



**Aging Technical Assistance Bulletin**

**ATAB# 18-29-01**

**Disposition:**

Rescinds ATAB 08-29-01  
Note Well and File for  
Reference

**Issuance Date:**

November 1, 2018

**Effective Date:**

November 1, 2018

**Program Area:** Other

**Origin:**

Bureau of Aging Services

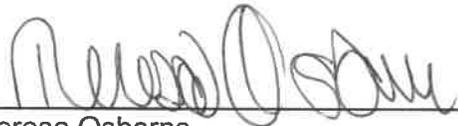
**Contact:**

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**Subject:** Area Agencies on Aging and the Living Independence for the Elderly (LIFE) Program Interface

**To:** Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)  
Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging  
Pennsylvania Council on Aging  
Department of Human Services/Office of Long-Term Living

**From:**

  
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Teresa Osborne  
Secretary

**Purpose:** The purpose of this Aging Technical Assistance Bulletin is to rescind Aging Technical Assistance Bulletin (ATAB) 08-29-01, and provide updated guidance on the AAAs role and interface with the LIFE Program.

**Background:** On January 23, 2008, the Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA) issued ATAB 08-29-01 informing the AAAs of LIFE's role in Pennsylvania's Long Term Living System and providing the AAAs with guidance on their role while interfacing with LIFE programs.

During the past decade since ATAB 08-29-01 was issued, many changes have taken place in Pennsylvania's Long Term Living System. Some changes have directly impacted the role of the AAAs, which prompted a review of the prior ATAB. As a result of that review, the previously issued ATAB (08-29-01) is rescinded, and updated technical assistance is now contained in this new ATAB 18-29-01.

**Discussion:**

The LIFE program (nationally known as the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly or PACE) is a Medicaid and Medicare program that serves older Pennsylvanians in their homes and communities. The LIFE program has local providers that pay for, manage, coordinate and provide all physical, behavioral health and long-term care services. Care is managed and delivered by a team including a doctor, nurse, social worker, therapists, and other care staff. All Medicare and Medicaid benefits are covered by LIFE.

The LIFE program is a program option to help individuals manage their long-term services and supports. Individuals 55 years of age or older, who are nursing facility clinically eligible, financially eligible for Medical Assistance, reside in an area served by a LIFE provider, and able to live safely at home or in the community are eligible for LIFE. An individual determined not eligible for Medical Assistance, can choose to privately pay to enroll in the LIFE program.

LIFE is an integral and growing part of Pennsylvania's long term living continuum of care, which has existed in Pennsylvania for the past 20 years. LIFE Programs presently serve communities throughout Pennsylvania, with the program becoming available to more seniors all the time. Current and potentially eligible individuals, who reside within counties or zip codes served by LIFE, are required to receive information about this voluntary, managed care, long-term living option.

**Technical Assistance:**

**I. AAAs Role in the Enrollment Process**

In April 2016, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services' Office of Long Term Living (DHS/OLTL) engaged an Independent Enrollment Broker, known as the IEB, for Medical Assistance (MA) Long-Term Services and Supports enrollments. The IEB is responsible to walk individuals through the application process; and for educating and notifying individuals seeking long term services and supports about their rights, responsibilities, and choice of managed care organizations to cover their long term care services and supports.

Effective, January 1, 2018, this choice now includes informing individuals that they have the option to enroll in the LIFE Program or in a Managed Care Organization under DHS/OLTLs Community HealthChoices (CHC) Program. The IEB is also responsible to provide individuals with a description of the LIFE Program and guidance on how to contact a LIFE Program provider for further information about the LIFE program and on the enrollment process.

## **II. AAAs Role in the Assessment Process**

Effective July 2017, the AAAs no longer serve as Pennsylvania's pre-admission assessment agency for level of care determinations for individuals seeking eligibility for Medicaid funded nursing facility care or long-term services and supports. Under an agreement with DHS/OLTL, this function is now the responsibility of Aging Well, a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging. The IEB refers individuals to Aging Well, which conducts a clinical eligibility determination for individuals seeking eligibility for long-term services and supports.

The IEB is currently responsible for educating individuals on the availability of the LIFE program as part of the Choice Counseling process, which requires the IEB to include a description of the LIFE Program and to provide information to individuals on how to contact a LIFE program provider for further information on service and supports and on the enrollment process for the LIFE Program.

## **III. AAAs Roles in Interfacing with LIFE Programs**

While DHS/OLTLs engagement of the IEB replaces the AAAs role in the enrollment function for Pennsylvania's long term living system; and the Aging Well agreement replaces the AAAs pre-admission assessment role under PDA, as required under the Older Americans Act, the AAAs do continue to serve as visible and effective advocates for older Pennsylvanians by helping them find information that will connect them to supports and services in their community.

To this end, the AAAs will continue to interface with LIFE Programs in their planning and service area (PSA) by:

- Providing information on the LIFE program, where available, to individuals as a part of their information and referral process.
- Referring individuals, who express an interest in enrolling in, or who request more information about the LIFE program, to the IEB hotline at 1-844-824-3655, directly to the LIFE provider in their PSA, if available, or to the PA LIFE Provider Alliance website at: <https://www.palifeprograms.org>
- Supporting and regularly communicating with DHS/OLTL as they recruit potential LIFE providers or prepare for the implementation of LIFE programs and services in their PSA.
- Regularly communicating with the LIFE providers in their PSA.
- Providing information for aging care managers, and other appropriate AAA staff on the LIFE Program, including a tour of a functioning LIFE Center.

- Including the LIFE Program in regular local networking and collaboration activities along with other providers as appropriate.
- Participating in regional or statewide cross-network conferences as they become available.

This technical assistance is to be a general guide on PDA recommended interfacing activities. It is not meant to restrict AAAs from participating in other locally initiated collaborative activities or opportunities with the LIFE Program Providers.