

## **WESTWOOD COUNCIL ON AGING**

### **PURPOSE**

The Westwood Council on Aging is an organization that is governed by an nine member Board of Directors under the office of the Board of Selectmen. This Board meets quarterly to help oversee services and programs available to residents sixty years of age and over according to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Annotated Laws Chapter 40, Section 8B.

The Mission of the Westwood Council on Aging is to identify and serve the diverse needs of all Westwood citizens 60 and older, as well as disabled adults. Designing programs that impact the mind, body and spirit of three generations requires understanding the range of their needs, economic levels, and physical capabilities. The Council both shares these goals with the community and elicits their support to implement programs that address health and nutrition, safety and security, as well as travel, entertainment, culture, and education. Outreach social services are available to all Westwood citizens to help maintain their independence and dignity.

It is the goal of the Westwood Council on Aging to provide the Senior Citizens of Westwood with information regarding services to which they are entitled and can enhance the quality of their lives. The COA Director works directly for the Town Administrator and partners with the COA Board to create a Center that meets the demands of a growing elder population.

The Center shall:

1. Disseminate information received from the Governmental agencies by means of the Senior Center and/or bi-monthly newsletter.
2. Respond to the request for information by a Westwood Senior Citizen (or an advocate) by evaluating the request and referring to appropriate agencies.
3. Provide information and referral, but leaves the decision to follow up or use the referral up to the individual.
4. Shall create and administer programs and events that encourage seniors to stay active, engaged and connected.
5. Work within the Town's budgetary guidelines to lobby/educates the town on the needs of its elder population.
6. Work with the Friends of the COA to fundraise and grow programs
7. Work closely with EOEA (Executive Office of Elder Affairs)
8. Report any senior at risk to the appropriate authority.

### **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Senior Center is open Monday-Thursday from 8:00am-4:00pm and Friday from 8:00-2:00. The Center will be closed for the day when the Westwood Schools are cancelled due to road or weather conditions, and on all federal holidays.

When the Center is being used as a polling station (during any Westwood election), all programs are cancelled. Skeleton staff will be available on Election Day; staff not at the

Center may use the day to attend trainings or work from home. The van will be available only for rides to the polls on elections days.

All Senior Citizens are welcome to participate in Center activities through the sole discretion of the Westwood Council on Aging, subject to the following:

1. All participants should be 60 years of age and over or be a disabled resident. Individuals under 60 years are welcome but priority will be given to those over 60 or disabled.
2. Participants must be ambulatory without assistance or accompanied by a person qualified to assist on a one-to-one ratio.
3. Participants must be able to assume responsibility for their personal needs, and be mentally and physically capable of participation in activities.
4. Staff has the authority to ask any participant to leave if the senior is not able to attend to their personal needs, or cannot mentally or physically participate in the activity.
5. If an accident or injury occurs, the EMTs must be immediately notified as well as the Director (even if the injured person refuses help). Incident reports will be written and filed by the Director and sent to Town Hall.

The Westwood Council on Aging and its agents do not provide any supervision and are not responsible for participants in Center activities. The COA has adopted the Standards of Independence for Senior Center Participation and will abide by said document.

## **STAFF**

The Westwood Senior Center employs three full time staff (Director, Operations Manager and Lead Van Driver) as well as three part time personnel (Outreach Counselor, Administrative Assistant and two part time drivers).

### ***DIRECTOR***

The COA Director is responsible for all decisions and administration regarding the Center's sponsored programs and activities. Staff is encouraged to offer ideas for future programming and special activities.

All funding, scheduling, billing, budgeting and payroll (for staff and consultants) is the responsibility of the Director. All income and expenses must be approved by the Director both from the COA town budget as well the Friends budget.

All non-program income tracking and expenditures (transportation, building, grants, out of state trips, general donations, fundraising, large events) will be the responsibility of the Director.

The Director works closely with COA Board of Directors which meets quarterly to go over budget, fundraising and all aspects of the Center.

The Director works closely with the Friends of the COA to help with fundraising and budgeting with this nonprofit arm of the Center.

All new programs and events must be approved by the Director prior to any scheduling or commitment.

The Director and/or the staff reserves the right to cancel any program for cause, which includes low enrollment or other use of the space needed. Program instructors will be consulted prior to a program's cancellation. If the schools are closed due to inclement weather, all programs are automatically cancelled as the Center will be closed as well.

All contact with the media and/or press releases regarding COA-sponsored programs will be generated only by the Center staff and must be approved by the Director. Any instructor who wishes to promote their COA programs must first get permission from the Director.

The Director schedules and coordinates all out of state trips.

The Director attends all managers' meetings, updates Town Officials on the work of the Center. The Director creates and submits information for the monthly Human Services Meetings and Director's Meeting The Director attends meetings/programs/trainings as well as the annual MCOA Conference to bring new ideas and information to the Center.

### ***OPERATIONS DIRECTOR***

The Operations Director (OD) provides oversight of the day-to-day operations of the Senior Center and manages the Center's Transportation Services. The OD resolves any scheduling problem that occurs at the front desk and is responsible for monthly transportation statistics.

Primary responsibilities include overseeing the front desk, collecting and recording program revenues, managing usage of rooms, running CORI checks and serving as liaison to the Food Pantry, when needed. The Operations Director has the authority to resolve any issues or problems that occur at the front desk, in the van or building if the Director is not present.

The Operations Director supervises the in-house transportation program as well as HESSCO and RSVP transportation programs. This includes resolving any problems that occur with this program, scheduling of part time drivers and working with the lead van driver to help schedule any necessary repairs in partnership with the lead driver.

Overseeing building repairs, maintenance and needs are the responsibility of the Operations Director. All building problems and issues must be directed to the Operations Director who works closely with the DPW to find resolution.

Any unforeseen building maintenance or van repair must first be approved by the Director. All income from either the transportation program or building rental will be given to the Director and deposited into the respective revolving funds.

The OD schedules and coordinates all local day trips.

The OD will be serve safe and work closely with the BOH to make sure the kitchen and all caterers are in compliance.

All regular program income and expenses are tracked by the Operations Director and deposited to the Friends of the COA. All day trips income and expenses are tracked by the OD, directed through the Friends with final tallies given to the Director.

### ***OUTREACH COUNSELOR AND SERVICES***

Outreach Services are the responsibility of the Outreach Counselor.

Outreach is available four days a week (no outreach services on Wednesday); scheduling appointments in advance to meet with the counselor are encouraged.

The Outreach Counselor (OC) provides information and referral to seniors and their families to help Westwood elders remain safe and independent. The OC can connect interested parties with resources and facilitate access to services.

The main services offered are:

- Transportation options
- Housing options
- Home care options
- Veteran's Benefits
- Support Groups
- Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS)
- Fuel Assistance
- SNAP (Food Stamps)
- Information and Referrals for those struggling with Memory Loss, Dementia and Alzheimer's
- Information on area Adult Day Health Care Centers
- Information on area Assisted Living and Skilled Nursing Facilities
- Information and Referrals for Financial Assistance Programs
- Information and Referrals to HESSCO (Local ASAP)

The Outreach Counselor attends meetings and trainings to keep up with current laws, regulations and information. All meetings and trainings must first be approved by the Director. Also, the OC is responsible for monthly statistical information concerning outreach.

### ***LEAD VAN DRIVER***

The Lead Van Driver is responsible for the day to day transportation of seniors. This includes resolving any scheduling issues, scheduling part time drivers and providing payroll information to the Director on a bi-monthly basis. This position is also responsible for all maintenance and repairs needed for each of the vans in consultation with the Director.

The Lead Driver works closely with the Operations Director to resolve any issue concerning a rider. The Director should be notified of any rider issue that concerns safety or disruption of service.

The Lead Driver delivers newsletters to all area banks, municipal buildings etc. on a bi-monthly basis.

The Lead Driver is also responsible for opening the building in the morning and setting up each room for the day's activities as well replenishing all bathroom supplies.

The Lead Driver works closely with the DPW to resolve any parking lot issues including snow plowing, salting etc.

All drivers (lead and part time) must keep up with state trainings to comply with state law.

### ***ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT***

The Administrative Assistant works part time (20 hours) a week and works under the direction of the Director.

The primary responsibility of the AA is to update all information concerning the MY SENIOR CENTER tracking kiosk and giving monthly usage information to the Director (including transportation, programs and social services). These records will be the only official records used to certify the number of attendees in each daily, weekly or monthly program.

Completed release forms are to be submitted to the COA staff. The Administrative Assistant will maintain an active file on all said documents. All participants need to sign consent forms and use the MYSENIOR CENTER kiosk upon arrival at the Center.

The AA is responsible for all aspects of the Tax Relief Program in conjunction with the Director and the Assessor's Office. This includes, but is not limited to: informing all participants of the opportunity and notifying them when changes are made, updating all records and recording all time served for this program..

The AA also keeps the Activity Book and Transportation updated on a monthly basis. The AA schedules all receptionists and volunteers as needed and secures the building at the end of the day.

### ***PART TIME VAN DRIVER***

The Center employs two part time van drivers who are scheduled on an as needed basis to help with van rides and other Center needs including helping during large events, opening the building (when lead van driver is not working) and setting up for programs.

### ***FRIENDLY VISITOR***

The Center employs a part time Friendly Visitor; this position is on an as needed basis with no more than 8 hours per week. The Friendly Visitor travels to the home of an isolated senior (i.e. does not drive, lives alone, and has limited contact with others) or caregiver to provide socialization, comfort and connection. The goal is to create and stimulate social interaction and while maintaining strict client confidentiality. The Director works closely with the Outreach Counselor to create the list of those who will be visited. The Friendly Visitor does not replace homemaking services, but is an opportunity for the town to connect and check in with isolated seniors and caregivers

## ***INSTRUCTORS***

The Director employs regular and special instructors for the Center. These instructors are paid as consultants and provide programs that help seniors stay healthy, informed and connected. All instructors work at the discretion of the Center, who directs the programs to fit the needs of the Center and its participants.

Program instructors are responsible for setting up their assigned program area prior to the class and for returning the area to its former condition after the class is completed. All program instructors must be responsible for their own monthly billing as well as bi-monthly updates for the newsletter. This information is given to the Director on a timely basis.

Program instructors are required to notify (prior to the scheduled start time of the program) the Director whenever they are unable to conduct their program as scheduled.

## **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

The Center's transportation runs Monday through Thursday 8:30-2:30 and Fridays 8:30 - 1p.m. This door to door service is available to Westwood residents; Westwood Glen and Highland Glen residents. There are suggested donations for this service and rides are limited to a ten mile radius.

This program is coordinated by the Lead Van Driver in cooperation with the Operation Director. The lead van driver is responsible for the maintenance, repairs and all services needed for all in-service vans (in consultation with the Director).

Part time van drivers work under the leadership of the lead van driver who coordinates their daily schedule and tracks part time hours as well as all donations.

Any accident or incident which happens with the van or with seniors traveling on the van must be immediately reported to the Director. All vehicle accidents are reported to the police and then the Director.

Transportation is for Westwood residents only age 60 or older or any disabled Westwood resident. All reservations must be made at least 48 hours in advance by calling the Senior Center. Only two reservations can be made per phone call and it is on a first come first serve basis and is prioritized for seniors who no longer drive.

Medical appointments take priority but rides are available to the Center and for other reasons. Food shopping and errands are scheduled weekly (published in the newsletter) and participants are allowed a maximum of 4 shopping bags per trip.

Westfare Taxi Vouchers are available to eligible seniors who no longer drive and who qualify financially. Contact the Outreach Counselor for further information.

The RIDE is also available to seniors. Contact the Outreach Counselor for further information.

## **WESTWOOD COA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Westwood Council on Aging Board of Directors is a nine member board that meets quarterly to discuss and help direct all work at the Senior Center. Board members serve 3 year terms with a limit of two consecutive terms per individual and serve at the pleasure of the Westwood Selectmen.

Primary responsibilities include approval of town budget, Center programs and discussion around issues concerning the growth of the Center.

The Director will schedule meetings that are open to the public and registered with the Town Clerk's Office.

## **FRIENDS OF THE WESTWOOD SENIOR CENTER**

The Friends of the Westwood Senior Center are the "non profit arm" of the Center. This 501© non-profit helps the Center grow with fundraising as well as the collection of funds from donations, grants and other opportunities. This group meets quarterly to discuss way to work closely with the Center as it grows.

The Treasurer and President work closely with Director and meet quarterly to discuss any issues or concerns.

Volunteers help with tracking all income and expenses of the Friends Group. Moreover, the officers and the Friends are all volunteers and they keep track of all income and expenses of the Friends Group.

Both the COA Board and Friends work closely with Director to help the Center grow and meet the continuing changing needs of Westwood's aging population.

## **STANDARDS OF INDEPENDENCE AND PARTICIPATION OF THE CENTER**

Our programs are primarily designed to target people aged sixty and older. Others may participate when the staff has been consulted. *Safety is a priority* and any participant must be able to independently use the Center or be accompanied by an aide.

Please note the following standards of independence and behavior with respect to senior center attendance and participation.

Participants at the senior center must:

1. Sign a release form with the name and telephone number of a person to contact in case of an emergency.
2. Follow the recommendation of the senior center staff to seek appropriate medical attention if an accident should occur.

3. Refrain from smoking, drinking alcohol or using illegal substances on the premises. Participants who do not adhere to these rules will be asked to leave immediately.
4. Take responsibility for their own personal care, including hygiene, toileting, as well as feeding.
5. Be reasonably oriented, capable of independent decision-making as well as planning their own activities, transportation, lunch, financial transactions etc.
6. Avoid causing disturbances or disruptions and to show respect for the building facilities and personal property of others.
7. Be responsible for their own personal health and medical care, including the taking of medications, monitoring special diets, etc. The Senior Center staff is not responsible for providing assistance with medication and other personal health and medical care.
8. Violence or threats of violence are not permitted and will result in the participant being asked to leave; possible permanent suspension from the Senior Center privileges may result.
9. Any group using the Center during regular business hours must be open to the public and must apply for approval by the Director. No group (during business hours) are allowed to be exclusive or private as the Center is a municipal building and must be open to any senior who would like to participate.

### **INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR**

If any inappropriate behavior is witnessed or reported, the staff will use discretion to take corrective action.

The staff has the authority to ask the participant to abstain from the inappropriate behavior, or if necessary, contact the police, doctor, ambulance or emergency personnel. Staff will determine if permanent suspension is applicable; reasonable accommodations will be considered if requested. Otherwise, permanent suspension may result.

If a participant cannot meet the required standards, staff is available to share resources and discuss options.

The staff is committed to providing a warm, welcoming and friendly atmosphere for as many seniors as possible.

### **SENIORS AT RISK**



Safety of the senior is always a priority at the Center and in the community. All staff at the Senior Center are mandated reporters. If a senior seems to be at risk, it is the responsibility of the staff to contact Protective Services and file a report. If applicable, HESSCO Elder Services outreach should also be contacted. This should be coordinated through the Outreach Counselor who will keep a file on all individuals reported.

Once Protective Services has been contacted, the staff is no longer responsible for the safety of the senior but may keep in touch with both the senior and HESSCO in case referral to other services is necessary. Staff has the authority to reach out to Police, Fire etc. if appropriate.

### **MEALS ON WHEELS AND ONSITE CONGREGATE MEAL**

It is the policy of the Westwood Council on Aging to provide a site for the Federal/State funded Meals on Wheels Program which is administered and financed through HESSCO Elder Services, using a meal site manager.

#### ***Off-Site Program:***

- (a) The meals on wheels program is open to all eligible senior citizens 60 years of age and over or disabled residents.
- (b) All utensils and materials used by the meal site must be sanitized after use either by an automatic dishwasher which is maintained by the COA.
- (c) The meal program is administered on a donation basis. The Senior Citizen member is asked to pay the suggested donation. The guest, under 60 years of age is to pay the full price.
- (d) The Meal Site will be closed when the Westwood Schools are cancelled, weekends and Federal Holidays or if the meal provider cannot deliver due to road or weather conditions.
- (e) HESSCO will approve all meals on wheels members
- (f) The site manager will keep track of seniors who would like a meal delivered.
- (g) The site manager will coordinate all kitchen and driver volunteers
- (h) Volunteer drivers will bring the meals to the individuals on a daily basis.
- (i) If a meal cannot be delivered the site manager will be notified.
- (j) All menus are available at the Center and are subject to change without notice.

#### ***On-Site Program:***

- (a) All reservations must be made two days in advance.
- (b) Reservations are strictly for the meal itself, not for the seat or the table.
- (c) Each individual participant is responsible for making their own reservation for lunch and for a ride to and from the meal site.
- (d) All menus are available at the Center and are subject to change without notice.
- (e) All participants must meet the criteria listed under Senior Center.

- (f) The Meal Site Manager is responsible for the smooth operation of the kitchen, including set up and clean up, as well as the preparation and distribution of the food.
- (g) The Meal Site program is run with a core of volunteers under the authority of the Meal Site Manager.
- (h) Only authorized personnel are permitted in the Food Service Area during meals.
- (i) If the COA is hosting a large luncheon or needs the dining area for a large event, the congregate meal will be cancelled for that day. Notice will be given to the Site Manager at least one week in advance of the cancellation.

### **USE OF THE SENIOR CENTER – *Evenings and Weekends***

1. No alcohol or smoking permitted at the Senior Center.
2. The Senior Center is insured by the Town of Westwood for the protection of the town and does not cover any individual or group using the Center against liability arising from their use of the Center. The applicant is urged to secure appropriate insurance or other protection against liability.
3. All scheduling for rooms, dates and times must be made through the COA staff well in advance of the meeting. The COA reserves the right to refuse any group. The COA has priority use of the building.
4. Keys to the building must be picked up and returned to the police station and will only be given out after permission from the Director.
5. Use of the kitchen, oven, refrigerator, dishwasher and any supplies is strictly prohibited. If kitchen is needed, COA staff must be alerted prior to usage to explain all parameters.
6. The Center must be left *in the same condition* as found including putting back chairs, tables and cleaning all areas used. Any damage or noncompliance to cleaning can result in suspension of the group to use the Center again. If damage does occur, the COA will expect fair and reasonable replacement cost for any such damages and may be subject to refusal for use again.
7. The OFFICE area is OFF LIMITS; this includes all desks, copy machine etc.
8. If a custodian is required, the renter is responsible for paying for that service. The custodian will be responsible for opening and locking the Center.
9. No windows or doors other than the side front door will be opened.
10. The Center is to be used by adults only. No youth groups may use the Center with the exception of the Youth and Family Service Department in the Town of Westwood.
11. Conservation of heat, lights and water must be a priority.

12. The building may not be used by any group during the working hours due to interference with the general operation of the Center.
13. At no time is the Director, COA staff or Board members expected to be in attendance at any function.
14. The Center may be used by the Friends of Westwood COA for any fund-raising event upon confirmation that another group is not using the Center. All other groups are prohibited from using the Center for fundraising.
15. The Center may not be used for political meetings or campaigning.
16. All fire code regulations shall be followed throughout the Center.

Written June 2016 LAD