

## 2018-2019 Pennsylvania Senior Community Center Grant Program

### What is New and Important in This Year's Grant?

Last year's grant instructions were 14 pages long, including 3 pages of instructions about the project narrative. This year's instructions are 13 pages long, plus an additional 8 pages of instructions and form fields for the project narrative ("the Scope of Work"). The application last year had 9 graded areas worth 5 to 20 points each. This year's application has only four more comprehensive graded sections worth 10 to 35 points each. Each section of the new grant application will be more important to the overall grade of the grant, and the instructions state, "*Your Scope of Work should be clear, thorough and persuasive.*"

What is important this year?

1. Do you have a compelling need? Identifying the need, explaining how the need was identified, how the solution was identified, and how the grant will help solve the need in a cost-effective manner is worth 35 out of 100 points in this year's application. Be sure to identify a compelling need and have a persuasive reason for meeting the need that has been identified.
2. Perhaps the most important change is in section 2 – qualitative v. quantitative. If your center's programs suffer from facilities that are in poor condition, you can express an argument for improving the quality of your center rather than the more traditional argument of improving the quantity of membership growth and participation. This is a significant change from years past, and opens up the grant opportunity to successful centers who need facility improvements that are already full with activities. Of course, if your center cannot demonstrate that you are already operating at maximum level, use this grant to help your center increase membership growth and participation. [How do know if you are at maximum operating capacity? Unless you have 2 programs for every activity room in your center for each day of the week you are open, you have room to grow.] Value of this section is worth 35 points.
3. Cost effectiveness in last year's grant was worth 10 points. This year cost effectiveness is worth double that. It is imperative that your grant narrative persuasively argue that the PDA funds provided will sustainable improvements to the quality of your center or the quantity of your programs and participation. If you identify costs for operating the grant, how will you cover the cost of those additional operating expenses after one year? Demonstrate sustainability.
4. What is your strategic plan? If you were at my workshop at the PASC conference on October 3, this was covered in detail. If you were not in attendance, download and review my notes "Seven Secrets Download." It is imperative to articulate goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes. How will you measure your outcomes? A goal without a plan is just a wish. How you measure your goals determines whether or not you have the ability of creating a successful project. This section is worth 10 points.

Although there are fewer graded questions, each section is worth more and is more comprehensive.

If you need help with identifying needs, articulating the purpose of your grant, persuasively arguing how your grant application is cost effective and sustainable, or in preparing a strategic plan, please waste no time in contacting Stephen Forbus at [stephenforbus@verizon.net](mailto:stephenforbus@verizon.net), or by calling 215-431-1368.