Washington STATE Community living connections

Staffing and Training Plan/Qualifications

# **2023**

 

## Introduction

Community Living Connections providers have individual structures and needs. The following staffing plan and training guidelines are meant to serve as guidelines for best practices in a fully functional Community Living Connections program.

Inform USA (formerly Alliance of Information and Referral Systems - AIRS) certification is recommended for all eligible CLC staff.

Agencies that are not able to meet outlined staffing requirements must get written exception approval from ALTSA Community Living Connections Program Manager

## Basic Staff Qualifications

Responsibilities of CLC staff may vary depending on the size of the CLC program. Areas of specialization may include Information and Assistance/Aging and Disability Specialist, Resource Database Specialist, and others. In large programs, one or more staff members may be assigned to each task. In smaller programs each staff member may have a variety of CLC responsibilities or even other program responsibilities such as Case Management or SHIBA.

* CLC’s may organize their staffing structure so that each individual has only one role; or in a way that optimizes existing staff to serve in “blended roles” within the CLC. Blended roles may even include other program responsibilities such as Family Caregiver Support, Care Transitions, health insurance education and counseling, and others. It is at the discretion of the CLC to determine what staffing structure will work best based upon their agency, organizational capacity and target population. In addition, some roles may best be centrally located, either within the AAA or in a primary CLC, to ensure consistency across the PSA in coordination with the statewide CLC program.
* CLC staff or other performing the full range of CLC agency duties may be volunteers but must meet the same qualifications as paid employees.
* All staff must have demonstrated proficiency in interpersonal communication, both oral and written.
* All staff must have demonstrated skills and knowledge commensurate with their job responsibilities at the time of employment or have the potential of achieving the required skills and knowledge through training. All staff who provide CLC services much have a general knowledge of:
	+ The purpose of the CLC program and the services it provides;
	+ The aging process and disabilities;
	+ The Aging Network delivery system;
	+ Person-centered concepts;
	+ Consumer direction;
	+ Characteristics of other target population served by CLC;
	+ Cultural awareness;
	+ Recognizing abuse and exploitation;
	+ Services funded by ALTSA and other service delivery systems in the community;
	+ The purpose of area agencies on aging, CLC’s and the programs and services they provide as well as other service delivery systems in the community;
* All CLC staff, including volunteers who have unsupervised access to vulnerable adults must have a Washington State Patrol Criminal History Background Check on file. Staff or volunteers with disqualifying crimes as defined in [RCW 43.43.830](http://www.leg.wa.gov/RCW/index.cfm?section=43.43.830&fuseaction=section) and [43.43.842](http://www.leg.wa.gov/RCW/index.cfm?section=43.43.842&fuseaction=section) cannot be given unsupervised access to vulnerable adults. The information is used to determine the staff person’s character, suitability and competence to perform in the position.
* All CLC personnel, including volunteers, will adhere to state and federal confidentiality requirements, including those under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA).

### Information and Assistance/Aging and Disabilities Resource Specialist

I&A/ADR/CLC Specialists are human service professionals whose skills in communication, problem-solving, and creative thinking provide the critical link between client needs and community, health, and social services. They respect and support client rights to self-determination as they provide information, assistance, referral and advocacy for older adults, persons of all ages with disabilities, and their caregivers.

## Education/Experience

1. B.A. in relevant field (social science) and two years of experience (may be paid or volunteer) providing direct human services. OR two years of relevant college level courses and four years of experience providing direct human services.
2. Experience providing services to older people and people with disabilities is preferred.
3. Inform USA (formerly AIRS) Certified Community Resource Specialist Aging and Disabilities (CRS-A/D) credentialing is recommended.
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## Duties may include:

1. Provide information and/or assistance on community resources to individuals, families and community partners over the telephone, by e-mail, in person or in home, as well as in community settings
2. Refer and screen for services,
3. Assess callers to determine if further assistance is needed
4. Screen callers to determine whether a referral for other services, either internal or external, is appropriate
5. Arrangement of services
6. Follow up to determine if services were put into place
7. Utilize electronic client management system to document caller and client interactions
8. Participate in outreach to inform community and partners of agency programs and services

### Resource Database Specialist

Resource Database Specialist apply problem-solving and research skills to create, update and maintain resource databases of nonprofit, government and for-profit organizations that provide the critical links between the needs of individuals, families and communities, and the community, social and health services designed to meet those needs. *This work will often be combined within another CLC agency role.*

## Education/Experience

1. High School diploma or G.E.D. plus a minimum of two years of post-secondary education. Four-year degree preferred. OR one year of relevant college level courses and two years of relevant experience.
2. Proficiency in CLC GetCare (or other applicable information and assistance software). Technical mastery sufficient to write queries, forms, reports and macros.
3. Experience involving services to older people and people with disabilities is preferred.
4. Knowledge of (or training support in) 211 LA Taxonomy (or other as identified by ALTSA)
5. Inform USA (formerly AIRS) Community Resource Specialist – Database Curator credentialing is recommended.

## Duties may include:

1. Develop and maintain database of resources available for older adults and their caregivers for use by CLC staff in service provision.
2. Coordinate the updating of Information and Assistance resource files by:
3. Contacting providers to update resource information.
4. Categorizing resource information in accordance with the 211 LA Taxonomy (or other as required by program needs).
5. Promptly updating the computerized database and hardcopy consumer documents.
6. Research and assist with the development and maintenance of a website.
7. Maintain and develop database forms and reports as requested by CLC Specialists.
8. Coordinate the distribution of updated material to designated staff.

### CLC Supervisor

All CLC staff shall have an assigned supervisor. Supervisors shall be paid employees.

The term supervisor as used in these standards does not necessarily refer to a person who has hiring and firing authority, monitors attendance, etc. Although this person may also perform the job duties listed below, this is not required. The person performing the listed job duties might be called a Lead I&A/ADRC/CLC Specialist, but the AAA must ensure that they meet the education/experience requirements listed below.

The supervisor shall be knowledgeable about the community resources, screening tools and process, and physical and mental health issues in the client population.

## Education/Experience

1. BA in relevant field (social science) plus two years of experience providing direct human services or two years of supervisory experience.
2. Experience must be paid.
3. Experience providing services to older people is preferred.
4. Inform USA (formerly AIRS) Community Resource Specialist Aging/Disability (CRS-A/D) credentialing is recommended.

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## Duties may include:

1. Maintain regular contact with staff.
2. Review case records with staff to determine effectiveness of actions taken.
3. Provide and arrange for formal staff training.
4. Provide consultation to staff as needed.
5. Arrange for appropriate case consultation by other professionals, as needed.
6. Monitor and report follow-up activities.
7. Review a sample of two assistance records for accuracy and completeness at least once every 90 days for each CLC Specialist.
8. Conduct a formal evaluation of each staff person at least once a year.

### CLC Program Director

Each CLC program, or each component if the program is divided among more than one service provider, shall have a program director. The program director shall be a paid employee.

## Education/Experience

A. B.A. in relevant field and two years of administrative experience (one year of supervisory experience may be substituted for one year of administrative experience).

## Duties may include

1. Develop and implement program policies, goals and objectives utilizing follow-up information to identify possible gaps in the service delivery system. Advocate and plan for system improvement.
2. Cooperate and advocate with AAA planning unit to determine where gaps in services exist for the target population
3. Hire and supervise appropriate staff.
4. Arrange for volunteer and student assistance and supervision as appropriate.
5. Manage or delegate day-to-day program operation.
6. Develop program operating procedures, personnel policies, job descriptions and record maintenance system.
7. Submit required reports in a timely fashion.
8. Develop and maintain linkages with community agencies and organizations that could give support to the program or individual older persons.
9. Educate community agencies and groups and the general public on the goals of the CLC program, the target population and services provided.
10. Develop program publicity.
11. Establish systems for evaluating program effectiveness.
12. Ensure that a case finding system is developed and maintained by the CLC.

## Orientation/Training

The agency providing CLC services must make orientation and training available to paid and volunteer staff. Each service provider will have a process for identifying the training needs of staff, both at the initial point of employment and during the course of employment. The CLC program will develop a written training plan and standardize orientation for new staff members and continuing training. The plan will encourage staff professional development including pursuing the nationally approved Inform USA (formerly Alliance of Information & Referral Systems/AIRS) Certification program as a suggested standard for excellence. \*Assistance with Training Plan development and template available upon request from CLC Program Manager.

Initial training should cover skills that are essential to good telephone contact and should be completed prior to a new staff member assuming his/her duties assisting callers. Types of training appropriate for CLC staff include, but are not limited to:

1. Person-Centered Practices/Counseling.
2. Introduction to the Aging Network.
3. Inform USA developed and sponsored conference, courses and webinars.
4. Philosophy of the CLC program, target population, and program functions.
5. Resources to address equity and access needs within community.
6. Agency policies and procedures.
7. Interviewing techniques and listening skills.
8. Screening and assessment skills.
9. Information-giving and referral procedures, including protocol for working with other agencies.
10. Techniques for handling emergency situations.
11. Setting up and maintaining resource files.
12. Appropriate data collection and documentation of CLC activities.
13. How to work as part of a team.
14. Use of technology in provision of services.

Ongoing professional development shall be a shared responsibility of both the CLC operating organization and each CLC staff. A minimum of six hours of continuing training shall be offered annually, with topics to be determined as staff needs/interests are identified. In-service training can be held as a part of regularly scheduled meetings in which staff has an opportunity to discuss problems and successes and receive peer feedback regarding call handling techniques. In addition, there should also be regularly scheduled training sessions which focus on more specialized topics to refine and up-date staff skills and increase understanding of emerging issues. Training programs should also be designed to meet the continuing education needs of CLC program directors and supervisors.