

## 2005 INNOVATIONS AWARDS PROGRAM

### APPLICATION

**Deadline: April 4, 2005**

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1. Program Name  
Aging Texas Well (ATW)

2. Administering Agency  
Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS). The program was started by the legacy Texas Department on Aging (TDOA). TDoA was consolidated into a new agency – DADS – as of September 1, 2005.

3. Contact Person (Name and Title)  
Karl Urban, Manager of Policy Analysis and Support

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8. Web site Address

<http://www.agingtexaswell.org>

9. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program.

To ensure that all Texans prepare for aging in all aspects of life and that state and local social infrastructure facilitates aging well throughout the lifespan.

10. How long has this program been operational (month and year)? **Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on May 1, 2005 to be considered.**

Overall initiative began in 1997. The legacy Texas Department on Aging created a special unit to formalize and implement the program in March 2001.

11. Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address? **Indicate how the program applies to the “change driver” that you listed above.**

Texas has the fourth largest 60-plus population (3.1 million) in the country, comprising 13 percent of the total Texas population. The diversity of older Texans is increasing. Rural areas of Texas have extremely high proportions of older adults. Between 2000 and 2010 the 85-plus population will grow by 23 percent and the 60 plus population by almost 30 percent. In 2010, older adults will comprise 15 percent of the total Texas population and by 2040 almost one quarter. These demographic trends will affect every aspect of individual life and social infrastructure in Texas. This will create new and different demands on state services across all functions of state government while providing new resources for economic and community growth and will create new challenges and opportunities for local communities.

12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.

The legacy TDoA created the Office of Aging Resource Services to formally establish Aging Texas Well program. The new Office consolidated and integrated the public information, partnership development, and policy and program analysis functions to create integrated ATW program.

The Aging Texas Well model was formalized and defined, consisting of 14 areas of individual and societal focus, to provide the framework for research, public information and partnership development.

The Aging Resource Group Advisory Committee (now named the Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee) was established to provide oversight and expert advice. Committee includes representatives of key state agencies, state executive and legislative leadership, academicians, faith-based and non-profit communities, and aging stakeholders.

The ATW model was integrated into state unit on aging and area agency on aging planning processes.

The ATW program consists of four inter-related functions: research, state agency policy and readiness, community preparedness and individual preparedness. These are ongoing functions and the following highlights summary of the activities and accomplishments for each of these functions:

**Research summary:** The Texas Baby Boomer survey in 2000 investigated attitudes and preparation for retirement. [Texas Demographics: Older Adults in Texas](#) (March 2000; April, 2003; Fall 2004; spring 2005) reports contain Texas demographic information on older Texans derived from the 1990 and 2000 census. The *State of Our State on Aging* reports (2001, 2002, and 2004 pending) use the ATW concept to analyze aging issues across 14 different areas of personal well-being and social infrastructure. Policy Papers

on [Healthy Aging](#), [Housing](#) and [Workforce](#) were published in September 2002. [Housing: 2003 Senior Housing Assessment Telephone Survey Results](#) is a summary of older Texans responses to survey addressing housing conditions and living arrangements, health, mobility, and accessibility, affordability, and community supports that allow individuals to age-in-place. [Housing: 2003 Senior Housing Assessment Key Informant Survey Results](#) is a summary of responses from policy makers and service providers regarding the strengths and weaknesses of housing policy in Texas. A 2004 ATW Indicator Survey collected data on individual and community preparedness. Responses are intended to provide insight into how well older Texans are doing (based on their own self-report) on key indicators. The findings from this project may be used to:

- Understand the status, experience and perceptions of older Texans related to their well-being;
- Develop overall benchmarks on the well-being of older Texans (not completed)
- Compare the experiences of older Texans to other national studies to draw inferences regarding how well Texans are doing compared to other regions of the country;
- Provide data to make informed recommendations on programs and policies in Texas; and
- Determine the capacity of the state and local infrastructure to support ability to age well.

Most research documents are available on the website.

**State Agency Policy and Readiness summary:** Legacy TDoA conducted a comprehensive survey of all state agencies to identify aging-related issues, current initiatives, future needs and to measure progress in serving an aging population. The results were published in *Survey Responses on the Readiness of State Government to Meet the Challenges of an Aging Texas* (July 2002). Legacy TDoA staff also conducted a survey of all state agencies, commissions and boards to identify programs that serve older Texans, target populations for these programs and gaps in services. The results were published in *Gaps and Coordination of Services for Older Texans: Survey Results* (July 2002). An extensive follow-up project is planned to provide agencies with tools to assess and build capacity and to develop policy issues for consideration by state leaders.

**Community Preparedness summary:** Legacy TDoA has encouraged and facilitated local communities to plan and build capacity for an aging population. In FY 2002 and 2003, TDoA funded capacity building grants. For example, individual grants addressed transportation best practices and caregiver services. A series of grants, coordinated through the Texas Cooperative Extension Service, were used to conduct a uniform, regionally-based assessment and planning process across the state. Results of this process were compiled and published in 2004 and 2005 under the name *Aging Texas Well: Community Preparedness Grant Reports*. Finally, a web-based community assessment and planning tool was developed and implemented in 2004 to assist communities in evaluating community infrastructure for supporting a rapidly-aging population.

**Individual Preparedness summary:** Over the course of the program, TDoA has developed partnerships with over two dozen public, private, non-profit and faith-based organizations to create resources, events, local programs, tools and opportunities for individuals to take responsibility for successful aging. Partners include Southwest Airlines, Blue Cross-Blue Shield, TheWord radio station, Baptist General Convention of Texas, Sam's Club, among many others. Additionally, the DADS' website contains an online resource guide of aging resources for each ATW area of focus.

One of the key initial target areas of ATW has been physical health. TDoA developed TEXERCISE, a statewide fitness campaign to educate and involve older Texans and their families in physical activities and proper nutrition. The TEXERCISE campaign promotes activity among individuals, as well as community events and policies that support fitness in all life areas. Texercise was given an Innovators award in 1994 by the International Council on Active Aging. A more complete description of Texercise is provided at [www.texercise.com](http://www.texercise.com).

13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?

The program takes latest gerontology research on successful aging and integrates different state agency functions to create a holistic, comprehensive and integrated approach to preparing individuals, state agencies and local communities for an aging population.

14. What were the program's start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)

There were no specific start-up costs. Initial staffing consisted of a Manager, three research analysts, director of marketing for public-private partnership development, public information officer, graphics and website designer, information specialist to coordinate events and assist with website and public information, and administrative support. These positions were funded out of existing resources; the positions also served agency functions beyond the Aging Texas Well program. Many of the operational costs (e.g., printing) of the public information component of the program have been shared with non-state agency partners.

15. What are the program's annual operational costs?

The programs annual operating costs have varied from year-to-year, depending on funding for grants for capacity building and for contracted research.

16. How is the program funded?

The program is funded out of Older Americans Act State Unit on Aging Administrative Funds and through public-private partnerships.

17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number.

This program is consistent with the State Unit on Aging mandates under the Older Americans Act. The 75<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature passed SCR 36 endorsing an Aging Texas Well initiative. See text here: <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/cgi-bin/tlo/textframe.cmd?LEG=75&SESS=R&CHAMBER=S&BILLTYPE=CR&BILLSUFFIX=00036&VERSION=5&TYPE=B>

Governor Rick Perry issue RP 42 on April 1, 2005 relating to the creation of the Aging Texas Well advisory committee and plan. See text here: <http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/press/exorders/rp42>

18. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program?

There is a dedicated internet website as listed above.

19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address.

Yes, Mary Sapp, former executive director of the legacy TDoA, was the innovator. P. O. Box 149030; Austin, TX 78714-9030; 512/438-4296; mary.sapp@dads.state.tx.us

To our knowledge, no state had implemented an integrated, comprehensive program like ATW at the time it was begun. Other states, such as Minnesota, had implemented the research component related to state agency readiness. Since ATW was started, the general concepts of readiness and preparedness have become popular among states and at the National Governor's Association.

20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

The New York Project 2015 is the most similar in terms of comprehensiveness. It has many similar elements related to state and community preparedness, particular in terms of research and tools. New York's project is focused on broader demographic trends than aging; does not have the public-private partnership component; does not have the individual online resource guide; has conducted more comprehensive and rigorous analysis and planning on state agency readiness than ATW has to-date; and has developed different types of community preparedness tools than TDoA.

21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken? The program is ongoing. The next steps are implementing the Governor's Executive Order, including:

- Publish upcoming research reports on caregiving in Texas, *Aging Texas Well: State of Our State* (2005), and ATW Indicator Survey results.
- Preparing for the FY 2005 White House Conference on Aging to be held on October 23 – 26 by implementing a stakeholder input process on policy issues to inform the Texas Delegation and White House Conference on Aging Policy Committee.
- Implementing the next phase of state agency readiness, with Governor's Office sponsorship through the Executive Order, including identifying participating agencies, defining the scope and outcomes of the project, and determining implementation steps and planning elements.
- Promoting the use of the ATW Community Assessment Tool by counties, cities and other appropriate organizations with the assistance of the Aging Network.
- Continuing to provide resources and encouragement to individual Texans and their families to prepare for their later years through tools and resources developed by DADS and by becoming active in their communities to ensure social infrastructure is developed.
- Continuing to create private, non-profit, and faith-based partnerships with DADS and the aging network to enhance individual and community preparedness.

22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples.

The program has successfully developed a model by which to integrate multiple functions (research, planning, public information, partnerships). The program has produced numerous products and partners designed to ensure successful aging in Texas as outlined in question 12 above.

23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

The program has evolved from a single state agency staff driven public awareness program to a multi-agency public/private partnership initiative with activities at the individual, community and state levels addressing preparedness.

24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?

States must have a state unit on aging that adopts a broader view of its advocacy and planning mandate than simply the services funded under the Older Americans Act and long-term care. State leadership and other state agencies must be willing to work with this broader mandate. State agencies must be willing to dedicate resources to research and analysis functions and to developing partnerships that do not have a tangible, short-term benefit.

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