



General Assembly

January Session, 2021

Raised Bill No. 817

LCO No. 1708



Referred to Committee on AGING

Introduced by:
(AGE)

AN ACT CONCERNING SENIOR CENTERS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 7-127b of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2021*):

3 (a) The chief elected official or the chief executive officer if by
4 ordinance of each municipality shall appoint a municipal agent for
5 elderly persons. Such agent shall be a staff member of a senior center, a
6 member of an agency that serves elderly persons in the municipality or
7 a responsible resident of the municipality who has demonstrated an
8 interest in the elderly or has been involved in programs in the field of
9 aging.

10 (b) The duties of the municipal agent may include, but shall not be
11 limited to: [] (1) [disseminating] Disseminating information to elderly
12 persons, assisting such persons in learning about the community
13 resources available to them and publicizing such resources and benefits;
14 (2) assisting elderly persons to apply for federal and other benefits
15 available to such persons; and (3) reporting to the chief elected official

16 or chief executive officer of the municipality and the Department of
17 Aging and Disability Services any needs and problems of the elderly
18 and any recommendations for action to improve services to the elderly.

19 (c) Each municipal agent shall serve for a term of two or four years,
20 at the discretion of the appointing authority of each municipality, and
21 may be reappointed. If more than one agent is necessary to carry out the
22 purposes of this section, the appointing authority, in its discretion, may
23 appoint one or more assistant agents. The town clerk in each
24 municipality shall notify the Department of Aging and Disability
25 Services immediately of the appointment of a new municipal agent.
26 Each municipality may provide to its municipal agent resources
27 sufficient for such agent to perform the duties of the office.

28 (d) The Department of Aging and Disability Services shall adopt and
29 disseminate to municipalities guidelines as to the role and duties of
30 municipal agents and such informational and technical materials as may
31 assist such agents in performance of their duties. The department, in
32 cooperation with the area agencies on aging, may provide training for
33 municipal agents within the available resources of the department and
34 of the area agencies on aging.

35 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2021*) (a) Any one or more
36 municipalities, or any one or more private organizations that serve older
37 persons and are designated to act as agents of one or more
38 municipalities, may establish a multipurpose senior center, as defined
39 in Title I of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended from time to
40 time.

41 (b) A multipurpose senior center established pursuant to subsection
42 (a) of this section may, but need not be limited to, providing: (1)
43 Nutrition services; (2) health programs, including, but not limited to,
44 mental health, behavioral health and wellness programs; (3)
45 employment assistance; (4) intergenerational initiatives; (5) community
46 service and civic engagement opportunities; (6) public benefits
47 counseling; (7) socialization and educational opportunities; (8)

48 transportation; (9) peer counseling; (10) financial and retirement
49 counseling; (11) arts and recreation programs; and (12) case
50 management services.

51 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2021*) Within available
52 appropriations, the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity
53 and Opportunity shall provide assistance to senior centers, which may
54 include, but need not be limited to: (1) Establishment and maintenance
55 of a list of senior centers and municipal services for older persons; (2)
56 establishment and maintenance of a list of resources for staff of senior
57 centers and municipal services for older persons; (3) development of
58 technical assistance for staff of senior centers and municipal services for
59 older persons through direct assistance or referral to expert resources;
60 (4) regular communication with staff of senior centers and municipal
61 services for older persons; (5) dissemination of information about local,
62 state and federal support and services of interest to senior centers and
63 municipal services for older persons; and (6) establishment and
64 facilitation of a state-wide senior center work group as described in
65 section 4 of this act. The executive director of the Commission on
66 Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity shall assign or
67 appoint necessary personnel to perform such duties.

68 Sec. 4. (*Effective October 1, 2021*) (a) There is established a state-wide
69 senior center working group to develop a coordinated plan of
70 development for senior centers and municipal services for older
71 persons.

72 (b) The working group shall: (1) Develop an annual plan for the
73 support and development of senior centers and municipal services for
74 older persons, including, but not limited to, training needs and the
75 coordination of existing resources; (2) evaluate the feasibility of
76 implementing standards for the delivery of core services and make
77 recommendations for such standards, including, but not limited to,
78 standards that allow for parity of core services across municipalities
79 while maintaining flexibility for delivery of those core services; (3)
80 consult with the five area agencies on aging and other agencies; (4)

81 facilitate coordination and communication between senior centers and
82 municipal services for older persons with executive branch
83 departments, including, but not limited to, the Departments of Aging
84 and Disability Services, Housing, Mental Health and Addiction
85 Services, Public Health, Social Services, Transportation and agencies
86 and initiatives that impact older persons in the community; (5) develop
87 and provide access to best practices and procedures for senior centers
88 and municipal services for older persons; and (6) make
89 recommendations to the joint standing committees of the General
90 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to aging, human
91 services, housing, planning and development, public health and
92 transportation for any necessary appropriations or legislative changes.

93 (c) The working group shall consist of the following members:

94 (1) Five representatives of senior centers, one from each of the five
95 planning and services areas, as described in section 17a-304 of the
96 general statutes, two appointed by the speaker of the House of
97 Representatives, two appointed by the president pro tempore of the
98 Senate, and one appointed by the majority leader of the House of
99 Representatives;

100 (2) Two representatives of the Connecticut Association of Senior
101 Center Personnel appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

102 (3) One representative of the Connecticut Local Administrators of
103 Social Services appointed by the minority leader of the House of
104 Representatives;

105 (4) One representative from a senior center that is accredited by the
106 National Institute of Senior Centers appointed by the minority leader of
107 the Senate;

108 (5) One representative of the Connecticut Association of Municipal
109 Agents for the Elderly and one representative of a nonprofit senior
110 center, appointed by the Governor;

111 (6) The executive director of the Commission on Women, Children,
112 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, who shall serve as chairperson of the
113 working group;

114 (7) The Commissioner of the Department of Aging and Disability
115 Services, or the commissioner's designee; and

116 (8) The Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's
117 designee.

118 (d) Any member of the working group appointed under subdivision
119 (1), (2), (3) or (4) of subsection (c) of this section may be a member of the
120 General Assembly.

121 (e) All initial appointments to the working group shall be made not
122 later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy
123 shall be filled by the appointing authority.

124 (f) The chairperson of the working group shall schedule the first
125 meeting, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective
126 date of this section.

127 (g) The administrative staff of the Commission on Women, Children,
128 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity shall serve as administrative staff of
129 the working group.

130 (h) Not later than January 1, 2023, the working group shall submit a
131 report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing
132 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
133 relating to aging, human services, housing, planning and development,
134 public health and transportation, in accordance with the provisions of
135 section 11-4a of the general statutes. The working group shall terminate
136 on the date that it submits such report or January 1, 2023, whichever is
137 later.

<p>This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:</p>
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Section 1	<i>October 1, 2021</i>	7-127b
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2021</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>October 1, 2021</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To support and expand services offered by senior centers.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]