Commonwealth Council on Aging
2024 Best Practices Award Instructions

The 2024 Best Practices Award Program is sponsored by the Commonwealth Council on Aging. The Council is committed to the independence, dignity, and security of the people it serves and helps state government meet the needs of older Virginians and their families.

AWARDS TO THE TOP PROGRAMS: The Council will provide awards to three (3) of the winners as follows:

     1st Place: $5,500 ($5,000 from Dominion Energy and $500 from AARP Virginia)
     2nd Place: $3,500 ($3,000 from Dominion Energy and $500 from AARP Virginia)
     3rd Place: $2,500 ($2,000 from Dominion Energy and $500 from AARP Virginia)

There will also be up to three (3) awards in an "Honorable Mention" category.

PURPOSE OF THE AWARD: The Best Practices Award Program is designed to identify and recognize unique programs of excellence for older Virginians and their caregivers and to encourage the replication of model programs throughout the Commonwealth. Awards will be based on innovation and impact of program to assist older adults to *Age in the Community*. The Commonwealth Council on Aging aims to recognize creativity in services, such as livable communities, home and community-based supports, transportation, housing, caregiver supports, intergenerational programming, care management or coordination, healthy aging, long-term care, safety and security, older adults as volunteers or community resources, or other activities.

Programs will be judged for their innovation, cost-effectiveness and sustainability, ease of replication, inclusiveness, and their impact on the quality of life of older Virginians, caregivers, and family members.

The Council will disseminate information on the award-winning programs throughout the Commonwealth. Winners will be asked to coordinate efforts to host media and community stakeholders for a formal presentation of the award in their respective community and through a virtual webinar event.

ELIGIBILITY: To be eligible for consideration, programs must:
1. Be targeted to adults age 60 and/or older, their families, and/or caregivers;
2. Be sponsored by local governments, municipalities, community organizations, aging services providers, universities, or faith organizations;
3. Demonstrate active operation at the time of the award and continuous operation for the 12 months preceding February 14, 2024;
4. Be prepared and willing to support other organizations interested in replicating the program (support could include technical assistance and education); and
5. Provide all information requested in the official application.

To be eligible to submit a program for consideration:
1. A single individual, organization, or partnership may submit a program.
2. Organizations may nominate themselves or they can nomination another organization's program.
3. Individuals and organizations may submit more than one nomination, but a separate nomination form is required for each program.

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Please pay particular attention to the following ineligibility considerations:
1. Programs (not agencies or organizations) that have received a previous Best Practices Award (cash award) or Honorable Mention (non-cash award) are not eligible to be considered for the 2024 awards.
2. Programs previously nominated but not recognized with a Best Practices Award or Honorable Mention may be resubmitted for the 2024 awards program.
3. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Please answer all the questions.
4. If selected for a monetary award, winning applicants will be required to fully complete a COVA W-9 form and return it to the Department in a timely manner. Failure to timely complete and return this form will result in the revocation of the award.

SELECTION CRITERIA: Programs will be judged on the following seven criteria:

Community Need and Impact: How important is the program to the community's overall welfare? What impact did the program have on the quality of life for community residents? How many people have been served or impacted? Is the impact ongoing or one-time-only? Did the program have a multiple impact (benefits to more than one group, organization, client, community, area of interest)?

Concept of Aging in the Community: How does the program promote or support healthy aging in the community, livable communities, and/or home and community-based supports? Which specific program components or services assist older adults in remaining in their homes and communities for longer and how is this achieved?

Innovation: Describe the program's unique aspects. How did the idea for this program develop? Was there a creative process in its design or implementation?

Inclusiveness: How was the program developed to be inclusive regarding disability, geographic barriers, race, ethnicity, culture, language, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity? Describe your outreach to the community. What is the program audience?

Goals/Outcomes/Evaluation: What were the goals/outcomes? Were the goals/outcomes clearly defined prior to implementation? Were the goals/outcomes achieved? How were the results measured or evaluated? What were the results?

Cost Effectiveness/Sustainability: Include a list of program (not agency) expenses. Budget information should reflect all costs incurred or contributed to the program's implementation. In developing the list of expenses, consider the following: personnel (salary and benefits), travel, equipment, supplies and materials, administrative or indirect fees, and contractual costs. Identify any volunteer or other in-kind contributions that supported the program's implementation. How will this program be sustained in the coming years? What efforts are underway or what plans are in place to assure that the program continues to receive financial support? How will the ongoing cost-effectiveness be evaluated, demonstrated, and documented?

Potential for Replication: Use this space to make the case for the program's replicability or scalability to other parts of Virginia or beyond. Also document the program's "after action report" or lessons learned. What worked and what did not work? What was learned during or after the program's implementation that could positively impact the program in the future or would be informative to other organizations who may be interested in replicating the program?

NOMINATION PROCESS AND SUBMISSION DEADLINE

NOMINATION PROCEDURE: All nominations must be made using the official nomination form. This form can be found on the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services website at: https://www.vda.virginia.gov/boardsandcouncils.htm.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: The nomination form must be received by the DARS Division for Community Living by 5:00 PM on Wednesday, February 14, 2023. Nomination forms should be attached to an email message and must be submitted to bestpracticesawards@dars.virginia.gov. Please include "2024 Best Practices Award" in the subject line of the email and include the name of the contact person and telephone number in the email message.

QUESTIONS: Please contact Charlotte Arbogast, Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), at (804) 662-7093 or via email at bestpracticesawards@dars.virginia.gov with questions relating to the application process.

POST-AWARD PROCESS AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

AWARD NOTIFICATION: Applicants will be notified regarding award decisions by March 15, 2024.

AWARD FUNDING: If selected for a monetary award, winning applicants will be required to fully complete a COVA W-9 form and return it to the Department in a timely manner. Failure to timely complete and return this form will result in the revocation of the award.

Award funds are intended to support a winning program's ongoing operations, the expansion of a winning program's scope or impact, and/or for the onsite awards presentation expenses.

AWARDS PRESENTATION: DARS staff will work with the winning programs to schedule an on-site awards presentation and recognition ceremony for each program during May 2024 to align with Older Americans Month and Older Virginians Month.

For the on-site awards presentations, winners may wish to include local elected officials, program board members, media representatives, volunteers, and program participants or

beneficiaries, and any others who will help to highlight the impact of the program in your community.

DARS staff will also work with the winning programs to schedule a live webinar event highlighting the top three winners. This webinar will be held in partnership with the Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging and the Virginia Governor's Conference on Aging Webinar Series. These webinars are typically held on the fourth Tuesday of each month from 1-2 p.m.

WEBSITE & PRESS RELEASE: DARS and the Council will use the summary requested in each program's Nomination Form, subject to revisions, to disseminate information on the winning programs via the Council's website and through a Department-issued press release to various media throughout the Commonwealth. Programs are required to provide timely responses to staff in developing the website and press release materials.

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The Commonwealth Council on Aging thanks Dominion Energy and AARP Virginia for their generous contribution, which allows the Council to recognize organizations for their dedication and work in advancing services for older adults.