

Working with struggling **Michigan residents 50+** to win back opportunity



For too many Americans 50+, uncertainty is the new normal. Having worked hard, paid taxes and served their country and community, they now face choices and pressures unlike those of any other age group—choices no one could have prepared for. Now, more than ever, those struggling in every state need a voice. AARP Foundation—a charitable affiliate of AARP—serves that purpose.

AARP Foundation is working with thousands of people 50+ in Michigan to win back opportunity, so they can move from vulnerability to stability and regain their confidence as good providers for their families and members of their communities.

What uncertainty looks like for **people 50+ in Michigan**

STATEWIDE

9.9%

live below the **poverty level**.

NATIONWIDE

Today, more than 10 million Americans 50+ live at or below the poverty line.ⁱ

STATEWIDE

9.1%

in state are **unemployed**.

NATIONWIDE

In 2012, an average of 8.1 percent of Americans were unemployed.ⁱⁱ Older workers suffer the largest increase in long-term unemployment, the longest spells of joblessness and the least likelihood of finding jobs.

AARP Foundation has a “multiplier effect” for local organizations in your state

In communities across America, hardworking, trusted organizations have been doing a heroic job of helping struggling Americans 50+. But with the number of people in crisis growing every day, it’s a challenge to reach everyone and ensure that those who need support know where to find it.

That’s where we come in. AARP Foundation helps local organizations reach more people, work more efficiently and make resources go further. AARP Foundation has identified four priority areas where action will have the greatest impact: hunger, housing, isolation and income. Through our community programs and services across the state, in 2012 we helped Michigan seniors regain their foothold and avoid falling into a permanent crisis situation.

Helping with taxes

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide is the nation’s largest free, volunteer-run tax preparation and assistance service for low- and moderate-income taxpayers. **In 2012, 1,067 AARP Foundation Tax-Aide volunteers helped 71,247 Michigan taxpayers file federal and state returns at no cost to them.** More than half (51 percent) of AARP Foundation Tax-Aide’s taxpayers say they would have paid a commercial tax preparer if this free service didn’t exist.

With the help of AARP Foundation Tax-Aide, Michigan taxpayers received \$26 million in federal tax refunds, and low-income workers received \$3.7 million in earned income tax credits, or EITCs.

Helping those in need access benefits

There are state, federal and private programs that help older people in need, but navigating the system can be difficult.

AARP Foundation’s free online Benefits QuickLINK (BQL) is an easy, confidential way for seniors, their families and caretakers to learn what benefits they may qualify for—including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and prescription drug programs—and how to apply for them. **In 2012, more than 18,000 people received public benefits screenings and application assistance through the AARP Foundation Benefits QuickLINK tool.**

Providing job training and placement

AARP Foundation’s Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), a federally funded program, places unemployed, low-income older people in community organizations and nonprofits for on-the-job training and skills development. **In 2012, 1,832 older Michigan clients worked 310,078 hours at these jobs, providing local nonprofit and community employers with over \$6.8 million worth of service.**

Securing finances

For aging and disabled Americans with money management problems, life can quickly go from the annoying to the terrifying—from forgetting to pay a bill or deposit a pension check to cut-off utilities, bank foreclosures, evictions and forced institutionalizations. **AARP Foundation Money Management volunteers helped 5,864 clients nationwide** with routine bill paying and other financial matters, allowing them to stay in their homes and communities.

For more information about AARP Foundation and its life-changing services and programs in Michigan, call 1-800-775-6776 or visit www.aarpfoundation.org.

National Impact

\$1,457,000

Total amount raised through the AARP Foundation Relief Fund and granted to organizations supporting victims and communities impacted by Superstorm Sandy, especially those dedicated to serving older adults.

Source: AARP Foundation Office of Grants Administration

\$4,942,311

Total 2012 grants made to organizations that are transforming the lives of vulnerable older Americans in communities across the country.

Source: AARP Foundation Office of Grants Administration

15,000

Number of eligible individuals AARP Foundation helped apply for SNAP benefits

Source: AARP Foundation Hunger Impact Area

Over 200,000

Individuals 50+ who received information and assistance through AARP Foundation to avoid foreclosure and stay in their homes. According to recent data, over 19 million 50+ households are burdened by housing costs.

Source: AARP Foundation Housing Impact Area

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS), PUMS, Percent of Poverty by Age and State for Those with Determined Poverty Status (Unweighted N for 50+ = 1,160,043), 2011

² Bureau of Labor Statistics. Employment Status of the Civilian Noninstitutional Population 16 Years of Age and Over by Region, Division, and State, 2011-12 Annual Averages. <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/srgune.t01.htm>

³ AARP Public Policy Institute Analysis of 2011 American Community Survey Data. "Lower than average" incomes are defined as those in the first two quartiles of 50+ household income and includes all 50+ households with less than \$48,570 in household income.