



General Assembly

February Session, 2020

***Raised Bill No. 162***

LCO No. 1557



Referred to Committee on AGING

Introduced by:  
(AGE)

***AN ACT CONCERNING SENIOR CENTERS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 7-127b of the 2020 supplement to the general  
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof  
3 (*Effective October 1, 2020*):

4 (a) The chief elected official or the chief executive officer if by  
5 ordinance of each municipality shall appoint a municipal agent for  
6 elderly persons. Such agent shall be a staff member of a senior center, a  
7 member of an agency that serves elderly persons in the municipality or  
8 a responsible resident of the municipality who has demonstrated an  
9 interest in the elderly or has been involved in programs in the field of  
10 aging.

11 (b) The duties of the municipal agent may include, but shall not be  
12 limited to: [ ] (1) [~~disseminating~~] Disseminating information to elderly  
13 persons, assisting such persons in learning about the community  
14 resources available to them and publicizing such resources and benefits;  
15 (2) assisting elderly persons to apply for federal and other benefits

16 available to such persons; and (3) reporting to the chief elected official  
17 or chief executive officer of the municipality and the Department of  
18 Aging and Disability Services any needs and problems of the elderly  
19 and any recommendations for action to improve services to the elderly.

20 (c) Each municipal agent shall serve for a term of two or four years,  
21 at the discretion of the appointing authority of each municipality, and  
22 may be reappointed. If more than one agent is necessary to carry out the  
23 purposes of this section, the appointing authority, in its discretion, may  
24 appoint one or more assistant agents. The town clerk in each  
25 municipality shall notify the Department of Aging and Disability  
26 Services immediately of the appointment of a new municipal agent.  
27 Each municipality may provide to its municipal agent resources  
28 sufficient for such agent to perform the duties of the office.

29 (d) The Department of Aging and Disability Services shall adopt and  
30 disseminate to municipalities guidelines as to the role and duties of  
31 municipal agents and such informational and technical materials as may  
32 assist such agents in performance of their duties. The department, in  
33 cooperation with the area agencies on aging, may provide training for  
34 municipal agents within the available resources of the department and  
35 of the area agencies on aging.

36 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2020*) (a) Any one or more  
37 municipalities, or any one or more private organizations that serve older  
38 persons and are designated to act as agents of one or more  
39 municipalities, may establish a multipurpose senior center, as defined  
40 in Title I of the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended from time to  
41 time.

42 (b) A multipurpose senior center established pursuant to subsection  
43 (a) of this section may provide, but need not be limited to, the following  
44 services: (1) Nutrition services; (2) health programs, including, but not  
45 limited to, mental and behavioral health, and wellness programs; (3)  
46 employment assistance; (4) intergenerational initiatives; (5) community  
47 service and civic engagement opportunities; (6) public benefits

48 counseling; (7) socialization and educational opportunities; (8)  
49 transportation; (9) peer counseling; (10) financial and retirement  
50 counseling; (11) arts and recreation programs; and (12) case  
51 management services.

52       Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2020*) Within available  
53 appropriations, the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity  
54 and Opportunity shall provide assistance to senior centers, which may  
55 include, but need not be limited to: (1) Establishment and maintenance  
56 of a list of senior centers and municipal services for older persons; (2)  
57 establishment and maintenance of a list of resources for staff of senior  
58 centers and municipal services for older persons; (3) development of  
59 technical assistance for staff of senior centers and municipal services for  
60 older persons through direct assistance or referral to expert resources;  
61 (4) regular communication with staff of senior centers and municipal  
62 services for older persons and dissemination of information about local,  
63 state and federal support and services of interest to senior centers and  
64 municipal services for older persons; and (5) establishment and  
65 facilitation of a state-wide senior center work group as described in  
66 section 4 of this act. The executive director of the Commission on  
67 Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity shall assign or  
68 appoint necessary personnel to perform such duties.

69       Sec. 4. (*Effective October 1, 2020*) (a) There is established a state-wide  
70 senior center working group to develop a coordinated plan of  
71 development for senior centers and municipal services for older  
72 persons.

73       (b) The working group shall: (1) Develop an annual plan for the  
74 support and development of senior centers and municipal services for  
75 older persons, including, but not limited to, training needs and the  
76 coordination of existing resources; (2) evaluate the feasibility of  
77 implementing standards for the delivery of core services and make  
78 recommendations for such standards, including, but not limited to,  
79 standards that allow for parity of core services across municipalities  
80 while maintaining flexibility for delivery of those core services; (3)

81 consult with the five area agencies on aging and other agencies; (4)  
82 facilitate coordination and communication between senior centers and  
83 municipal services for older persons with executive branch  
84 departments, including, but not limited to, the Departments of Aging  
85 and Disability Services, Housing, Mental Health and Addiction  
86 Services, Public Health, Social Services, Transportation and agencies  
87 and initiatives that impact older persons in the community; (5) develop  
88 and provide access to best practices and procedures for senior centers  
89 and municipal services for older persons; and (6) make  
90 recommendations to the joint standing committees of the General  
91 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to aging, human  
92 services, housing, planning and development, public health and  
93 transportation for any necessary appropriations or legislative changes.

94 (c) The working group shall consist of the following members:

95 (1) Five representatives of senior centers, one from each of the five  
96 planning and services areas, as described in section 17a-304 of the  
97 general statutes, two appointed by the speaker of the House of  
98 Representatives, two appointed by the president pro tempore of the  
99 Senate, and one appointed by the majority leader of the House of  
100 Representatives;

101 (2) Two representatives of the Connecticut Association of Senior  
102 Center Personnel appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

103 (3) One representative of the Connecticut Local Administrators of  
104 Social Services appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
105 Representatives;

106 (4) One representative from a senior center that is accredited by the  
107 National Institute of Senior Centers appointed by the minority leader of  
108 the Senate;

109 (5) Two appointed by the Governor, one a representative of the  
110 Connecticut Association of Municipal Agents for the Elderly and one a  
111 representative of a nonprofit senior center;

112 (6) The executive director of the Commission on Women, Children,  
113 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, who shall serve as chairperson of the  
114 working group;

115 (7) The Commissioner of the Department of Aging and Disability  
116 Services, or the commissioner's designee; and

117 (8) The Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's  
118 designee.

119 (d) Any member of the working group appointed under subdivision  
120 (1), (2), (3) or (4) of subsection (c) of this section may be a member of the  
121 General Assembly.

122 (e) All initial appointments to the working group shall be made not  
123 later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy  
124 shall be filled by the appointing authority.

125 (f) The chairperson of the working group shall schedule the first  
126 meeting, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective  
127 date of this section.

128 (g) The administrative staff of the Commission on Women, Children,  
129 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity shall serve as administrative staff of  
130 the working group.

131 (h) Not later than January 1, 2022, the working group shall submit a  
132 report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing  
133 committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
134 relating to aging, human services, housing, planning and development,  
135 public health and transportation, in accordance with the provisions of  
136 section 11-4a of the general statutes. The working group shall terminate  
137 on the date that it submits such report or January 1, 2022, whichever is  
138 later.

<p>This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:</p>
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Section 1	<i>October 1, 2020</i>	7-127b
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2020</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2020</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>October 1, 2020</i>	New section

***Statement of Purpose:***

To (1) include senior center staff members among persons municipalities can name as municipal agents for the elderly, (2) authorize the establishment of multipurpose senior centers, (3) authorize additional resources for senior centers, and (4) establish a working group to study the needs of senior centers.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*