

THE OFFICE ON AGING

COMMISSION ON AGING

Chairperson: Margaret C. Schweinhaut, 1983

Appointed members: Edmund G. Beacham, 1983; Dana G. Cable, 1983; Reverend Msgr. Leo J. Coady, 1983; Viola M. Gardner, 1983; Rena Z. Greenblatt, 1983; Betty K. Hamburger, 1983; William E. Henry, 1983; Alexander W. Kramer, 1983; Pauline H. Menes, 1983; Edwin Robertson, 1983; John H. Shope, 1983; Rose Sullivan, 1983.

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Matthew L. Tayback, Sc.D., *State Director on Aging*

Harry F. Walker, *Deputy Director*

James F. Chmelik, *Assistant Director*

Room 1004
301 West Preston Street
Baltimore 21201 Telephone: 383-5064

The Office on Aging was established by Chapter 261, Acts of 1975, as an independent agency to consolidate and coordinate all efforts concerned with the problems of older Marylanders. Its predecessor agency was the State Coordinating Commission on the Problems of the Aging created by Chapter 1, Acts of 1959. The name of this agency was changed to the Commission on the Aging by Chapter 595, Acts of 1971. In 1974, by Executive Order, the Governor established the Governor's Coordinating Office on Problems of the Aging. The creation of the Office on Aging as a cabinet-level agency resulted in the merger of the Commission on the Aging staff with the Governor's Coordinating Office on Problems of the Aging. The Commission on Aging was reassigned as both an advisory and policy-making board to the State Director on Aging.

The State Director on Aging is appointed by and responsible to the Governor. The Director's actions are subject to the advice, counsel, and approval of the Commission on Aging. The Office is divided into two divisions: the Program Division headed by the Deputy Director and the Administration Division headed by the Assistant Director.

In the Program Division are the program officer, the nutrition program officer, the senior aides

program officer, the direct service projects coordinator, special assignments coordinator, and supporting staff. They are responsible for administering the federal Title III and Title V programs under the Older Americans Act. This division also includes the following service and programs: legal services, transportation, and a long-term care unit.

The program unit within this division works on both federal and state planning and evaluation requirements, assists with preparing legislation, and provides assistance for program staff and grantees.

The Administration Division includes fiscal and personnel services, information services, housing services, the legislative advocate, a life care unit, nursing home advocate, and various support staff members. Fiscal services is responsible for the budget, fiscal planning, fiscal grants management, accounting, and office personnel management. Information services handles planned programs of communication as well as voluntary reporting on aging issues, programs, and services within the state. Public education involves working with the elderly and general population in fostering a positive approach towards the aging process. The public information unit works directly with senior citizen groups and on behalf of individuals in handling specific aged-related concerns. The legislative advocate works as a liaison officer with community-based agencies, other state departments, and the General Assembly. Complaints about nursing home practices are received and acted upon by the nursing home advocate in accordance with Chapter 857, Acts of 1975. The housing unit has authority by Chapter 143, Acts of 1976, to develop guidelines and standards for sheltered housing for the elderly, which will serve to govern certification of such housing in Maryland.

The Office on Aging coordinates, assesses, and evaluates all state and local programs and services, both public and private, insofar as they relate and are important to the well-being of the state's aged. The Office on Aging administers programs and activities delegated by the federal government to the state under the provisions of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended; provides leadership in bringing about changes in the law beneficial to the elderly; investigates complaints concerning the operations of nursing homes (Chapter 857, Acts of 1975); engages in training activities for, and provides consultative and technical assistance to, local units and agencies conducting programs for the aged; and under Chapter 143, Acts of 1976, develops, certifies, and assists in the operation of sheltered housing