

King County Aging Network

2022 State Legislative Priorities

Protect and Strengthen Our Communities for the Future

Washington State leads the states on our long-term services and supports system — ranked 2nd in the nation for quality and cost effectiveness. However, critical maintenance was neglected during the recession, and **revenue is needed** to ensure that the system can effectively respond to both opportunities and challenges of our state’s growing and vibrant older population.

Our state and region thrive when people of all ages actively participate in their communities, have equitable access to opportunities and everyone is treated with respect, regardless of their age or ability.

We need your help to ensure that communities in our state are “age-friendly”- places that enable people of all ages to achieve their potential.

You can help by supporting:

- **Better policies for our rapidly aging nation informed by COVID-19 tragedies and successes.**
- **Opportunities for healthy aging in employment, a safe and secure retirement system, and affordable healthcare.**
- **Cost-effective aging home and community-based supports for family caregivers, older adults, and people with disabilities, including those with dementia and Alzheimer’s disease**

On the next page, we have listed opportunities for the Washington State Legislature to strengthen the work of Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) in 2022. These priorities were developed in collaboration with Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A) and Washington State Senior Lobby.

If you have questions or would like information specific to your legislative district, contact Aging and Disability Services (ADS) Advisory Council staff liaison Sariga Santhosh: 206-379-3851; Santhosh@seattle.gov



King County Advisory Council on Aging & Disability Services
www.agingkingcounty.org

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Support the aging network by investing in:



Stabilize AAA Case Management Program

AAA case management is the core of our state's Medicaid long-term care system. ADS and subcontracted case managers authorize and coordinate services that allow 25% of the state's long-term care clients to receive care in homes and communities rather than costly institutional settings. Our case managers carry heavy workloads (~87 clients), stretching worker capacity and overwhelming a workforce that has struggled with flat funding for over a decade.

- **Increase AAA case management funding (\$12M General Fund + \$12M federal match) to establish an equitable baseline with DSHS case management programs**
- **Support efforts to protect parity in statute.**



Increase PNA to support client choice

Clients receiving Medicaid in-home services are allowed to retain a portion of their income (known as Personal Needs Allowance or PNA) for housing, utilities, and other living expenses. Any income above PNA goes towards cost of care. The current PNA for an unmarried individual - \$1,074 in 2021 – does not allow clients to save enough and disincentivizes participation. This results in delayed entry into the Medicaid system until client care needs are high, often requiring placement in more costly long-term care facilities.

- **Increase PNA for in-home clients to 300% of the federal benefit rate.**
- **Support client choice that allows seniors and individuals with disabilities to remain in their home, successfully transition out of acute care settings, and reduce poverty for Medicaid long-term care clients.**



Support full implementation of WA Cares

WA State passed WA Cares, the first of its kind long-term care benefit in 2019.

- **Invest in long-term stability and solvency of WA Cares**
- **Explore improvements that strengthen program (interstate portability, options for near-retirees and those already retired, etc.)**

