

Organizational Structure

ADRC Operations Manual

I. Introduction

Aging and disability resource centers (ADRC) must have a distinct and independent identity that it is easily recognizable to the public. Potential customers should not be expected to be familiar with the organization that is operating the ADRC in order to access ADRC services; the operating structure of the ADRC should not pose a barrier to accessing services. ADRCs may choose among several options for organizational structure. For example, an ADRC may be a stand-alone organization or part of a human services department, county aging unit, or other larger organization. ADRCs are required to be organizationally and physically separate from any managed care organization (MCO), IRIS consultant agency (ICA), or fiscal employer agent (FEA).

II. Agency Structure

The overall organizational structure of the ADRC must support the identity and operations of the ADRC. Staffing levels, responsibilities, and lines of authority within the ADRC must be clear and understandable and support the mission of the ADRC. The ADRC must maintain organizational charts that describe its organizational structure, areas of responsibility, and reporting relationships. The organizational charts must describe the placement of the ADRC within any larger organization of which it is part and the ADRC's relationship to its governing board.

A. Single County

An ADRC may serve a single county. Placement of the ADRC within county government or as a separate non-profit agency is at the discretion of the county. County government maintains the right of first refusal to operate the ADRC. Details regarding the county's decisions related to organizational structure must be included in the [application to operate an ADRC \(F-00052\)](#) and approved by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS).

B. Regional and Multiple Counties

Two or more counties may operate a regional ADRC. When multiple counties choose to operate a single, multi-county ADRC, they must detail their organizational structure in the [application to operate an ADRC \(F-00052\)](#), which must be approved by DHS.

An ADRC that serves multiple counties and/or tribes must:

- Be recognizable to the public as a single regional service entity and provide consistent services to people in all of the participating counties and tribes within its service area.
- Have a single governing board with representation from each participating county and tribe in the regional ADRC. A regional ADRC
- Use one agency name consistently throughout its entire service area. The agency name should be concise; it does not need to contain the names of the counties and tribes in the service area.
- Share one mission statement across all of its branch offices.
- Have a single director who is responsible for overseeing agency operations across all counties and tribes within its service area.
- Operate as a single organizational entity.
- Use a single client tracking system and a single resource database, to develop a single budget and expenditure report(s), and to have a single website.

Although each county and tribe in the regional ADRC service area may remain an employer of record, the best practice is to have one county in the service area serve as the employer of record for all ADRC staff in the region; this arrangement supports consistency in policies, procedures, schedules, and pay scales.

C. Integration With Aging Units

ADRCs and county aging units (CAU) are encouraged to integrate and operate as a single entity that provides all required ADRC and aging services. When ADRCs and CAUs are integrated, they must have a single agency name that fulfills the agency naming requirements (see section IV. Operational Policies and Procedures, below). The integrated agency must have one publicized phone number and website. There must be a single director with responsibility for both ADRC and aging unit functions. Integrated agencies are required to have a budgeting and accounting system that streamlines fiscal management and clearly distinguishes funds from the ADRC grant, the Older Americans Act, and other funding sources.

Integrated ADRCs and CAUs are encouraged to complete a [Self-Assessment for an Integrated Agency](#).

D. Tribal Partnership

ADRCs must provide all tribal members residing in their geographic service area with the full range of ADRC services in the most accessible, comfortable, and culturally appropriate manner possible.

Some tribes have opted to fully partner with an ADRC, electing to have the ADRC be the primary service provider to their tribal members. Other tribes have opted to employ a tribal aging and disability resource specialist (ADRS).

When a tribe has opted to employ a tribal ADRS, its tribal members may choose to receive services from either the tribal ADRS or the ADRC that operates in the county where they reside.

III. Staffing Requirements and Prohibitions

The ADRC must have sufficient staff to provide all required services. Staffing at the ADRC must be at an appropriate level to meet the needs of customers during typical business hours. The ADRC must develop and maintain a staffing plan as described in section IV.D.3 of this chapter.

The ADRC is responsible for maintaining knowledgeable staff. The ADRC must adequately staff the organization to ensure the expertise required for the provision of quality services and to foster a consistent public and organizational identity for the ADRC.

A. Director

The ADRC is required to have a single director whose position is dedicated to the ADRC, with at least 50% of the director's time spent on ADRC or integrated ADRC and aging unit operations and management activities. The director has the following responsibilities:

- Ensure that the ADRC meets all obligations under the ADRC contract and the [ADRC Operations Manual](#) (P-03062).
- Ensure that performance of the ADRC meets expectations for quality and is consistent with the mission set out for the ADRC.
- Oversee day-to-day operations of the ADRC in coordination with all counties and tribes in its service area.
- Provide supervision for the staff of the ADRC, including making work assignments, arranging training, and overseeing performance.
- Oversee personnel decisions regarding the ADRC staff and have direct or shared authority to hire and terminate staff.
- Oversee the performance of any subcontractors of the ADRC.
- Oversee the budget and financial management of the ADRC.
- Ensure that all charges incurred against the ADRC grant agreement are correct and appropriate.
- Report to and assist the ADRC's governing board in carrying out its duties.
- Provide orientation, training, and ongoing education for governing board members so they can effectively carry out their responsibilities.
- Seek input from, and be responsible to provide input to, the ADRC's customers and governing board.

An ADRC Director is required to have a Bachelor of Arts or Science degree or a license to practice as a registered nurse, pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 441.06, and the equivalent of at least one year of full-time experience in a health or human services field working with one or more of the client populations served by the ADRC. Qualifying work experience may be paid or unpaid and may include internships, field placements, and volunteer work.

In the event that a candidate lacks the degree and/or experience described above, the ADRC can request a waiver of education and/or experience requirements from DHS. Approval of waiver requests is discretionary. DHS is not obligated to approve a request for waiver of education and/or experience requirements. Requests for exception to the education or experience requirements must be submitted to and approved by DHS prior to the ADRC making the job offer. Requests must be made using the form [F-00054](#) and submitted to [ORCD](#).

B. ADRC Specialist

An ADRC specialist is required to have a Bachelor of Arts or Science degree or a license to practice as a registered nurse, pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 441.06, and the equivalent of at least one year of full-time experience in a health or human services field working with one or more of the client populations served by the ADRC. Qualifying work experience may be paid or unpaid and may include internships, field placements, and volunteer work.

In the event that a candidate lacks the degree and/or experience described above, the ADRC can request a waiver of education and/or experience requirements from DHS. Approval of waiver requests is discretionary. DHS is not obligated to approve a request for waiver of education and/or experience requirements. Requests for exception to the education or experience requirements must be submitted to and approved by DHS prior to the ADRC making the job offer. Requests must be made using the form [F-00054](#) and submitted to [ORCD](#).

ADRC specialists may provide one or more of the following services and must adhere to the requirements described for each of these services within the scope of services and ADRC operations manual:

- [Information and Assistance](#) (P-03062-01)
At least one person providing information and assistance at the ADRC must be certified by the [Alliance for Information and Referral Systems \(AIRS\)](#) as a Community Resource Specialist – Aging/Disability (CIRS – A/D). Candidates for the CIRS – A/D must follow [AIRS Ethical Principles](#).
- [Options Counseling](#) (P-03062-02)

- [Eligibility Determination](#) (P-03062-04)
The ADRC is required to provide [functional eligibility determination](#) (P-03062-04a) for publicly funded long-term care programs. The ADRC is also required to identify a staff member to serve the role of long-term care functional screen liaison. This lead staff person will work with DHS to ensure the consistency, accuracy, and timeliness of the long-term care functional screen.
- [Enrollment](#) (P-03062-03a) and [Disenrollment Counseling](#) (P-03062-03b)

ADRCs are required to have at least one full-time ADRC specialist position that provides information and assistance as its primary job responsibility. This position may also provide any of the other ADRC specialist services.

Additional positions that perform ADRC specialist services must do so at a minimum of .5 full-time equivalency (FTE). This requirement may be waived under exceptional circumstances with prior written approval from DHS. Requests for exceptions must be submitted to DHS using the form [F-00054D](#) and submitted to [ORCD](#). Approval of a waiver request is discretionary and may be conditional or time-limited.

C. Dementia Care Specialist (DCS)

Each ADRC is required to have a minimum of .5 FTE that is dedicated to providing [dementia care specialist services](#) (P-03062-07). Regional ADRCs are required to have a minimum of .5 FTE per county in the ADRC's service area. For example, a regional ADRC serving three counties is required to staff a minimum of 1.5 FTE that is dedicated to providing dementia care specialist services. The regional ADRC has the discretion to determine how that total FTE is allocated and operationalized for the agency.

DCS are required to have a Bachelor of Arts or Science degree or a license to practice as a registered nurse, pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 441.06, and the equivalent of at least one year of full-time, paid experience in a health or human services field working with dementia. Qualifying work experience must be paid.

In the event that a candidate lacks the degree and/or experience described above, the ADRC can request a waiver of education and/or experience requirements from DHS. Approval of waiver requests is discretionary. DHS is not obligated to approve a request for waiver of education and/or experience requirements. Requests for exception to the

education or experience requirements must be submitted to and approved by DHS prior to the ADRC making the job offer. Requests must be made using the form [F-00054](#) and submitted to [ORCD](#).

D. Disability Benefit Specialist and Elder Benefit Specialist

Each ADRC is required to have a minimum of .5 FTE that is dedicated to providing Disability Benefit Specialist (DBS) services. Staffing requirements for the Elder Benefit Specialist (EBS) position are more detailed, and follow below.

The Elder Benefit Specialist program requires the employment of a minimum of 1.0 FTE elder benefit specialist in each county, or one that is as close to full-time as possible within the limits of state EBS funding allocated to the county. More details on elder benefit specialist staffing requirements can be found in section 10.1(6) of the [Elder Benefit Specialist](#) chapter (P-03062-06) in this manual.

Benefit specialists are required to have a Bachelor of Arts or Science degree or a license to practice as a registered nurse, pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 441.06, and the equivalent of at least one year of full-time experience in a health or human services field working with one or more of the client populations served by the ADRC. Qualifying work experience may be paid or unpaid and may include internships, field placements, and volunteer work.

In the event that a candidate lacks the degree and/or experience described above, the ADRC can request a waiver of education and/or experience requirements from DHS. Approval of waiver requests is discretionary. DHS is not obligated to approve a request for waiver of education and/or experience requirements. Requests for exception to the education or experience requirements must be submitted to and approved by DHS prior to the ADRC making the job offer. Requests must be made using the form [F-00054](#) and submitted to [ORCD](#).

Benefit specialist positions must meet a minimum of .5 FTE. This requirement may be waived under exceptional circumstances with prior written approval from DHS. Requests for exceptions must be submitted to DHS using the form [F-00054D](#) and submitted to [ORCD](#). Approval of a waiver request is discretionary and may be conditional or time-limited.

E. Adult Protective Services

ADRCs that are organizationally a part of county government may provide adult protective services (APS), but ADRC grant funds cannot be used for this purpose. Positions that have both ADRC and APS responsibilities must comply with

the requirements for shared positions (section F below) and the requirements of the [Conflict of Interest policy](#) (P-02923-03). ADRCs are strongly encouraged to have a written referral process or MOU with APS. The format of the agreement is at the discretion of the agencies; however, a [model template \(P-00824\)](#) is available.

F. Positions Shared Within an ADRC or Other County Department

The ADRC must ensure that shared or part-time staff are free from [conflicts of interest](#) (P-02923-03) and have the time and expertise needed to carry out their ADRC responsibilities while providing a high-quality, professional level of service as part of the ADRC team.

Clerical and other supportive positions, such as human resources, accounting, and IT may be subcontracted or shared with other organizations where they have similar responsibilities. However, the director is responsible for ensuring that the activities and performance of shared or subcontracted staff supported with ADRC funds are correct and appropriate.

Shared or part-time staff must meet all of the applicable requirements for ADRC staff qualifications and training described in this section and the corresponding section of the ADRC operations manual for that service. All shared or part-time positions in which a portion of the position is allocated to the ADRC must be submitted to and approved by the ADRC's assigned regional quality specialist.

Only that portion of a shared position that is devoted to the functions required under this section and the corresponding section of the ADRC operations manual may be funded with ADRC funds. For positions where [100% time and task reporting](#) (P-03062-10) is required to claim federal Medicaid administrative funds, costs must be allocated between funding sources based on time reporting. Funding for other positions may be allocated based on FTE or another method that has been reviewed and approved by DHS.

G. Positions Shared Between Multiple ADRCs

Two or more ADRCs may choose to share a position while remaining separate and distinct agencies. If multiple ADRCs decide to share a position, they are expected to adhere to the following requirements:

- The service area of a shared position will include all of the counties served by both ADRCs. For example, a position shared between a regional ADRC and a single-county ADRC will serve all of the counties that make up the regional ADRC as well as the single-county ADRC.
- Only one ADRC will be the employer of record and the fiscal agent. The employer of record and the fiscal agent are responsible for:
 1. Employment-related activities, including payroll and expense reimbursement.
 2. Oversight and supervision.
 3. Submission of 100% time and task reports for the position.
- The agency or agencies that contribute funding to support the shared position will be responsible for:
 1. CARS reporting for their financial contribution to the position.
 2. Including information in their annual document, expenditure reports, and any other required reporting for the shared position. If an agency is not the employer of record, the position should be defined as a subcontractor in annual documentation.
- A memorandum of understanding (MOU) or other written agreement will be executed between the ADRCs for the shared position and a copy sent to the ADRCs assigned regional quality specialist(s). The MOU agreement will, at a minimum, address the following roles and responsibilities for each agency:
 1. Recruitment, selection, and hiring of candidates for the position
 2. Training
 3. Physical location, equipment, and supplies
 4. Performance monitoring and reviews
 5. Invoicing, payments, and fiscal monitoring
 6. Reporting
 7. Confidentiality
 8. Record retention

- Shared positions between ADRCs will have access to materials for each ADRC, including logos, letterhead, and business cards.
- The shared position will maintain a single email address and advertise a single phone number for use with all customers across the combined service area.
- All required services of the shared position will be provided consistently throughout the shared service area.
- The shared position will have access to the client-tracking system(s) and any other required system(s) for all ADRCs that the position serves. Shared positions must follow customer residency requirements to determine which client tracking system or other required system to use when documenting a customer's information.

IV. Operational Policies and Procedures

A. Statutory References

[Wis. Stat. § 46.283 Resource Centers](#)

[Wis. Admin. Code ch. DHS 10](#)

[Medicaid Managed Care Rule](#)

[Older Americans Act](#)

[Wisconsin Elders Act](#)

B. Agency Requirements

1. Hours of Operation

The ADRC must have:

- Business hours at times that are convenient for its customers.
- A fixed schedule of hours of operation.
- Their hours of operation included in the voicemail greeting, posted on the ADRC’s website, and posted at the entrance to the ADRC.
- A statement that lets customers know that after-hours appointments are available upon request.

In addition to its regularly scheduled business hours, the ADRC must have the capacity to set up occasional after-hours and weekend appointments. The ADRC may establish criteria for determining when after-hours appointments are necessary and that the after-hours appointments are made in a timely manner.

2. ADRC Name

The ADRC must have a name that begins with the phrase “Aging and Disability Resource Center,” and the name must be approved by DHS. The approved name will be included on all of the ADRC’s advertising materials, on its website, and in any ADRC publication provided to the public.

3. Organizational Independence from MCOs, ICAs, and FEAs

The ADRC must be organizationally separate and independent from any managed care organization, IRIS consultant agency, and fiscal employer agency. The ADRC must meet all state and federal requirements for organizational independence from any MCO.

C. Policy Requirements

[Complaint and Grievance Policy \(P-02923-02\)](#)

[Conflict of Interest \(P-02923-03\)](#)

[Confidentiality \(P-02923-06\)](#)

D. Reporting and Plan Requirements

1. Regional Management Plan

Regional ADRCs are required to have a regional management plan. The plan describes the respective roles and responsibilities of the regional director and the branch management staff. It includes information related to communication among the director, branch staff, oversight boards or committees in participating counties, and the regional ADRC governing board. The plan must also include information on how the performance of each branch will be evaluated in order to determine whether consistent quality standards are being met. This plan is submitted to DHS for approval with the ADRC Annual Update, as requested.

2. Annual Update

The ADRC must submit information annually for the ADRC Annual Update using the report form supplied and following the procedures established by DHS. This report contains information on staffing, organization, contact information, service area leads, budget, and other information requested by DHS.

3. Staffing Plan

The ADRC is required to develop and maintain a staffing plan that describes how it is staffed to meet the requirements of the ADRC. The plan needs to include:

- The functions of the various staff positions.
- The qualifications of the employees in those positions.
- Any functions the position performs in addition to its ADRC responsibilities, together with the source of funding for performance of those functions.

- The percent of time each position devotes to its different responsibilities.
- The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) positions devoted to each function.

The staffing plan must identify any positions and services that are subcontracted by the ADRC and indicate where these positions are located. The plan is intended for the ADRC's use and does not need to be submitted to DHS for review and approval; however, the plan must be made available to DHS upon request.

4. DCS Work Plan

The ADRC is required to develop and submit a DCS work plan by February 1 for the current calendar year. This plan outlines the goals and initiatives that the DCS will be addressing for the current contract year. The [work plan](#) (F-02882) should be sent via email to [ORCD](#).

5. Quality Assurance and Improvement Plan

The ADRC needs to establish goals and indicators for measuring the quality and effectiveness of its performance and procedures for evaluating and acting on the results. This plan for monitoring and evaluating performance should include:

- Policies and procedures that are designed to ensure quality, including knowledgeable and skilled staff.
- Performance goals that are specific to the needs of the ADRC's customers, including any goals specified by DHS.
- Objective and measurable indicators of whether the performance goals are being achieved, including any indicator specified by DHS.
- Timelines within which goals will be achieved.
- The process that the ADRC will use to gather feedback from the ADRC's customers and staff, and other sources on the quality and effectiveness of the ADRC's performance.

- The process the ADRC will use to monitor and act on the results and feedback received.

The ADRC must establish a process for initiating, implementing, and documenting continuous quality improvement within its organization. The ADRC should also establish a process for annually updating its quality assurance and improvement plan. This includes a description of the process the ADRC will use for annually assessing the effectiveness of the plan and the impact of its implementation on outcomes.

6. Health Promotion, Prevention, and Early Intervention Plan

The ADRC must develop and maintain a plan that outlines its approach to providing the health promotion, prevention, and early intervention services and activities allowed under the ADRC contract. The plan is intended for the ADRC's use and does not need to be submitted to DHS for review and approval. However, it must be made available to DHS upon request.

V. Additional Resources and Tools

[Wisconsin AIRS](#)

[AIRS](#)

[Adult Protective Services and ADRC Guidelines – Sample MOU \(P-00824\)](#)