

State Council on Aging Functions and Member Responsibilities

Statutory Powers and Duties

RCW 43.20A.695

(1) The State Council has the following powers and duties:

- a. To serve in an advisory capacity to the Governor, the Secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services, and the State Unit on Aging on all matters pertaining to policies, programs, and services affecting the quality of life of older persons;*
- b. To create public awareness of the special needs and potentialities of older persons;*
- c. To provide for self-advocacy by older citizens of the state through sponsorship of training, legislative and other conferences, workshops and such other methods as may be deemed appropriate.*

(2) The council shall establish bylaws to aid in the performance of its powers and duties.

The duties of the Council are carried out in a variety of ways, but may include making recommendations, writing letters of support or opposition, sponsoring events, and advocating directly to policymakers and legislators.

Member Responsibilities

Members are expected to:

1. “Represent only themselves, not the agency or organization with which they may be affiliated in terms of employment or other associations. Members are expected to bring their own unique expertise, principals and viewpoints to the State Council.” [From the State Council on Aging By-laws, Section III3 Duties.]
2. Attend all regularly scheduled Council meetings. These meetings usually occur on the fourth Tuesday of each month except for July, August and December.
3. Keep informed of the needs of older persons in the geographic area represented, including those who are lower-income, have ethnic or racial minority status, and live in rural areas. Some ways members can stay informed are to:
 - be active in organizations that serve or represent the interests of older adults;
 - attend activities at senior centers and other venues or events;
 - serve on area agency on aging (AAA) advisory councils or other relevant boards;
 - participate in AAA area plan process;

- attend forums about issues relating to older individuals;
 - be politically and civically active;
 - keep abreast of issues through the media.
4. Communicate the needs and concerns of older persons to the Governor and the Department of Social and Health Services, Aging and Disability Services /DSHS by participating fully at State Council meetings and following through with decisions made by the Council.
 5. Bring to bear members' years of experience and wisdom and their knowledge of the needs of older adults to assist ATLSA to solve problems, address issues, and develop programs to carry out its mission, particularly with respect to older adults.
 6. Volunteer for subcommittees, special projects, or to represent the Council on other boards or at events.