

# Evaluation of the ACL Title VI Programs: Year 1 Interim Report

## January 2018

### What are the Title VI Programs?

In 1965, the Older Americans Act (OAA) was authorized in response to concerns over the lack of social service programs and protections for older people. The OAA protects the wellbeing of older Americans through community and home-based services to support independent living, physical and mental health, suitable housing, restorative services for those requiring institutional care, and retirement in "health, honor, and dignity" (OAA Title I, Sec. 101: 42 U.S.C. 3001).

In 1978, the OAA was amended to include Title VI, which established programs to deliver home and community-based supportive services for older American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian (AI/AN/NH) populations. The program was later expanded to include caregiver support services, including support for caregivers of elders and grandparents caring for grandchildren. These programs help to reduce the need for costly institutional care and medical interventions. They are responsive to the cultural diversity of tribal communities and represent an important part of the communities' comprehensive health and social services.

#### Title VI Programs: Addressing a Need for Comprehensive Services in Tribal Communities

Title VI includes three sections: Part A is the Indian Program; Part B is the Native Hawaiian Program; and Part C is the Native American Caregiver Support Program.

##### Indian Program (Part A)

Serves federally recognized tribes with at least 50 members ages 60 years and above.

##### Native Hawaiian Program (Part B)

Serves public or nonprofit private organizations that serve Native Hawaiians and represent at least 50 individuals ages 60 years and above.

##### Native American Caregiver Support Program (Part C)

Serves all programs with Parts A or B, providing support to caregivers of Elders and grandparents caring for grandchildren.

##### Nutrition and Supportive Services for Elders

- Congregate and home-delivered meals
- Information and referral
- Transportation
- Personal care
- Help with chores
- Health promotion and disease prevention
- Other supportive services

##### Caregiver Services

- Information and outreach
- Access assistance
- Individual counseling
- Support groups and training
- Respite care
- Other supplemental services

The Administration for Community Living (ACL), Administration on Aging (AoA), administers the Title VI Programs with recognition of the strengths and resiliency of AI/AN/NH elders and with respect for Native communities' sovereignty, culture, and self-determination. ICF has been contracted to complete the Evaluation of ACL's American Indian, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiian Programs (OAA Title VI) Title VI Grant Program under ACL contract # HHSP233201600197A.

### Older Americans Act

- Protects the wellbeing of older Americans
- Promotes independent living
- Provides services that allow for retirement in "health, honor, and dignity"

### Title VI

- Provides home and community-based services for AI/AN/NH elders and caregiver support services
- Recognizes that older AI/AN/NH are "a vital resource entitled to all benefits and services available"
- Affirms that "services and benefits should be provided in a manner that preserves and restores their respective dignity, self-respect, and cultural identities" (OAA Title VI, Sec. 602: 42 U.S.C. 3057a)

#### Title VI Grantees Funded in Fiscal Year 2017

**270** Part A/B  
(Nutrition and Supportive Services)

- 269 three-year grants awarded to tribes/tribal organizations (Part A)
- 1 three-year grant awarded to an organization serving Native Hawaiian Elders (Part B)

**233** Part C  
(Caregiver Services)

Three-year grants awarded for the Caregiver Support Program

## What is the Evaluation of the ACL Title VI Programs?

In 2018, the Title VI Program will celebrate 40 years of providing programs and services to older AI/AN/NH communities. ACL decided the time was right to better understand how the Title VI program impacts people’s lives and to look for ways ACL can do more to make these programs more effective. In 2016, ACL hired a contractor, ICF, to help with:

- Evaluating the Title VI Programs to learn more about how Tribes organize and manage their Title VI programs and
- Providing grantees participating in the evaluation with training and technical assistance (TTA) to meet their own data needs.

## Preparing for Evaluation

In 2014, ICF helped ACL conduct an evaluability assessment (EA) of the Title VI programs. EAs are used to guide and inform investments in evaluation and research. The purpose of the EA was:

- To describe the characteristics, context, activities, processes, implementation, and intended outcomes of the Title VI nutrition, supportive, and caregiver support services and
- To assess the feasibility of, and best approaches for, a full-scale evaluation of the Title VI Programs.

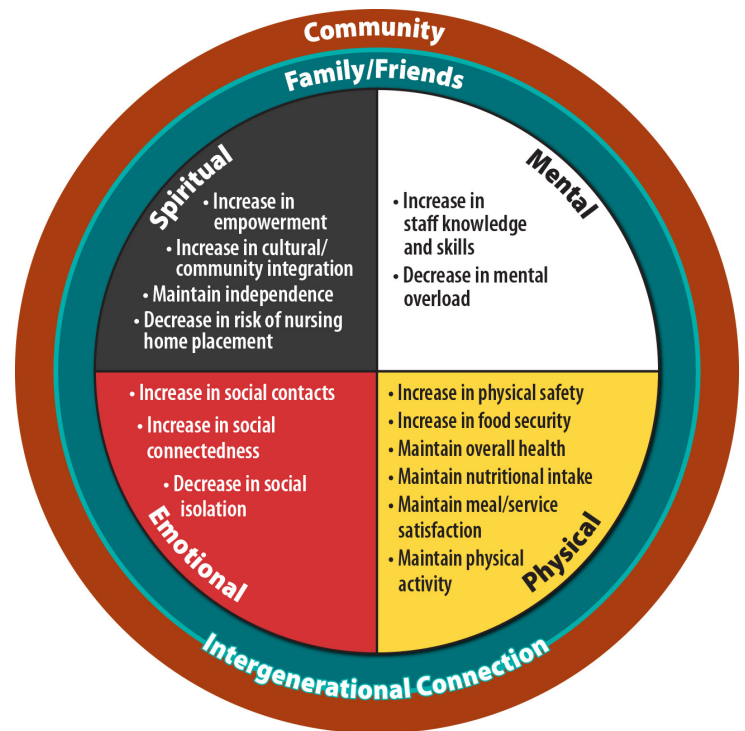
As part of this process, a 20-member stakeholder advisory group provided input and guidance on the best way to evaluate the Title VI Programs in a culturally responsive way.

### EA Stakeholder Advisory Group Members

- **National Indian Council on Aging**
- **National Resource Centers on Aging**
  - National Resource Center for Native Elders (University of Alaska, Anchorage)
  - National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders (University of Hawaii)
  - National Resource Center on Native American Aging (University of North Dakota)
- **Title VI grantees**

The EA team identified outcomes for the Title VI programs in the form of a medicine wheel in order to show the outcomes in the four quadrants of indigenous practice: Spiritual, Mental, Emotional, and Physical. The four quadrants are encircled by community, family, and intergenerational connection which highlights their importance to the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical well-being of indigenous communities and Elders. The medicine wheel guides the evaluation to ensure the questions accurately reflect planned and achieved program outcomes.

### Title VI Programs Medicine Wheel



A Medicine Wheel was developed as part of the EA, to help the team think holistically about the different domains that the Title VI programs impact, and how Title VI outcomes in each domain could be assessed.

## Designing the Evaluation: A Participatory Approach

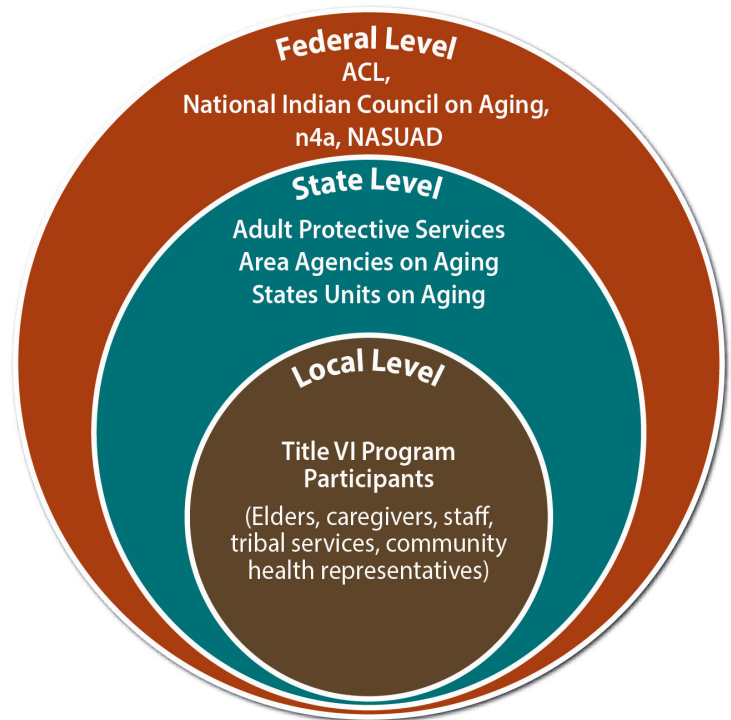
Building on the results of the EA, ICF & ACL began to design the Title VI evaluation in 2016. Similar to the EA, the evaluation team continued to involve stakeholders at every step using a Participatory Action Research (PAR) framework. As part of this approach, the team promotes the active involvement of ACL Title VI stakeholders in all phases of the evaluation including evaluation design, data collection, measure development and piloting, participant recruitment, interpretation of data and analysis, and dissemination of evaluation findings.



### A Participatory Action Research Framework

- Promotes a community-driven approach to evaluation design and implementation
- Empowers and involves local stakeholders at every step, helping to identify evaluation questions important to the community and to involve community members in interpretation of findings
- Supports local capacity building to conduct evaluation if desired by the community

### Title VI Steering Committee



ACL Title VI stakeholders include a wide array of individuals as well as local, state, and federal agencies that connect with the ACL Title VI Programs. Stakeholders span three levels of support or involvement with the Title VI Programs. As shown, the first level includes those closest to program implementation and includes program recipients (e.g., Elders, caregivers), Title VI Program staff and volunteers, and others. The second level includes regional and state partners. Finally, the third level includes Federal partners such as the National Indian Council on Aging (NICOA), National Association for Area Agencies on Aging (n4a), and the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD). Stakeholders at each level were consulted for input and guidance on the evaluation design and now serve as part of the key groups guiding the implementation of the evaluation—the ACL Title VI Steering Committee and Evaluation Working Group (EWG).

ACL and ICF will continue to use a participatory approach in implementing the evaluation, which means that the evaluation team will work closely with grantees to help ensure that it is culturally appropriate and will be useful to tribes and programs. To help with that, the evaluation team collaborates with the 17-member Steering Committee representing 11 tribes and tribal consortia, the three National Resource Centers, and the EWG, as well as two senior services divisions, and Meals on Wheels.

Title VI Evaluation Partners

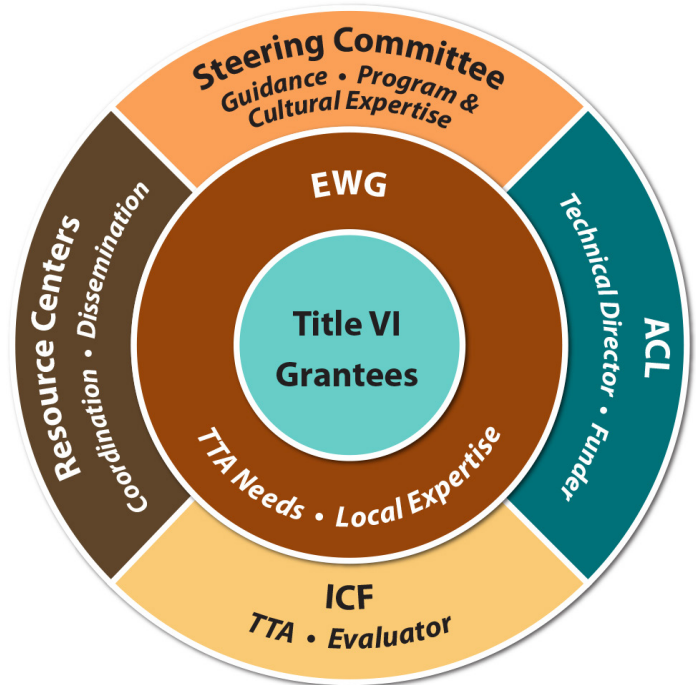
<p><b>ACL Title VI Steering Committee</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Made up of federal, state, and local tribal aging partners including Title VI program grantees.</li> <li>• Provides guidance on the evaluation throughout the project as well as important cultural and topical expertise including the types of TTA most valuable to tribes, making sense of data collected and providing recommendations for disseminating evaluation findings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>National Resource Centers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include three National Resource Centers on Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Aging, funded by ACL.</li> <li>• Provide topical expertise for the Evaluation of the ACL Title VI Programs and opportunities for the coordination and dissemination of evaluation activities and findings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluation Working Group or EWG (grantees)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes two staff members from each the Title VI grantees that participate in the evaluation (see a list of grantees on page 7)—1) the program director and 2) local community researcher for the evaluation.</li> <li>• Established to further guide and inform all stages of evaluation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>ACL and ICF</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate the design, development and review of the evaluation and TTA activities with the EWG, as the funding agency (Title VI program and evaluation) and evaluation contractor, respectively.</li> <li>• Collaborate throughout evaluation implementation and ongoing TTA.</li> </ul>

Training and Technical Assistance

The evaluation team will provide evaluation training and technical assistance (TTA) on topics like data collection, data analysis, and how to use data to inform local programming. This work will occur directly between ICF and the tribe/program.

ICF’s TTA approach will engage three major groups: the Steering Committee, the three Resource Centers, and the EWG. The Steering Committee will provide guidance on the Evaluation of the ACL Title VI Programs as well as important cultural and topical expertise. The Resource Centers will provide opportunities for coordination and dissemination as well as topical expertise. The EWG will provide guidance on local grantee-specific tailoring and data collection and analysis TTA needs.

A Participatory TTA Approach



## Evaluation of the ACL Title VI Programs: Year 1 Interim Report

Evaluation TTA, informed by the PAR framework, is designed to be individually tailored to best meet the needs of Title VI grantees participating in the evaluation. TTA will be used to assess evaluation capacity and needs, support data collection, build evaluation capacity, and support the use and dissemination of evaluation findings. TTA will be provided in multiple ways:



In-person EWG meetings conducted in 2017, 2018, and 2019.



Coordination of TTA resources provided through the National Resource Centers, including peer-to-peer-based sharing of resources to support a community of learning, such as a listserv to share lessons learned and strategies for data collection.



Virtual skills training for EWG members, including 2 webinars annually, data collection implementation resources, and related support via a TTA evaluation liaison.



An in-person site visit per grantee participating in the evaluation in the first and second year of the evaluation to provide intensive and in-person TTA to facilitate and support participation in the evaluation.



Access to an evaluation liaison who will support grantees in data collection efforts in the community and provide TTA related to local data collection and analysis.

## Final Evaluation Design

Drawing on input and feedback from Title VI Program stakeholders, the evaluation team created an evaluation design including two parts:



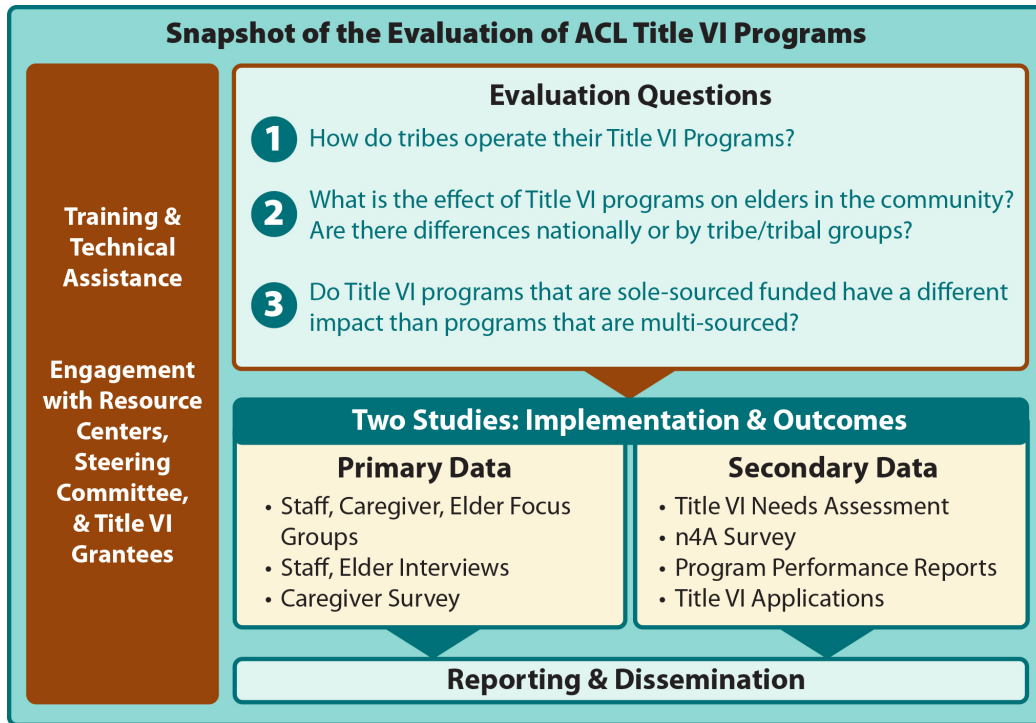
- 1. Implementation Study:** a study to look at the context of the Title VI program including barriers and facilitators to program implementation. This study aims to learn what stands in the way of the program being successful and the work of program directors to try to make the program as successful as possible.
- 2. Outcomes Study:** a study to assess the impact of the program, particularly to understand the impact that the program is having on elders and the community.

The Evaluation of the ACL Title VI Programs will use a mix of information that grantees already collect (secondary data) as well as new sources of information (primary data) to describe the implementation of the ACL Title VI Programs and outcomes across nutrition services, supportive services, and caregiver support services. The evaluation team worked to track down information where it already exists such as the UND Needs Assessment and the n4a survey results, to avoid asking grantees for similar information more than once.

As part of the primary (or new) data collection, grantees will help the evaluation team conduct focus groups (or talking circles). The focus groups will be conducted with elders who receive congregate meals. The evaluation also includes interviews with a small number of elders who receive home-delivered meals. The evaluation also includes focus groups with caregivers and a survey of caregivers. Overall, the interviews, focus groups, and survey will help improve

## Evaluation of the ACL Title VI Programs: Year 1 Interim Report

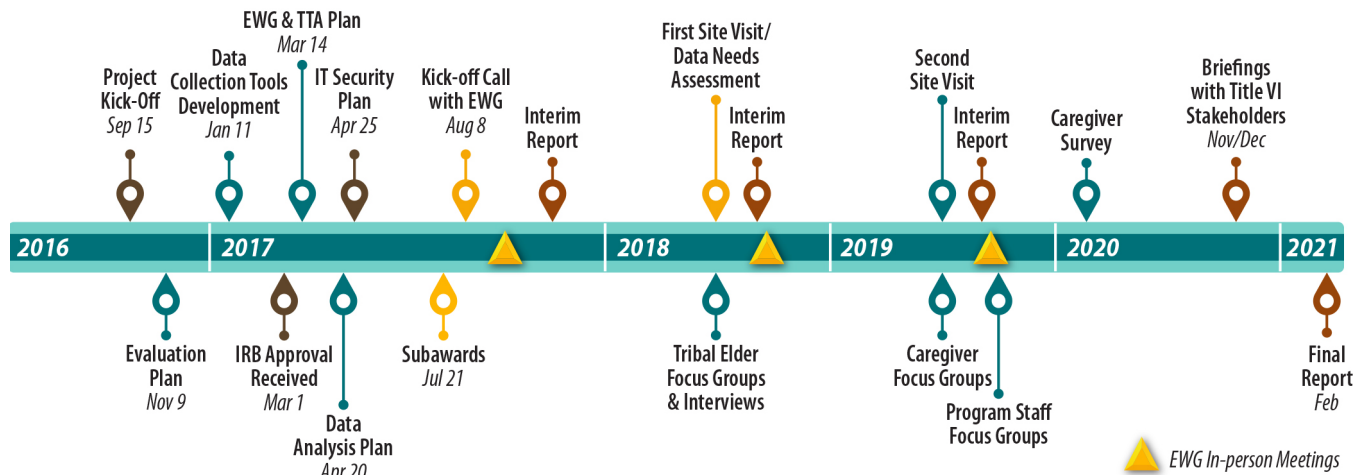
understanding of the services people receive as part of Title VI and how those services impact them. In addition, the evaluation includes interviews and focus groups with Title VI program staff to improve understanding about how the Title VI programs are serving each community and to learn more about areas where programs could use additional support. The interviews will be conducted in year 1 and the focus groups in year 3, to see if anything has changed for program staff.



## Evaluation Timeline

Overall, the evaluation project will span five years, as illustrated below. The first year (2016-2017) is a planning and recruiting year. In years 2-4 (2018-2020), the project will focus on data collection and TTA. The fifth year will be focused on data analysis and reporting.

### Timeline for the Evaluation of the ACL Title VI Programs



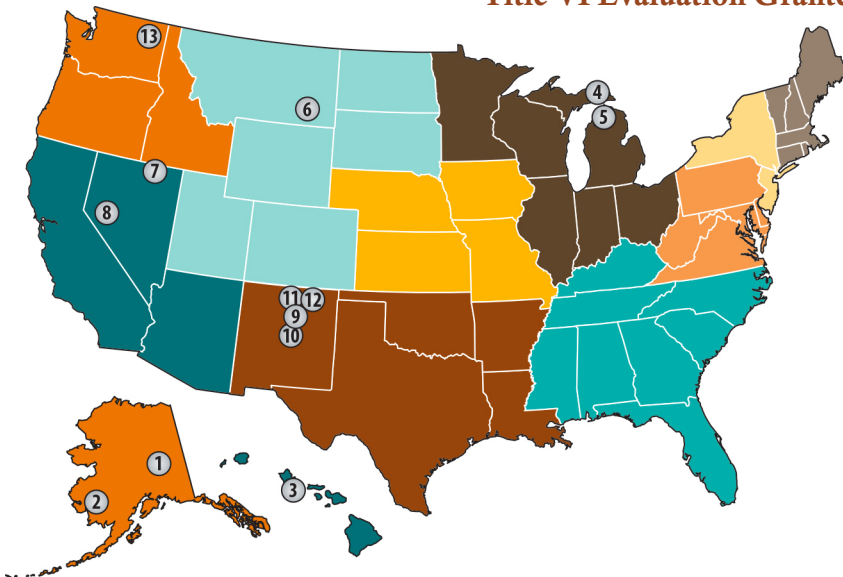
## Which Title VI Grantees Will Participate in the Evaluation?

In collaboration with ACL and the Steering Committee, ICF recruited Title VI grantees to participate in the evaluation. On May 16, 2017, a Request for Proposals (RFP) emphasizing the participatory nature of the evaluation was released to all Title VI program grantees. All Title VI grantees that received awards starting April 1, 2017 could apply to be a part of the evaluation.

- June 2017: 18 applications were received
- July 2017: 13 evaluation grantees were selected

The evaluation grantees will receive funding each year, for three years, to compensate tribes for participation in the evaluation, including costs associated with participant recruitment, data collection, and analysis/dissemination efforts. In addition, ACL and ICF will provide grantees with TTA to meet their own data needs. In August 2017, ICF hosted a virtual kickoff meeting welcoming evaluation grantees to the project. In September 2017, ICF held a one-day, in-person training with evaluation grantees to review evaluation topics and to prepare for participation in the evaluation at the ACL Title VI National Training and Technical Assistance Conference.

### Title VI Evaluation Grantees



- 1 Fairbanks Native Association; Fairbanks, Alaska
- 2 Orutsaramuit Native Council; Bethel, Alaska
- 3 ALU LIKE, Inc.; Honolulu, Hawaii
- 4 Bay Mills Indian Community; Bay Mills, Michigan
- 5 Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians; Harbor Springs, Michigan
- 6 Northern Cheyenne; Lame Deer, Montana
- 7 Shoshone-Paiute Tribes; Owyhee, Nevada
- 8 Walker River Paiute Tribe; Schurz, Nevada
- 9 Eight Northern Indian Pueblo Council; Bernalillo County, New Mexico
- 10 Pueblo of Isleta; New Mexico
- 11 Pueblo of Jemez; Albuquerque, New Mexico
- 12 Pueblo of San Felipe; Sandoval County, New Mexico
- 13 Spokane Tribe of Indians; Wellpinit, Washington

The 13 evaluation grantees represent 5 Title VI regions and 7 states. Together, they form the Evaluation Working Group, or EWG, for the Title VI evaluation. Each grantee was asked to identify 2-3 people from their program to serve on the EWG throughout the 3-year period, including the Title VI program director and one or two other staff members who will serve as “community researchers.” The community researcher is someone in the community who is interested in learning more about evaluation and helping the evaluation team with data collection. Responsibilities for EWG members include:

- Attending the annual in-person meetings and virtual trainings related to the evaluation
- Participating in quarterly calls with evaluation liaisons
- Helping with recruiting participants to take part in focus groups and surveys, and distribute a caregiver survey
- Working with the evaluation team to identify what kind of help would be useful to the program related to evaluating the program or managing data

In addition, Title VI directors (and other Title VI staff) will be asked to take part in an interview and a focus group about their programs.

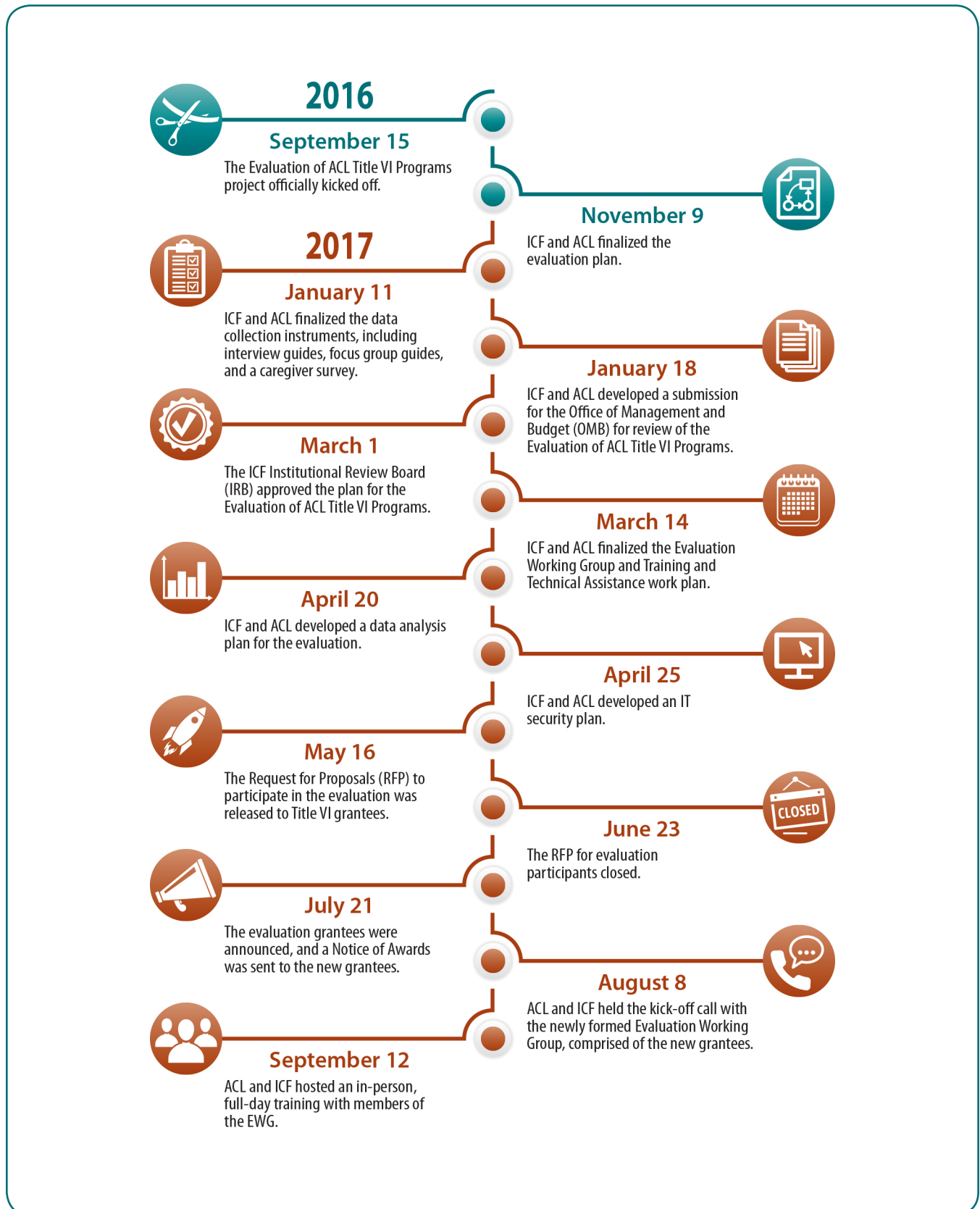
### Total Evaluation Grantees

**13** Grantees

**5** Regions Represented  
(X, IX, VIII, VI, V)

**7** States Represented  
(Alaska, Hawaii, Washington, Nevada, Montana, New Mexico, Michigan)

## Key Achievements in Year 1 of the Evaluation of Title VI Programs





## What We've Learned

While Year 1 of the evaluation project was focused on evaluation planning and grantee recruitment rather than data collection, it has provided a rich opportunity for learning about the Title VI program, stakeholder involvement in the program and related interests and concerns, and about the 13 evaluation grantees and the populations they serve. The evaluation grantees are diverse in many ways, reflecting the following:



Widely varying geographic areas, HHS/AOA regions, and cultures



A diversity of program experiences, operations, and requirements (e.g., tribal approvals)



Differences in level of experience with evaluation and evaluation capacity

To address these differences and needs, the evaluation will need to be flexible and tailored to promote participation. TTA will need to include multiple approaches and activities to involve grantees in meaningful ways and support local capacity building to conduct evaluation, if desired by the grantee.

### Characteristics of Title VI Evaluation Grantees

The grantees also vary in terms of their service populations, types of services offered, and program processes and resources. The bar graphs below illustrate: 1) the number of elders in the service area and number of caregivers of elders, as reported on grantee evaluation applications; 2) the number of elders at congregate meals and receiving home-delivered meals, as reported on grantee evaluation applications and on the Title VI application; 3) the number of grantees that report using paper or electronic records, or both; and 4) the number of grantees that report having a complete list of Title VI service recipients; having regular face-to-face contact with Title VI clients; having participated in a previous evaluation; and having existing data collection.



## Lessons in Collaborating with Evaluation Grantees

While opportunities to collaborate with evaluation grantees have been limited in the first year, evaluation partners including ACL, ICF, and the evaluation grantees, had the opportunity to gather at the first in-person meeting for the evaluation on September 12, 2017. This full day meeting took place at Mystic Lake Casino Hotel in Minneapolis, MN, and provided a chance for all partners to share information, questions and ideas about the evaluation. Related lessons learned included:

- **Importance of “hands on” learning:** information and TTA was more useful to grantees when it included practical, relevant, and relatable language as well as opportunities for active, “hands on” learning, such as participating in a mock focus group.
- **Benefits of peer sharing:** the in-person meeting gave grantees a chance to share ideas and experiences about evaluation, allowing more experienced grantees to share many examples of experiences collecting data or participating in other ways in other evaluations.

### What’s Next?

The evaluation implementation and TTA will begin when the Office of Management and Budget approves the evaluation design and will continue through July 2020. Following is an overview of upcoming events in the first year of the evaluation implementation:

- **Program Staff Interviews:** These interviews will be 60-minute telephone interviews with local Title VI program staff to improve understanding about how the Title VI programs are serving each community and to learn about areas where programs could use additional support.
- **Two EWG Virtual Trainings/Webinars:** In February or March 2018, the first virtual training or webinar will focus on helping grantees prepare for the first site visit. The time frame for the second training will be determined in the near future.
- **Site Visits:** Evaluation liaisons will work with grantees to schedule a 3-day site visit in the spring of 2018. The site visit will be an opportunity for: 1) one-on-one support for grantees; 2) learning more about grantees’ needs around data and evaluation and 3) conducting focus group or talking circles with up to 10 congregate meal elders and interviews with elders receiving home-delivered meals.
- **Second Annual EWG In-person Meeting:** the second annual EWG in-person meeting will occur in the fall of 2018.

### For more information, contact:

**Kristen (Krissy) Hudgins, PhD**

Social Science Analyst, Office of Performance and Evaluation  
Administration for Community Living  
Telephone: 202-795-7732  
E-mail: [Kristen.Hudgins@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:Kristen.Hudgins@acl.hhs.gov)

**Gretchen Clarke, MPH**

Technical Specialist, Title VI Evaluation Program Manager  
ICF  
Telephone: 907-747-7124  
E-mail: [Gretchen.Clarke@icf.com](mailto:Gretchen.Clarke@icf.com)

## References

Older Americans Act (OAA), Public Law 89–73, as amended through P.L. 114–144 (enacted April 19, 2016).  
Title I, Sec. 101 (42 U.S.C. 3001) and Title VI, Sec. 602 (42 U.S.C. 3057a)  
<http://ltcombudsman.org/uploads/files/issues/Older-Americans-Act-of-1965-Compilation.pdf>

Tribal Evaluation Workgroup. (2013) “A Roadmap for Collaborative and Effective Evaluation in Tribal Communities.”  
Children’s Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

