



MEDIA RELEASE

West Central Indiana Economic Development District, Inc.

Economic Development

Aging & Disabled Programs and Services

Transportation Planning

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Senior Meal Program Undergoes Changes

Citing renewed emphasis by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on the elimination of the potential appearance of any type of conflict of interest (i.e. same agency determining eligibility and then delivering services) and a continuing decline in funding, the board of directors of the West Central Indiana Economic Development District – the Area 7 Agency on Aging & Disabled, recently implemented some changes to its meal programs for older adults and disabled persons.

Gloria Wetnight, Director of Aging & Disabled Services with West Central, said "... the biggest change was a decision to outsource day-to-day operation of congregate dining sites and distribution of home delivered meals to Lafayette based Mid-Land Meals". Wetnight went on to say "... Mid-Land Meals has produced the frozen meals we've been serving our clients since 2007. In addition, they have over 40-years of experience preparing meals, operating dining sites, and distributing meals to home bound seniors and disabled persons in Central Indiana."

In conjunction with this change, the Clay County Senior Center declined an invitation to continue to host a congregate dining site/meal distribution point at its facility in Brazil. Wetnight said the number of individuals using the site had significantly declined over the last few years, so the site has been used primarily as a distribution point for home bound meals to clients in Clay and Putnam Counties. Those home bound meals are now temporarily being distributed from Area 7's McMillan Adult Day Center in Terre Haute. However, the agency continues to look for an organization in Clay and/or Putnam County that is willing to host a congregate dining site and a meal distribution point.

Wetnight said "... the transition from Area 7 operating congregate dining sites and distributing meals to having Mid-Land perform this work has went smooth. Partly because, in many cases clients are still being served by one of Area 7's former employees who now work for Mid-Land." The contract with Mid-Land will be up for renewal again in 2018.

*Helping to build strong communities and improve quality of life in West Central
Indiana.*

The congregate meal program provides up to five meals per week to clients who are 60 years of age or older, have a score of 6 or higher on a nutritional risk assessment, and have the capability to store frozen meals and to safely heat the meals using a microwave oven. Last year the Agency served over 26,600 meals to clients at congregate dining sites scattered throughout West Central Indiana.

The home delivered meal program provides up to five nutritionally balanced frozen meals per week to homebound persons age 60 and older, and to people who are disabled. Individuals who wish to participate in this program must first be assessed by one of the agency's Options Counselors to determine program eligibility. Last year the agency provided over 38,000 meals to homebound seniors and disabled persons.

Both meal programs are funded through various federal, state and local programs. Therefore, clients are not required to pay for meals if they meet established eligibility criteria. However, both individual and corporate donations are accepted to help defray the cost of the meals. The suggested donation is \$1.25 per meal.

For more information about the meal programs and other services available through the Area 7 Agency on Aging & Disabled call 800-489-1561, 812-917-3145 or visit the agency on the web at <http://www.westcentralin.com/area7.htm>.

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