

IV. OTHER SOCIAL AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

SENIOR SERVICE SYSTEM

In addition to services designed for blind and visually impaired persons, there are other social service programs available. There is an extensive service system for seniors that is administered by the California Department of Aging (CDA). The CDA serves as both a unifying force for services to seniors and adults with disabilities and as a focal point for federal, state and local agencies which serve the elderly and adults with disabilities in California. The contact information for the CDA is:

California Department of Aging

1300 National Drive, Suite 200

Sacramento, CA 95834-1992

(916) 419-7500

(800) 735-2929 (TDD/TTY)

Website: www.aging.ca.gov

The CDA contracts with the network of Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), which directly manages a wide array of federal and state-funded services that help older adults. Each county has an AAA that is staffed by professionals who are knowledgeable about services available in your community. These services include, but are not limited to, transportation services, meal services, adult day care, housing assistance, medication management assistance and information as well as referral services. A wide range

of recreational and educational activities are also provided at Senior Centers.

Program availability varies between AAAs. For more information about services in your area and their availability, call your local Information and Assistance Program toll free at (800) 510-2020. County specific telephone numbers may be accessed at:

www.aging.ca.gov/ProgramsProviders/AAA/AAA_listing.asp

For information about senior related services available outside of California, call the toll free Elder Care Locator at (800) 677-1116 or visit the following website:

<http://www.eldercare.gov/Eldercare.NET/Public/Index.aspx>

IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

For persons who cannot live independently in their own homes without some assistance, there is a program known as In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS). The IHSS program will help pay for assistance services, thus allowing a person to remain safely in their own home. If eligible, an IHSS Social Worker goes to a client's home and assesses the need for service. The types of service provided by IHSS include: house cleaning, grocery shopping, meal preparation, laundry, personal care services, assistance with medical appointments and other chores necessary to maintain a safe and healthy home environment. To learn more about the IHSS program and to find out whether you are eligible for services, contact

your local County Welfare or Social Services office. A complete listing of these offices may be found at the following website: www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medical/Pages/CountyOffices.aspx.

THE CALIFORNIA IDENTIFICATION CARD

For persons who do not qualify for a driver's license, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) issues the California Identification (ID) Card. This is a picture identification card that looks very much like a driver's license but is used for identification purposes only. A regular ID card is valid for six years and a senior citizen ID card is valid for ten years. To qualify for a senior citizen ID card, you must be 62 or older.

You may pay a reduced application fee for an original or renewal identification card if you meet income requirements from a public assistance program. If you are eligible, the governmental or non-profit program will give you a completed Verification for Reduced Fee Identification Card (Form DL 937) to take to DMV to apply for your reduced fee identification card.

You can obtain a California ID Card from any DMV branch office. While an appointment is not necessary, it is preferable to make an appointment to avoid a long wait by calling (800) 777-0133. You will need your birth certificate and Social Security Number to apply for a California ID Card.

TRANSPORTATION

When driving a motor vehicle is no longer an option, getting from place to place becomes quite challenging. One of the most daunting tasks for a person may be to find reliable transportation in order to maintain the daily necessities of life such as going to the market, the doctor, etc.

Unfortunately, for Californians who do not drive automobiles, finding dependable transportation continues to be one of the biggest challenges. Throughout the state, there is a system of regional transit systems. Some of them are single county entities; some are jointly operated by multiple counties. In the 58 counties in the state, there are about 80 of these systems that form the foundation of the public transportation system.

In your area, the public Transit Agency may contract with private companies to provide such specialized transportation directly. Contract agencies frequently use names such as “Dial-a-Ride” or “Paratransit”. The quality and responsiveness of these services, as well as eligibility requirements and fees, vary from community to community. You will need to contact your local transportation authority to learn more about the transportation options available to you.

For a listing of all transit agencies with the local links listed by county and city, refer to the website below which is

provided by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA):

www.apta.com/resources/links/unitedstates/Pages/CaliforniaTransitLinks.aspx.