MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF SENIOR CENTERS

Working to Make Michigan's Senior Centers Even Better

SENIOR CENTER PROGRAM MANAGER CERTIFICATION (SPMC)

Introduction

Senior Center Program Managers play a critical role in the quality, relevance, and impact of senior center programming across Michigan. These professionals plan, implement, manage, and evaluate programs that support the health, independence, and well-being of older adults.

There is no single academic pathway into senior center program management. Many Program Managers gain their expertise through on-the-job experience, professional development, and years of service in the field. As a result, educational backgrounds, training, and experience levels vary widely across the state.

The Senior Center Program Manager Certification (SPMC) was created to establish a consistent, statewide professional standard for individuals in this role. Certification recognizes demonstrated competence, encourages ongoing professional growth, and supports the continued development of high-quality senior center programming.

Purpose of Certification

The Senior Center Program Manager Certification is intended to:

- Promote professional credibility and visibility within the field of aging services
- Identify individuals who have met established professional standards for senior center program management
- Encourage continued professional growth and lifelong learning among senior center professionals

Definition of a Senior Center Program Manager

A Senior Center Program Manager (or comparable title) is an individual whose primary responsibility is the planning, implementation, management, and evaluation of specific senior center programs.

Applicants must be actively employed in a Senior Center Program Manager role in the year the application is submitted.

Minimum Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for certification, applicants must meet all of the following:

- High school diploma or equivalent
- Minimum of two (2) years of experience working at a senior center
- Minimum of twenty (20) hours per week in a program management role
- Currently employed as a Senior Center Program Manager or in a comparable position
- Employed at a senior center that:
    - Meets MASC Senior Center Criteria
    - Is a current member of the Michigan Association of Senior Centers

Required Application Materials

Applicants must submit the following as part of the online application:

- Letter of support from immediate supervisor
- Current résumé
- Current position description
- Organizational chart identifying the applicant's position
- Narrative demonstrating how the applicant's center meets the Senior Center Criteria
- Body of Knowledge documentation demonstrating professional competencies

All required materials must be submitted electronically through the online application portal. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Senior Center Criteria

To be eligible, the applicant's senior center must demonstrate the ability to meet the service needs of older adults and must document the following:

The center must demonstrate:

- Ability to provide access to information, referral, and emergency services
- A concentration of older adults in the service area
- Ability to serve low-income, minority, frail, and disabled older adults
- Capacity to accommodate and coordinate additional services on-site
- Operation for a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week
- A barrier-free, accessible facility
- Accessibility to transportation (public or private)

In addition, the center must provide **at least four (4)** of the following on-site services and/or demonstrate the ability to assist older adults in accessing these services:

- Adult Day Services
- Care Management
- Caregiver Support
- Chore Services
- Congregate Meals
- Counseling Services
- Educational Classes
- Fitness Offerings
- Health Screenings
- Healthy Living Programs
- Home Delivered Meals
- Home Repair
- Homemaking
- Information & Assistance
- Legal Assistance
- Outreach
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Volunteer Opportunities

Applicants will provide a brief narrative and supporting documentation demonstrating how their center meets these criteria.

Body of Knowledge Requirement

Applicants must demonstrate professional competence by completing a Body of Knowledge portfolio.

Applicants will select **three (3)** of the following six areas and provide **one detailed program example** from each selected area that they personally created, implemented, and/or supervised within the past three (3) years:

- Recreation
- Education
- Health Promotion / Wellness
- Social Services
- Fundraising
- Volunteer Management

For each program example, applicants must address all of the following elements:

- Program planning and development
- Implementation
- Fiscal management
- Use of staff and/or volunteers
- Publicity and public relations

- Program evaluation and outcomes

Supporting documentation may include newsletters, flyers, brochures, photographs, reports, letters of support, or other relevant materials.

What Reviewers Are Looking For

The Certification Review Committee will evaluate applications based on:

- Demonstrated leadership and professional judgment
- Evidence of program planning, management, and evaluation
- Clear role in supervising and managing programs
- Alignment with the mission and purpose of senior centers
- Quality and completeness of documentation

Certification Renewal

Certification is valid for three (3) years.

To renew certification, applicants must document:

- A minimum of **16 hours of approved professional development** over the three-year certification period
- Continued employment in a senior center program management role
- A brief narrative describing **three to five (3–5)** new or significantly expanded programs developed during the certification period

Application Process and Timeline

- Applications are accepted annually from **January 1 through September 30**
- Applications are reviewed by the MASC Standards Committee
- Applicants will be notified in writing of their application status prior to the MASC Annual Conference
- Awards will be given at the Annual Conference. If applicants cannot attend conference, MASC board members will send award via US Mail.
- Incomplete applications will not be reviewed
- If deficiencies are identified, applicants will be given one opportunity to submit corrections

Fees (MASC Members)

- Initial Certification: **$35**
- Renewal Certification: **$25**

An invoice will be generated upon submission of the online application. Payment may be made by check or credit card.

Questions and Assistance

For questions regarding the certification process, please contact:

MASC Standards Committee
Email: miseniorcenters@gmail.com

LINK to Application: https://forms.gle/VWtXYpkMNjR7aUj79