



STATEHOUSE REPORT

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Healthy Aging Grants initial application due October 13; guidance, timeline, and other information available

This week, the Ohio Department of Aging released information about the Healthy Aging Grants included in the recently passed state operating budget. The General Assembly appropriated \$40 million in ARPA funding for the Healthy Aging Grants. All information about the grants can be found on the [department's website](#). The materials include [Pre-Award Guidance](#) that outlines the process for applying, as well as the timeline and guidelines for the grant.

The boards of county commissioners, or county executive and county council of charter counties, are the recipients of the grant dollars and will choose who to partner with to complete projects in accordance with the grant guidelines. Each county has an allocation; the grant is not competitive. The amounts can be found [here](#).

In order to receive the advance of funds, **each county must complete an application through the Ohio Grants Portal by October 13, 2023 at 11:59 p.m.** The application does not require the county to outline how the funds will be spent. It will require the county to identify points of contact for the grant administration. A checklist of what is necessary to complete the application can be found [here](#). Following the application submission, each county will execute a Grant Agreement with the state prior to receiving the advance of funds.

Guidelines and Allowable Uses

The materials provided by the Department of Aging outline how the grant dollars must be spent. Please remember the dollars are ARPA funds, so all ARPA parameters apply. The below information is summarized from the [Pre-Award Guidance document](#). The Department of Aging requires that the funds be spent as follows:

- At least 20% of the total allocation to support food assistance services;

- At least 20% of the total allocation to support housing assistance; and
- At least 10% of the total allocation to support internet access and digital literacy services.

The remaining funds may be used to provide evidence-based/evidence-informed services in alignment with [Ohio's 2023-2026 State Plan on Aging](#), including:

- Community conditions, including strategies to improve financial stability, housing quality and affordability, and/or transportation;
- Healthy living, including strategies to improve nutrition and/or physical activity;
- Access to care, including strategies to improve health insurance enrollment, including outreach and advocacy and/or family caregiver supports;
- Social connectedness, including strategies to improve social inclusion and/or volunteerism;
- Population health, including strategies to reduce cognitive difficulty, hypertension, and/or depression;
- Preserving independence, including strategies to improve chronic pain management and/or, falls risk and mobility.

The above categories are priorities within the State Plan on Aging and are summarized [here](#).

Recipients may retain up to 10% of the total funds received for the administration of the project.

Recipients may not use funds for capital expenditures. Additions, improvements, modifications, replacements, rearrangements, reinstallation, renovations, or alterations to capital assets that materially increase their value or useful life are not permitted. Ordinary repairs and maintenance to a home environment that are directly related to reducing the risk of falling and improving the general safety, accessibility, and functional abilities of an older adult are permitted. More information around capital expenditures can be found in the Pre-Award Guidance [here](#).

Timeline and Important Dates

The materials also outline the timeline for the grant administration as follows:

October 13, 2023: Deadline to apply for funds through Ohio Grants Portal

January 10, 2024: First Quarterly Report due

March 31, 2024: If at least 50% of funds are not obligated by this date, the county will be required to return the remaining funds to the state.

April 10, 2024: Second Quarterly Report due

June 30, 2024: 100% of funds must be obligated

July 10, 2024: Third Quarterly Report due

September 30, 2024: 100% of funds must be expended

October 10, 2024: Fourth Quarterly Report due

October 31, 2024: Final Report due

Reporting

As noted in the timeline above, counties will be required to report quarterly during the grant period. The Ohio Grants Portal page includes a template for these quarterly reports. You can view the template [here](#).

Technical Assistance and Questions

The Department of Aging is committed to providing ongoing technical assistance to counties with respect to the Healthy Aging Grants. The grant webpage is the central source of information and can be found [here](#). Please note the FAQs section.

For questions or challenges accessing the Ohio Grants Portal Access, please contact the Ohio Department of Budget and Management (Grants@obm.ohio.gov).

For general technical assistance, please contact HealthyAgingGrants@age.ohio.gov.

CCAO will continue to update members on technical assistance opportunities and additional information pertaining to the grants as they are released. If you have questions please contact Rachel Reedy at rreedy@ccao.org or 513-543-3723.

CCAO announces the creation of Statehouse Advocacy Task Force

At its September meeting, the CCAO Board of Directors voted unanimously to create a Statehouse Advocacy Task Force. The mission of the task force will be to strengthen the advocacy efforts of CCAO members through effective relationship building strategies with members of the Ohio General Assembly and education on key CCAO policy priorities.

Furthermore, CCAO President and Henry County Commissioner Glenn Miller announced that Ashtabula County Commissioner Casey Kozlowski and Hamilton County Commissioner Denise Driehaus will serve as co-chairs of the task force. The task force will meet monthly or

as needed depending on the legislative calendar. We envision the task force accomplishing the following goals:

1. Identify effective strategies for building relationships with state lawmakers and executive officials.
2. Develop advocacy materials to educate CCAO members on policy priorities.
3. Cultivate best practices for communicating CCAO legislative priorities to state lawmakers and executive officials.
4. Disseminate task force information and materials to CCAO members.

If you are interested in serving on the task force, or have questions about it, please contact Kyle Petty at kpetty@ccao.org by October 20th. However, this task force is open to any member and members can be added at any point in the calendar.

House Ways and Means hears sales tax exemption bills, CCAO provides opponent testimony

Two sales tax exemption bills, [House Bill 186](#) (Representative Darnell Brewer and Representative Sean Brennan) and [House Bill 189](#) (Representative Al Cutrona), received their third hearings in the House Ways and Means Committee earlier this week.

HB 186 exempts firearms safety devices from sales and use taxes. The bill defines a firearms safety device as a device that prevents the firearm from being operated without deactivating the device, or a gun safe, gun case, or other device that prevents access to a firearm. The [Legislative Service Commission](#) estimates that counties and transit authorities may lose between \$300,000 and \$700,000 sales and use tax revenue annually, although this estimate is subject to a great deal of uncertainty.

HB 189 establishes a sales and use tax exemption for small arms and ammunition, and a separate tax credit for a capital investment of at least \$2 million in a new or expanded small arms and ammunition manufacturing facility in Ohio. The sales and use tax exemption applies to any non-shotgun firearm that is .50-caliber or smaller, any shotgun that is 10 gauge or smaller, and the ammunition designed for use in these firearms. The [Legislative Service Commission](#) estimates that the exemption will reduce county and transit authority sales tax collections between \$5.9 million and \$9.8 million annually, with revenue losses increasing slowly each year with inflation.

CCAO submitted written opposition [testimony](#) to both bills due to their projected impacts on county revenue. The testimony also reminded committee members that these products are included in the Expanded Sales Tax Holiday that will take place in August 2024, and in future years as state revenue permits, if they are priced at \$500 or less. The state will reimburse counties for revenue losses incurred as a result of the expanded sales tax holiday.

Members with questions should contact Jon Honeck, jhoneck@ccao.org, 614-220-7982.

Virtual meeting authority for non-elected bodies bill receives first hearing

This week, [House Bill 257](#) (Representative Jim Hoops and Representative Thaddeus Claggett), which would authorize certain public bodies to meet virtually, received its first hearing in House Government Oversight Committee.

The bill uses the broad definition of "public body" established in [R.C. 121.22\(B\)\(1\)](#) but clarifies that a number of bodies are excluded from the definition (and therefore not permitted to hold virtual meetings). These excluded bodies include:

- The General Assembly and any of its committees and subcommittees;
- Any court, including mayor's courts;
- The State Board of Education;
- The Bureau of Workers' Compensation;
- The Ohio Elections Commission;
- Boards of county commissioners;
- Boards of township trustees;
- The legislative authority of a municipality or charter county;
- A public school district board of education;
- A board of elections, unless the meeting is within 90 days of an August special election.

The bill explicitly allows the annual county engineer meeting of all township and county authorities involved with construction of roads and bridges to be held virtually.

Bodies that wish to hold virtual meetings must adopt policies within certain parameters established in the R.C. to ensure the public can still be involved, that regulate how many members may be virtual, and other conditions.

During testimony, two questions were asked of the sponsors. First, Representative Bill Seitz, who indicated he is supportive of the bill, asked about a provision that requires an entity hold an in-person meeting if two or more members object to holding it virtually. His question concerned what might be done to avoid the abuse of this provision and a subsequent delay in government operations. The sponsors shared Rep. Seitz's concern and said they would work on protecting against abuse of the virtual meeting objection provision.

The second question came from Representative Latyna Humphrey who asked if the sponsors are aware of any opposition to the bill. The sponsors indicated that, since elected bodies are not included in the bill, they have not heard any opposition.

During their testimony, the sponsors also noted that, while the bill has an emergency clause, which would allow the bill to become effective immediately, they no longer believe the

emergency clause is necessary and are open to removing it. Bills with emergency clauses must clear a higher vote threshold than those without.

CCAO will keep membership informed of future hearings regarding HB 257. If you have questions about the bill, please contact either Nick Ciolli at nciolli@ccao.org or 614-580-0525 or Jon Honeck at [jhoneyck@ccao.org](mailto:jhoneck@ccao.org) or 614-220-7982.

Legislative Activity

Committee Hearings

Several bills of interest to counties received hearings this week across different committees.

House Finance

- [House Bill 7](#) (Representative Andrea White and Representative Latyna Humphrey): To express the General Assembly's intent to support strong foundations for mothers and babies to address maternal and infant mortality and improve health and developmental outcomes, and to name this act the Strong Foundations Act.
 - Second hearing, proponent testimony from Groundwork Ohio, the Center for Community Solutions, the Catholic Conference of Ohio, the Ohio Head Start Association, and eleven other organizations.
- [House Bill 181](#) (Representative Brett Hillyer and Representative Josh Williams): To make various changes regarding recorded instruments, powers of attorney, judgment liens, mortgage subrogation, law enforcement towing laws, and state stock banks, and to make an appropriation.
 - Second hearing, proponent testimony from the Ohio Recorders Association, the Ohio Bankers League, the Ohio Credit Union League, and four other organizations.

House Ways and Means

- [House Bill 263](#) (Representative Dani Isaacsohn and Representative Thomas Hall): To authorize a property tax freeze for certain owner-occupied homes.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

House Pensions

- [House Bill 261](#) (Representative Tom Patton and Representative Bride Rose Sweeney): To make emergency medical services workers "public safety officers" under the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

House Economic and Workforce Development

- [Senate Bill 41](#) (Senator Kristina Roegner): To make changes to the law relating to building inspections.
 - Third hearing, opponent testimony from the Ohio Building Officials Association

House Government Oversight

- [Senate Bill 158](#) (Senator Jerry Cirino): Regards the disbursement of municipal funds by residents and to declare an emergency.
 - Informal hearing, sponsor testimony and proponent testimony from the Buckeye Institute, ACT Ohio, the Greater Cleveland Partnership, and the Ohio Chamber of Commerce.
- [House Bill 208](#) (Representative Thomas Hall): To require an elector to register as a member of a political party in order to participate in that party's primary election.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

House Energy and Natural Resources

- [Senate Bill 119](#) (Senator Bill Reineke): To make changes to the laws governing the transfer and disposal of solid waste and construction and demolition debris, including increasing certain fees.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony

House Homeland Security

- [House Bill 13](#) (Representative Joe Miller and Representative Casey Weinstein): To redefine "hybrid motor vehicle" under the motor vehicle law for purposes of the additional registration fee applicable to those vehicles and to delay the effect of those changes until January 1, 2024.
 - Second hearing, proponent testimony from Clean Fuels Ohio, Alliance for Automotive Innovation, Drive Electric Columbus, Electrification Coalition, and two private individuals.
- [House Bill 237](#) (Representative Kevin Miller and Representative Phil Plummer): To make changes to the laws governing all-purpose vehicles, off-highway motorcycles, snowmobiles, utility vehicles, and mini-trucks.
 - Second hearing, proponent testimony from the Buckeye State Sheriff's Association and four private individuals.
- [House Bill 241](#) (Representative Joe Miller and Representative Kevin Miller): Regarding filling a vacant police department position without a competitive examination.
 - Second hearing, proponent testimony from the City of Lorain and the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police.

Senate Ways and Means

- [House Bill 66](#) (Representative Thomas Hall and Representative Reggie Stoltzfus): Regards the deduction and recovery of bad debts for cigarette and tobacco and vapor products taxes.
 - Third hearing, proponent testimony from the Ohio Wholesale Marketers Association.
- [Senate Bill 124](#) (Senator Tim Schaffer): To exempt from the sales and use tax the sale of certain firearms and ammunition and to authorize nonrefundable tax credits for small arms and ammunition manufacturers.
 - First hearing, sponsor testimony
- [Senate Bill 153](#) (Senator George Lang and Senator Terry Johnson): To temporarily modify the method for valuing farmland and other real property for tax purposes.

- Third hearing, opponent testimony from the Warren County Auditor and the Franklin County Auditor.

Upcoming Committee Hearings

The following committees are currently scheduled to meet and discuss bills that may interest counties. Other committees will likely meet as well, but as of press time for the *Statehouse Report*, they have not released agendas. Please note that these schedules are subject to change.

If you would like to testify on any bill, please visit the committee page and contact the committee chair's office for instructions on submitting testimony.

Tuesday, October 10

[Senate Local Government](#) (11:00 a.m.)

- [House Bill 101](#) (Representative Adam Bird and Representative Jean Schmidt): To modify the law regarding village dissolution.
 - Fourth hearing, all testimony
 - **POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS**

[House Health Provider Services](#) (3:00 p.m.)

- [House Bill 229](#) (Representative Beth Lear and Representative Melanie Miller): To prohibit a congregate care setting from denying a patient or resident access to an advocate and to name this act the Never Alone Act.
 - Second hearing, proponent testimony

[House Criminal Justice](#) (3:00 p.m.)

- [House Bill 56](#) (Representative Phil Plummer and Representative Andrea White): To increase penalties for fleeing from law enforcement, to require law enforcement entities to have a policy governing the pursuit of a motor vehicle, and to prohibit hooning and being a spectator at a hooning event.
 - Third hearing, all testimony
 - **POSSIBLE SUBSTITUTE BILL**