

MCOA Members

May I suggest we all take a deep breath- me included.

An email from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs was distributed yesterday that has caused some heartburn within our network (see below).

The first read of the email leaves the impression that the FY17 Formula Grant was being set at \$9/elder ('level funding') as opposed to the \$10/elder that was signed into effect by Governor Baker (GAA).

The key phrase that got buried in this email from EOEA was "Should the level of state revenue allow us to do so, we may be able to provide additional funding later in the fiscal year." Thus I interpret this as the 'first installment' is \$9 and nothing precludes a second award of an additional \$1 *if funding allows*.

I want to augment this conclusion with more that I have learned from EOEA today.

Over the last two months, many of you have expressed concern that the rate and the 'contract' for FY17 have not been posted. The main reason has been, that from the beginning of the Fiscal Year, Governor Baker has been publicly concerned that our total state budget has been out of balance. He vetoed some funding at the time he signed the budget but the Legislature overrode his cuts. Couple that with the fact that almost 4 months in, we know revenues are down slightly and some unexpected growth is projected to cause problems. We all should realize things look 'iffy'.

Given the precariousness of the FY17 revenues and the fact that we won't know for sure until mid-January how this would impact COAs; EOEA was faced with waiting until the final shoe drops (mid-January) or issuing a directive that would allow you to access \$9/elder right now and remain hopeful that the tenth dollar will be available later.

EOEA made the right choice, but having fought so hard to get \$10/elder/FY17, MCOA will not give up on that goal. This at least secures the \$9/elder for your use now.

Next Steps:

- To those of you that have not submitted your "Statement of Grant Balances for FY16"- realize **YOU** are holding up the whole process. **GET THESE REPORTS IN NOW!!!**
- The rest of you look for your contracts to be posted shortly and adjust your budgets to \$9/elder.
- Keep your town and your legislators apprised of this change. If, and when, a formal 9c cut is announced, we may choose to ask for an override and, thus need their support again.

In the meantime, plan on buying or doing something fun over the holidays. We need the tax revenue.

David P. Stevens
Executive Director
MCOA

From: Schmarsow, Emmett (ELD) [<mailto:Emmett.Schmarsow@MassMail.State.MA.US>]
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2016 1:40 PM
To: emmett.schmarsow@state.ma.us; Sore, Sherri (ELD)
Cc: MCOA -- David Stevens; MCOA (Donna Popkin, o/r, field rep); MCOA (Kathy Bowler Training, Educ)
Subject: FY2017 Formula Grant Funding -- NOTICE TO COAs
Importance: High

Dear Colleagues,

As you may well be aware, the commonwealth is currently experiencing lower sales tax revenue (presently \$175 million) than had been projected during FY2017 state budget discussions.

Given these circumstances, this email will serve to notify Councils on Aging that your FY2017 Formula Grant award basis will be level funded to the FY2016 award amount (see attached).

As soon as all "Statement of Grant Balances" from FY2016 have been submitted, reviewed and reconciled, Elder Affairs will post Formula Grant contracts on line. All awards are subject to appropriations. Should the level of state revenue allow us to do so, we may be able to provide additional funding later in the fiscal year.

Please feel free to contact this office if I/we can be of further assistance at present.

Sincerely yours,
Emmett

Emmett H. Schmarsow
Program Manager for Councils on Aging
and Senior Centers
MA Executive Office of Elder Affairs
1 Ashburton Pl., 5th Flr.
Boston, MA 02108

Emmett.schmarsow@state.ma.us
(617) 222-7471
1-800-698-9723 (toll-free)