

NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR THE AGING

GRANT POLICY MEMORANDUM

NON-SECTARIAN ACTIVITIES

Grantees must refrain from using funds to advance any sectarian effort and ensure that any services to be provided with their state-funded grant will be secular in nature and scope. Grant funds may not be used to support any inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction, or proselytization, as part of the funded programs or services.

This means that:

Public funds cannot be used to support or further religious purposes. Grantee organizations that are sectarian in nature must ensure that they use grant funds to support only activities that are clearly non-sectarian in nature and purpose.

1. The services provided with grant funds must be **non-religious**. The programs and services must not include any inherently religious activities, nor can participation in inherently religious activities be a condition for receiving services or result in preferential treatment for receiving services.
2. The services provided under the grant must be made available to **all older adults, aged 60 and older**, not just members or individuals attending a particular house of worship.
3. Grant funds can be used for the renovation or restoration of a facility where sectarian activities are held; however, grant funded improvements are limited to an amount proportionate to the space utilized by non-sectarian older adult program(s). Refer to Grant Policy Memorandum on Cost Allocation for information on how to prorate costs.

Some examples of **unallowable** sectarian activities are:

- Religious classes or seminars, religious camps, or religious conferences that are primarily for teaching or promoting a specific religion; or
- Cultural activities or programs that are of a religious nature and promote or benefit a religion or set of religious beliefs; or

- Entertainment that is primarily of a religious nature to further the religious principles of a religion that would constitute proselytizing; or
- Meals or refreshments provided as part of a religious ceremony or service.

If you have any questions concerning the non-sectarian requirement, please contact our office at (518) 473-4808. Please keep the above requirements in mind. We can only approve the use of grant funds for purposes that are unquestionably secular in nature.