



*Improving the Lives of Older Adults and People with Disabilities  
Through Services, Research, and Education*

April 10, 2020

**State Unit on Aging Directors Letter #02-2020**

Re: COVID-19 – Presumptive Approval of Waivers Permitting Extension of Existing State Plans

In light of the public health emergency presented by COVID-19, States have requested flexibility in the deadline for submission of State Plans, and have extended their two- or three-year plans to four-year plans. We invite States with expiring four-year plans to apply for a waiver of the Section 307(a) plan duration limit under Section 316(a) of the Older Americans Act. States may be approved for a one-time, one-year extension to their existing State Plan. States will be expected to submit a new State Plan for approval for FY 2022. States must also notify the public of the requested extension to the existing State Plan.

We understand that States are operating at maximum capacity to address issues associated with COVID-19, and may not have the present ability to develop and submit a new State Plan. Section 316(a) permits a waiver of Section 307(a) State Plan requirements where, “the probable benefits for older individuals can reasonably be expected to outweigh any negative consequences, or particular circumstances in the State.” I find the probable benefits of these extensions likely to outweigh any negative consequences in all twelve of the States to which this situation applies (AL, DE, FL, ID, IL, KY, ME, MD, NV, PA, SC, WV).

To apply for a waiver, States should submit (via email) the required documentation listed in Section 316(a) to their Regional Administrator. We will exercise discretion in reviewing your applications, understanding that the current environment may hamper your ability to robustly comply with the application requirements.

We appreciate your ongoing partnership and encourage you to continue to reach out to let us know how we can best support you during this national emergency.

Sincerely,

Lance A. Robertson  
Assistant Secretary for Aging