



Senior Housing Weekly

December 16, 2022

LeadingAge Affordable Housing Network Meeting on Dec 19. Join the LeadingAge Affordable Housing Member Network on Monday, December 19, from 12:30 – 1:30 PM ET for our last meeting of the year! We'll discuss rules and new info from HUD about cash-free and credit card rent payments from residents; we'll also provide news from the Hill, updates from the White House on ordering free test kits in bulk for Section 202 communities, and other updates to round out the year. Participation in the Network is open to all members of LeadingAge; for details on joining the Network (and attending Monday's meeting) contact Juliana (JBilowich@leadingage.org) or Linda (LCouch@leadingage.org).

Upcoming LeadingAge Coronavirus Call. On Monday, December 19 at 3:30 PM ET, Carrie Reed, DSc, MPH, Acting Chief of the Epidemiology and Prevention Branch of the Influenza Division at CDC and **Dr. Barbara Mahon** Acting Director, Coronavirus and Other Respiratory Viruses Division (CORVD) in CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD) will join us to talk about vaccines, tests, and treatments. Dr. Mahon led part of the COVID response with CDC and has a great deal to share on the clinical evidence on boosters and treatments. They'll also explain [Nowcast](#), a model that estimates the most current estimates of circulating variants. It is a tool that LeadingAge members can use to track the most current information about COVID in their community, by variant, in order to determine if any actions need to be considered. We'll talk with these CDC experts about how aging services providers can use Nowcast. If you haven't registered for LeadingAge Update Calls, [you can do so here](#). You can also find previous call recordings [here](#). Note that to access recordings of the calls you need a LeadingAge password. Any staff member of any LeadingAge member organization can set up a password to access previous calls and other "members only" content.

LeadingAge Housing Asks for Fiscal Year 2023 Still in Play. LeadingAge is urging Congress to include [adequate and increased senior housing funding levels](#) in its FY23 HUD appropriation bills. As of December 16, the House and Senate had passed a one-week extension of the stop-gap Continuing Resolution, giving Congress until December 23 to finalize its FY23 spending bills. During the week of December 12, Congressional leadership reached agreement on a topline spending framework, paving the way for negotiators to iron out details within the 12 appropriations bills. Until enactment of the final FY23 bills, LeadingAge's [year-end action alert](#) is an important way for affordable senior housing stakeholders to communicate appropriations and Low Income Housing Tax Credit priorities to their congressional delegation.

HUD Outlines Plans to Implement New Housing Inspections. As HUD readies its new NSIPRE housing inspection protocol, the agency has begun to share details of the Real Estate Assessment Center's (REAC) new protocol implementation, scheduled for October 2023. Members can read LeadingAge's inside scoop from the first HUD's NSIPRE "Get Ready" sessions [here](#). Email Juliana (jbilowich@leadingage.org) with questions.

LeadingAge applauds HUD on new OCAFs; urges more improvement. In comments to HUD, LeadingAge welcomed the agency's proposed changes to affordable housing property budgets for 2023, but [urged](#)

[the agency to go further](#). Earlier this year, in response to feedback from LeadingAge and others, [HUD proposed a change](#) to the calculation of Operating Cost Adjustment Factors, or OCAFs, which are used annually to adjust the operating budgets of certain HUD-assisted housing communities. HUD's proposed adjusted calculation results in higher OCAFs than in previous years, bringing the national average from 3.1% in 2022 to 6.1% in 2023. The proposed changes include using new and different data to calculate some of the nine weighted components that make up the annual increase rate. A key area of improvement is property insurance cost calculations, which LeadingAge had specifically advocated for. However, despite the positive changes that HUD proposed, the 2023 OCAFs would still fall short of cost increases over the past year. For example, inflation rates were higher than 8% for more than half of 2022; similarly, the Social Security Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) was set at 8.7% for 2023. More information and LeadingAge's comments to HUD are available [here](#).

LeadingAge joins coalition letter urging better broadband mapping in affordable housing. Today, LeadingAge joined a [coalition letter](#) to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) about broadband mapping. The letter, signed by 110 organizations, details shared concerns regarding the mis-categorization of connectivity levels in multifamily housing properties located in high-poverty areas. The FCC is currently in the process of mapping broadband availability nationwide; the results will heavily impact the flow of federal infrastructure funding to improve internet connectivity across the country. To join LeadingAge's monthly workgroup on connectivity in affordable housing, email jbilowich@leadingage.org.

Housing + Services Webinar: Braiding Resources to Collaboratively Develop and Strengthen Partnerships. Looking to build dynamic partnerships that combine rental assistance and access to supportive services for people with disabilities, older adults, and people at risk of or experiencing homelessness? The Housing and Services Resource Center will host a webinar on January 9 from 2:00-3:00 pm ET featuring examples of strong collaborations from federal, state, and local levels. Presenters will explore not only opportunities to braid funding and resources but also approaches to developing partnerships that really work! [Learn more and register](#) for this Housing and Services Resource Center webinar.

White House COVID Preparedness Plan Includes HUD Test Kit Portal. On December 15, the White House released a COVID-19 Winter Preparedness Plan (detailed in this [Fact Sheet](#)) detailing test distribution, vaccines, treatments, and a section on the "highest-risk Americans," including residents of nursing homes and other congregate care communities. Importantly, the fact sheet announces that a test ordering portal for Section 202 affordable senior housing providers will soon be available; LeadingAge requested this portal and our work with HUD and the White House helped make it a reality.

LeadingAge is pleased to see that the Administration is bringing all its resources together to fight COVID this winter. We are also glad that many of the efforts on which we are collaborating with HHS are reflected in the fact sheet. For instance, the White House acknowledges that LeadingAge was the catalyst and helped activate the Section 202 test portal – not in this fact sheet but in public statements. Here's a [LeadingAge press release](#) on the White House announcement.

"Vax and Pax" Toolkit and Trust Building Toolkit. This week, our Coronavirus Update Call featured Erin Vigne, Director of Clinical Affairs for AMDA – The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine, who spoke about the organization's [new toolkit on vaccines and treatments](#) for COVID-19. The toolkit is highly curated and includes those resources judged by AMDA experts to be most useful in promoting vaccines/boosters and helping people understand and use treatments. The primary audience is clinicians

in long-term care. One resource Erin highlighted on the call is a Paxlovid Fact Sheet for Patients, Residents, and their Caregivers; she said many providers have found it useful to share with families that need basic information about Paxlovid, possibly to correct misinformation. She also pointed to a [video explanation of COVID-19 vaccines](#) and suggested it could help residents, family members, and staff easily learn about vaccines.

House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis Holds Final Hearing and Adopts Report. On December 14, the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis held its final hearing titled, “Preparing for and Preventing the Next Public Health Emergency: Lessons Learned from the Coronavirus Crisis.” The final hearing highlighted the extensive oversight work performed by the Subcommittee, and it examined some of the 30 recommendations put forward in the subcommittee’s final report to strengthen the nation’s ability to prevent and respond to public health and economic emergencies.

A few of the recommendations in the final report include accelerating development of next-generation coronavirus vaccines and therapeutics; increasing bivalent booster uptake; making investments in our health care workforce; as well as strengthening investments in affordable housing through HUD’s Housing Choice Voucher program and also through new construction of affordable housing. LeadingAge has been actively engaged with Congress and the Administration on each of these priorities.

The Subcommittee also released in its final report additional findings from its two-year investigation into five for-profit nursing home chains. One of the more notable findings is that while primary series vaccination rates among residents and staff were high, many residents and staff were behind on boosters as of July 2022. Although these findings were based on five specific for-profit nursing home chains, LeadingAge is currently partnering with the White House, HHS, CMS, and the CDC to increase bivalent booster uptake at nursing homes across the country.

The Subcommittee’s final hearing was punctuated with a business session where it adopted its final report. However, Members have two legislative days to include their dissenting views and staff are authorized to make technical or clarifying changes to the final report as necessary. Any updates made to the final report will be provided as needed. The final report’s adoption will be the Subcommittee’s last official act, pursuant to its 2020 authorizing resolution. [The final hearing can be viewed here.](#) [The final report, including the Subcommittee’s findings and recommendations, can be found here.](#)

Congressional Progress on FY23 Spending Bills. On December 13, a bi-cameral and bi-partisan group of legislators announced agreement on topline federal spending for fiscal year 2023. The agreement will allow negotiations for the specific funding levels in all 12 appropriations bills to move forward. The current continuing resolution (CR), which keeps federally-appropriated programs funded at FY22 levels for its duration, will expire December 16. Congress is now poised to enact a one-week extension of the CR, to December 23, while it works to complete an omnibus package of all 12 fiscal year 2023 spending bills. With the topline agreement reached, LeadingAge’s goals are twofold: first, for Congress to plod forward and finish an omnibus package by the new December 23 deadline to avoid a government shutdown and to avoid punting work to finish appropriations into the next session, whose members might not be as keen as this one’s to invest new resources into programs meeting the needs of older adults; and, second, for the omnibus bill to reflect [LeadingAge’s priorities](#). On the HUD funding front, LeadingAge is thrilled with the apparent agreement to complete the appropriations bills as one of the alternatives, to have FY22 funding for the duration of FY23, would be devastating to housing programs whose costs rise each year even if the programs themselves don’t expand. No reports on the negotiations indicate any inclusion of additional COVID-related funding, as requested by the White

House, in the omnibus package. On the House floor the afternoon of December 14, House Appropriations Committee Chair Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) [called](#) the new one-week CR “a simple date change that keeps the government up and running as we negotiate the details of final spending bills and complete the work of funding the government programs that meet the needs of hardworking Americans.”