



IIIB- Education-Technology Digital Navigator Model ARPA Service Description

Overview

AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois is committed to collaborating with the Illinois Department on Aging (IDOA) and other community-based providers within our region to address the needs of older adults in our eight-county region. Utilizing American Rescue Plan Act funding (ARPA) funding, AgeGuide seeks to enhance and expand services to increase access and address the increased social isolation older adults are experiencing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Projects funded with the ARPA grant will begin on June 1, 2022 and end on December 31, 2023.

From AgeGuide's Needs Assessment, challenges including comfort level with technology, the need for technology skills building and support and the need for broadband or internet services came up in every listening session and across all service areas. The Digital Navigator model seeks to address those challenges directly.

The Digital Navigator model provides a supportive educational framework for older adults to be assisted in applying for low-cost internet or broadband service, such as the Affordable Connectivity Program-ACP, (formerly Emergency Broadband Benefit) and low-cost devices if needed and learn to operate those devices to benefit from and to fully participate in their community and society in general. Title IIIB Education activities will provide individuals with opportunities to acquire technology knowledge, literacy, and skills. This newly acquired knowledge will broaden their capabilities and confidence and be delivered through formally structured, group-oriented lectures or classes, and include one-on-one support as needed. Subject areas for adult education will involve technology use, internet safety, and client satisfaction follow-up. Another topic that will be strongly encouraged to present is how to change out or trade-in phones and other technology that will be rendered useless by the cell phone carriers discontinuing 3G frequency band.

Service Activities

- Create resource paper on local or statewide affordable internet/broadband options and assist or teach clients on how to apply or connect to options.
- Develop or obtain standardized beginners class curricula designed to increase technology knowledge and skills of older adults.
- Provide continued technology learning classes, one-on-one support, or referrals to outside sources.
- Administer intake forms that capture AgeGuide required demographic information as well as client's self-reported technology needs assessment.
- Administer exit surveys to gauge how well clients' needs have been met or skill obtained
- Provide follow-up contact to clients to check progress or further educational needs within 2-3 months of last contact.