



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Aging and Adult Services

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Division Director

Administrative Letter No. DAAS 13-16

To: Area Agencies on Aging Administrators  
Senior Center Directors

From: Dennis W. Streets, Division Director *Dennis W. Streets*

Subject: Senior Center Directors Assuming Dual Roles

Date: September 9, 2013

The Division of Aging and Adult services is proud of the many senior center accomplishments of the last fifteen years that have strengthened programs and services for older North Carolinians. However, the economic difficulties of the past several years have placed extraordinary stress on the aging network to sustain these performance levels. For many local senior centers the situation has only been made worse by other factors associated with budgetary uncertainty and reductions. All of these fiscal issues require senior centers to make difficult decisions about their operations to assure solvency and effective performance.

Please note that in the remainder of this letter the title of senior center director is used but actual titles could include senior center manager, senior center coordinator, or another title for the full-time lead role at the senior center.

Several questions have arisen regarding the responsibilities of a senior center director, specifically, is it possible for an individual to have a dual role such as being the director of the senior center's parent organization as well as the senior center director? The Division wishes to do all that it can do to provide local centers with the means to make difficult choices in the wake of financial constraints; however maintaining the operation and program standards that have been established for senior centers is of utmost importance. Therefore, the Area Agency on Aging may request a one-year waiver for the senior center director to act in a dual capacity if the following conditions can be met:

- 1) The senior center director can perform both roles from the senior center or within the same government complex, campus, or building.
- 2) If the senior center director is not on-site at the senior center or is otherwise unavailable due to the other job's duties, another paid staff person is available to stand in at the senior center.
- 3) The senior center is able to maintain the level of programs and operation standards that existed with a full-time senior center director.

This policy is applicable to full-time senior centers receiving Senior Center Operations and General Purpose funding.

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A Request for a 12-month Waiver of Service and Certification Standards must be made in writing to Leslee Breen by the Area Agency on Aging. Additional waivers are not automatic. Should the situation persist beyond a year, the center must again request a waiver for the following 12 months. We expect the center or its parent organization to be constantly evaluating its situation and searching for permanent funding solutions to restore the senior center director's position to full-time.

The initial one-year waiver request should include:

- 1) a description of the situation and specifics about the dual roles of the director, including both job titles and the percentage of time to be spent in each role.
- 2) a specific plan for maintaining programs and operations at the same level.
- 3) actions planned within the waiver period to restore the senior center director's position to full-time; for example, "speaking to the Board of County Commissioners (or other funding source) about the need for a full-time senior center director;" or "utilizing the center's advisory council to advocate for the restoration of funding."

Requests for an additional waiver beyond the initial 12 months should include:

- 1), 2) and 3) above, plus:
- 4) specific actions taken during the past 12 months towards restoring the center director's position to full-time.

The senior center or Area Agency on Aging may provide back-up documentation with a request.

The Division will render a decision based on the information submitted and respond to the request in writing.

For centers being recertified at Merit or Excellence, or centers receiving Senior Center Operations funding, programs and operations will be carefully examined to assure that standards are being maintained.

If you have any questions about this information please contact Leslee Breen at [leslee.breen@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:leslee.breen@dhhs.nc.gov), telephone - 919-855-3414; or Judy Smith at [judy.smith@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:judy.smith@dhhs.nc.gov), telephone - 919-855-3412.

cc: Steve Freedman, Leslee Breen, Judy Smith, Kim Jacobs