

Senior Services Director

Geriatric Social
Worker

Program Coordinator

Administrative
Coordinator

COA Outreach
Worker

SENIOR SERVICES

DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION

The Department of Senior Services' was established in July, 2005 to carry out programs and services that assist and enrich the lives of Newton seniors. These responsibilities include the oversight of the programs and services offered through the Newton Senior Center provision of social services in the community, administration of the Senior Citizen Transportation system, and the coordination of the functions of the Newton Council on Aging.

The Senior Center's mission is to offer a place for older adults to gather in an atmosphere that promotes and utilizes life experiences and skills. The Center's goal is to provide an environment that validates the changing needs and interests of the individual and enhances growth, dignity and connection to each other and the community at large. The center meets its mission and goals by offering programs and resources in the areas of physical and mental health, nutrition, recreation and education.

The Council on Aging's mission is to serve the needs and improve the quality of life for all Newton seniors, focusing on advocacy, education, outreach and legislation. The Department of Senior Services works with the Council on Aging to identify the needs of seniors in the community; to design, advocate for, and implement services to meet those needs; and to educate citizens and enlist their support and participation to meet the needs.

The Department of Senior Services coordinates the Attorney General's Office of Consumer Affairs housed and administered at Newton City Hall.

The Department of Senior Services is funded by the City of Newton, Community Development Block Grant funds, The Executive Office of Elder Affairs, and privately raised funds.

The Department of Senior Services delivers its services through the following programs.

Social Services: The Geriatric Clinical Social Worker and the Outreach Social Worker connect seniors and their families to resources through information and referral and case management. Clients also receive support through crisis intervention and mental health counseling. Case management is offered primarily through the Outreach Social Worker and mental health services are offered primarily through the Geriatric Clinical Social Worker. There is the need for crossover between these two sets of services.

The Geriatric Clinical Social Worker is in a unique position, due to training and experience, to be able to provide both the mental health services and case management – making the provision of services as seamless as possible. The Geriatric Clinical Social Worker also recruits and supervises social work interns that expand the department's ability to provide case management and counseling services.

Referrals to Social Services come from seniors themselves and others, including: family, neighbors, healthcare providers, police, religious organizations, and other human services agencies. The seniors who are referred require assistance in accessing services; making significant life style decisions; and maintaining safety in the community. The needs fall into six (6) general categories: housing, home services, health care, financial assistance, family, and general services. Social service staff makes referrals to other community services, monitor services, and re-assess needs.

General Programs and Services: All staff help seniors understand and connect with services offered through the Newton Senior Center and in the greater community. Senior Services Department services include: transportation, the administration of the Senior Tax Work-Off Program, legal assistance, tax return preparation, lunch, health benefits counseling, and senior parking stickers.

The Program Coordinator develops and implements programs in the areas of: fitness, health, recreation, education, art and music. The Program Coordinator recruits, trains, places and supervises volunteers to provide the programs. The Program Coordinator also promotes and markets all programs and services to the public. The Program Coordinator is also responsible for fundraising and development of program sponsorship.

The Administrative Coordinator tracks and oversees the Department's income and expenditures and coordinates the vendors that support the operation of the facilities, programs, and services of the department. This position is responsible for

all data entry and tracking of participant's use of the departments' programs and services. The Administrative Coordinator supervises one part-time clerical position, two part-time custodians, as well as a team of volunteers that support administrative responsibilities of the Coordinator.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. **Implemented changes to the Senior Transportation System** in order to decrease the overall cost of the service due to increased demand and FY09 budget cuts. The rider contribution system was changed in an effort to increase revenue. A contribution exemption process was implemented to allow continued access to the services for those seniors who could not afford the required increased contribution. As of January 31, 2009 over 10,000 rides have been provided, with a projection of 18,000 to be provided by the end of FY09.
2. **Increased community awareness of the programs and services offered by the department.** Staff presented at many community sites throughout the year. The Newton Council on Aging has implemented a Newsletter Delivery/Outreach project that assures the information in the Coming of Age newsletter is as broadly distributed as possible. The Department received two National awards. One award given by the Alliance for Community Media Professional Senior Television Programming was received for the NewTV show Coming of Age. The other award given by the National Council on Aging was received in recognition of our STABLE (Stand Tall, Balanced, Lively, and Energetic) programs the center offers that address the

fear of falling and improves balance. These programs include: aerobics, muscle conditioning, yoga, line dancing, and tai-chi (funded in part from a grant from NWH). The STABLE program also includes our FABB (Fit and Balanced Brain) Center, which involves UMASS Health and Physical Science undergrad students to teach participants how to use the Nintendo Wii and Wii Fit programs . The Program Coordinator has become a regular contributing writer for the Newton TAB's 50 and over supplement. Annual report information and program evaluation results are being regularly publicized on the Coming of Age newsletter.

- 3. Increased collaborative programs and co-sponsorship of programs and services.** The department created new collaborations with Springwell Elder Services, the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization, Temple Shalom, and Newton at Home (a newly formed grass roots non-profit membership organization that enables Newton residents to age at home comfortably, safely, independently, and with peace of mind) to assure that Newton seniors have the opportunity and resources to "Age in Place". Aging in place means staying in your home with access to outside support, programs, and services that one may want as they grow older, rather than moving to an independent living or retirement community where these are provided on site. The collaboration included offering focus groups to seniors and providers, administering a survey to Newton residents assessing the barrier to aging in place in Newton, and the implementation of a survey/needs of assessment of the availability of informally/volunteer offered services.

- 4. Transition of Senior Tax Work-Off Program into the Department of Senior Services from the Health and Human Services' Office of Volunteer Services.** Communication regarding the change in administration was provided to all seniors in the program and to the departments they work in. A survey was administered to the groups mentioned. The process to expand the program to allow senior volunteers to be placed in the community to address senior resident needs (home and yard maintenance needs) has begun.
- 5. Creation of a Participant Advisory Council.** This group was developed to increase participant involvement in senior center operations, improve communication between participants, staff, and the Council on Aging.
- 6. Year to date (through 2/20/09) 66 different individuals have received 237 sessions of mental health counseling.** The outcomes of this service as reported by clients include: decreased feelings of depression and anxiety; improved mood and emotional functioning; increased ability to solve interpersonal problems; decreases sense of isolation; decreased stress; and increased knowledge of psychosocial issues.
- 7. Year to date (through 2/20/09) 210 different people have accessed 875 hours of our case management services.** Outcomes from these services include; securing of public benefits (fuel assistance, food stamps, SSI, property tax relief, and The RIDE); assistance in obtaining housing, health care, health insurance, financial assistance, public and private homecare, employment counseling, specialized mental health services, housing rehab services, and meals on wheels; prevent homelessness and loss of utilities.

Information and Referral calls have been tracked more closely this past year; 446 people were provided information on community resources through 796 calls.

8. **Year to date (through 2/26/09) participation in senior center programs and services** reflects that 2075 different people have received 34,000 units of service.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. **Implement new transportation services contract.** The new transportation contract will begin as of July 1, 2009. Staff will educate riders on changes to services and the procedures to access them. Additional funds to support the continuation and possible expansion of these services will be pursued. The department will complete an exploration, with the Programs and Services subcommittee of the Board of Aldermen, of possible revenue that may be available through the special permit process.
2. **Complete assessment of services and unmet needs that affect a senior's goal to Age in Place.** The department will work collaboratively with a team of community based organizations to determine what services are being provided on an informal or volunteer basis that allow seniors to remain living safely and independently in the setting they choose. This process will determine what areas of un-met need there are and provide data as to the types of services that need to be developed to address these needs. This process will also create a directory of the currently provided services to be used for information and referral

calls. This assessment will be accomplished through community educational events, focus groups, and surveys.

3. **Initiate recruitment of new Senior Tax Work -Off** volunteers to be matched with seniors in need in the community.
4. **Provide additional staff training in the use of ServeTracker.** Staff will be trained in the use of additional functions of this software. Specifically the social services staff will be trained in the use of the Case Management module in order to better track those services and to centralize electronic record keeping.
5. **Improve emergency and safety protocol and procedures** to address natural disasters, power outages. Changes will include the installation of a building wide public address system and area evacuation plans.
6. **In cooperation with the Participant Advisory council develop a Participant Grievance Policy and Procedure** to allow an opportunity for participants to officially communicate concerns and grievances.
7. **Continued exploration and pursuit of funds for an additional Outreach Worker.** Due to the increased demand for case management and specialized needs that arise from our customers, additional outreach hours are required to continue to meet the needs of Newton's senior population.

DEPARTMENT:

502 - SENIOR SERVICES

**CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET
DEPARTMENT SUMMARY**

OBJECT SUMMARY	ACTUAL 2007	ACTUAL 2008	ORIGINAL	2009		RECOMMENDED 2010	APPROPRIATION CHANGE	
				ADJUSTMENTS	TOTAL		2009 To 2010	
51 - PERSONAL SERVICES	212,179	230,609	234,695	3,418	238,113	233,792	-4,321	-2%
52 - EXPENSES	242,422	320,091	305,411	7,100	312,511	301,444	-11,067	-4%
SUB-TOTALS:	454,601	550,700	540,106	10,518	550,624	535,236	-15,388	-3%
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	48,434	53,085	54,193	-1	54,192	59,201	5,009	9%
SUB-TOTALS:	48,434	53,085	54,193	-1	54,192	59,201	5,009	9%
DEPARTMENT TOTALS:	503,036	603,785	594,299	10,517	604,816	594,437	-10,379	-2%

FUNCTIONAL ELEMENT SUMMARY	ACTUAL 2007	ACTUAL 2008	ORIGINAL	2009		RECOMMENDED 2010	APPROPRIATION CHANGE	
				ADJUSTMENTS	TOTAL		2009 To 2010	
0150201 HUMAN SERVICES ADMIN	-709	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
0150202 SENIOR SERVICES	503,744	603,785	594,299	10,517	604,816	594,437	-10,379	-2%
DEPARTMENT TOTALS:	503,036	603,785	594,299	10,517	604,816	594,437	-10,379	-2%

HUMAN SERVICES ADMIN	ACTUAL 2007	ACTUAL 2008	ORIGINAL	2009		RECOMMENDED 2010	APPROPRIATION CHANGE	
				ADJUSTMENTS	TOTAL		2009 To 2010	
51 - PERSONAL SERVICES	-709	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
SUB-TOTALS:	-709	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Element Totals:	-709	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%

SENIOR SERVICES	ACTUAL 2007	ACTUAL 2008	ORIGINAL	2009		RECOMMENDED 2010	APPROPRIATION CHANGE	
				ADJUSTMENTS	TOTAL		2009 To 2010	
51 - PERSONAL SERVICES	212,888	230,609	234,695	3,418	238,113	233,792	-4,321	-2%
52 - EXPENSES	242,422	320,091	305,411	7,100	312,511	301,444	-11,067	-4%
SUB-TOTALS:	455,310	550,700	540,106	10,518	550,624	535,236	-15,388	-3%
57 - FRINGE BENEFITS	48,434	53,085	54,193	-1	54,192	59,201	5,009	9%
SUB-TOTALS:	48,434	53,085	54,193	-1	54,192	59,201	5,009	9%
Element Totals:	503,744	603,785	594,299	10,517	604,816	594,437	-10,379	-2%

DEPARTMENT:
502 - SENIOR SERVICES

CITY OF NEWTON BUDGET
PERSONAL SERVICES SUMMARY

ACCOUNT	POSITION TITLE	RANGE	2009 BUDGET		2010 RECOMMENDED	
			FTE	SALARY	FTE	SALARY
511001	Sr Center Director	H10	1	86,715	1	88,459
	Sr Center Social Worker	S08	0.48	27,696	0.48	27,835
	Admin Coordinator	S06	0.9	44,781	0.9	45,006
	Sr Center Program Coord	S06	0.54	26,236	0.54	26,368
	COA Outreach Worker	S06	1	41,581	1	42,050
Account Totals:			3.92	227,009	3.92	229,717
Report Totals:			3.92	227,009	3.92	229,717