



Frequently Asked Questions: Blending & Braiding Funding Streams for Your Tribal Program

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This document is for Older Americans Act (OAA) Title VI grantees like you and explains the difference between blending and braiding funds for your tribal program. The document provides examples of funding sources, such as states, non-profits, tribes, etc. It also guides you on how to blend or braid dollars from these sources and how to report them in your Title VI Program Performance Report (PPR).

ACL knows you need other funds in addition to those from Title VI to support your tribal program. In the Title VI PPR, ACL wants you to report about these other sources. This reporting helps ACL understand the total cost and scope of your program, enabling ACL to make better decisions about the overarching Title VI program.

Question 1: What is “blending” funding?

Blending occurs when you mix dollars from multiple funding sources to create a single “pot” of dollars to support your program. These sources do not require you to separately track the services they pay for in your program. Typical examples of dollars you can blend are Title VI, tribal funds, and donations.

Question 2: What is “braiding” funding?

Braiding occurs when you have multiple funding sources that support specific services under your program. These sources require you to separately track the services they pay for in your program. A typical example of dollars you can braid is OAA Title III funds.

Question 3: How do I know which funding I can blend versus those I can braid?

You get dollars from different funding sources. Check the rules in each agreement (grant, contract, etc.). If a source **does not** require you to separately track services you pay for with their dollars, you can blend them. If a source does, you must braid them.

Question 4: How do I track blended and braided funds under Title VI?

Blended funds support your overall tribal program. You do not need to track these dollars separately from those from other sources. For Title VI reporting purposes, you can track the program services that these dollars support in the Title VI Tracking Workbooks or other tracking tools you create. The benefit of the Title VI Tracking Workbooks is that they:

- help you track all your services throughout the year;
- automatically calculate values required for the Title VI PPR; and
- allow you to upload your Title VI PPR values into Older Americans Act Performance System (OAAPS).

You can use either a Microsoft Access or Excel version of the Title VI Tracking Workbooks and you can choose whether to track your services on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis.

- [Download a list of Microsoft Excel Title VI Tracking Workbooks, User Manuals, and How-To Guides and Videos](#)
- [Download a list of Microsoft Access Title VI Tracking Workbooks, User Manuals, and How-To Guides and Videos](#)

Braided funds typically support specific services under your tribal program. You must track these dollars separately from those from other sources. Often the funding source provides you with tracking tools or methods. Be sure to work with the source to determine a method to track these dollars.

Examples of Funding Sources that can be Blended or Braided

Below are several examples of funding sources that you can blend or braid to support your program, along with information on how you can report about these sources in the Title VI PPR.

OAA Title VI

OAA Title VI funds are dollars to supplement your program services that enhance the well-being and independence of older American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians. You can use these dollars to support your elder services like congregate meals, home-delivered meals, case management, transportation, homemaker, personal/home health aid, chore, nutrition education, nutrition counseling, social events, and health promotion and wellness activities; or caregiver services like support group, counseling, training, home modification/repairs, consumable items, homemaker/chore/personal care, financial support, and respite care.

You can blend Title VI dollars with those from other funding sources to support your elder and/or

caregiver services. For example, if you get dollars from a non-profit grant to fund caregiver support groups and the grant allows you to blend them, you can combine them with those you get from Title VI to cover the costs of your caregiver support group services.

In this case, in the Title VI PPR, you would:

1. report the “Total number of sessions of Support Group” you provided using the combined dollars;
2. indicate that you received funds through “Other grants” in the “What other sources of funds help you support your Title VI services?” section; and
3. mention the dollars from the non-profit grant you received to support your caregiver support group services in the “Optional explanation of elements included in total amount of funds” section. For example, “We received \$40,000 through a grant from the Alzheimer’s Foundation of America to help support our caregiver support group services.”

For More Information – <https://olderindians.acl.gov/grants/#gsc.tab=0>

OAA Title III

OAA Title III funds are dollars to supplement your program services that enhance the well-being and independence of older Americans, especially services that help older individuals remain in their homes and communities. You can use these dollars to support myriad services for elders or caregivers including, but not limited to adult day care/adult day health, assisted transportation, case management, chore, congregate meals, home-delivered meals, homemaker, nutrition education, nutrition counseling, outreach, transportation, legal assistance, personal care, access assistance, counseling, information services, and respite care.

You cannot blend Title III dollars with dollars from other sources, including Title VI dollars, to support the services you provide to elders and caregivers. You must braid Title III funds and track those dollars separately. For example, if you receive dollars from Title III and Title VI to support services like congregate meals, you must track the meals they fund separately.

In this case, in the Title VI PPR, you would:

1. report the “Total number of Congregate Meals served” and “Unduplicated number of eligible persons who received one or more Congregate Meal(s)” you paid for with Title VI dollars (**do not include congregate meals paid for with Title III dollars in your totals**);
2. select “Title III funds” in the “What other sources of funds help you support your Title VI services?” section; and
3. mention the dollars from Title III you received to help support your program in the “Optional explanation of elements included in total amount of funds” section. For example, “We received \$35,000 in Title III funds to support our program services. Services funded by Title III are not included in our service totals.”

States provide their own tools for you to track and report on the congregate meal and other services paid with Title III dollars.

For More Information – The federal government funds State Units on Aging (SUAs) to implement the Title III program. [Find and contact your local SUA](#) for more information on how to access and track Title III funds. You can also [contact your ACL Regional Administrator \(RA\)](#) for help.

Tribal Funds

Tribal funds are dollars tribes give to support your program. Usually, tribes do not require that you track these dollars separately, so you can blend them with dollars from other sources that also allow blending. Tribes typically do not require that you use the dollars for specific services either. So, generally, you can use them to support all your program services.

In this case, in the Title VI PPR, you would:

1. indicate that you received funds through “Tribal funds” in the “What other sources of funds help you support your Title VI services?” section; and
2. mention the dollars from tribal funds you received to help finance your program in the “Optional explanation of elements included in total amount of funds” section. For example, “We received \$50,000 in tribal funds to support our program services.”

Donations

Donated funds are dollars organizations or individuals give to support your program. Like tribal funds, donors usually do not require that you track these dollars separately, so you can blend them with dollars from other sources that also allow blending. Donors typically do not require that you use the dollars for specific services either. So, generally, you can use them to support all your program services.

In this case, in the Title VI PPR, you would:

1. indicate that you received funds through “Donations” in the “What other sources of funds help you support your Title VI services?” section; and
2. indicate that you received tribal funds to help finance your program in the “Optional explanation of elements included in total amount of funds” section. For example, “We received \$25,000 in donated funds to support our program services.”

AmeriCorps Senior Companion Program

AmeriCorps is the federal agency for national service and volunteerism. AmeriCorps’ Senior Companion Program provides grants to engage persons 55 years and older, particularly those with limited incomes, in volunteer service to meet your community’s needs. Although the dollars from this grant do not directly support your program services, the volunteers you recruit through the program can supplement your staff and indirectly support your elder services like transportation, homemaker services, personal/home health aid, and chore; or caregiver services like home modification/repairs, homemaker/chore/personal care, and respite care.

In this case, in the Title VI PPR, you would:

1. indicate that you received funds through “Other grants” in the “What other sources of funds help you support your Title VI services?” section; and
2. mention the dollars from AmeriCorps’ Senior Companion Program you received to help support your program in the “Optional explanation of elements included in total amount of funds” section. For example, “We received \$17,000 in AmeriCorps Senior Companion Program

funds to recruit volunteers to support our program services.”

For More Information – <https://americorps.gov/partner/how-it-works/americorps-seniors-senior-companion-program>

Indian Health Service (IHS) Tribal Self-Governance Program (TSGP)

The TSGP allows tribes to take charge of their health care programs instead of the IHS, giving tribes more control over decision-making and priorities. TSGP funds support services that may include primary healthcare, public health programs, behavioral health services, dental and vision care, community health programs, contract health services, and health information management.

Whether you can blend or braid TSGP funds depends on the Programs, Services, Functions, and Activities (PSFAs) you set up with IHS. Generally, you can blend TSGP dollars to support your elder services like personal/home health aid, nutrition counseling, and health promotion and wellness; or caregiver services like counseling, caregiver training, and respite care. However, if you set up a specific PSFA for a service, IHS may require that you track those dollars separately from dollars you receive from other sources. Be sure to discuss with IHS.

If you and IHS determine that you can blend TSGP funds, you can blend those dollars with Title VI dollars. For example, if you provide personal care/home health aid services and health promotion and wellness activities under your program, you can pay for those services using combined dollars from TSGP and Title VI.

In this case, in the Title VI PPR, you would:

1. report the “Unduplicated number of persons receiving Personal Care/Home Health Aid Services,” “Total number of hours of Personal Care/Home Health Aid Service, and “Total number of persons receiving Health Promotion and Wellness activities” you provided using the combined dollars;
2. indicate that you received funds through “Other grants” in the “What other sources of funds help you support your Title VI services?” section; and
3. mention the dollars you received from the non-profit grant that helped financed your health-related services in the “Optional explanation of elements included in total amount of funds” section. For example, “We received \$15,000 through a IHS TSGP grant help support our health-related services.”

For More Information – <https://www.ihs.gov/selfgovernance/funding>

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Funding Opportunities for Tribal Governments

FTA funds tribal governments with transportation needs through programs like the Tribal Transit Program (TTP) for grants, Formula Grants (Section 5311) for rural transit, and other support for training and assistance. FTA programs are mostly geared toward transportation infrastructure or public transit improvements and, generally, do not directly support your program services. However, FTA grant dollars may indirectly support your services and you can blend them. For example, if you receive an FTA grant to purchase a new vehicle, you may be able to start a transportation service or increase the number of trips you provide on an annual basis.

In this case, in the Title VI PPR, you would:

1. indicate that you received funds through “Other grants” in the “What other sources of funds help you support your Title VI services?” section; and
2. mention the FTA grant that you received to help finance your transportation services in the “Optional explanation of elements included in total amount of funds” section. For example, “We received \$22,000 in FTA grant funds to purchase a vehicle to support our transportation services.”

For More Information – <https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/fta-programs-tribal-recipients>

SeedMoney Garden Grants

SeedMoney is a nonprofit organization that offers crowdfunding opportunities specifically tailored for initiatives related to gardening, community farming, and sustainable agriculture. SeedMoney provides garden grants you can use to fund a community garden. Although the dollars from this grant do not directly support your program services, they may indirectly support your services and you can blend them. For example, if you provide bags of garden produce to elders as an other supportive service.

In this case, in the Title VI PPR, you would:

1. indicate that you received funds through “Other grants” in the “What other sources of funds help you support your Title VI services?” section;
2. indicate that you provide bags of garden produce to elders in the “Optional space for other supportive services offered that are not listed” section; and
3. mention the SeedMoney garden grant you received to help finance your other supportive services for elders in the “Optional explanation of elements included in total amount of funds” section. For example, “We received \$2,500 in SeedMoney garden grant funds to create a garden and we provide bags of garden produce to elders as an other supportive service.”

More Information – <https://seedmoney.org/apply>