

HOMEMAKER
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING
SERVICE STANDARD

Definition

Homemaker services provide assistance to persons with the inability to perform one or more of the following instrumental activities of daily living: preparing meals, shopping for personal items, managing money, using the telephone or doing light housework.¹ This service may be provided for purpose of respite for family caregivers.

Eligible Population

Homemaker services are targeted to persons 60 years of age or older who are frail, have disabilities, or who are at risk of institutional placement. Priority shall be given to persons who are in the greatest economic or social need and/or residing in rural or geographically isolated areas, with particular attention to low-income minority individuals.²

Service Delivery Elements

The area agency or service provider must perform all of the following components of homemaker services:

Service-Specific Assessment:

A service-specific assessment using Part “A” Uniform Assessment Instrument shall be performed on each potential client to determine whether the individual is eligible for the service, the amount of the individual’s service-specific need, and the individual’s level of priority for service delivery.

- Federal Poverty should be determined and documented. The Federal Poverty/VDA form may be used.
- Any fee for service charge to the client shall be determined by the applicable sliding fee scale.

Care Plan:

Before the service is delivered, a written individualized care plan shall be developed that identifies the service components to be provided to meet the client’s assessed need. The plan must be developed with involvement from the client. “Client” may include the individual’s authorized representative or family member. The client shall be given the opportunity to contribute to the implementation and evaluation of the plan. The plan may be modified to reflect any change in the client’s needs. Each plan must include:

- identified service needs
- services to be delivered by the service provider or other sources
- goals and objectives of service to be provided
- the quantity of service units to be provided

¹ National Aging Program Information System Reporting Requirements – State Program Report Definitions

² Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, Section 306(a)(4)(A)(i)

Service Agreement:

A service agreement shall be completed between the client and the service provider. The agreement will explain the service arrangement to the client. The client shall receive a copy of the agreement. The agreement shall include:

- services to be provided
- scheduled hours and days of service
- information regarding voluntary contributions
- emergency contacts
- severe weather policy

Service Activities

Service activities provided by the provider agency may include:

- Basic housekeeping and home management skills necessary to ensure safe, sanitary conditions in the client's home, such as dusting, vacuuming, sweeping and mopping. Housekeeping is performed only for the client;
- Instructing client in home management, including maintaining an orderly environment, proper food storage, preparation of shopping lists, meal planning and preparation;
- Shopping assistance with or without client;
- Personal laundry and mending of clothing;
- Client transportation may be provided only when other transportation services are unavailable and for scheduled appointments. Need must be clearly documented. Routine transportation is not permitted.

Client assistance may include:

- Assistance with eating, including set up, opening containers, and cutting food. Feeding is not permitted.
- Assistance with bathing of areas that the client cannot reach. Bed baths or transferring are not permitted.
- Assistance with dressing of ambulatory clients, such as the fastening of clothing on the client. Lifting or putting on braces or other supports is not permitted.
- Assistance with personal grooming, such as combing hair, brushing dentures and shaving with an electric razor. Cutting nails or shaving with a blade is not permitted;
- Supportive assistance with ambulation, such as providing stabilization to the client while walking. Lifting and transferring are not permitted.

Service Record:

A service record or log, signed by the client, shall record the date and duration of each time the service is provided.

Service Reassessment:

A review of the client's need for services, the amount of services provided and the appropriateness of the care plan shall be performed when the client's condition or situation changes, but at least annually.

- Federal Poverty should be determined and documented. The Federal Poverty/VDA form may be used.
- Any fee for service charge to the client shall be determined by the applicable sliding fee scale.

Service Termination Policy:

Homemaker services can be terminated at the discretion of the service provider. The client shall receive a copy of the policy when service begins. The policy shall have provisions for a) appropriate advance notice to client, preferably of ten business days, b) a service summary, c) and referrals to other community service programs.

Administrative Elements

Staff Qualifications:

- Knowledge: Homemakers should have an awareness of the biological, psychological, and social aspects of aging; an awareness of the impact disability and illness on aging and an awareness of community resources and consumer rights.
- Skills: Homemakers should have skills in establishing and sustaining interpersonal relationships and in problem solving.
- Ability: Homemakers should have the ability to communicate with persons of different socioeconomic background; to work independently and in groups and to perform household cleaning tasks.

Job Description:

For each paid and volunteer position, an Area Agency on Aging shall maintain:

- A current and complete job description which shall cover the scope of a homemaker's duties and responsibilities, and
- A current description of the minimum entry-level standards of performance for each job.

Units of Service:

Units of service must be reported in AIM for each client receiving the service. Service units can be reported by a client on a daily basis, but not aggregated (summarized) more than beyond one calendar month.

- Hours (All hours spent assessing the need for; and, arranging and delivering homemaker services for the client.)
- Persons served (unduplicated)

Program Reports:

- Aging Monthly Report (AMR) to VDA by the twelfth (12th) of the following month. If the area agency on aging provides this service, this report must be updated and submitted even if no expenditures or units of service occurred.
- AIM client level data transmitted by the last day of the following month.

Consumer Contributions/Program Income

There must be a written policy on handling of Client Program Income (CPI) and other gratuities and donations.

Cost Sharing: An Area Agency on Aging is permitted to implement cost sharing for recipients of this service.³

And/Or

Voluntary Contributions: Voluntary contributions shall be allowed and may be solicited for this service, provided that the method of solicitation is non-coercive.⁴

Quality Assurance

Criminal Background Checks:

- VDA strongly recommends that the agency and its contractors protect their vulnerable older clients by conducting criminal background checks for staff providing any service where they go to or into a client's home.

Staff training:

Each homemaker service provider agency providing the above mentioned service activities shall comply with the following:

- At hiring, homemakers should receive orientation on agency policies and procedures, community characteristics and resources, and procedures for conducting the allowable activities under this service;
- All homemakers shall have a minimum of 16 hours basic training within the first year of employment; training topics should include, but are not limited to ethics and confidentiality in patient care, home safety precautions, working with diverse populations, and home management.
- All training programs that provide certification must comply with the training guidelines established by the Homecare University.
- Workers should receive a minimum of 8 hours per year of in-service training based on the need for professional growth and upgrading of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Supervision/Case Review:

Consultation, supervision and case review shall be available to all staff providing the service.

Program Evaluation:

The agency should conduct regular and systematic analysis of the persons served and the impact of the service. Service providers shall be monitored annually.

³ Older Americans Act of 1965 as amended, Section 315(a)

⁴ Older Americans Act of 1965 as amended, Section 315(b)

Client Records:

Service providers must maintain specific program records that include:

- Part “A” Uniform Assessment Instrument
- Federal Poverty documentation and Fee for Service calculation must be part of the client record. Federal Poverty/VDA Sliding Fee Scale form may be used.
- Care Plan
- Service Agreement
- Service Documentation
- Service Reassessment
- Service Termination policy
- Appeal Process
- Consent to Exchange Information Form