

# Home and Community-Based Services for Florida's Seniors: Older Americans Act of 1965 — Home and Community-Based Services for Older Adults<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

This article is part of the Home and Community-Based Services for Florida's Seniors series, a collection of educational resources designed to inform the public about home and community-based support services available to seniors in Florida.

The Older Americans Act of 1965 (OAA) provides a variety of home and community-based services for eligible older Americans (those aged 60 years or older, as defined by OAA) that are channeled through the Administration on Aging (AoA) and state-level units on aging. In the state of Florida, these services are administered and implemented through Florida's Aging Network, which comprises the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) and a host of 58 nonprofit organizations.

As the older adult population of Florida continues to grow rapidly, it is increasingly important that the state's seniors, their caregivers, other stakeholders, and the general public understand the home and community-based services and

protections available through the 58 nonprofits — 11 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and 47 Community Care for the Elderly (CCE) lead agencies — that make up Florida's Aging Network.

## The Older Americans Act of 1965

The Older Americans Act is a U.S. federal law enacted in the year 1965 for the primary purpose of providing social and nutritional services for seniors in need. Since then, the United States has experienced significant surges in its aging population, and the OAA and its provisions have become increasingly important for the foundation of comprehensive services and support for older adults. Projections show that over the next 40 years, the number of adults aged 60 and older will increase by more than 41 million, those aged 65 and older by over 38 million, and adults aged 85 and older by more than 12 million (Tillery, 2021). These figures represent population increases of 53%, 69%, and 184%, respectively, between 2020 and 2060.

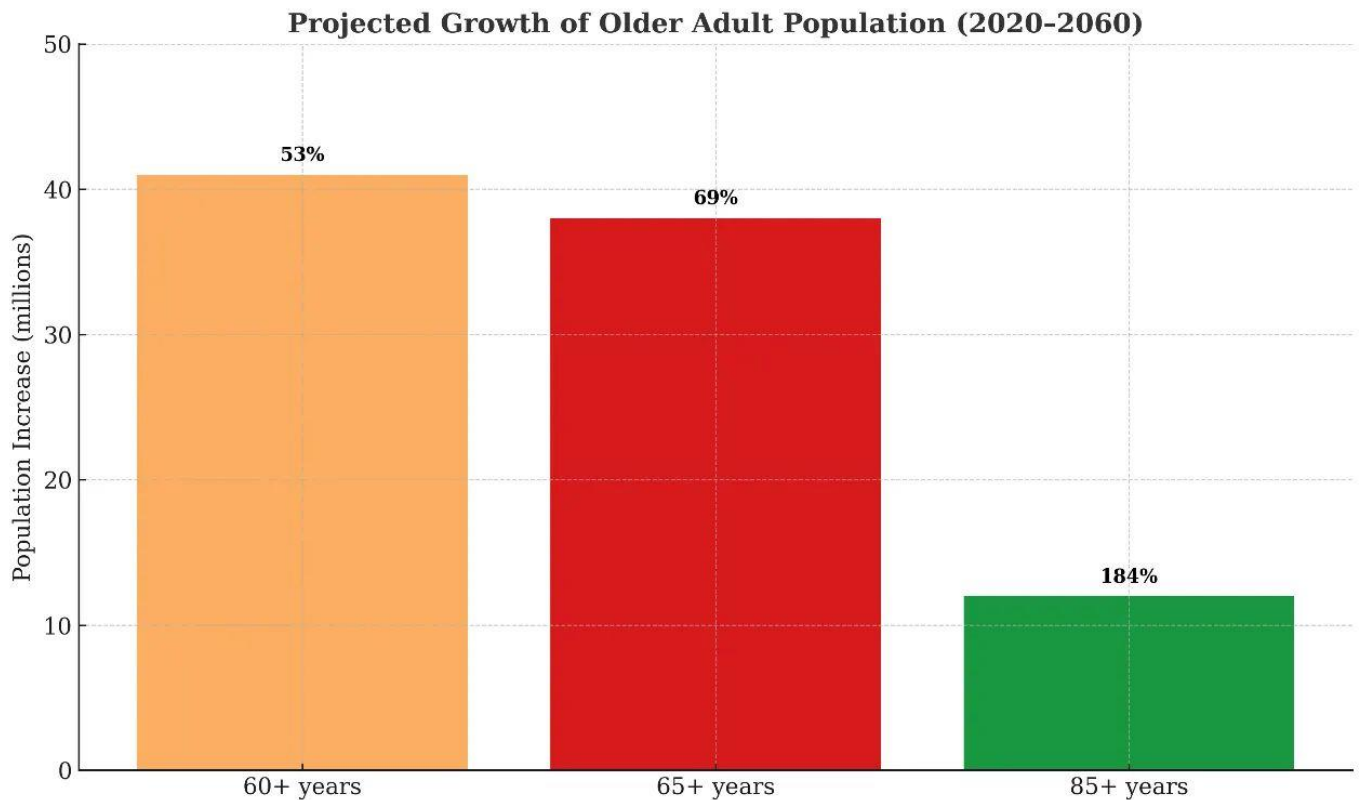


Figure 1. Projected growth of the older adult population in the United States from 2020 to 2060.  
Credit: Muthusami Kumaran, Katlyn Diamond, and Rachel Gatto

Given these demographic shifts, it is essential that older adults and their caretakers understand the services they may be eligible for under the OAA. This article highlights several programs that support older adults living independently and includes links to additional resources to help readers explore public services available in their communities.

## Titles and Services Discussed in the OAA

The OAA consists of seven titles, which describe its objectives, funding allocations, research, and programs. The OAA's seven titles are listed below.

Title I: Declaration of objectives and definitions.

Title II: Establishment of the Administration on Aging and Area Agencies on Aging.

Title III: Grants for state and community programs on aging.

Title IV: Activities for health, independence, and longevity.

Title V: Community Service Senior Opportunities Act.

Title VI: Grants for Native Americans.

Title VII: Allotments for vulnerable elder rights protection activities.

These titles have since been amended and reauthorized to account for the evolving needs of the aging population (ACL, 2024).

## Titles of the Older American Act

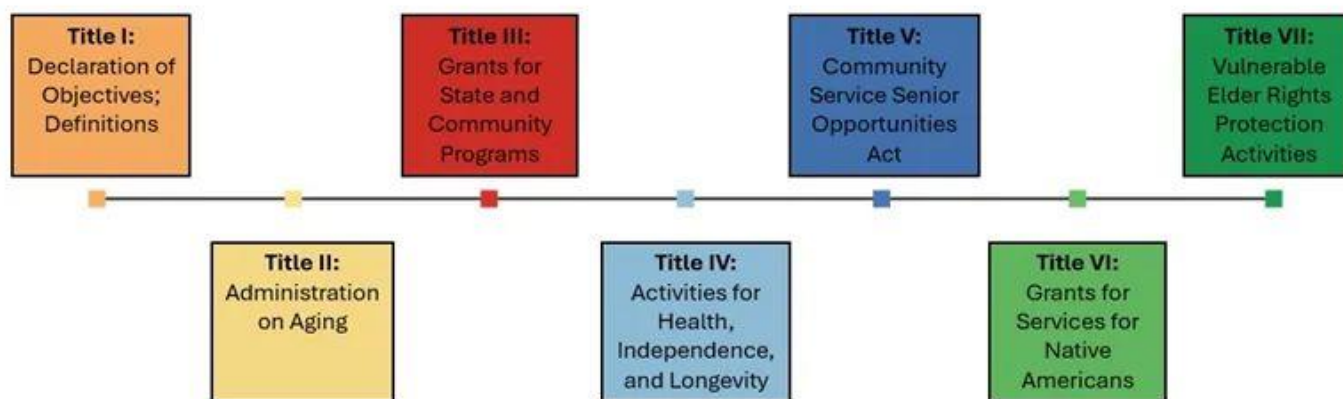


Figure 2. The seven titles of the Older Americans Act.

Credit: Muthusami Kumaran, Katlyn Diamond, and Rachel Gatto

### Title III Services of the OAA

Home and community-based services for the elderly are primarily provided through Title III of the OAA, otherwise known as Grants for State and Community Programs on Aging. Title III accounts for the largest portion of the OAA's funding, supporting the comprehensive network of services that help older adults live independently across the nation. These services include education on disease prevention, nutrition and health promotion, and individual and family caregiver support (Office for the Aging, n.d.).

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) was established in 2012 and serves as the primary federal agency overseeing the OAA by collecting data on Title III programs and services. Community living has been defined as enabling older adults to choose where to live, earn a living, participate actively in society, and make important decisions about their lives. The ACL supports these endeavors by funding services, investing in research and innovation, and advocating for older adults (Tillery, 2021).

Over 10.8 million older adults received services through Title III programs, which included the delivery of nearly 147 million meals to homes and the provision of 74 million

meals at congregate sites. Additionally, 20 million rides were provided to medical appointments, grocery stores, and other essential destinations. Furthermore, aides provided 21 million hours of homemaker assistance. Between 89% and 96% of recipients reported that these services helped them continue to live independently in their homes (Tillery, 2021).

The OAA Title III programs provide essential support to older adults through four main components: Title IIIB, Title IIIC, Title IIID, and Title IIIE. Title IIIB offers a broad range of supportive services such as transportation, personal care, meal assistance, and caregiver support to help seniors live independently. Title IIIC is divided into C1, which provides group meals and nutrition education in community settings to promote social interaction, and C2, which delivers meals and nutrition support directly to homebound individuals. Title IIID focuses on preventive health services, offering programs that help older adults manage or prevent health issues and adopt healthier lifestyles. Lastly, Title IIIE supports caregivers of older adults and relatives caring for children, including those with disabilities, by providing resources and assistance to ease their caregiving responsibilities (DOEA, 2023).

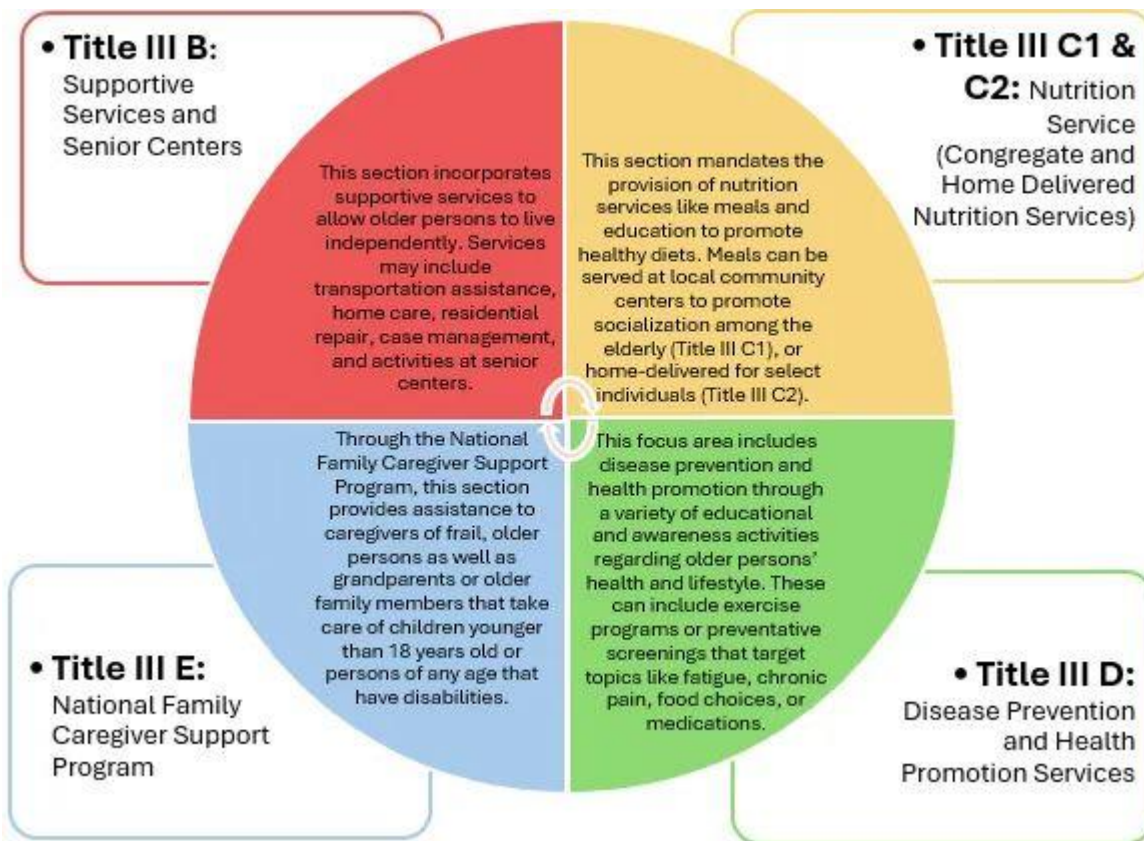


Figure 3. Four main components of Title III services.

Credit: Muthusami Kumaran, Katlyn Diamond, and Rachel Gatto

## Conclusion

While the types of services for older Americans provided by organizations in Aging Networks differ, specific federal and state funds are set aside to broadly improve the quality of life for seniors, support families, and caregivers. Under Title III of the OAA, programs include various home and community-based services, including supportive services, nutrition services, caregiver support, and disease prevention and health promotion services.

Understanding the available services at the local level through the Area Agencies on Aging and the Community Care for the Elderly lead agencies in Florida is critical in meeting the needs of Florida's older adults as outlined in the Older Americans Act. Older adults or their caregivers should be directed to contact the Florida Department of Elder Affairs' Elder Helpline at 1-800-963-5337 (1-800-96-ELDER). Staff at this helpline can help connect those in need to a local service provider.

## Helpful Resources

AARP: <https://www.aarp.org/>

Florida Department of Elder Affairs Resource Guide: <https://elderaffairs.org/resources/#resource-guide>

Healthy Living: Reliable Websites: <https://doi.org/10.32473/edis-fy102-2016>

Eldercare Locator: <https://eldercare.acl.gov/home>

Adult and Elder Care: <https://hr.emory.edu/eu/work-life/adult-and-elder-care/index.html>

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[%20Disability%20in%20America/OAA%20Title%20III%20Report\\_2018\\_FINAL\\_WEB\\_VERSION\\_508.pdf](#)

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