

**256.975 MINNESOTA BOARD ON AGING.**

Subdivision 1. **Creation.** There is created a Minnesota Board on Aging consisting of 25 members to be appointed by the governor. At least one member shall be appointed from each congressional district and the remaining members shall be appointed at large. No member shall be appointed for more than two consecutive terms of four years each. In making appointments, the governor shall give consideration to individuals having a special interest in aging, and so far as practicable, shall include persons affiliated with agriculture, labor, industry, education, social work, health, housing, religion, recreation, and voluntary citizen groups, including senior citizens.

The governor shall designate the chair. Other officers, including vice-chair and secretary, shall be elected by the board members.

Subd. 1a. **Removal; vacancies.** The membership terms, compensation, removal of members, and filling of vacancies on the board shall be as provided in section 15.0575.

Subd. 2. **Duties.** The board shall carry out the following duties:

(1) to advise the governor and heads of state departments and agencies regarding policy, programs, and services affecting the aging;

(2) to provide a mechanism for coordinating plans and activities of state departments and citizens' groups as they pertain to aging;

(3) to create public awareness of the special needs and potentialities of older persons;

(4) to gather and disseminate information about research and action programs, and to encourage state departments and other agencies to conduct needed research in the field of aging;

(5) to stimulate, guide, and provide technical assistance in the organization of local councils on aging;

(6) to provide continuous review of ongoing services, programs and proposed legislation affecting the elderly in Minnesota;

(7) to administer and to make policy relating to all aspects of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, including implementation thereof; and

(8) to award grants, enter into contracts, and adopt rules the Minnesota Board on Aging deems necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

Subd. 2a. **Electronic meetings.** (a) Notwithstanding section 13D.01, the Minnesota Board on Aging may conduct a meeting of its members by telephone or other electronic means so long as the following conditions are met:

(1) all members of the board participating in the meeting, wherever their physical location, can hear one another and can hear all discussion and testimony;

(2) members of the public present at the regular meeting location of the board can hear all discussion and testimony and all votes of members of the board;

(3) at least one member of the board is physically present at the regular meeting location; and

(4) all votes are conducted by roll call, so that each member's vote on each issue can be identified and recorded.

(b) Each member of the board participating in a meeting by telephone or other electronic means is considered present at the meeting for purposes of determining a quorum and participating in all proceedings.

(c) If telephone or other electronic means is used to conduct a meeting, the board, to the extent practical, shall allow a person to monitor the meeting electronically from a remote location. The board may require the person making a connection to pay for documented marginal costs that the board incurs as a result of the additional connection.

(d) If telephone or other electronic means is used to conduct a regular, special, or emergency meeting, the board shall provide notice of the regular meeting location, of the fact that some members may participate by telephone or other electronic means, and of the provisions of paragraph (c). The timing and method of providing notice is governed by section 13D.04.

Subd. 3. **Policy.** The board shall recommend to the state legislature no later than January 1, 1977, a proposed state policy for citizens dependent on long-term care and services. The proposed state policy shall address, but need not be limited to, the following:

(1) developing alternatives to institutionalization in long-term care facilities and other programs which will assist each citizen dependent on long-term care and services to maintain the highest level of self-sufficiency and independence which the citizen's mental and physical condition allows;

(2) developing methods for ensuring citizens dependent on long-term care and services an effective voice in determining which programs and services are made available to them;

(3) protecting citizens dependent on long-term care and services from unnecessary governmental interference in private and personal affairs; and

(4) informing citizens dependent on long-term care and services of the programs and services for which they are eligible.

Subd. 4. **Home-delivered meals.** The Board on Aging shall take appropriate action to secure reimbursement from public and private medical care programs, health plans, and health insurers for home-delivered meals that are a necessary part of medical treatment for the elderly.

Subd. 5. **Programs for senior citizens and disabled persons.** Any sums collected under section 325F.71 must be deposited into the state treasury and credited to the account of the state Board on Aging. The money credited to the account of the state Board on Aging is annually appropriated to the state board on aging and shall be expended for the following purposes:

(1) to prepare and distribute educational materials to inform senior citizens, disabled persons, and the public regarding consumer protection laws and consumer rights that are of particular interest to senior citizens and disabled persons; or

(2) to underwrite educational seminars and other forms of educational projects for the benefit of senior citizens and disabled persons.

Subd. 6. **Indian elders position.** The Minnesota Board on Aging shall create an Indian elders coordinator position, and shall hire staff as appropriations permit for the purposes of coordinating efforts with the National Indian Council on Aging and developing a comprehensive statewide service system for Indian elders. An Indian elder is defined for purposes of this subdivision as an Indian enrolled in a band or tribe who is 55 years or older. The statewide service system must include the following components:

- (1) an assessment of the program eligibility, examining the need to change the age-based eligibility criteria to need-based eligibility criteria;
- (2) a planning system that would grant or make recommendations for granting federal and state funding for services;
- (3) a plan for service focal points, senior centers, or community centers for socialization and service accessibility for Indian elders;
- (4) a plan to develop and implement education and public awareness campaigns including awareness programs, sensitivity cultural training, and public education on Indian elder needs;
- (5) a plan for information and referral services including trained advocates and an Indian elder newsletter;
- (6) a plan for a coordinated health care system including health promotion/prevention, in-home service, long-term care service, and health care services;
- (7) a plan for ongoing research involving Indian elders including needs assessment and needs analysis;
- (8) information and referral services for legal advice or legal counsel; and
- (9) a plan to coordinate services with existing organizations including the Council of Indian Affairs, the Minnesota Indian Council of Elders, the Minnesota Board on Aging, and tribal governments.

**Subd. 7. Consumer information and assistance and long-term care options counseling; Senior LinkAge Line.** (a) The Minnesota Board on Aging shall operate a statewide service to aid older Minnesotans and their families in making informed choices about long-term care options and health care benefits. Language services to persons with limited English language skills may be made available. The service, known as Senior LinkAge Line, must be available during business hours through a statewide toll-free number and must also be available through the Internet.

(b) The service must provide long-term care options counseling by assisting older adults, caregivers, and providers in accessing information and options counseling about choices in long-term care services that are purchased through private providers or available through public options. The service must:

- (1) develop a comprehensive database that includes detailed listings in both consumer- and provider-oriented formats;
- (2) make the database accessible on the Internet and through other telecommunication and media-related tools;
- (3) link callers to interactive long-term care screening tools and make these tools available through the Internet by integrating the tools with the database;
- (4) develop community education materials with a focus on planning for long-term care and evaluating independent living, housing, and service options;
- (5) conduct an outreach campaign to assist older adults and their caregivers in finding information on the Internet and through other means of communication;
- (6) implement a messaging system for overflow callers and respond to these callers by the next business day;

(7) link callers with county human services and other providers to receive more in-depth assistance and consultation related to long-term care options;

(8) link callers with quality profiles for nursing facilities and other providers developed by the commissioner of health;

(9) incorporate information about the availability of housing options, as well as registered housing with services and consumer rights within the MinnesotaHelp.info network long-term care database to facilitate consumer comparison of services and costs among housing with services establishments and with other in-home services and to support financial self-sufficiency as long as possible. Housing with services establishments and their arranged home care providers shall provide information that will facilitate price comparisons, including delineation of charges for rent and for services available. The commissioners of health and human services shall align the data elements required by section 144G.06, the Uniform Consumer Information Guide, and this section to provide consumers standardized information and ease of comparison of long-term care options. The commissioner of human services shall provide the data to the Minnesota Board on Aging for inclusion in the MinnesotaHelp.info network long-term care database;

(10) provide long-term care options counseling. Long-term care options counselors shall:

(i) for individuals not eligible for case management under a public program or public funding source, provide interactive decision support under which consumers, family members, or other helpers are supported in their deliberations to determine appropriate long-term care choices in the context of the consumer's needs, preferences, values, and individual circumstances, including implementing a community support plan;

(ii) provide Web-based educational information and collateral written materials to familiarize consumers, family members, or other helpers with the long-term care basics, issues to be considered, and the range of options available in the community;

(iii) provide long-term care futures planning, which means providing assistance to individuals who anticipate having long-term care needs to develop a plan for the more distant future; and

(iv) provide expertise in benefits and financing options for long-term care, including Medicare, long-term care insurance, tax or employer-based incentives, reverse mortgages, private pay options, and ways to access low or no-cost services or benefits through volunteer-based or charitable programs; and

(11) using risk management and support planning protocols, provide long-term care options counseling to current residents of nursing homes deemed appropriate for discharge by the commissioner. In order to meet this requirement, the commissioner shall provide designated Senior LinkAge Line contact centers with a list of nursing home residents appropriate for discharge planning via a secure Web portal. Senior LinkAge Line shall provide these residents, if they indicate a preference to receive long-term care options counseling, with initial assessment, review of risk factors, independent living support consultation, or referral to:

(i) long-term care consultation services under section 256B.0911;

(ii) designated care coordinators of contracted entities under section 256B.035 for persons who are enrolled in a managed care plan; or

(iii) the long-term care consultation team for those who are appropriate for relocation service coordination due to high-risk factors or psychological or physical disability.

Subd. 8. **Promotion of long-term care insurance.** Within the limits of appropriations specifically for this purpose, the Minnesota Board on Aging, either directly or through contract, shall promote the provision of employer-sponsored, long-term care insurance. The board shall encourage private and public sector employers to make long-term care insurance available to employees, provide interested employers with information on the long-term care insurance product offered to state employees, and provide technical assistance to employers in designing long-term care insurance products and contacting companies offering long-term care insurance products.

Subd. 9. **Prescription drug assistance.** The Minnesota Board on Aging shall establish and administer a prescription drug assistance program to assist individuals in accessing programs offered by pharmaceutical manufacturers that provide free or discounted prescription drugs or provide coverage for prescription drugs. The board shall use computer software programs to:

(1) list eligibility requirements for pharmaceutical assistance programs offered by manufacturers;

(2) list drugs that are included in a supplemental rebate contract between the commissioner and a pharmaceutical manufacturer under section 256.01, subdivision 2, clause (23); and

(3) link individuals with the pharmaceutical assistance programs most appropriate for the individual. The board shall make information on the prescription drug assistance program available to interested individuals and health care providers and shall coordinate the program with the statewide information and assistance service provided through the Senior LinkAge Line under subdivision 7.

Subd. 10. **Communities for a lifetime.** (a) For purposes of this subdivision, "communities for a lifetime" means partnerships of small cities, counties, municipalities, statutory or home rule charter cities, or towns, whose citizens seek to affirmatively extend to persons ages 65 and older the opportunities, supports, and services that will enable them to continue to be contributing, civically engaged residents.

(b) The opportunities extended within a reasonable distance to senior residents by communities for a lifetime must include, but not be limited to:

(1) the opportunity to contribute time and talents through volunteer community service;

(2) the opportunity to participate in the paid workforce, with flexibility of hours and scheduling;

(3) the opportunity for socializing, recreation, and wellness activities, including both physical exercise and mental stimulation;

(4) the opportunity to "age in place" and choose among a variety of affordable, accessible housing options, including single-family housing, independent congregate senior housing, and senior housing with services;

(5) the opportunity to access quality long-term care in the setting of the senior's own choice; and

(6) the opportunity for community-wide mobility and to access public transportation, including door-to-door assistance and weekend and evening access.

(c) Communities for a lifetime must demonstrate the availability of supports and services for senior residents that include, but are not limited to:

- (1) an array of home and community-based services to support seniors' options to remain in an independent living setting as they age and become more frail;
  - (2) access to contemporary remote medical technology for cost-effective home-based monitoring of medical conditions;
  - (3) access to nutrition programs, including congregate meal and home-delivered meal opportunities;
  - (4) access to a comprehensive caregiver support system for family members and volunteer caregivers, including:
    - (i) technological support for caregivers remaining in the paid workforce to manage caregiver responsibilities effectively; and
    - (ii) respite care that offers temporary substitute care and supervision for frail seniors;
  - (5) personal assistance in accessing services and supports, and in seeking financing for these services and supports;
  - (6) high-quality assisted living facilities within a senior's geographic setting of choice;
  - (7) high-quality nursing care facilities within a senior's geographic setting of choice; and
  - (8) the protection offered to vulnerable seniors by a publicly operated adult protective service.
- (d) Communities for a lifetime must also:
- (1) establish an ongoing local commission to advise the community for a lifetime on its provision of the opportunities, services, and supports identified in paragraphs (b) and (c);
  - (2) offer training and learning opportunities for businesses, civic groups, fire and police personnel, and others frequently interacting with seniors on appropriate methods of interacting with seniors; and
  - (3) incorporate into its local plan, developed in accordance with sections 366.10, 394.232, and 462.353, elements that address the impact of the forecast change in population age structure on land use, housing, public facilities, transportation, capital improvement, and other areas addressed by local plans; provisions addressing the availability of the opportunities, supports, and services identified in paragraphs (b) and (c); and strategies to develop physical infrastructure responsive to the needs of the projected population.
- (e) In implementing this subdivision, the Minnesota Board on Aging shall:
- (1) consult with, and when appropriate work through, the area agencies on aging;
  - (2) consult with the commissioners of human services, health, and employment and economic development, and the League of Minnesota Cities and other organizations representing local units of government; and
  - (3) review models of senior-friendly community initiatives from other states and organizations.
- (f) The Board on Aging shall report to the legislature by February 28, 2010, with recommendations on (1) a process for communities to request and receive the designation of community for a lifetime, and (2) funding sources to implement these communities.

**History:** 1961 c 466 s 1,2; 1974 c 536 s 1; 1975 c 271 s 6; 1976 c 134 s 59,60; 1976 c 275 s 1; 1986 c 404 s 10; 1986 c 444; 1989 c 282 art 2 s 121; 1989 c 294 s 1; 1995 c 207 art 3 s 17; 1Sp2001 c 9 art 4 s 2; art 8 s 13; 2002 c 379 art 1 s 113; 1Sp2003 c 14 art 12 s 11; 2005 c 56 s 1; 1Sp2005 c 4 art 8 s 16; 2007 c 147 art 6 s 16; art 7 s 5; 2009 c 60 s 1; 2009 c 79 art 8 s 16; 2009 c 173 art 1 s 16; 1Sp2010 c 1 art 17 s 8