

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
Division of Aging and Adult ServicesFILED  
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Policy Type  
AAA FunctionsSubject of Policy  
Telephone ReassurancePolicy Number  
222Policy Statement

Providers who receive federal or state funds for Telephone Reassurance services provided to individuals aged 60 and older must comply with the provisions of the Older Americans Act as well as state and federal regulations pertaining to the funding and delivery of such service.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide an organized system of calling elderly clients who have telephones, who live alone or temporarily alone, are homebound in isolated areas; on a mutually agreed upon calling schedule. Telephone Reassurance is designed to alleviate loneliness and the feeling of isolation and to check on the client's status and, if contact is not made, to ensure that assistance will be forthcoming.

Scope

This policy applies to all Area Agencies on Aging and all subcontractors of home and community-based services that provide Telephone Reassurance to frail older individuals.

General Authority

Older Americans Act of 1965 as amended, Title III, Part D, Sections 341, 342, 343 and 344.

Arkansas Code Annotated Section 25-10-101 et. seq.

Social Services Block Grant

Arkansas Department of Human Serv/Division of Aging & Adult Services			
Section:	AAA Functions	Subj. of Proc.:	Telephone Reassurance
Procedure Number:	222	Corresponding Policy:	Telephone Reassurance
Originating Unit:	Com. Based Care	Effective Date:	June 15, 1993

### Scope

These procedures apply to all Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and all subcontractors of home and community-based services that provide Telephone Reassurance to frail older individuals.

### Definitions

- I. Client: Any person receiving Telephone Reassurance services which are provided through state or federal funds.
- II. Telephone Reassurance: Telephone Reassurance is telephone calls at an appointed time to eligible elderly clients to check their status thus providing an element of emotional and psychological reassurance and, if contact is not made, to ensure that assistance will be forthcoming.
- III. Unit: One (1) completed individual client call per household or one (1) call placed to the client's emergency contact in the event the client does not answer their phone at the appointed time or there is a continual busy signal, equals one (1) unit.
- IV. Provider: Any entity that gives Telephone Reassurance services as described in II above either as a contractor or subcontractor.

### Procedural Requirements

- I. Responsibilities of the Division of Aging and Adult Services:
  - A. Monitoring of all state and federally funded activities which involve service delivery to elderly persons.
  - B. Establish an assessment process to ensure compliance with program policy and procedures.
  - C. Provide technical assistance and quality assurance in program area.
  - D. Provide necessary reports requested by the Administration on Aging and/or state legislators.
  - E. Revise program area policy and procedures as necessary.

## II. Responsibilities of Providers:

Each service provider offering Telephone Reassurance funded by state and/or federal funds must meet the following program requirements.

### A. Service Activities:

1. A person qualified by training or experience must be designated to supervise the service.
2. There must be an organizational structure with clear lines of supervision, approved position descriptions, established job qualifications and the clear assignment of all functional tasks.
3. Satisfactory procedures must be established to recruit, train, schedule and evaluate staff (paid and volunteer).
4. Satisfactory procedures must be established to develop sources of volunteer staff to augment paid staff.
5. The client shall be allowed the opportunity to contribute to the cost of the service if financially able.
6. Satisfactory procedures must be established to utilize client contributions for the service.
7. Training is to be provided for all staff (paid and volunteer) in all aspects of service provision. Training for Telephone Reassurance should include but is not limited to:
  - a. Principles of communication.
  - b. Scheduling of reassurance calls.
  - c. Developing an emergency plan of action if unable to reach client at appointed time. (For example: telephone numbers of neighbors, clergy or a relative who could be called to go to the client's home to check on their status.)
  - d. Keeping emergency plan information current. (Emergency plan information should be updated quarterly or as necessary in between quarters.)
  - e. Implementing special or emergency assistance plans.
  - f. Confidentiality of client information.
  - g. Reporting units of service.

8. Satisfactory procedures must be established to provide timely and accurate required reports including data for the Management Information System (MIS).
9. Satisfactory procedures must be established to protect confidentiality of records which include an older person's name and personal information, and to obtain and record the individual's informed consent prior to the release of personal information.
10. Satisfactory procedures must be established to objectively resolve service complaints and evaluate the quality of the services.
11. Satisfactory procedures must be established to:
  - a. Maintain files which accurately reflect the individuals receiving Telephone Reassurance, the persons who are performing the reassurance calls and the agreed upon calling schedule.
  - b. Maintain records describing the current negotiated special or emergency procedures applicable to each individual client receiving the service.
  - c. Approve an individual to receive the service.
  - d. Resolve coordination difficulties arising between the person receiving the service and the caller.
  - e. Provide alternative or substitute callers to cover temporary absences.
  - f. Discontinue Telephone Reassurance service to individuals who no longer need the service. (Clients should be reassessed every six months for eligibility for continuation of service, or more often as necessary.)

### III. Eligibility

Persons age 60 and older who live alone or temporarily alone, are homebound in isolated areas.

Special Notes: This service is available to individuals sixty years or older, or to the spouse of an individual who is 60 years or older and receiving services through SSBG or Title III of the Older American's Act. The service is also available to handicapped/disabled individuals who are dependents of and residing with individuals who are sixty years or older and receiving services through SSBG or Title III. In protective services cases (as certified by the Protective Services Unit of the Division of Aging and Adult Services), any adult will be eligible for services.

Persons that generally are not eligible for billable Telephone Reassurance are persons that:

- A. Are receiving any other service at or through a Senior Center where program staff is in touch with them on a regular basis (3 or more times a week) because of the service being provided, or
- B. Lives with a spouse, or
- C. Lives with a friend or family member, or
- D. Is not isolated, has family, friends or neighbors that check on them daily.

#### IV. Location of Service

Provided to the client at his/her domicile.

#### V. Access to Service

An eligible client may enter the service system at any point through a referral from a case manager or community agency or individual request for service.

#### VI. Record Keeping

Each client shall have a client record to indicate an application for service. A call log chronologically arranged with most current date on top. An authorization for release of confidential information, where appropriate.