



April 7, 2020

Kimberly Murnieks, Director
Ohio Office of Budget and Management
30 East Broad Street, 34th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Director Murnieks,

The Ohio Department of Aging (AGE) is responding to your March 24, 2020, request. After consulting with our OBM analyst, our department was asked to produce scenarios that would result in a 20% reduction in General Revenue Funds (GRF) of \$1,435,144 and \$836,782 in non-GRF funds for fiscal year 2020. We have identified the proposed reductions achieving the 20% threshold although such reductions would have direct impacts on the older adults who rely on our services. We appreciate the unprecedented challenges that the COVID-19 emergency is wielding on our Administration's revenues, the insurmountable rising costs of unemployment and social services amid the current needs for agencies to serve our most vulnerable citizens. Below are summaries of each of the proposed reductions and the corresponding impacts. A companion spreadsheet is also attached.

General Revenue Fund (GRF) Reductions:

- Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program: This reduction would eliminate the non-traditional delivery of services for the senior farmers market nutrition program. Additional funding to achieve statewide programming was included in the last executive budget. Thus far in fiscal year 2020, the program achieved statewide expansion and eliminated waitlists in existing programs. The proposed funds for reduction would not impact that portion of the expansion but would limit expansion of new programming that was about to launch. This reduced amount would be \$440,000.
- Alzheimer's and Other Dementia Respite: This reduction would impact respite-related services provided to caregivers whose loved ones are living with a form of dementia. Services include adult day care, institutional care, and in-home services that support caregivers. Annually, funds are equally distributed to the Area Agencies on Aging and the Alzheimer's Association chapters. This reduction would not impact services delivered by the Alzheimer's Association chapters but would impact services delivered by the Area Agencies on Aging. The amount reduced would be \$78,842.
- Regional Ombudsman program: This reduction would delay building the capacity to achieve heightened representation of long-term care (LTC) residents in each of the regions. The program received support in the last executive budget to expand regionally through volunteers its advocacy services to residents of LTC facilities and their families. The amount reduced would be \$107,936.

Fostering sound public policy, research, and initiatives that benefit older Ohioans.

- Senior Community Service: This reduction would impact Area Agencies on Aging programs that support high-need older adults. These funds are used for traditional aging services which include meals, transportation, home modification, personal care, and other care needs. It is important to note that these funds are distributed to the Area Agencies on Aging as match funds for the federal Older Americans Act funds. If these funds are reduced, ODA could still achieve federal match obligations through alternatively utilizing local sources to contribute to the match. This reduced amount would be \$710,236.
- Planned Agency Outreach, Education and Encumbrances: This is a series of reductions that would 1) eliminate planned agency events that focus on the accomplishments of older Ohioans such as the Senior Citizens Hall of Fame, 2) heighten education of Ohio's aging services workforce and ODA staff through our statewide aging conference, and 3) target focus on older adult health at the annual state fair. Also included in this amount are cancelled encumbrances and travel costs due to directives regarding state purchasing and state travel. This reduced amount would be \$104,503.

Non-General Revenue Fund (non-GRF) Reductions:

- Family Satisfaction Survey and the Consumer's Guide for Nursing Homes: This reduction would impact the completion of the Consumer's Guide for Nursing Homes which is used by prospective residents and their families when selecting a nursing facility in which the older adult will reside. This project has been launched but would be paused due to this reduction. ODA would hope to resume this project in fiscal year 2021. The reduction amount would be \$636,782.
- Ombudsman Demonstration Program: This reduction would have minimal impact as the project has not yet launched. The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, under the current COVID-19 protocols, would be unable to conduct a MyCare demonstration program during fiscal year 2020. The reduced amount would be \$200,000.
- Cancelled encumbrances: The removal and cancellation of encumbrances which will not be used in fiscal year 2020 totals \$32,117.

We appreciate the difficult position facing all state agencies. Due to our need to serve older Ohioans in this critical time, we appreciate the opportunity to provide the impacts of the requested reductions for your consideration moving forward.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Ursel J. McElroy
Director