

17—7.10 (231) Legal assistance requirements. The provisions and restrictions in this rule apply only to legal assistance providers and only when they are performing tasks covered by Section 307(a)(11) of the Act.

7.10(1) Provider requirements. The AAA shall award funds to the legal assistance provider(s) that most fully meets the standards given in this rule. The legal assistance provider(s) shall:

a. Have staff with expertise in specific areas of law affecting older individuals with economic or social needs and give priority to issues related to income, health care, long-term care, nutrition, utilities, housing, protective services, abuse, neglect, age discrimination and defense of guardianship;

b. Demonstrate the capacity to provide effective administrative and judicial representation in the areas of law affecting older individuals with economic or social needs;

c. Demonstrate the capacity to provide support to other advocacy efforts, for example, the long-term care resident's advocate program or elder abuse initiatives programs;

d. Demonstrate the capacity to deliver legal services to institutionalized, isolated, and homebound older individuals effectively;

e. Demonstrate the capacity to provide legal assistance in the principal language spoken by clients in areas where a significant number of clients do not speak English as their principal language; and

f. Coordinate the provision of legal assistance with private bar attorneys and legal services corporation state grantees.

7.10(2) Client income disclosure. A legal assistance provider shall not require an older individual to disclose information about income or resources as a condition for providing legal assistance under this rule.

7.10(3) Client information. A legal assistance provider may ask about an older individual's financial circumstances only as a part of the process of providing legal advice or counseling and representation, or for the purpose of identifying additional resources and benefits for which an older individual may be eligible.

7.10(4) Assistance allowed. Nothing in this rule is intended to prohibit an attorney or staff attorney from providing any form of legal assistance or to interfere with the fulfillment of the attorney's professional responsibilities.

7.10(5) Provider compliance with OAA regulations. The legal assistance provider and its attorney(s) and employee(s) shall comply with all federal and state laws, regulations and rules which govern ethical and professional conduct and the practice of law.

7.10(6) An AAA shall not require a provider of legal assistance to reveal information protected by attorney-client privilege.

7.10(7) The department will be responsible for the following:

a. Providing for the coordination of the furnishing of legal assistance to older individuals within the state;

b. Providing advice and technical assistance in the delivery of legal assistance to older individuals within the state;

c. Supporting the provision of training and technical assistance for legal assistance for older individuals; and

d. Assigning 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.