

STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE
NCOA / NISC: Building Excellence:
The National Senior Center Self-Assessment Process

1. Purpose and Planning—

- Mission Statement
- Planning Document with Goals, Objectives and Action Plan
- Report of Accomplishments, Annual Report

2. Community Connections—

- List of Collaborative Community Partners
- Sample of Cooperative Agreement between Senior Center and Community Partner
- Explanation of how the Information and Referral process is made available to seniors and the community
- Copy of Marketing Plan
- Copy of Marketing materials
- News releases and news articles

3. Governance—

- Documents or by-laws showing that the nine standards of excellence of the NISC are in progress of being met by the Senior Center Governing Board/Advisory Council, Code of Ethics, Conflict of Interest Statement, List of committees/boards including members' names and affiliation or profession, list of services that require certificates or inspections to be posted (restrooms, kitchen).

4. Administration and Human Resources—

- Current resume for main administrator of Senior Center
- Job description for paid staff
- Organizational chart showing structure and lines of authority
- Personnel policies for paid staff
- Job descriptions for unpaid staff
- Volunteer Handbook for unpaid staff that includes policies

5. Program Development and Implementation—

- Description of programs and services that meet Best Practices as described by NISC
- List of hours and locations of services and programs

6. Evaluation—

- Senior Center's evaluation plan

- Examples of outcome-based evaluation, including baseline data, intended results, actual results, and how information was used in an improvement process.

7. Fiscal and Asset Responsibility—

- Senior Center Budget
- Monthly Financial Statements
- Current audits or financial reviews
- Written procedures for internal financial control
- Statement of Insurance Coverage
- Incident report form
- Disaster recovery or business continuity plan (Ex: Fire, Flood, Earthquake)

8. Records and Reports—

- Monthly or quarterly statistical report on programs and services
- Comparative year-end reports on programs and services for two separate years
- General participant record form
- Participant forms used for specific services or activities (Ex: field trips)
- Confidentiality policy
- Policy and Procedures Manual

9. Facility and Operations—

- Current pictures of Senior Center with outside signage
- List of transportation options
- Diagram of Senior Center layout
- Copy of safety procedures
- Preventive maintenance schedule
- Written procedure for rental to other groups or agreement for Senior Center to rent its space

BEST PRACTICES
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Definition of a Senior Center:

No longer do senior centers provide only socialization opportunities. A senior center is a community focal point where older adults come together for services and activities that reflect their experience and interests, enhance their dignity, support their independence and encourage their involvement in and with the senior center and the community.

As part of a comprehensive community strategy to meet the needs of older adults, senior centers offer services and activities within the senior center, outside the center and link participants with resources offered by other agencies. Senior center programs consist of a variety of individual and group services and activities that include but are not limited to:

- Information and referral services
- Meal programs
- Health and wellness
- Social and community action opportunities
- Educational opportunities
- Arts and humanities programming
- Intergenerational activities
- Employment assistance
- Transportation services
- Volunteer opportunities
- Financial and benefits assistance