

# Service Delivery Options

## Aging Policy Manual

### I. Introduction

The development and operation of services, from nutrition to information and assistance, is an important function of the aging network in Wisconsin. Each year the Wisconsin aging network serves over 100,000 older people.

Within the aging network, as contrasted to traditional service networks, services are seen as a means to an end rather than the principal focus of the network. It is a network whose major roles are to empower and enable older people and to ensure that existing service systems are responsive and accessible to the elderly. From that perspective, services are typically seen as gap-filling or enabling rather than as an end in themselves.

The rules, regulations, and laws that govern service delivery in the Wisconsin aging network reinforce this essential "aging difference."

### II. Citizen Involvement

Although many government programs require the participation of representatives of the population to be served, the involvement of older people in the services provided by the aging network is integral to the development and operation of those services.

There are a number of techniques one might use to involve older people in the development of aging unit plans.

#### A. Planning and Oversight

The services which the aging unit operates directly or under contract shall be identified within the aging unit plan.

The aging unit advisory committee (where applicable) and policy-making bodies have significant responsibilities for the aging unit plan. In the case of the policy-making body, there is a significant legal and personal liability attached

to the plans and actions of the agency. This responsibility requires that the advisory committee (where applicable) and policy-making body be intimately involved in the development and oversight of the aging unit plan.

Responsibility for the services operated directly by or under contract to the aging unit continues during the operation of the services. The policy-making body, and where applicable the advisory committee, are strongly urged to regularly review the operations of all services.

Aging units are urged to consider including a performance-measurement system as a routine element in their efforts to monitor and evaluate the services they operate or fund. A good performance-measurement system helps an agency (program, service, section, etc.) better understand how it is doing and helps improve its performance. The value of a measurement system depends on the usefulness of its information. Effective systems support management and policy decisions in addition to serving as an accountability tool.

## **B. Feedback from Older People**

### **1. Why Involve People?**

Community involvement becomes the catalyst which helps organizations reexamine their purpose, cultures, systems, and mechanisms, thus improving their functioning at all levels and on all issues. Involving service users has advantages, both to the organization and to the individuals who use the services they provide. Advantages of user involvement include all of the following:

- Involvement is the law and the most basic element of the Older Americans Act.
- It rebuilds trust and confidence in a service as being open, accountable, and shaped by public views.
- It develops local ownership of and commitment to health and social services.
- It increases local understanding of change as well as confidence in the way changes were planned.
- A shared agenda promotes constructive working relationships.
- Decisions are more likely to be viewed positively by those who have had a stake in them.
- Harnessing public views can help drive up standards and lead to a more responsive service.
- Involvement ensures that the voices of users, as experts in defining their own wishes and needs, are heard;

this increases sensitivity, effectiveness, and appropriateness of services.

- It identifies areas where standards are not being met and provides positive feedback where staff is performing well.
- Better information leads to more appropriate use of services, which maximizes benefits to the greatest number of people.
- Involvement generates new ideas.
- It provides insight for staff into how participants and their families experience services.
- It protects individuals' rights and increases their control over their lives.
- It is an integral part of a service aiming to promote self-esteem and independence.
- It demonstrates respect.

## 2. How to Engage with People: Key Points

Involving people in development of the services they receive or might receive is not rocket science. However it does not just happen. Some points to keep in mind are as follows:

- It is overwhelmingly important to genuinely want to involve people. This comes from a sense of respect for people and a willingness to regard their perspectives as valid and of equal worth. The culture of the organization needs to be one of openness and willingness to change. For staff to feel secure about involving people in planning and decision-making, they need opportunities to work through their concerns.
- Everyone has an opinion – ask them! People may not volunteer, but they are usually pleased to be asked directly. There are plenty of opportunities for doing this. Staff is in contact with large numbers of people, and individual invitations can be issued through community, volunteer, and user groups.
- From the beginning include people in setting the agenda and agreeing on priorities.
- Once some trust is established, people will recruit others through their own networks. A statistically representative sample is seldom needed; instead, a fairly typical one is usually acceptable.
- The best motivation for people to participate is the feeling that they can improve things for others.
- Start small. Success breeds enthusiasm and confidence.

- Go out onto people's territory (local venues, existing groups, etc.); do not expect them to come to you.
- Be absolutely clear about what is expected of people and what they can expect from the agency.
- It is a common misapprehension that if asked what they want, people will ask for the impossible. They do not. Explain any genuine restrictions. People can understand.
- Activities providing opportunity for interaction are more enjoyable than formal ones. Make it fun!
- Communicate. Give feedback. People need to see the result of their efforts and to see that they have made a difference.
- Do not expect anything to happen quickly. Gaining trust and developing good working relationships takes a long time. Community development approaches will be needed to allow people to develop the skills to represent themselves.
- Use involvement needs resources: money and staff time. Do not underestimate the resources required.

### **3. Specific Ways to Involve Older People**

There are many mechanisms by which aging agencies might involve older consumers in discussions about aging services and other issues. Some approaches follow. Regardless of which approach or approaches are followed, it is important to keep in mind that quality citizen participation takes time, effort and commitment on behalf of the aging agency.

#### **a. Public Meetings or Forums**

A public meeting is an event which extends an open invitation to members of the public to attend. A forum is a less formal public gathering, usually convened to gain public input on a specific topic. There must be a public agency; there is usually a speaker and there may be a panel of people who will respond to questions from the audience. The meeting may be held to introduce a plan, strategy, or report, or when there is a specific issue of public interest such as a change in service provision. Agencies hold regular, public meetings to conduct business.

Public meetings are often seen as democratic, offering an open invitation to the public to receive information, to comment, to raise issues, to inform decisions and to challenge service providers. However, this approach usually reaches only a small section of the community. Public meetings are inaccessible for many of the people who would use aging services. The public relations element may be lost because of the unsatisfactory nature of the interaction and difficulty in providing feedback on the outcome.

Using only public meetings as the strategy for involving people is never sufficient; other forms of dialogue groups may be more appropriate.

**b. Surveys**

Surveys are a way of gathering information using a questionnaire or interviews. In order to provide reliable information, a survey needs to (1) reach a representative sample of all people in the study group (i.e., the public, users of specific services, residents of a particular area) and (2) obtain a high response rate.

Most people who require services want them to address quite specific needs. Asking specific questions related to quality of life and achievable change, rather than attempting to address a general "satisfaction with services," is a method of identifying and focusing on these needs.

Ongoing quality monitoring, using standards developed with participants, is more productive for gauging perceptions and experience of services than are periodic surveys.

**c. Advisory Committees or Groups**

Advisory committees range from large numbers of people contributing via mail surveys to smaller groups of people who meet to contribute their views. The key feature of a committee is that it continues to exist over a period of time (whereas focus groups meet on only one occasion). Most advisory committees limit the length of time a panel member may serve and replace them after that time. Others refresh the committee by recruiting a certain percentage of new members each year, allowing new opinions to be introduced and new members to be absorbed. The aim is to avoid committee members becoming better informed than the average citizen by virtue of their participation.

Advisory groups can be an effective but resource-intensive way of enabling older people to express their views. Such groups should be welcomed by service providers as an innovative way of engaging with older people. There should be some concern about how representative the advisory group's views are. For an advisory committee to be effective, the agency must be committed to using the advice and/or products developed by the committee.

**d. Peer Interviews**

Peer interviews are conducted by using members of a peer group. Peers are defined here as older persons and/or persons who share characteristics with the interviewee(s). Examples of shared characteristics include age, gender, experience of service use, class, language, or ethnic origin.

Peer interviewing has been widely used in work with young people and in user-led service monitoring in mental health. There is potential for use in aging services.

**e. Focused Group Discussions**

The focus group is a small group, ideally no more than 12 people, given a particular topic or issue as the focus of discussion. Focused group discussions may allow participation by those who would only feel comfortable in a group of similar people (e.g., caregivers of persons with dementia).

Discussion groups may also be used to obtain views on a wider range of issues, although they work best if there is a limited number of topics for the group to address in a single session. Group discussions can engage harder-to-reach groups where other methods might fail to include them.

Both focus and discussion groups could effectively be used by nutrition and transportation advisory councils.

### **III. Targeting, Not Means-Testing**

While the Older Americans Act (OAA) directs the aging network to advocate for all people aged 60 and over, it also requires that the network focus or target its efforts on the needs of particular subgroups of older people. These subgroups within the overall elderly population are sometimes referred to as "target groups." There is some misunderstanding about the apparent incongruity between the essential universal focus of the OAA, on one hand, and the demand to give "particular attention" to the needs of certain target groups.

Targeting of effort is an integral part of the planning and advocacy activities of the aging network. When organizations develop advocacy or service plans, an initial step is an assessment of the needs of the older people in the community. Advocacy strategies and services are then developed to meet the needs of the older population. The needs of the older population drive the plans and activities of the aging agency. Because needs are not uniform within the older population,

the activities of the aging unit are naturally more focused on some groups (target groups) than on others. This does not imply a lack of caring for the general elderly population; merely a focusing of efforts.

All aging agencies engage in focused or targeted activities. For example, when an aging agency decides to use its limited funds to support respite care, personal care, chore service, or any other service, it is making a decision to target funds to a service which supports a group of older people who need that service. Similarly, when aging agencies advocate for an expansion of means-tested, community-based, long-term care services, those particular advocacy efforts most directly benefit the potential clientele of those services.

Targeting is not excluding older people; rather it is a focusing of limited funds and resources on the needs of older people who are, by some standard, most in need. Federally mandated target groups, which are noted in the Older Americans Act, can be seen as representing the sense of the U.S. Congress on which groups within the nation's older population require particular attention by the aging network. It is the same process that local aging agencies go through in determining their local target groups.

Means testing, in which eligibility for services is determined based on income, is prohibited for all services supported wholly or in part with funds from the Older Americans Act.

#### **IV. Data Collection and Reporting**

The purpose of data collection and subsequent reporting is fairly straightforward. Information is needed for all of the following reasons:

- to demonstrate that funds were spent in accordance with all federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies
- to assist in documenting the need for additional programs and services for older people
- to aid in monitoring ongoing services
- to help make improvements to agency operations and services
- to provide agency decision-makers with the information needed in order to determine if established outcomes are being met

Adequate information is necessary for effective agency operations. Without information, decisions are made in a

vacuum.

As a condition of funding, AAA and aging units are required to comply with all data-collection and reporting requirements of the Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources.

## V. Privacy and Confidentiality Rights

The regulations governing the Older Americans Act guarantee that users of aging services have rights pertaining to the information collected about them.

No information about an older person or obtained from an older person by a service provider, aging unit or area agency on aging may be disclosed by that organization in a form which identifies the person, without the informed consent of the person or his or her legal representative, unless the disclosure is required by court order, or for program monitoring by authorized federal, state or local monitoring agencies.

Special confidentiality requirements apply to clients of legal and benefit counseling services (P-03062-06).

## VI. Contributions and Cost Sharing

Participant contributions play a major role in financing the Wisconsin aging network. Older participants support the services they receive by voluntarily contributing what they can.

For services rendered with funding under the Older Americans Act, the service provider shall do all of the following:

- Provide each older person with an opportunity to voluntarily contribute to the cost of the service
- protect the privacy of each older person with respect to his or her contributions
- establish appropriate procedures to safeguard and account for all contributions

Aging agencies shall counterbalance their need for program revenues via client contributions with the potentially negative impact that an overemphasis on contributions might have on program participation. To the extent to which older participants regard their contributions as "fees," there may be a negative impact among participants and potential participants who cannot afford the contributions/fees. This is counterproductive to the purposes of the Older Americans Act.

Each service provider shall use supportive-services contributions and nutrition-services contributions for maintaining or expanding supportive services and nutrition services, respectively.

Each service provider under the Older Americans Act may develop a suggested contribution schedule. In developing a contribution schedule, the provider shall consider the income ranges of older persons in the community and the provider's othersources of income. However, means tests may not be used for any service supported with funds under the Older Americans Act.

A service provider that receives funds under this part may not deny any older person a service because the older person will not or cannot contribute to the cost of the service.

The Older Americans Act permits BADR to institute cost sharing for certain services funded under the Older Americans Act. As of this date, BADR has not elected to permit cost sharing in services funded under the Older Americans Act.

## **VII. Equal Opportunity in Service Delivery and Employment**

BADR is committed to ensuring equal opportunity in all programs, services and activities. The remainder of this section describes the requirements of AAAs, aging units, and subcontractors to meet the standards for equal opportunity developed by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS).

Where an AAA or an aging unit is part of county or tribal government, it is quite likely that the unit of government has already undertaken efforts to comply with the DHS requirements. In such circumstances aging agencies need not engage in additional compliance activities as long as the aging unit can document that the overall efforts meet the standards which follow.

### **A. Equal Opportunity in Service Delivery**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 have similar requirements for recipients and subrecipients of federal funding which provides program services. Basically, these laws require taking affirmative action to ensure equal opportunity in service delivery and to overcome the continuing effects of prior discrimination against people of color, women, people with disabilities,

and people associated with people with disabilities.

Affirmative action to ensure equal opportunity is also authorized to overcome the effects of conditions which resulted in limited participation of people in programs based on their race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, or disability. These characteristics are considered protected from discrimination. People of color, women, people over 40, people with disabilities, and people associated with people with disabilities are considered to be members of protected groups under the laws.

It is the policy of DHS to ensure the equitable and accessible delivery of health and human services to the older population of the state of Wisconsin. This commitment extends to ensuring that services be administered and provided in compliance with federal, state, and local civil rights legislation, executive orders, rules, and regulations.

Equal opportunity requires that no otherwise qualified person, based on protected status, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that receives or benefits from assistance through BADR. Under civil rights laws, executive orders, and rules and regulations, protected status includes age, race, color, disability, association with a person with a disability, gender, creed or religious conviction, national origin and ancestry.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services is committed to ensuring equal opportunity in all programs, services, or activities. This includes, but is not limited to, program eligibility, treatment by staff, communication of program information, access to facilities and/or programs and activities, assignment of clients to staff within a program, outreach, intake and admissions, assignment to facilities or referrals to other services, assessment/diagnosis/evaluation and treatment, disciplinary actions and terminations from programs.

Equal opportunity to communicate program information and to provide program services or activities means providing services and information in the appropriate language to persons with limited ability to read, speak or understand English; providing readers for persons with visual impairments; providing literature, audio visual and posted information in formats which are understandable to person with hearing or visual impairments; and providing special assistance for persons with developmental or learning disabilities.

Area agencies on aging, aging units and other subrecipients of federal funding administered through BADR shall

operate each program or activity so that, when viewed in its entirety, it is accessible to all older people regardless of their protected status. When a particular program or service is not accessible because of physical or program barriers, the service provider will make arrangements to use alternate accessible facilities or to remove the program barrier (such as arranging for an interpreter in a timely fashion or altering the service to meet the needs of the participant).

**1. Policy Statement and Notification**

Area agencies on aging, aging units and other subrecipients of federal funding administered by BADR shall take appropriate initial and continuing steps to notify participants, beneficiaries and applicants, including those with visual and hearing impairments, developmental or learning disabilities, or with limited ability to read, speak or understand English, that they do not discriminate on the basis of protected status. A model equal opportunity in service delivery policy to be used as notification follows this section.

**2. Designation of Equal Opportunity Coordinator, Service Delivery**

Area agencies on aging, aging units and other subcontractors shall designate at least one person to coordinate their efforts to comply with requirements for equal opportunity. BADR shall be notified of the designated equal opportunity coordinator (EOC). The designated coordinator's equal opportunity responsibilities should be reflected in their position description.

**3. Discrimination Complaint/Grievance Process**

Area agencies on aging, aging units and their subcontractors shall adopt an informal discrimination complaint process which incorporates appropriate due process standards and provides for a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of protected status, including those alleging illegal harassment.

Information provided to clients about the complaint-resolution process should be in writing or other usable media such as audiotape. In service areas with a significant population of persons with limited ability to read and understand English, the information should be translated and available in the language of the major language groups in that area.

Complainants have an informal complaint process available through which to seek resolution at the most immediate level of responsibility within the agency. However, complainants are not required to file an informal

complaint with the contractor/subcontractor in most cases. They may choose to file a formal complaint.

The informal complaint process of the contractor or subcontractor should attempt early resolution. Specific requirements for this complaint process are as follows:

- (1) The complaint process shall be in writing or other useable media and readily available to clients, their families, staff and others. All clients shall be informed of the non-discrimination policy and of the complaint process. Translated materials will be available to those with limited ability to read, speak or understand English.
- (2) A standard form shall be developed and available for use in the complaint process.
- (3) The name, address and telephone number of the equal opportunity coordinator shall be posted where it is readily available to program beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries. This information shall also be included in the informal discrimination complaint form.
- (4) For each complaint filed, there shall be written documentation of the investigation conducted, the decision reached and the reason(s) for the decision. Files should be maintained confidentially for at least three years.
- (5) Those persons who file complaints/grievances, who are witnesses or testify, or who investigate or decide on the cases, shall be protected from retaliation for their actions. This protection will be described in the complaint process policy and will include the consequences of any retaliatory actions.
- (6) The complaint process will contain a provision for appeal of a decision resulting from the findings and recommendations of the equal opportunity coordinator. All complainants shall be notified of their right to appeal to DHS and/or to the federal funding agency, following the same process as for filing a formal complaint.
- (7) Reasonable time frames (no longer than a total of 30 calendar days) shall be set for bringing complaints to a final resolution.
- (8) It is the responsibility of the program service delivery agency to furnish qualified translators for clients with limited ability to read, speak, or understand English; and interpreters for persons with communication impairments.
- (9) Clients shall be permitted to arrange for representation of their interests in any complaint or grievance (for example, friends, family, attorneys or lay advocates) if that is their preference.

- (10) Complainants also have a formal complaint process available in order to raise issues of alleged discrimination. Client may file a complaint using this formal process without using the service provider's informal process, or they may appeal the service provider's informal complaint decision. Notification of this option should be included in the service delivery agency's informal complaint decision. The decision should be received by the complainant to allow ample time for the complainant to file the formal appeal within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory incident.
- (11) The complainant has the right to file his or her complaint at any time in the process, within 180 days of the discriminatory incident, with the Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources (BADR) or with the federal agency listed below, depending on the source(s) of funding for the program, service or activity in question.

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**  
**Office for Civil Rights, Region V**  
**105 West Adams Street**  
**Chicago, IL 60603**

Complainants also have a formal complaint process available to raise issues of alleged discrimination. Clients may file a complaint using this formal process without using the service provider's informal process, or they may appeal the service provider's informal complaint decision. The service delivery agency will notify the complainant in writing or other useable media, in the language understandable to the client, that he or she may file a formal complaint or an appeal with BADR or with the federal funding agency. The notification should be included in the service delivery agency's informal complaint decision. This should be received by the complainant to allow ample time for the complainant to file the formal appeal within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory incident.

If an investigation is held as a result of a formal complaint or of the review of the informal complaint decision, BADR shall arrange for the investigation to be held in a location convenient for the individual filing the appeal.

The complainant has the right to file his or her complaint at any time in the process, within 180 days of the discriminatory incident with BADR, or with the federal agency listed below, depending on the source(s) of

funding for the program, service, or activity in question.

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Office for Civil Rights, Region V  
105 West Adams Street  
Chicago, IL 60603**

#### **4. Self-Evaluation of Service Delivery**

Area agencies on aging, aging units and each subcontractor who receives federal funding administered by BADR shall develop a self-evaluation of civil rights compliance in all aspects of service delivery for all clients and applicants for services. Each of the major civil rights laws: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and the ADA of 1990; requires that recipients of federal funding, regardless of funding levels or number of staff, conduct an initial evaluation of compliance with the respective laws and then annually update this evaluation. The initial self-evaluation plan should be done within the time frame of the respective civil rights law that requires it.

The "Contractor/Subcontractor Civil Rights Compliance Action Plan for Meeting Equal Opportunity Requirements in Service Delivery and Employment" is the recommended tool for conducting the self-evaluation and for meeting department requirements to submit CRC Plans. This format provides for a simple plan that covers both service delivery and employment.

### **B. Equal Opportunity in Employment**

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services, as an employer, is committed to ensuring equal opportunity in all terms, conditions and privileges of employment. As a provider of federal funding for health, human and rehabilitative services, BADR is committed to requiring compliance with equal opportunity among subcontractors as a vehicle to implement its policy for equal opportunity in service delivery. The ensuring of equal opportunity may include taking affirmative steps where necessary to eliminate the present effects of discrimination, and (2) seeking the representation of people of color, women, and people with disabilities in the workforce in proportion to their availability in the relevant geographical labor market.

Applicants for employment and current employees are protected from discrimination in employment based on age, race, religion, color, gender, national origin or ancestry, disability (as defined in the ADA of 1990, Title I), arrest or conviction record, sexual orientation, marital status, or military participation (in keeping with s. 111.32, Wisconsin Fair Employment Law).

Protection from discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 includes the provision of reasonable accommodations for religious practices, beliefs or convictions. Protection from discrimination under Title I of the ADA includes the provision of reasonable accommodations to allow qualified applicants with disabilities equal opportunity to compete for jobs, and to allow employees with disabilities to perform the essential functions of their jobs and to access all available terms and benefits of employment. The requirement for non-discriminatory treatment, with the exception of the provision of reasonable accommodations, extends to applicants for employment and current employees who, even though they may not have a disability themselves, are protected from discrimination on the basis of their association with a person with a disability.

### **1. Policy Statement and Notification**

Area agencies on aging, aging units and their subcontractors who receive federal funding administered by BADR shall take appropriate steps to notify applicants for employment and existing employees that they do not discriminate on the basis of protected status. The policy statement should be included in all publications, advertisements, media announcements, and recruitment and employment materials. The policy statement should be available in formats accessible to people with disabilities. In areas with a significant population of persons with limited ability to read and understand English, the policy statement should be translated and available in the language of the major language groups in that area. For this process, "major" means that 5 percent or 1,000 people (whichever is smaller) of the total area population are persons with limited ability to read and understand English, and that 5 percent of the general population or 1,000 people (whichever is smaller) are known to use the same language. The policy shall be posted in accessible formats in all employment facilities and made readily available to all employees.

### **2. Designation of Equal Opportunity Coordinator, Employment**

Area agencies on aging, aging units and their subcontractors who receive federal funding administered by DHS shall designate an equal opportunity coordinator (EOC) responsible for compliance with requirements for equal

opportunity in employment.

The following responsibilities should be included in the EOC's position description:

- investigates complaints of employment discrimination and recommends corrective action to the agency head
- disseminates equal employment opportunity information to applicants for employment, existing employees and the public
- prepares an equal-opportunity-in-employment self-evaluation, a CRC plan, and annual updates, to be submitted to the DHS AA/CRC office every two years
- provides employees and applicants for employment with technical assistance, information, and referral to training on equal employment opportunity requirements

### 3. Discrimination Complaint/Grievance Process

Area agencies on aging, aging units and their subrecipients of federal funding administered by BADR shall adopt a discrimination complaint process that provides prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging discrimination in employment, including complaints of harassment. The process should be posted and made available to employees and applicants in usable media. Translations to languages other than English should be made available upon request. The process should indicate that:

Complainants have an informal complaint process available through which to seek resolution at the most immediate level of responsibility within the agency. However, complainants are *not* required to file an informal complaint with the contractor/subcontractor in most cases. They may choose to file a formal complaint.

The informal complaint process should attempt early resolution. Specific requirements for this complaint process are as follows:

- (1) The complaint process shall be in writing or other useable media and readily available to employees and applicants. All applicants shall be informed of the non-discrimination policy and of the complaint process. Translated materials will be available to those with limited ability to read, speak or

- understand English.
- (2) A standard form shall be developed and available for use in the complaint process.
  - (3) The name, address and telephone number of the equal opportunity coordinator shall be posted where it is readily available to applicants and employees. This information shall be included in the informal discrimination complaint form and in written and audio/visual formats of the complaint process.
  - (4) For each complaint filed, there shall be written documentation of the investigation conducted, the decision reached and the reason(s) for the decision. Files should be maintained confidentially for at least three years. A copy of the written decision and notification of the right to appeal provided to the complainant shall also be part of the file.
  - (5) Those persons who file complaints/grievances, who are witnesses or testify, or who investigate or decide on the cases, shall be protected from retaliation for their actions. This protection will be described in the complaint process policy and will include the consequences of any retaliatory actions.
  - (6) The complaint process will contain a provision for appeal of a decision resulting from the findings and recommendations of the equal opportunity coordinator. All complainants shall be notified of their right to appeal. Reasonable time frames (no longer than 30 calendar days) shall be set for bringing complaints to a final resolution.
  - (7) It is the responsibility of the contractor/subcontractor to furnish qualified translators for applicants and employees with limited ability to read, speak, or understand English, and interpreters for persons with communication impairments.

Complainants also have a formal complaint process available to appeal the decision of the contractor/subcontractor. The agency will notify the complainant in writing or other useable media, and in the language understandable to the applicant or employee, that he or she may file a formal complaint with the federal funding agency.

**Equal Rights Division**  
**Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development**  
**P.O. Box 8928 Madison, WI 53715**  
**Telephone: 608/266-6860**  
**TDD: 800/947-3529**



**U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**  
**310 West Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 800**  
**Milwaukee, WI 53203**  
**Telephone: 414/297-1111**  
**TDD: 414/297-1115**

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**  
**Office for Civil Rights**  
**105 West Adams Street**  
**Chicago, IL 60603 Telephone: 312/886-2359**  
**TDD: 312/353-5693**

**4. Self-Evaluation of Employment Policies and Practices**

Area agencies on aging, aging units and other subrecipients of federal funding shall develop a self-evaluation plan which ensures evaluation of civil rights compliance with equal employment opportunity in all terms and conditions of employment for all applicants for employment and existing employees. The "Contractor/Subcontractor Civil Rights Compliance Action Plan for Meeting Equal Opportunity Requirements in Service Delivery and Employment" is the recommended tool for conducting the self-evaluation and for meeting DHS requirements to submit a CRC Plan.