The plan shall provide assurances that the State agency will carry out, through the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, a State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program in accordance with section 712 and this title, and will expend for such purpose an amount that is not less than an amount expended by the State agency with funds received under this title for fiscal year 2000, and an amount that is not less than the amount expended by the State agency with funds received under title VII for fiscal year 2000.

(10) The plan shall provide assurance that the special needs of older individuals residing in rural areas will be taken into consideration and shall describe how those needs have been met and describe how funds have been allocated to meet those needs.

(11)(A) The plan shall provide assurances that area agencies on aging will--

- (i) enter into contracts with providers of legal assistance which can demonstrate the experience or capacity to deliver legal assistance;
- (ii) include in any such contract provisions to assure that any recipient of funds under division (A) will be subject to specific restrictions and regulations promulgated under the Legal Services Corporation Act (other than restrictions and regulations governing eligibility for legal assistance under such Act and governing membership of local governing boards) as determined appropriate by the Assistant Secretary; and
- (iii) attempt to involve the private bar in legal assistance activities authorized under this title, including groups within the private bar furnishing services to older individuals on a pro bono and reduced fee basis.

(11)(B) The plan contains assurances that no legal assistance will be furnished unless the grantee administers a program designed to provide legal assistance to older individuals with social or economic need and has agreed, if the grantee is not a Legal Services Corporation project grantee, to coordinate its services with existing Legal Services Corporation projects in the planning and service area in order to concentrate the use of funds provided under this title on individuals with the greatest such need; and the area agency on aging makes a finding, after assessment, pursuant to standards for service promulgated by the Assistant Secretary, that any grantee selected is the entity best able to provide the particular services.

(11)(D) The plan contains assurances, to the extent practicable, that legal assistance furnished under the plan will be in addition to any legal assistance for older individuals being furnished with funds from sources other than this Act and that reasonable efforts will be made to maintain existing levels of legal assistance for older individuals;

(11)(E) The plan contains assurances that area agencies on aging will give priority to legal assistance related to income, health care, long-term care, nutrition, housing, utilities, protective services, defense of guardianship, abuse, neglect, and age discrimination.

(12) The plan shall provide, whenever the State desires to provide for a fiscal year for services for the prevention of abuse of older individuals, the plan contains assurances that any area agency on aging carrying out such services will conduct a program consistent with relevant State law and coordinated with existing State adult protective service activities for--

- (A) public education to identify and prevent abuse of older individuals;
- (B) receipt of reports of abuse of older individuals;
- (C) active participation of older individuals participating in programs under this Act through outreach, conferences, and referral of such individuals to other social service agencies or sources of assistance where appropriate and consented to by the parties to be referred; and
- (D) referral of complaints to law enforcement or public protective service agencies where appropriate.

(13) The plan shall provide assurances that each State will assign personnel (one of whom shall be known as a legal assistance developer) to provide State leadership in developing legal assistance programs for older individuals throughout the State.

(15) The plan shall provide assurances that, if a substantial number of the older individuals residing in any planning and service area in the State are of limited English-speaking ability, then the State will require the area agency on aging for each such planning and service area—

- (A) to utilize in the delivery of outreach services under section 306(a)(2)(A), the services of workers who are fluent in the language spoken by a predominant number of such older individuals who are of limited English-speaking ability; and
- (B) to designate an individual employed by the area agency on aging, or available to such area agency on aging on a full-time basis, whose responsibilities will include--
 - (i) taking such action as may be appropriate to assure that counseling assistance is made available to such older individuals who are of limited English-speaking ability in order to assist such older individuals in participating in programs and receiving assistance under this Act; and
 - (ii) providing guidance to individuals engaged in the delivery of supportive services under the area plan involved to enable such individuals to be aware of cultural sensitivities and to take into account effectively linguistic and cultural differences.

(16) The plan shall provide assurances that the State agency will require outreach efforts that will—

- (A) identify individuals eligible for assistance under this Act, with special emphasis on—
 - (i) older individuals residing in rural areas;
 - (ii) older individuals with greatest economic need (with particular attention to low-income older individuals, including low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas;
 - (iii) older individuals with greatest social need (with particular attention to low-income older individuals, including low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas;
 - (iv) older individuals with severe disabilities;

(v) older individuals with limited English-speaking ability; and
(vi) older individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunction (and the caretakers of such individuals); and
(B) inform the older individuals referred to in clauses (i) through (vi) of subparagraph (A), and the caretakers of such individuals, of the availability of such assistance.

(17) The plan shall provide, with respect to the needs of older individuals with severe disabilities, assurances that the State will coordinate planning, identification, assessment of needs, and service for older individuals with disabilities with particular attention to individuals with severe disabilities with the State agencies with primary responsibility for individuals with disabilities, including severe disabilities, to enhance services and develop collaborative programs, where appropriate, to meet the needs of older individuals with disabilities.

(18) The plan shall provide assurances that area agencies on aging will conduct efforts to facilitate the coordination of community-based, long-term care services, pursuant to section 306(a)(7), for older individuals who--

(A) reside at home and are at risk of institutionalization because of limitations on their ability to function independently;

(B) are patients in hospitals and are at risk of prolonged institutionalization; or

(C) are patients in long-term care facilities, but who can return to their homes if community-based services are provided to them.

(19) The plan shall include the assurances and description required by section 705(a).

(20) The plan shall provide assurances that special efforts will be made to provide technical assistance to minority providers of services.

(21) The plan shall

(A) provide an assurance that the State agency will coordinate programs under this title and programs under title VI, if applicable; and

(B) provide an assurance that the State agency will pursue activities to increase access by older individuals who are Native Americans to all aging programs and benefits provided by the agency, including programs and benefits provided under this title, if applicable, and specify the ways in which the State agency intends to implement the activities.

(22) If case management services are offered to provide access to supportive services, the plan shall provide that the State agency shall ensure compliance with the requirements specified in section 306(a)(8).

(23) The plan shall provide assurances that demonstrable efforts will be made--

(A) to coordinate services provided under this Act with other State services that benefit older individuals; and

(B) to provide multigenerational activities, such as opportunities for older individuals to serve as mentors or advisers in child care, youth day care, educational assistance, at-risk youth intervention, juvenile delinquency treatment, and family support programs.

(24) The plan shall provide assurances that the State will coordinate public services within the State to assist older individuals to obtain transportation services associated with access to services provided under this title, to services under title VI, to comprehensive counseling services, and to legal assistance.

(25) The plan shall include assurances that the State has in effect a mechanism to provide for quality in the provision of in-home services under this title.

(26) The plan shall provide assurances that funds received under this title will not be used to pay any part of a cost (including an administrative cost) incurred by the State agency or an area agency on aging to carry out a contract or commercial relationship that is not carried out to implement this title.

(27) The plan shall provide assurances that area agencies on aging will provide, to the extent feasible, for the furnishing of services under this Act, consistent with self-directed care.

Sec. 308, PLANNING, COORDINATION, EVALUATION, AND ADMINISTRATION OF STATE PLANS

(b)(3)(E) No application by a State under subparagraph (b)(3)(A) shall be approved unless it contains assurances that no amounts received by the State under this paragraph will be used to hire any individual to fill a job opening created by the action of the State in laying off or terminating the employment of any regular employee not supported under this Act in anticipation of filling the vacancy so created by hiring an employee to be supported through use of amounts received under this paragraph.

Sec. 705, ADDITIONAL STATE PLAN REQUIREMENTS (as numbered in statute)

(1) The State plan shall provide an assurance that the State, in carrying out any chapter of this subtitle for which the State receives funding under this subtitle, will establish programs in accordance with the requirements of the chapter and this chapter.

(2) The State plan shall provide an assurance that the State will hold public hearings, and use other means, to obtain the views of older individuals, area agencies on aging, recipients of grants under title VI, and other interested persons and entities regarding programs carried out under this subtitle.

(3) The State plan shall provide an assurance that the State, in consultation with area agencies on aging, will identify and prioritize statewide activities aimed at ensuring that older individuals have access to, and assistance in securing and maintaining, benefits and rights.

(4) The State plan shall provide an assurance that the State will use funds made available under this subtitle for a chapter in addition to, and will not supplant, any funds that are expended under any Federal or State law in existence on the day before the date of the

enactment of this subtitle, to carry out each of the vulnerable elder rights protection activities described in the chapter.

(5) The State plan shall provide an assurance that the State will place no restrictions, other than the requirements referred to in clauses (i) through (iv) of section 712(a)(5)(C), on the eligibility of entities for designation as local Ombudsman entities under section 712(a)(5).

(6) The State plan shall provide an assurance that, with respect to programs for the prevention of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation under chapter 3—

(A) in carrying out such programs the State agency will conduct a program of services consistent with relevant State law and coordinated with existing State adult protective service activities for--

(i) public education to identify and prevent elder abuse;

(ii) receipt of reports of elder abuse;

(iii) active participation of older individuals participating in programs under this Act through outreach, conferences, and referral of such individuals to other social service agencies or sources of assistance if appropriate and if the individuals to be referred consent; and

(iv) referral of complaints to law enforcement or public protective service agencies if appropriate;

(B) the State will not permit involuntary or coerced participation in the program of services described in subparagraph (A) by alleged victims, abusers, or their households; and

(C) all information gathered in the course of receiving reports and making referrals shall remain confidential except--

(i) if all parties to such complaint consent in writing to the release of such information;

(ii) if the release of such information is to a law enforcement agency, public protective service agency, licensing or certification agency, ombudsman program, or protection or advocacy system; or

(iii) upon court order

REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

Sec. 307(a) STATE PLANS

(1)(A)The State Agency requires each area agency on aging designated under section 305(a)(2)(A) to develop and submit to the State agency for approval, in accordance with a uniform format developed by the State agency, an area plan meeting the requirements of section 306; and

(B) The State plan is based on such area plans.

Note: THIS SUBSECTION OF STATUTE DOES NOT REQUIRE THAT AREA PLANS BE DEVELOPED PRIOR TO STATE PLANS AND/OR THAT STATE PLANS DEVELOP AS A COMPILATION OF AREA PLANS.

(2) The State agency:

(A) evaluates, using uniform procedures described in section 202(a)(26), the need for supportive services (including legal assistance pursuant to 307(a)(11), information and assistance, and transportation services), nutrition services, and multipurpose senior centers within the State;

(B) has developed a standardized process to determine the extent to which public or private programs and resources (including Department of Labor Senior Community Service Employment Program participants, and programs and services of voluntary organizations) have the capacity and actually meet such need;

(4) The plan shall provide that the State agency will conduct periodic evaluations of, and public hearings on, activities and projects carried out in the State under this title and title VII, including evaluations of the effectiveness of services provided to individuals with greatest economic need, greatest social need, or disabilities (with particular attention to low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas). Note: "Periodic" (defined in 45CFR Part 1321.3) means, at a minimum, once each fiscal year.

(5) The State agency:

(A) affords an opportunity for a public hearing upon request, in accordance with published procedures, to any area agency on aging submitting a plan under this title, to any provider of (or applicant to provide) services;

(B) issues guidelines applicable to grievance procedures required by section 306(a)(10); and

(C) affords an opportunity for a public hearing, upon request, by an area agency on aging, by a provider of (or applicant to provide) services, or by any recipient of services under this title regarding any waiver request, including those under Section 316.

(6) The State agency will make such reports, in such form, and containing such information, as the Assistant Secretary may require, and comply with such requirements as the Assistant Secretary may impose to insure the correctness of such reports.

(8)(A) No supportive services, nutrition services, or in-home services are directly provided by the State agency or an area agency on aging in the State, unless, in the judgment of the State agency--

(i) provision of such services by the State agency or the area agency on aging is necessary to assure an adequate supply of such services;

(ii) such services are directly related to such State agency's or area agency on aging's administrative functions; or

(iii) such services can be provided more economically, and with comparable quality, by such State agency or area agency on aging.

INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

Section 305(a)(2)(E)

Describe the mechanism(s) for assuring that preference will be given to providing services to older individuals with greatest economic need and older individuals with greatest social need, (with particular attention to low-income older individuals, including low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas) and include proposed methods of carrying out the preference in the State plan;

OoA RESPONSE: *All participating elderly and people with disabilities, upon application for services work with the OoA staff to complete a basic application form. This form includes the participants' personal information, and will assist in determining whether the participant has a great economic or social need. Upon this determination, high preference will be given for services offered at the Office on Aging. A needs assessment survey will also be given to the participant upon application, and updated yearly, on the types of services they would like to avail at the senior center. These services include all Title III and Title VII programs.*

Section 306(a)(17)

Describe the mechanism(s) for assuring that each Area Plan will include information detailing how the Area Agency will coordinate activities and develop long-range emergency preparedness plans with local and State emergency response agencies, relief organizations, local and State governments and other institutions that have responsibility for disaster relief service delivery.

OoA RESPONSE: *The CNMI Office on Aging, together with other divisions under the Department of Community of Cultural Affairs (DCCA), works collaboratively with the CNMI Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the Department of Public Safety, and the Governor's Office to assist in disaster relief programs. The DCCA has implemented an emergency preparedness committee to relay information and assist in the transportation of individuals to emergency shelters. The CNMI Office on Aging has assigned two OoA staff and vehicles to assist, with instructions to prioritize senior citizens and people with disabilities in need of transportation services such as trips to the store to buy essential supplies, food and water in preparation for the storm or other emergencies. As part of the application process at the Senior Centers, elders and people with disabilities are asked whether they will need assistance during a natural disaster such as typhoon or tsunami to ensure speedy service during an emergency where time is of the essence. The chain of command during an emergency is 1) Governor, 2) Homeland Security, 3) DCCA, 4) Office on Aging.*

Section 307(a)(2)

The plan shall provide that the State agency will:

(C) *Specify a minimum proportion of the funds received by each area agency on aging in the State to carry out part B that will be expended (in the absence of a waiver under sections 306 (c) or 316) by such area agency on aging to provide each of the categories of services specified in section 306(a)(2) (Note: those categories are access, in-home, and legal assistance). Provide specific minimum proportion determined for each category of service.*

OoA RESPONSE:

2014:

Access (I & A, Case Management and Transportation combined): (15%)

In-home: (5%)

Legal Services: (1.75%)

Next year 2015

Access (I & A, Case Management and Transportation combined): (17%)

In-home: (7%)

Legal Services: (1.75%)

Section (307(a)(3))

The plan shall:

...

(B) with respect to services for older individuals residing in rural areas:

(i) provide assurances the State agency will spend for each fiscal year of the plan, not less than the amount expended for such services for fiscal year 2000.

***OoA RESPONSE:** The CNMI is considered 100% rural, thus all Title III and Title VII funds will be spent on services for individuals residing in rural areas.*

(ii) identify, for each fiscal year to which the plan applies, the projected costs of providing such services (including the cost of providing access to such services).

***OoA RESPONSE:** 100% of the allotted federal dollars, or approximately \$796,568 each fiscal will be used on services for older individuals residing in rural areas in the CNMI.*

(iii) describe the methods used to meet the needs for such services in the fiscal year preceding the first year to which such plan applies.

***OoA RESPONSE:** In the first year of the plan, the OoA focuses on the plan to spend 100% of all Title III and Title VII funds on services for individuals residing in rural areas in the CNMI. The OoA will create an action plan which will include Title III and Title VII programs and to routinely monitor all services rendered to ensure that our elders and people with disabilities receive those services.*

Section 307(a)(10)

The plan shall provide assurance that the special needs of older individuals residing in rural areas are taken into consideration and shall describe how those needs have been met and describe how funds have been allocated to meet those needs.

OoA RESPONSE: *Since the CNMI is 100% rural, the OoA focuses on providing effective and efficient services to the entire CNMI population of elderly individuals and people with disabilities. All funds under Title-III and Title-VII are used to assist persons from rural areas.*

Section 307(a)(14)

(14) The plan shall, with respect to the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which such plan is prepared—

(A) *identify the number of low-income minority older individuals in the State, including the number of low income minority older individuals with limited English proficiency; and*

OoA RESPONSE: *According to the 2010 CNMI Census, the number of people who speak a language at home other than English and are age 60 and over is 3,110, which coincidentally is the exact number of individuals age 60 and over. The number of individuals age 60 and older who do not speak English at all is 107 or approximately 3.4% of the total senior citizen population in the CNMI. The number of individuals age 60 and over for whom poverty status was determined is 1,564 or roughly 50% of the total senior citizen population.*

(B) *describe the methods used to satisfy the service needs of the low-income minority older individuals described in subparagraph (A), including the plan to meet the needs of low-income minority older individuals with limited English proficiency.*

OoA RESPONSE: *Data on whether participants are low-income or have limited English proficiency is collected upon application. Preference is always given to individuals from low-income backgrounds, and translators for the indigenous language (usually by OoA staff) are available for people with limited English proficiency.*

Section 307(a)(21)

The plan shall:

(B) *provide an assurance that the State agency will pursue activities to increase access by older individuals who are Native Americans to all aging programs and benefits provided by the agency, including programs and benefits provided under this title (title III), if applicable, and specify the ways in which the State agency intends to implement the activities. Not applicable*

Section 307(a)(29)

The plan shall include information detailing how the State will coordinate activities, and develop long-range emergency preparedness plans, with area agencies on aging, local emergency response agencies, relief organizations, local governments, State agencies responsible for emergency preparedness, and any other institutions that have responsibility for disaster relief service delivery.

OoA RESPONSE: *OoA under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs (DCCA) works collaboratively with the CNMI Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the Department of Public Safety, and the Governor's Office to assist in disaster relief programs. The DCCA has implemented an emergency preparedness committee to relay information and*

assist in the transportation of individuals to emergency shelters. The CNMI Office on Aging, together with the DCCA Disaster Preparedness Committee, will assist in the transportation of individuals and people with disabilities to nearby shelters. Two OoA staff have been assigned to the DCCA Disaster Preparedness Committee for this purpose. OoA vehicles may be utilized to assist with transportation when all active and homebound clients have been secured, and with the approval of the OoA Director. The use of OoA vehicles should prioritize elderly individuals and people with disabilities. The Rota Senior Center has been designated as an emergency shelter should a disaster become imminent. In Saipan and Tinian, designated shelters include public schools and other establishments.

In the case of an impending disaster, the Office on Aging will transport all active elderly clients to their homes for safety. If their homes seem unstable or they feel unsafe, they may be transported to an emergency shelter. OoA staff will also contact elderly homebound clients to ask if they would like to be transported to an emergency shelter or to a store to purchase supplies. The OoA staff assigned to the Disaster Preparedness Committee will keep a log of this activity. After the disaster, OoA staff will again transport the elderly clients to their homes to assess any damages. The same will be done in Tinian and Rota.

Disaster Health Services such as the Commonwealth Health Care Corporation are valuable resources when trying to determine ways to meet the needs of an individual with a disability. In all cases, coordination between the Office on Aging, shelter management, Disaster Health Services, HSEM and the client will determine the solution that best meets the needs of the individual and other shelter residents.

Section 307(a)(30)

The plan shall include information describing the involvement of the head of the State agency in the development, revision, and implementation of emergency preparedness plans, including the State Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan.

OoA RESPONSE: *The OoA Director works closely with the DCCA Disaster Preparedness Committee headed by the DCCA Secretary in formulating the emergency preparedness plan to ensure the safety of senior citizens and people with disabilities residing in the CNMI. Any new development, revision, or implementation of the DCCA emergency preparedness plan will include the input of the OoA Director.*

Section 705(a)(7) *The CNMI office on Aging does not have an Ombudsman Program

In order to be eligible to receive an allotment under this subtitle, a State shall include in the State plan submitted under section 307:

(7) a description of the manner in which the State agency will carry out this title in accordance with the assurances described in paragraphs (1) through (6).

(Note: Paragraphs (1) of through (6) of this section are listed below)

In order to be eligible to receive an allotment under this subtitle, a State shall include in the State plan submitted under section 307:

(1) an assurance that the State, in carrying out any chapter of this subtitle for which the State receives funding under this subtitle, will establish programs in accordance with the requirements of the chapter and this chapter;

(2) an assurance that the State will hold public hearings, and use other means, to obtain the views of older individuals, area agencies on aging, recipients of grants under title VI, and other interested persons and entities regarding programs carried out under this subtitle;

(3) an assurance that the State, in consultation with area agencies on aging, will identify and prioritize statewide activities aimed at ensuring that older individuals have access to, and assistance in securing and maintaining, benefits and rights;

(4) an assurance that the State will use funds made available under this subtitle for a chapter in addition to, and will not supplant, any funds that are expended under any Federal or State law in existence on the day before the date of the enactment of this subtitle, to carry out each of the vulnerable elder rights protection activities described in the chapter;

(5) an assurance that the State will place no restrictions, other than the requirements referred to in clauses (i) through (iv) of section 712(a)(5)(C), on the eligibility of entities for designation as local Ombudsman entities under section 712(a)(5);

(6) an assurance that, with respect to programs for the prevention of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation under chapter 3--

(A) in carrying out such programs the State agency will conduct a program of services consistent with relevant State law and coordinated with existing State adult protective service activities for:

(i) public education to identify and prevent elder abuse;

(ii) receipt of reports of elder abuse;

(iii) active participation of older individuals participating in programs under this Act through outreach, conferences, and referral of such individuals to other social service agencies or sources of assistance if appropriate and if the individuals to be referred consent; and

(iv) referral of complaints to law enforcement or public protective service agencies if appropriate;

(B) the State will not permit involuntary or coerced participation in the program of services described in subparagraph (A) by alleged victims, abusers, or their households; and

(C) all information gathered in the course of receiving reports and making referrals shall remain confidential except--

(i) if all parties to such complaint consent in writing to the release of such information;

(ii) if the release of such information is to a law enforcement agency, public protective service agency, licensing or certification agency, ombudsman program, or protection or advocacy system; or

(iii) upon court order.

Eloy S. Inos, CNMI Governor
Signature and Title of Authorized Official

Date: _____