



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF AGING
Harrisburg, Pa. 17101

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF AGING

1. File Number: APD-85- ²⁹ 22 -01		2. Disposition: This APD rescinds APD # 82-21	
3. Issuance Date: October 1, 1985		4. Effective Date: October 1, 1985	
5. Program Area: "Other"			
6. Origin: Division of Policy		7. Contact: Division of Field Operations (717) 783-6007	

AGING PROGRAM DIRECTIVE

SUBJECT: CHANGES IN PLANNING AND SERVICE AREA (PSA) BOUNDARIES

TO: EXECUTIVE STAFF PDA GRANTEES AND CONTRACTORS
DIVISION OF FIELD OPERATIONS PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL ON AGING
AREA AGENCIES ON AGING PA STATE ASSOCIATION OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

FROM: *Alma R. Jacobs*
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SECRETARY
DEPARTMENT OF AGING

REGULATORY REFERENCES: 45 CFR Section 1321.43, (1985)
6 PA Code, Chapter 30 (PA Bulletin, Vol. 10,
No. 21, May 24, 1980)
Pennsylvania Act 78-70 (P.L. 477, No. 70)

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Directive is to set forth the policies and procedures which must be followed to change the boundaries of Planning and Service Areas currently established by the Department of Aging for the delivery of Department-funded services.

BACKGROUND: In January of 1974, the Department of Public Welfare, pursuant to the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended in 1972, designated and established 40 Planning and Service Areas in the Commonwealth as substate catchment areas for the delivery of services to the aging. During the years which have followed, and prior to the establishment of the Department of Aging in 1979, the Department of Public Welfare approved several changes in the originally-designated Planning and Service boundaries. These and

other changes resulted in the current boundaries which divide the Commonwealth into 51 Planning and Service Areas. In each of these Planning and Service Areas the Department of Aging has designated an Area Agency on Aging which, under a grant agreement with the Department, provides services to the aging persons who reside within the boundaries of the Planning and Service Area (PSA).

Recent local interest in the possibilities for additional changes in PSA boundaries have made it advisable for the Department to set forth these policies and procedures.

CONTENT:

Statement of Policy Regarding Changes in PSA Boundaries

The basic intent of dividing the Commonwealth into Planning and Service Areas is to facilitate the effective delivery of services designed to meet special needs of older Pennsylvanians. The effective delivery of these services may depend significantly on one or more of the following PSA characteristics:

- The size of the aging population residing within the geographical area.
- The incidence of economic and social need for services among this older population.
- The availability of sufficient local resources to develop and maintain an effective program of services for the aging.
- The potential for successful cooperative efforts between or among counties where PSA's include more than one county.
- Possibilities for establishing an Area Agency on Aging capable of providing effective management of public funds allocated for services to the aging and of promoting effective coordination of other agencies and resources related to the needs of the aging within the PSA.
- The general support of the older citizens residing in the area.
- The support of local public officials.
- In cases where the area is currently served by a non-profit Area Agency on Aging, the support of the governing board of that agency.

Any future changes in PSA boundaries approved by the Department, whether such changes are proposed by the

Department or by representatives of a specific local geographic area, will be determined only after adequate consideration has been given to all factors which may contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of services to the aging residing in the areas affected by such change.

Statement of Policy for the Allocation of Funds to Newly-Designated PSAs

All federal and state funds are allocated to PSA's by the Department of Aging in accordance with a standard formula as published in the Department's Title III State Plan. One factor in the allocation formula is the "hold harmless" provision of Act 70 of 1978 (See P.L. 477, No. 70, Section 2201-A(a); 71 P.S. 581-10(a)). This provision provides that "each area agency shall be held harmless to the amount of such funds received in the program year in which this act becomes effective." The act became effective January 1, 1979, during program year 1978-79.

Effective as of September 23, 1982 (the date that APD #82-21 was originally issued), the Department has interpreted this clause as guaranteeing a funding level only to those AAA's serving PSA's designated at or before that time (September 23, 1982). The "hold harmless" provision of Act 70 has not applied and will not apply to area agencies which came about after September 23, 1982, due to a change in the boundaries of planning and service areas.

Minimum Criteria for Establishing New PSA Boundaries

- (1) PSA boundaries shall not cross boundaries of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- (2) PSA boundaries shall not result in the division of a county, except in the event that a unit of general purpose local government with a population of 100,000 or more receives the approval of the Secretary of Aging under the provisions of the Older Americans Act, as amended, to be designated as a separate PSA within the boundaries of a county.

Procedures for Requesting Changes in PSA Boundaries

1. In order to assure program continuity, requests for PSA boundary changes shall be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, if possible by August 1, but in any case no later than October 1 of the year preceding the program year (July 1 - June 30) for which the proposed changes would become effective.

2. The request for change shall include the following detail:
 - (a) a statement of rationale in support of the change;
 - (b) a statement of the potential impact on the provision of services in the affected area, and on the staff structure of the existing Area Agency(ies) on Aging (this statement shall appropriately utilize key demographic and survey data concerning the affected aging population and its needs);
 - (c) the comments of the Advisory Council(s) of the Area Agency(ies) on Aging in the area of the proposed PSA;
 - (d) The comments of affected Regional Council(s) of the Pennsylvania Council on Aging;
 - (e) the comments of the governing authority of any Area Agency on Aging in the area of the proposed PSA if such governing authority is not involved in submitting the change request;
 - (f) maps of the affected existing and proposed planning and service areas;
 - (g) suggestions for the Secretary's consideration in establishing or designating an Area Agency in the proposed new Planning and Service areas, including an explanation of the experience and capabilities of any agencies suggested which are not now Area Agencies on Aging;
 - (h) the identification of adequate local resources to use with State and Federal resources to carry out the service plan for the new area.
3. The Department, upon receipt of such requests, will review the materials, solicit comments from the Pennsylvania Council on Aging and, if necessary, conduct a site visit to the area(s) to be affected. If there appears to be a legitimate basis for the request, the Department will also initiate plans to convene a public hearing. A staff report with recommendations shall be submitted to the Secretary within 15 days of the date the request was received or the public hearing if one is held.
4. The staff report and recommendations will be reviewed by the Secretary. Within 60 days of the date the

request was received, the Secretary shall decide to accept or reject the request for change.

5. If the request for change is denied, a letter detailing the Department's objections and the applicant's rights to appeal will be transmitted to the applicant(s). If the request is approved, a letter will be sent to the applicant(s) indicating State approval pending review and approval of the U.S. Administration on Aging.
6. All changes in Planning and Service Area boundaries require a formal amendment to the State Plan on Aging required under Title III of the Older Americans Act. Changes in PSA boundaries shall not be effective until the U.S. Commissioner on Aging has approved the amended State Plan.
7. Immediately following a decision to change any PSA boundaries, the Department shall initiate the procedures for designating Area Agencies on Aging to administer services to the aging in the new PSA's. These procedures are set forth in 6 PA Code, Chapter 30 (published in the PA Bulletin, Vol. 10, No. 21, May 24, 1980).