

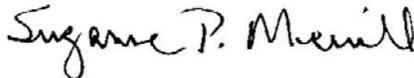


Aging and Adult Services
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

RICHARD O. BRAJER
Secretary

SUZANNE P. MERRILL
Director, Division of Aging and Adult Services

DAAS Administrative Letter No. 16-08

To: Area Agencies on Aging, Senior Center Directors
From: Suzanne P. Merrill 
Subject: Revised Policy for Charging Fees in Senior Centers
Date: July 5, 2016

The Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) recognizes many senior centers rely on fees and contributions from participants as an economic necessity. Administrative Letter 11-07 outlined acceptable ways fees and contributions could be requested, but recently both area agency on aging and senior center staff expressed confusion about this existing policy. Therefore, the purpose of this letter is to revise and further clarify the policy about charging fees in senior centers referenced in Administrative Letter 11-07 and provide more guidance about acceptable fees.

Administrative Letter 11-07 outlined the basic, core services that a senior center must provide for all older adults in the community it serves without charge, but stated charges could be applied for additional programming if these core services were adequately provided. However, there was not clear guidance for determining to what extent the core services were *adequately* provided.

Effective July 1, 2016, a center must offer 60% of its scheduled health promotion, social, educational and recreational activities for no charge. Based on research the Division staff and a consultant from the Center for Aging Research and Educational Services at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work determined that a majority guideline of 60% be used to define the expected minimum array. Further, there must be an equitable distribution of quality free and fee based programming that addresses varying levels of cognitive and physical abilities. The center should develop an identification method that shows the distinction between free and fee based programming. Centers should also develop a policy to ensure all drop-in activities are made available to those who are unable to pay a fee. The center must be able to sustain itself, but not at the expense of those who cannot afford fee based services and programs.





Aging and Adult Services
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

RICHARD O. BRAJER
Secretary

SUZANNE P. MERRILL
Director, Division of Aging and Adult Services

Future monitoring by the Area Agency on Aging will include inspection of the fee-to-free ratio to determine if centers are offering at least 60% of the above programs at no cost to participants and to ensure all center patrons have equitable access to drop-in activities. Monitors should examine calendars, newsletters, or other documentation of programming to verify a distinction between free and fee based programming and ensure an adequate percentage of free programming. The most recent documentation should be selected. The new monitoring tool will become effective for the FY 2016-2017 monitoring and should be used for monitoring Senior Center Operations in accordance with the Area Agency on Aging's monitoring plan.

All centers receiving Senior Center Operations will be expected to adhere to this requirement. Certification standards are an extension of Senior Center Operations standards, and therefore, all *certified* centers are also expected to adhere to this requirement. Future certification revisions will reflect this new requirement.

Please contact Leslee Breen (leslee.breen@dhhs.nc.gov) or Rebecca Freeman (rebecca.freeman@dhhs.nc.gov) if you have any questions.

SPM:lb



Department of Health and Human Services | Division of Aging and Adult Services
693 Palmer Drive, Taylor Hall | 2101 Mail Service Center | Raleigh, NC 27699-2101
919 855 3400 T | 919 733 0443 F