Senior Housing Weekly:

Recap of LeadingAge Updates

July 2, 2020

**Senate senior housing COVID-19 relief bill introduced.** On July 2, Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and 14 Senate co-sponsors introduced the Emergency Housing Assistance for Older Adults Act. The bill is the Senate companion to HR 6873, which was introduced by Representative Katie Porter and House Financial Services Chair Maxine Waters in May. LeadingAge is working to include the bills’ $1.2 billion in Congress’s next COVID-19 relief bill, which is expect to come together for enactment in late July. The [bill includes](https://leadingage.org/file/senior-housing-weekly-recap-7-2-2020) $845 million for COVID-19 relief, $300 million for Service Coordinators, $50 million for wifi installation and service fees in individual apartments, and $7 million for a one-year extension of HUD’s Integrated Wellness in Supportive Housing demonstration.

**House passes two bills with affordable senior housing funds.** LeadingAge supported two bills that passed the House this week, one on June 29 and the other on July 1. The first bill is a compilation of the affordable housing provisions from the House’s wish-list bill for the next COVID-19 relief package; the bill includes two key LeadingAge priorities: hundreds of millions for Section 202 and Project-Based Rental Assistance communities for COVID-19 relief as well as $300 million for new HUD Service Coordinators. The second bill is the House’s $1.5 trillion infrastructure bill, which includes $2.5 billion for new Section 202 homes. [Here’s](https://leadingage.org/legislation/two-bills-key-housing-provisions-pass-house) an article about the bills.

**CARES Act funds to senior housing providers in July, HUD says.** On June 29, HUD officials said it was done being ambivalent about when and how to use the Mach 27 CARES Act funds to help affordable senior housing providers with COVID-19 expenses. After asking HUD for months where these funds were, LeadingAge began sounded the alarm loudly on this, starting with a June 4 letter from LeadingAge President and CEO Katie Smith Sloan to HUD Secretary Ben Carson. Here’s an [article](https://leadingage.org/regulation/cares-act-funds-housing-providers-july-hud-says) about HUD’s July 29 comments.

**HUD CFO issues CARES Act plan.** HUD published a [plan for the $12.4 billion in CARES Act relief funding](https://leadingage.org/sites/default/files/HUD_Agency_Plan_for_Use_of_CARES_Act_Covered_Funds_FINAL.pdf?mkt_tok=eyJpIjoiTURVMVlqVTRZemc1TURBeCIsInQiOiJrVFwvZnVXaU9hVEtnMGFaaEUwMTZEOWNaTlN6Vm5lc3UrRzF3ZzNsdjlmaTV2VHExc21rVDJTdkNwbUt2UjhnaGF4bzhyZUFxd29XT2hkbkxKbDlPalFKSG9FZXhjVUcwR0E5VHhyOEs5YnpzWmJHcmFPNjkzUlJtM0lidlBYY0gifQ%3D%3D) appropriated for the agency in late March. The comprehensive plan discusses a response team assembled by HUD for CARES Act disbursement, communication efforts with stakeholders, and funds allotment for various programs. For senior housing, the plan says that the agency will make some of the $40 million in funds available to help owners experiencing significant operating cost increases and financial hardships as a direct result of COVID-19; for service coordinators, the plan states that HUD will focus the $10 million in CARES Act funds on grant-funded service coordinators, as opposed to both budget-based and grant-based personnel. More details for senior housing CARES Act funds are expected from the agency within 30 days.

**Physical inspections in senior housing.** Join LeadingAge for a special edition of the Housing Advisory Group on Monday, July 6th, from 12:30-1:30pm ET. On the call, HUD Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) leadership, including Deputy Assistant Secretary David Vargas and Director Steve Bolden, will provide updates on physical inspections in HUD-assisted housing during COVID-19, in particular strategies for prioritizing health and safety in senior housing communities. Inspections from REAC, as well as for HUD's [NSPIRE demonstration program](https://leadingage.org/regulation/hud-hosts-nspire-demonstration-discussion-housing-stakeholders), have been on hold since early in the pandemic, and HUD will share their plans for a return to operations. To join the Housing Advisory Group, to receive the call-in details, or to send in advance questions, please email jbilowich@leadingage.org.

**HUD staff provide RAD for PRAC update.** On June 30, LeadingAge hosted a call on RAD for PRAC that included updates from HUD staff about RAD flexibilities during COVID-19, new RAD for PRAC forms, and other updates. Tom Davis, director of HUD’s Office of Recapitalization, gave an update on the preservation demonstration, which was newly-authorized for PRAC properties. Davis thanked providers on the call for their work, especially during the public health emergency, and provided updates on the RAD for PRAC pipeline, flexibilities during COVID-19, and the agency’s remote workflow. LeadingAge’s summary of the updates are available [here](https://leadingage.org/regulation/hud-proposes-new-rad-prac-forms-provides-rad-updates) (thanks to Jason from LeadingAge Illinois for helping us compile the recap).

**Older Adults Facing Growing Financial Insecurity in Retirement.** From the [LTSS Center](https://www.ltsscenter.org/older-adults-facing-growing-financial-insecurity-in-retirement/): Analysis of income and asset ownership shows widespread economic risk for elders after working years.

Most older Americans are already struggling to make ends meet or are at risk for a retirement crisis in the years ahead, according to an analysis by the LeadingAge LTSS Center @UMass Boston and the National Council on Aging (NCOA). The analysis found that 80% of households with adults age 60 and over—or 32 million households—are struggling financially today or are at risk of falling into economic insecurity as they age. This trend worsened over time. Nine of every 10 older households experienced decreases in income and net value of wealth between 2014 and 2016, the most recent periods for which data was available. Cohen and Tavares worked on the analysis with NCOA researchers Lauren Popham, Susan Silberman, and Liz Berke. NCOA published their findings in an issue brief, [The 80 Percent: The True Scope of Financial Insecurity in Retirement](https://d2mkcg26uvg1cz.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020-FWP-DG02_The80_Issue-Brief_4-24.pdf).

**Light a candle and join the Global Ageing Network on July 8 for a special day of remembrance.**

[Remembering the Elders of Coronavirus](https://globalageing.org/remember-the-elders-of-coronavirus/) pays tribute to the elders we have lost worldwide during the coronavirus pandemic. This health crisis has robbed our communities of elders who greatly contributed to our society and our lives, and has impacted aged care organizations and older adults in countless ways. On July 8, we encourage the Global Ageing Network community, care providers, elders, and their families around the world to share photos and videos of candle lightings.