



July 21, 2025

Dear Community Partner:

Springwell, the Area Agency on Aging for Ashland, Belmont, Brookline, Dover, Framingham, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Natick, Needham, Newton, Northborough, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Waltham, Watertown, Wayland, Wellesley, Westborough, and Weston, invites you to **submit a proposal for funding** under Title III of the Older Americans Act.

Title III awards will be made for federal fiscal year FFY26 - October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026. Award contracts are renewable for one additional year, contingent upon satisfactory program performance and availability of federal funding. Title III funding will be awarded for legal services with an award up to \$110,000.

Enclosed is the Request for Proposals (RFP) information package that includes: the letter of intent, the guidelines for distribution of funds, award information and requirements, and the FFY26 Title III award application. A Letter of Intent must be received by Springwell no later than by 5pm on Friday, August 8, 2025 (electronic copy). Completed proposals must be received by 5pm on Friday, August 22, 2025 (electronic copy only).

Springwell invites all prospective legal services providers to send technical assistance questions by Friday, August 1, 2025. This is not mandatory. All Q&A/technical assistance will be posted at www.springwell.com by August 4, 2025. All RFP materials will also be posted at www.springwell.com.

Thank you for your interest. We look forward to receiving your proposal.

Sincerely,

Trish Smith
Chief Executive Officer

Guidelines for Distribution of Title III Funds

Letter of Intent due by 5pm on Friday, August 8, 2025.

Proposal due by 5pm on Friday, August 22, 2025 (electronic copy only)

Proposals must be complete and submitted on time to be considered for funding.

How Priorities for Funding are Established:

The priorities for funding are based on the requirements of the Older Americans Act, the results of local and state community needs assessments, and the locally developed Area Plan on Aging. The goal is the further development of a comprehensive and coordinated community-based system of health and social services for people age 60 and older, which enables them to live independently in their own homes and communities for as long as possible.

Older Americans Act “Priority Populations”

Services provided with Older Americans Act funds must give priority to elders with the greatest economic need, (“need resulting from an income level at or below the poverty level”) and the greatest social need, (“need caused by non-economic factors which include physical and mental disabilities, language barriers, cultural, social, or geographic isolation, living alone, and minority racial or ethnic status”). See the Reference Section of this RFP for more detailed definitions.

Springwell’s Local Priorities

Below are the local priorities Springwell is seeking to fund under Title III.

Projected number of projects to be funded	Priority Areas
1	Legal services for elders throughout the service area (providing advice and full representation on a broad number of issues, including eviction, credit/debt issues)

Allocation Information

A committee, comprised of the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Advisory Council and/or Board members, and staffed by Springwell, will review the proposals. The Review Committee will make funding recommendations to the full AAA Advisory Council and the Springwell Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors votes to accept, reject, or change the recommendations. The decision of the Board is final, although applicants do have an appeal process if they feel the Board’s decision was arbitrary or capricious. Letters announcing the decisions will be sent out to all applicants via certified mail within ten business days of the Board’s decision. Appeal rights will be included.

Springwell reserves the right to reject or amend any and all proposals received in response to this RFP, or to negotiate separately in any manner necessary to best serve the interests of older adults in our service area.

The following factors, listed here in no particular order, will be considered in rating the proposals:

- potential for sustaining the project without Title III funds
- number of years program has already received Title III funding
- ability to reach priority populations and meet local priorities
- ability to achieve the goals and objectives by the end of the grant cycle
- project meets a demonstrated need, and does not duplicate existing services
- creation of a new program / seed project
- cost-effectiveness of proposed project
- evidence of collaboration with other agencies, especially with the local Councils on Aging
- demonstrated ability to successfully implement innovative programs
- overall quality of the proposal
- ability of the project to be easily replicated by other agencies/communities
- ability to serve all 22 towns in the Springwell area
- total pool of proposals received.

Please note: You may be contacted by phone or email for clarification on any element of your proposal sometime during the weeks of **August 25-August 29, 2025** . Be sure your listed “RFP contact person” will be available or will have another designated person available during that week to answer any questions the Springwell Review Team may have.

Award Information and Requirements

- Applicants must be registered to do business with the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- All applicants are required to establish that they can provide matching funds that **total at least 15%** of the total Title III award. The 15% matching funds may consist of in-kind contributions (not paid for with federal funds) or non-federal funds. Please note that 25% is required for awards related to Caregiver services.
- Upon notification of funding, Springwell may require revision of the grantee's proposed project budget and goals, in accordance with the project's funding level.

All Service Agreements will be sent out after notification of funding awards and must be signed and returned to Springwell on or before September 30, 2025. Springwell may attach conditions or provisions to Service Agreements as needed, to best serve the interests of older adults in our service area.

- The proposal, including the goals, objectives and budget, will be incorporated into the Service Agreement and serve as a basis for grant monitoring and evaluation for all grantees. Any significant change in goals, objectives, or budget during the grant year must have prior approval from Springwell.
- **Awards will be made for federal fiscal year FFY26 (October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026).** Funding may be renewable for one additional year (FFY27: October 1, 2026-September 30, 2027 contingent upon confirmation of available Title III funds, satisfactory performance and monitoring results, and determination by Springwell of continued need for the project.
- All grantees will be required to submit a copy of their **Certificate of Insurance**, listing Springwell as an additional insured and a Certificate Holder, and showing the limits of the insurance, **by September 30, 2025**. Funding will not be released if the Certificate of Insurance is not received by the deadline in the manner required.
- All grantees must comply with all requirements associated with the receipt of federal funding including, but not limited to, being fully handicap accessible, and completing C.O.R.I. (Criminal Offender Record Information) checks and Office of the Inspector General (OIG) checks on all staff and volunteers working on the project who will have direct or indirect contact with older adults, or access to consumer files. Please note that OIG checks need to be completed in the LEIE (List of Excluded Individuals & Entities) database, on an annual basis, using the following link: <https://exclusions.oig.hhs.gov/Default.aspx>

- All grantees will be required to submit to Springwell monthly program and fiscal reports within 10 business days after the end of the month for which the reports are made. These reports will also serve as a basis for grant monitoring and evaluation. These reports can be submitted via email.
- Grant funds are disbursed on a cost reimbursement basis. The grantee incurs the expenses and receives reimbursement only upon submission of the required reports. Reimbursement requests must be based on the approved grant budget.
- All grantees are required to develop and use a formal mechanism for gathering and incorporating consumer opinion on, and satisfaction with, the services supported with Title III funding. *This must be done at least once per year.* A copy of the survey tool and a summary of the consumers' responses must be submitted to Springwell no later than July 1st of each grant year. Results will be considered during the monitoring process and when considering renewal for year two of the grant cycle.
- All grantees must give consumers the opportunity to make voluntary, confidential donations to the Title III funded service. Donations must be spent on the funded project and during the fiscal year in which they are collected. All donations received by the Title III funded program must be reported monthly to Springwell. The privacy of the consumer, with respect to his/her contribution, must be protected. The **donation policy must be in writing and a copy must be submitted to Springwell no later than September 30, 2025.** Funding will not be released if the donation policy is not received by the deadline. Compliance and success soliciting donations will be taken into account during the annual program review and when considering renewal for year two of the grant cycle. **Projects receiving Title III funding are expressly prohibited from charging any form of mandatory fee to access the Title III funded project.**
- Organizations that require seniors to pay a membership fee in order to access the Title III-funded project **are not eligible** to apply as Title III regulations prohibit any mandatory fees in order for the older adult to access the Title III funded service.
- Grantees are subject to at least one on-site annual program and fiscal review, which examines compliance with the various requirements in the contract and the agreed upon outcomes, and budget. Springwell conducts two on-site reviews per year for new projects, for agencies that have never previously received Title III funding, and/or for grantees failing to comply with the funding requirements.
- Title III funded projects can only be used to serve persons age 60 and over who live in Springwell's service area: Ashland, Belmont, Brookline, Dover, Framingham, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Natick, Needham, Newton, Northborough, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Waltham, Watertown, Wayland, Wellesley, Westborough, and Weston.

- **If federal funding is cut or eliminated after Springwell has awarded funds**, the contracts will be modified accordingly with a contract amendment or rendered void. **Springwell reserves the right to amend or void contracts as needed** to best serve the interests of older adults in our service area. In the case of an increase of federal monies awarded to Springwell, another RFP process may be conducted at Springwell's discretion.

Instructions for Completing the Proposal

I. **Submit the Letter of Intent (Form A) – Must be received by August 8, 2025 at 5pm. (electronic copy)**

- 1) Download from www.springwell.com
- 2) Only one copy of the Letter of Intent (LOI) is required.
- 3) It does not need to be resubmitted with the full proposal.
- 4) It must be emailed as an attachment to dcannella@springwell.com
- 5) Once the LOI is received, a confirmation of receipt will be sent by email.
- 6) Applicants will NOT receive any further response to the LOI. **(Applicants must however submit the LOI – without it, the full proposal will not be accepted).**

II. **Submit complete proposal (Form B) to Springwell by August 22, 2025 by 5pm. (electronic copy only)**

- 1) Late submissions will not be accepted.
- 2) Do not attach any documentation not requested.
- 3) Complete proposals must have all questions answered in full and must provide all required attachments as outlined.
- 4) See the Proposal Checklist to ensure that your proposal is complete.
- 5) Proposals should be emailed to the attention of Donlyn C. Cannella, Director of Community Services: dcannella@springwell.com.

PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

- Application (Form B) signed by agency director
- Line-item budget form
- Budget Narrative- provides a more detailed description and justification for the budget proposed. Be sure to discuss the following: (a) which line items your mandatory 15% match will cover, (b) how much you anticipate collecting in voluntary consumer donations and the line items to which those donations will be applied once received and (c) the approximate cost per older adult being serviced through the program.
- List of current Board members
- Applicant's Affirmative Action plan
- Applicant's brochure/fact sheet
- Draft of the participant satisfaction survey tool to be used
- Most recent audited financial statements

REFERENCES:

1. Older Americans Act definition of “low income/greatest economic need”
2. Older Americans Act definition of “greatest social need”
3. Older Americans Act definition of “minorities / minority racial status”
4. Older Americans Act definition of “unduplicated count”

1. The Older Americans Act defines “greatest economic need/low income” based on the definition of poverty maintained by the Office of Management and Budget and the Census. These guidelines are as released in the Federal Register: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines?os=ios%2F&ref=app>

<i>Persons in Household</i>	<i>Income at or below</i>
One person household	\$15, 650 annually
Two person household	\$21, 150 annually
Three person household	\$26, 650 annually

2. The Older Americans Act defines “greatest social need” as need caused by non-economic factors which include physical and mental disabilities, language barriers, cultural, social, or geographic isolation, in particular, isolation caused by minority racial or ethnic status or living alone that restricts the ability of an individual to perform normal daily tasks or threatens the capacity of the individual to live independently.

3. The Older Americans Act defines “minority racial status” as Hispanic / Latino, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian / Alaskan Natives, and Black or African American. Please note that “minority” does not refer to other populations that speak English as their second language. These communities may have “greatest social needs” as a result of cultural, social, or language barriers.

4. The Older Americans Act defines an “unduplicated count” of older adults to be served as: Counting each elder served, regardless of the number of times s/he comes in contact with your program, only once per fiscal year.

FFY 25 RFP TIMELINE (for FFY25-26 grants)

RFP press release	7/21/25
RFP emailed to contacts & posted at www.springwell.com	7/21/25
Technical assistance questions received by	8/1/25
Technical assistance answers posted at www.springwell.com	8/4/25
Letters of intent due	8/8/25
Proposals due	8/22/25
Review Team reads proposals/Complete Score Sheets	8/25/25-9/10/25
Advisory Council recommendations	9/10/25
Final Board approval/vote	9/24/25
Decision Notification Letters sent to all applicants	9/26/25
Service Agreements, etc. issued	9/26/25-9/30/25
Signed Service Agreements due	9/30/25
FFY26 Title III grants begin	10/1/25