

George Latimer
County Executive

June 6, 2023

Westchester County Board of Legislators
800 Michaelian Office Building
148 Martine Avenue
White Plains, New York 10601

Dear Honorable Members of the Board of Legislators:

Transmitted herewith for your review and approval is an act ("Act") which, if adopted by your Honorable Board, would authorize the County of Westchester (the "County"), acting by and through its Department of Senior Programs and Services (the "Department") to enter into a grant agreement ("Grant Agreement") with the State of New York, acting by and through its Office for the Aging ("NYSOFA"), to accept state grant funds made available to the County under the Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Volunteer Stipend Program ("HIICAP Volunteer Stipend"), in an amount not-to-exceed \$7,800.

The Grant Agreement will be for a term deemed to commence retroactively on April 1, 2022 and continuing through March 31, 2023.

The funding will be used by the Department to pay a one-time stipend to volunteers completing the 2022-2023 required HIICAP training and certification and participating and assisting with the Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program ("HIICAP"), retroactive to the term of the Grant Agreement, and as such the approval of Your Honorable Board is not required.

The HIICAP Volunteer Stipend is a new pilot program aimed at new recruitment and retention of HIICAP volunteers by paying them a stipend as an incentive for participating in the HIICAP program. HIICAP is driven by dedicated knowledgeable volunteers who are committed to helping people with Medicare.

The Planning Department has advised that the proposed Grant Agreement with NYSOFA described above does not meet the definition of an "action" under the State Environmental Quality Review Act, 6 NYCRR part 617. Accordingly, no further environmental review is required. Please refer to the annexed memorandum from the Department of Planning dated January 12, 2023, which is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Legislators. As you know, your Honorable Board may use such expert advice to make its own conclusion.

The proposed Grant Agreement with NYSOFA is intended to benefit the County because it provides funding that aids in the effort to recruit and retain volunteers for the implementation of the HIICAP program in order to assist County residents. Volunteers help foster the mission to educate and assist Medicare-eligible County residents through objective outreach, counseling, and

training. They dedicate countless hours helping Medicare beneficiaries with their individual healthcare options such as Medicare, Medicare Advantage, Medigap, Part D drug coverage, and low-income assistance programs.

Accordingly, I believe the proposed Grant Agreement with NYSOFA is in the best interest of the County as it will allow for volunteers to be paid a stipend for training and certification that qualifies and enables them to assist County residents about Medicare benefits and saves them money by helping them access "Extra Help" programs.

Based on the foregoing, your favorable action on the annexed proposed Act is recommended.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "George Latimer", written in a cursive style.

George Latimer
County Executive

GL/MC/SJ/cmc

**HONORABLE BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
THE COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER**

Your Committee is in receipt of a communication from the County Executive recommending the approval of an act (the “Act”) which would authorize the County of Westchester (the “County”), acting by and through its Department of Senior Programs and Services (the “Department”) to enter into a grant agreement (“Grant Agreement”) with the State of New York, acting by and through its Office for the Aging (“NYSOFA”), to accept state grant funds made available to the County under the Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Volunteer Stipend Program (“HIICAP Volunteer Stipend”), in an amount not-to-exceed \$7,800.

Your Committee is advised that the Grant Agreement will be for a term deemed to commence retroactively on April 1, 2022 and continuing through March 31, 2023.

Your Committee is further advised that the funding will be used by the Department to pay a one-time stipend to volunteers completing the 2022-2023 required HIICAP training and certification and participating and assisting with the Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (“HIICAP”), retroactive to the term of the Grant Agreement, and as such the approval of Your Honorable Board is not required.

Your Committee is further advised that the HIICAP Volunteer Stipend is a new pilot program aimed at new recruitment and retention of HIICAP volunteers by paying them a stipend as an incentive for participating in the HIICAP program. HIICAP is driven by dedicated knowledgeable volunteers who are committed to helping people with Medicare.

Your Committee is further advised by the Planning Department that the proposed Grant Agreement with NYSOFA described above does not meet the definition of an “action” under the State Environmental Quality Review Act, 6 NYCRR part 617. Please refer to the annexed memorandum from the Department of Planning dated January 12, 2023, which is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Legislators. Accordingly, the Planning Department recommends that no further environmental review is required, and your Committee concurs with this conclusion.

Your Committee is further advised that the proposed Grant Agreement with NYSOFA is intended to benefit the County because it provides funding that aids in the effort to recruit and retain volunteers for the implementation of the HIICAP program in order to assist County residents. Volunteers help foster the mission to educate and assist Medicare-eligible County residents through objective outreach, counseling, and training. They dedicate countless hours helping Medicare beneficiaries with their individual healthcare options such as Medicare, Medicare Advantage, Medigap, Part D drug coverage, and low-income assistance programs.

Your Committee is further advised that the proposed Grant Agreement with NYSOFA is in the best interest of the County as it will allow for volunteers to be paid a stipend for training and certification that qualifies and enables them to assist County residents about Medicare benefits and saves them money by helping them access “Extra Help” programs.

Your Committee has been advised that the passage of the attached Act requires an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of your Honorable Board.

Your Committee has been advised that adoption of the proposed Act is necessary to effectively carry out these worthwhile programs. Accordingly, after due consideration, your Committee recommends adoption of the annexed Act.

Dated: _____, 2023
White Plains, New York

COMMITTEE ON

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUBJECT: HILCAP Volunteer Stipend Program

NO FISCAL IMPACT PROJECTED

OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT

(To be completed by operating department and reviewed by Budget Department)

A) GENERAL FUND AIRPORT SPECIAL REVENUE FUND (Districts)

B) EXPENSES AND REVENUES

Total Current Year Cost \$ 7800

Total Current Year Revenue \$ 7800

Source of Funds (check one): Current Appropriations

Transfer of Existing Appropriations

Additional Appropriations

Other (explain)

Identify Accounts: 263-85-G072

Potential Related Operating Budget Expenses:

Annual Amount \$ 0

Describe: _____

Potential Related Revenues: Annual Amount \$ 7800

Describe: Funding received from the New York State Office for the Aging for the Health Insurance Information, Counseling, and Assistance Volunteer Stipend Program for recruitment and retention of volunteers.

Anticipated Savings to County and/or Impact on Department Operations:

Current Year: The Department would not be able to provide counseling and information on all health insurance programs for seniors including Medicare and HMOs without the assistance of dedicated knowledgeable volunteers.


Next Four years:

N/A

Prepared by: Sandra Brown

Title: Director of Program Development II


Department: Senior Programs & Svcs.

DAD
Reviewed By: 

Budget Director

If you need more space, please attach additional sheets.

TO: George Latimer, County Executive
Kenneth Jenkins, Deputy County Executive
John Nonna, County Attorney

FROM: David Kvinge, AICP, RLA, CFM 
Assistant Commissioner

DATE: January 12, 2023

SUBJECT: **ACTIVITIES NOT SUBJECT TO STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
REVIEW**

As required by the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act and its implementing regulations 6 NYCRR Part 617 (“SEQR”), the Board of Legislators (“BOL”) is the body that must assess the environmental significance of all actions that the BOL has discretion to approve, fund or directly undertake. The Planning Department has historically conducted the necessary environmental review for the BOL to undertake its responsibility under SEQR. Additionally, contracts going before the Board of Acquisition and Contracts (“BAC”) must be reviewed for conformance with SEQR.

Pursuant to Section 617.2(b) of SEQR, “Actions” are defined as:

- (1) projects or physical activities, such as construction or other activities that may affect the environment by changing the use, appearance or condition of any natural resource or structure, that:
 - (i) are directly undertaken by an agency; or
 - (ii) involve funding by an agency; or
 - (iii) require one or more new or modified approvals from an agency or agencies;
- (2) agency planning and policy making activities that may affect the environment and commit the agency to a definite course of future decisions;
- (3) adoption of agency rules, regulations and procedures, including local laws, codes, ordinances, executive orders and resolutions that may affect the environment; and
- (4) any combinations of the above.

As part of the Planning Department’s ongoing review of its processes, we are streamlining the process for SEQR review and related document preparation for the BOL and BAC. The most effective method to achieve a more timely SEQR review is to create a list of categories of activities **that do not meet the definition of an “action”** as defined in SEQR. This list (attached) references activities that are routine and which do not change the use, appearance or condition of any natural resource or structure, nor do they involve policies or regulations that may affect the environment. The creation of this list in no way eliminates the BOL’s or BAC’s

responsibilities under SEQ. Rather, it establishes a workflow for items that are routine and do not, under the law, require environmental review.

Accordingly, the Planning Department advises that no environmental review is required and no SEQ documentation is necessary for submission with BOL legislation or with resolutions or contracts requiring BAC approval regarding activities on the attached list.

County departments and agencies may reference this memorandum in the legislation in order to document compliance with SEQ for actions listed herein. As such, this memorandum should be kept on file with the Clerk of the Board of Legislators. Legislation should include a statement similar to the following: "The proposed project does not meet the definition of an action under New York State Environmental Quality Review Act and its implementing regulations 6 NYCRR Part 617. Please refer to the memorandum from the Department of Planning dated January 12, 2022, which is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Legislators."

This memorandum will be distributed to all Commissioners as part of County operations.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Att.

cc: Malika Vanderberg, Clerk and Chief Administrative Officer to the Board of Legislators
Joan McDonald, Director of Operations
Andrew Ferris, Chief of Staff
Steve Bass, Director of Intergovernmental Relations
Paula Friedman, Assistant to the County Executive
Stacey Dolgin-Kmetz, Chief Deputy County Attorney
Tami Altschiller, Assistant Chief Deputy County Attorney
Norma Drummond, Commissioner of Planning

**ACTIVITIES THAT DO NOT MEET THE DEFINITION OF AN “ACTION”
PURSUANT TO SEQR AND ARE, CONSEQUENTLY, NOT SUBJECT TO SEQR**

1. BUDGETS AND AMENDMENTS

- Municipal budgets and amendments to them – The budgeting process merely sets aside funds without a commitment to their expenditure. Operating expenditures are typically for government-related activities that would also not meet the definition of an action. Even the establishment of the Capital Budget is not subject to SEQR because many of the capital projects are usually not definitive enough with respect to potential impacts to be reviewable at the time the budget is adopted. However, any subsequent authorization, such as bonding, to undertake a particular capital project is an action that requires SEQR compliance before it may be approved.
- The transfer of funds within the County operating and capital budgets for the purpose of balancing accounts – It is understood that these actions are purely budgetary, where accounts with excess funds are moved to accounts with existing or anticipated deficits. It is further understood that the activities covered by these accounts have either already occurred or been reviewed in accordance with SEQR, are Type II actions or actions that are not subject to SEQR, or are actions that will require future approval prior to being undertaken, at which time further SEQR review may be appropriate.
- Rescissions or reduction of bond acts to cancel unspent funds.

2. SERVICES

- Consultant services – Contracts or agreements that provide for administrative services, training, reports for Boards and Commissions, but not including studies or design of physical improvements, which has been listed under SEQR as Type II.
- Social Services – Actions or agreements that provide services to persons in need, such as employment assistance, family/domestic intervention and respite care.
- Youth services – Actions or agreements that provide for youth services, such as a Resource Allocation Plan, Invest-in-Kids Program, after-school programs, camp programs and head-start programs.
- Senior programs & services – Actions or agreements that provide for services to seniors, such as provision of information/education, home care, nutrition & transportation assistance, caregiver support, and acceptance of federal and state grants providing for such services (e.g., OAA Title III grants and NYSOFA grants, including CSE, CSI, CRC, EISEP, NYSTP, WIN & NSIP).
- Public Safety services – programs that promote public safety, such as STOP-DWI, Police Night Out, and intermunicipal agreements (IMAs) for shared training, equipment and response to emergencies, including E-911.
- Fire services – Fire district IMAs for shared training, equipment and response to emergencies.
- Legal services – Contracts for outside counsel, litigation or associated monetary settlements.

- Medical Services – Contracts with medical providers for medical examinations, testing, vaccinations or medical treatment of County employees or the public.
- Mental Health Services – Contracts with agencies to provide treatment, services or education related to mental health.

3. PERSONNEL MATTERS

- Actions related to employment or employees.
- Contracts for temporary staff assistance.
- Legislation pertaining to establishment and membership of boards and commissions.

4. FINANCES

- Tax Anticipation Notes.
- Bond acts to finance tax certiorari payments.
- Banking contracts/agreements for money management services.
- Mortgage tax receipts disbursements (County Clerk).
- Refinancing of affordable housing mortgages.
- Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreements.

5. LAWS

- New laws or amendments of existing laws that regulate the sale or use of products for the protection of public health.
- New laws or amendments of existing laws that regulate businesses for the protection of consumers.
- Pertaining to consumer protection, not including professional licensing, which have been classified as Type II.
- Pertaining to animal welfare, excluding regulations involving habitat management.
- Pertaining to public safety.
- Pertaining to taxation, such as establishment of new taxes or tax exemptions.
- Pertaining to establishment or modification of fees.
- Pertaining to notices, publications and record keeping.
- Pertaining to hiring or contracting procedures.
- Pertaining to the functioning of County government, such as term limits, board appointments, etc. that do not impact the environment.

6. MISCELLANEOUS

- Amendments to existing agreements for changes in name or consultants.
- Education/training programs, contracts for clinical instruction.
- Prisoner Transport IMAs.
- Tourism Promotion Agency designation.
- Software licenses.

- IMAs for temporary housing in existing facilities (homeless, inmate, troubled youths, domestic violence victims).
- Naming or renaming of streets, buildings, parks or other public facilities.

WCDP
JAN 2023

ACT NO. 2023 --

AN ACT authorizing the County of Westchester to enter into a grant agreement with the State of New York, acting by and through its Office for the Aging, to accept state grant funds under the Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Volunteer Stipend Program (“HIICAP Volunteer Stipend”).

BE IT ENACTED by the Board of Legislators of the County of Westchester as follows:

Section 1. The County of Westchester (the “County”) acting by and through its Department of Senior Programs and Services (the “Department”) be and hereby is authorized to enter into a grant agreement (“Grant Agreement”) with the State of New York, acting by and through its Office for the Aging (“NYSOFA”), to accept state grant funds made available to the County under the Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Volunteer Stipend Program (“HIICAP Volunteer Stipend”), in an amount not-to-exceed \$7,800.

§2. The Grant Agreement will be for a term deemed to commence retroactively on April 1, 2022 and continuing through March 31, 2023.

§3. The funding under the Grant Agreement will be used to pay a one-time stipend to volunteers who participated in the established Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Volunteer Stipend Program (“HIICAP”) retroactive to the term of the Grant Agreement.

§4. The County Executive or his authorized designee is hereby empowered to execute all instruments and take all actions reasonable and necessary to effect the purposes hereof

§5. This Act shall take effect immediately.