

A Guide to Submitting a Public Comment for the ACL Comment Period

What is a Public Comment?

Writing a comment is a process that allows individuals, organizations, agencies, and businesses to provide written input on proposed decisions by an agency—in this case, the Administration for Community Living (ACL). **A personal, authentic comment that clearly communicates and supports its claims can have far more of an impact than a comment derived from a template.** That's why we've put together this guide to make it as easy as possible for you or your organization to submit your own, unique comment.

Please note that the comment period closes at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 3, 2021.

What Your Comment Should Say:

The most powerful contribution your comment can have is your unique perspective!

General talking points:

- Briefly explain why we need to know if transgender elders are able to access critical aging services and supports like Meals-on-Wheels and senior centers.
- Elaborate on how having this data might help us better meet the needs of transgender elders.
- By understanding the unique experiences and challenges transgender elders face, ACL can better support transgender older people as they age.

Comment Outline:

Remember, it's important that each comment is unique and represents your specific perspective and experiences. Here's an outline to help make the drafting as easy as possible.

1. **Introduce your organization/yourself.** Describe the organization you represent and why you feel compelled to write a comment. If you are writing as an individual, briefly explain what is motivating you to write a comment.
2. **Identify the issue.** Clearly state that you're specifically commenting on the importance of including a transgender gender identity question in the survey. Don't worry about getting into the weeds of the issue or knowing everything about it.
3. **Share your story.** *This is the most important one of all.* Prove to ACL that transgender elders refuse to be invisible by telling a story about yourself, one of your members or constituents, one of your patients or residents, or a family member or friend where culturally competent services helped you or them thrive and age with dignity.
4. **Reiterate your stance on the issue.** Tell the ACL that transgender elders refuse to be invisible on the NSOAAP.

Remember, your comment does not need to be extremely detailed in terms of policy. Simply explain that the gender identity question must be reinstated on the survey, using your lived experiences or professional experiences to demonstrate why. Visit <http://sageusa.org/acacomment> and send your comment today. Thank you for supporting transgender elders!