



Community Action Pioneer Valley Look4Help Public Resource Directory Inclusion/Exclusion Policy



*Community Action Pioneer Valley's Look4Help Public Resource Directory **Inclusion/Exclusion Policy** specifies the types of agencies, sites and services that Look4Help's resource database contains. The purpose of the Inclusion/Exclusion Policy is to simplify day-to-day decision-making and to maintain consistency. This **Inclusion/Exclusion Policy** was based on AIRS standards (Alliance of Information & Referral Systems) and the needs of the community Look4Help serves.*

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Geographic areas covered:

Primarily Franklin and Hampshire Counties and the North Quabbin Region. Some resources are included in portions of Worcester, Hampden, and Berkshire counties when services overlap. Selected regional and state agencies are also included.

General criteria:

At a minimum, agencies/service providers must:

- Serve residents of the geographic area defined above
- Have been providing service for a minimum of six months and reasonably expect assured funding to continue operation for at least one year
- Have a publishable address and/or phone number and/or website address

Agencies must also fall into one of the following categories:

- Non-profit agencies with IRS 501(c) status providing a direct social service.
- Non-profit agencies with IRS 501(c) status located in bordering geographic areas if they serve the residents of our region.
- Locally-based and state-wide hotlines, help lines, and Information and Referral lines that are administered by a nonprofit or government entity, including specialized Information and Referral services.
- Hospitals, community health clinics, and hospices.
- Member organizations, such as churches, offering major and sustained services to the community at large.
- Governmental agencies that provide direct social services. (No attempt will be made to list all governmental agencies or departments.)

General criteria continued...

Agencies must also fall into one of the following categories:

- For-profit companies may be included if they provide a community service free of charge; are contracted by a government agency to provide services at no direct cost to the client; or meet a unique service need not addressed by the non-profit sector.
- Vocational rehabilitation programs and schools for special needs, if accessible to low-income families.
- Child care centers providing subsidized child care.
- Housing authorities or public housing developments.

These types of resources are excluded:

- Individual practitioners unless explicitly addressing or meeting a gap in service.
- For-profit agencies that do not meet the requirements stated in the inclusion criteria.
- Direct service providers who are consistently and systematically tracked by a specialized referral service (e.g., lawyers who are tracked by a Comprehensive Legal Referral Service), in which case we list the referral entity only.
- Faith community-based programs that provide services only to members of their own congregations.
- Organizations that exist solely to serve the clients of another service provider (e.g., if a counseling program only serves clients of Child Protective Services under a contract, we do not include the counseling service in the database. Instead, we indicate in the local Child Protective Services program description that counseling can be provided to their clients by the separate counseling service).
- For-profit home care businesses that offer homemakers, companions, chore assistance services, but that do not offer home nursing and are therefore not licensed or regulated.
- General infrastructure services such as town halls, public schools, and police or fire departments.
- Agencies that violate federal, state, or local laws or regulations; are found to misrepresent their services; have documented unresolved complaints; proselytize as a condition of service; deny service based on prejudice or discrimination.
- Agencies that give information or provide public awareness that is only of a political nature.
- Agencies that provide services based out of the provider's home.
- Individual child care providers or child care centers that do not provide subsidized child care.
- Private subsidized housing developments.
- Agencies that deny service on the basis of color, race, sex, religion, ancestry, sexual orientation, nationality or creed, or whose service is illegal.

Exceptions:

- The local United Ways, which partner with many direct service agencies, are included as a courtesy.
- Local transportation authorities are included, as many low-income individuals rely on public transportation to access social services. Also, transportation authorities provide specialized transportation services for elders and people with disabilities.
- Local Y facilities, even if they do not provide social services, are included as they offer sliding fee scales for low-income families and individuals.
- Utility companies that offer arrearage management plans are included.
- Community colleges are included due to their services (e.g., GED/HiSET instruction or GED/HiSET testing) for nontraditional college students and other adult learners.

Note on the inclusion of services

For most of the agencies that fit within our inclusion/exclusion policy, it will be appropriate to index all of their services. However, in cases where some of an agency's services are beyond the scope of our inclusion policy, in accordance with AIRS standards, we index only the services that are within scope. Other services may be listed in the narrative site description.

Disclaimer

We reserve the right to edit information for brevity, clarity, format, and space requirements. Inclusion of an agency or organization does not imply endorsement by Community Action Pioneer Valley; exclusion does not signify disapproval. An agency's listing in the database will be terminated if repeated requests or attempts to update database information through FAX, emails, mailings and telephone calls have been unanswered.

This policy is reviewed annually.



[Updated 3/1/19]