



# TOWN OF CANTON

FOUR MARKET STREET  
P.O. BOX 168  
COLLINSVILLE, CONNECTICUT 06022-0168

## Frequently Asked Questions: Reorganization of the Senior/Social Services Department

### What is the current staffing at the Senior/Social Services Department?

- **Director of Senior/Social Services** (35 hours per week) – functions as the Town’s Social Worker and is responsible for overseeing both the Senior Center and Social Services.
- **Senior/Social Services Administrative Assistant** (25 hours per week) – performs clerical function for both the Senior Center and Social Services.
- **Senior Center Coordinator** (20 hours per week) – Develops and implements programs for the Senior Center.

### Why make any changes to the Department?

- **Privacy** – There is a lack of privacy for those seeking social services. People seeking energy assistance or have medical issues are in the same office, sometimes literally the same line, as those signing up for Zumba. This can also lead to congestion. Finally, the Social Worker’s office lacks privacy and is not sound proof.
- **Improvement of Services** – Senior Center activities have declined or stagnated and are not geared towards the full range of people who could be utilizing the Senior Center.
- **The Social Worker’s time is divided** between overseeing the operations of the Senior Center and Social Services instead of having a professional with that skill set to exclusively oversee the Town’s safety net.
- **Concerns with Social Services** includes using limited local resources instead of applying and receiving available state funding, program accountability and making sure that all aspects of Canton’s population, including the youth, receive appropriate services.

### What changes are proposed?

- **Dedicate additional staffing and hours for the Senior Center**
  - Senior Center Coordinator’s hours would increase up to 25 hours per week.
  - New Senior Center Administrative Assistant for up to 25 hours per week.
- **Department of Human Services would be created**
  - New Director of Human Services dedicated to Social Services for up to 28 hours a week.
  - New Human Services Administrative Assistant at 18 hours per week.
- **The Senior Center would become a division of Parks & Recreation**
  - P&R would assist with programming and marketing of Senior Programs and Recreational Trips.

- P&R would assist with routine office functions such as payroll and purchase orders.
- P&R Special Revenue Account would be utilized for capturing funds that could be used for additional Senior Programming.
- **Human Services Department would become an independent agency with its main office at Town Hall.**
  - Secure, professional office space with immediate access to Market Street.
  - Meetings could be set up in other locations such as the Community Center, especially during senior events.
  - Human Services Department would be set up to allow for growth in the future, including in the area of Youth Services.
  - There would still be coordination between Senior Center and Human Services in both direct referrals and programming.

**Will the changes cost more money?**

- The cost of the changes is approximately equal to what was already approved for the Senior/Social Services Department for fiscal year 2019-2020.

**What will be voted on at the Town Meeting on July 24, 2019?**

- Pursuant to the Town Charter, new positions and those positions receiving an increase in hours need to be approved by a Town Meeting. Therefore, the new positions of Senior Center Administrative Assistant, Human Services Director, Human Services Administrative Assistant and the additional hours for the Senior Center Coordinator will be voted on. The location of offices and job descriptions will be approved by the Board of Selectmen separately.

**Where can I find more information?**

The full proposal as presented to the Board of Selectmen can be found on the Town Web Page at [www.townofcantonct.org](http://www.townofcantonct.org) under News and Current Events.