



Membership Application

To join the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities** and the **World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities**

- If you have questions while completing this form, please email livable@aarpp.org or call 202-434-2430
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: 3/15/2016

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Erie County

STATE: New York

POPULATION SIZE: 922,000

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 21

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Mark Poloncarz, County Executive

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: Erie County, 95 Franklin St, Suite #1600, Buffalo, NY 14202

Section 2: COMMUNITY CONTACT FOR THE AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

The community contact is the local staff member or volunteer who is primarily responsible for carrying out the community-level work — it is not the responsible AARP staff member.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Please describe the named person's role in the city or community's age-friendly initiative:

Randy Hoak is the Erie County Commissioner of Senior Services and co-coordinator of Age Friendly Erie County Initiative along with University at Buffalo's Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access (IDeA Center). Brittany Perez is the contact from the IDeA Center. Contact information: Brittany Perez, OTD, OTR/L Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access, University at Buffalo, School of Architecture and Planning 114 Diefendorf Hall 3435 Main St. Buffalo, NY 14214 Phone: 716-829-5921 Web: <http://idea.ap.buffalo.edu>.

Section 3: COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, ENGAGEMENTS and COLLABORATIONS

1) Please provide a brief summary of the community policies, programs and services that are targeted toward older people and how the community plans to become more age-friendly.

Erie County will become more age friendly by working collaboratively with older adults and those who serve them. This begins with gaining a greater understanding of unmet needs of older adults across several domains and mobilizing the community to cultivate resources to address those needs. Initial attention will be given to areas where the Department of Senior Services has a level of control over moving toward improvement. To that end, Erie County intends to: 1) Create more inclusive and representative planning processes on both the community and individual level through increased training and the pursuit of opportunities to collaborate with older adults. Our approach to this is described in the response to question two. 2) Develop new and improve existing programs to promote, maintain, and restore health. Examples of programs include Ready Set Home, which takes an age-friendly approach to service provision by going to the places where older adults in need of services are most likely to be; Choose Healthy, which brings evidence-based disease management classes to older adults; and Consumer-directed home care services, which empower older adults to take direct control over their care need. 3) Create meaningful volunteer experiences for older adults and harness this resource to fuel evidence based programs that rely on peer leaders, and other types of services like faith-based volunteer respite programs. 4) Reduce social isolation by improving transportation and increasing access to the internet by providing home bound elders with one on one training on internet basics including social media and email. 5) Leverage UB/Age Friendly education and training for more inclusive work environments and events. 6) Make small changes that deliver big impact such as modifying font size for brochures and handouts regarding services.

2) How will the community engage and involve older people in the process of becoming a more age-friendly?

Erie County will engage and involve older people in the process of becoming more age friendly in several ways. It will deepen existing efforts and opportunities for participation in needs assessment efforts, advocacy campaigns, and public forums that provide opportunities for members of the public to voice their concerns. Looking at specific domains of concern, work will be done in partnership with the NFTA and GBNRTC to establish an inclusive coordinated transportation partnership with older adults, and deepen the work of One Region Forward and the Complete Streets Initiative. Similarly, Erie County will work with older adults in underserved communities to build outreach strategies to better serve them. This work includes targeted outreach and partnership with the LGBT community and to members of Buffalo's growing immigrant and refugee population. On an individual level, Erie County is also working to train those who serve older adults to provide more person-center service and partner with older adults in planning their own care. This includes expansion of consumer-directed home care services.

3) Briefly describe the mechanisms the community has or is planning to put in place to facilitate collaborative planning and implementation between different agencies and departments.

To facilitate collaborative planning and implementation between different agencies and departments, Erie County will work to establish more opportunities for discussion and building common solutions. Examples of this include the convening of Erie County's Health and Human Services workgroup to identify strategies for addressing poverty in our community. This work also includes public-private partnerships to address problems facing our aging community such as needs for home and community based services (i.e., WNY Integrated Care Collaborative), caregiver supports (i.e., WNY Alzheimer's Care Collaborative), and for information and assistance. We will work collaboratively with community partners to seek out new resources to address unmet needs of older adults in Erie County, to develop needed programs, and to improve existing ones.

Section 4: NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

Your answers to the following questions will help us complete your membership in the global age-friendly network and better enable us to understand how to support the network.

4) How do you hope to contribute to the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

Age Friendly Erie County hope to be a unique contributor to AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities with its unique partnership between Erie County Senior Services and the multidisciplinary inclusive design research center at the University at Buffalo. The mission of the Center is to produce knowledge and tools that will increase community participation for groups like people with disabilities and older adults, who are often marginalized by traditional design practices. This unique partnership instigated the creation of two additional domains important to Age Friendly Erie County which include Emergency Preparedness and Research & Education. The IDeA Center and Erie County Senior Services will partner to set an example for how communities can create more inclusive and age-friendly shared spaces, workplaces, civic engagement opportunities, transportation options, and events, etc. for everyone to participate.

5) What motivated your community to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

Erie County has been encouraged to join the Network of Age Friendly Communities by other communities in New York State. As a County Government we are in a unique position to lead the many agencies and local governments who contribute to the work of the aging network as we know it, but also have influence over decisions that are made that impact the lives of people of all ages that struggle to maintain independence every day. Erie County is excited about this leadership opportunity that will bring experts, stakeholders, decision makers and older adults together to evaluate and improve our communities age friendliness.

6) Please provide a digital file or link of a logo or other image that represents your community.

The image resolution should be at least 72 dpi. As an example of an image, here's ours >



Erie County Logo