



Membership Application

To join the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and 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@aarp.org
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: 9/25/2019

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Village of River Forest

STATE: Illinois

POPULATION SIZE: 11,172

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 22%

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Village President Catherine M. Adduci

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: 400 Park Ave. River Forest, IL 60305

Section 2: COMMUNITY CONTACT for the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and 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.

NAME: Sara Phyfer

POSITION: Management Analyst

EMAIL ADDRESS: sphyfer@vrf.us

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 708-714-3526

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

Sara will serve as the primary liaison and coordinator for the Village on age-friendly initiatives. She will work with Village Trustee Respicio Vazquez to collaborate with other local agencies and stakeholders to fulfill the commitments outlined in Village President Adduci's letter.

The person named above agrees to be subscribed to the [AARP Livable Communities Weekly e-Newsletter](#), which is one of the primary ways we share useful news and resources. To add additional subscribers, type their names and email addresses into below. Once this application is processed, a subscription confirmation message will be sent so the individual can confirm that they want to subscribe. To subscribe today, follow the link above or visit [AARP.org/Livable-Subscribe](#).

rvazquez@vrf.us; epalm@vrf.us

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.

As a small and tight-knit community, the Village of River Forest enjoys the collaboration of many stakeholders to support our aging population. In 2019 alone, the Village Board of Trustees passed two resolutions: one to formally acknowledge the efforts of becoming recognized as a Dementia-Friendly Community and another to support the Village President's Pledge to making River Forest a village for successful aging. Other items recently adopted include: implementation of a red bracelet program that helps first responders identify individuals with Dementia/Alzheimer's; the approval of a planned development for the Village's first senior living facility; funding for the Village's first senior snow removal program; amended standards of review for planned developments to include language to address accessibility for those with disabilities; and incorporating Aging in Place as a core objective in the updated Comprehensive Plan. The River Forest Township partners with the River Forest Library to provide a variety of social engagement opportunities to reduce isolation, as well as educational programming targeted at seniors. The elementary schools host events to involve seniors and bridge the generational gap, such as Veterans Day celebrations and an annual senior citizen's tea event. The high school hosts an annual free reception in the winter for seniors, and offers them free admittance for Sunday matinee performances, as well as pre-show talks with the directors. The Dementia Friendly River Forest team provides "Dementia Live" training and raises awareness in the community about the risks faced by this population. The community will continue to seek opportunities to make the Village more accessible to and livable for seniors and allow them to Age in Place.

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

The agencies involved in this initiative continually survey the community and their program participants to ensure they are meeting the needs of all populations. The Library has included community engagement as part of their Strategic Plan, as well as a dedication to lifelong learning opportunities. The school district targets the older population in communication efforts to both gain support for the schools and measure their impact on the community. The district also continues to look for opportunities to work with organizations that serve seniors. Additionally, the high school will be undergoing extensive renovations, in part to make the facility ADA compliant, and older citizens provided input during their year-long series of community engagement sessions while developing plans. The Township has a Senior Services department that serves more than 1,000 older adults and their families and caregivers each month. They engage with seniors on a variety of levels and gather requests and feedback from these interactions on a daily basis. The Township's Senior Services Advisory Committee meets nine times over the course of a year and the members serve as ambassadors in the community to provide information about programs and services; at a minimum, one third of the committee members are adults over the age of 55. All stakeholders will be involved with maximizing their reach to conduct the listening tour/surveys upon enrollment in the network.

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.

The Village is represented by two elected officials (President Adduci, who chairs the subcommittee, and Trustee Vazquez) at the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Subcommittee on Age-Friendly Communities, which facilitates the sharing of best practices for age-friendly plans and includes fostering partnerships to support these initiatives. Within the past few weeks, President Adduci and Trustee Vazquez met with the Caucus executive board and received support to move forward as a more formal collaborative with 35 participating communities. The Village will continue to communicate the community's senior programming and resources through social media and its monthly newsletter. The DFRF team is already cross-connected with the Village and its first responders, local taxing bodies, clinical providers, centers for gerontological research, community-based organizations, and people in the community living with dementia and their caregivers. All of these groups actively participate in community events geared towards seniors and work to raise awareness about risks and challenges seniors may face. The progress of DFRF goals and initiatives is tracked and supported by the Center for Gerontology at Concordia University Chicago. The progress will be shared with the community to help inform the development and implementation more age-friendly plans.

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 States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

The Village of River Forest hopes to contribute to this network by sharing successes and exchanging experiences as widely as possible. The red bracelet program, for example, is already gaining traction and our police department has presented to other municipalities on how to launch and implement similar programs elsewhere. In addition to the value of being recognized as an Age-Friendly Community, the Village aspires to serve as a mentor to and resource for other communities seeking to join the network, as well as to broaden the partnership on making a community-wide effort to approach addressing the needs of aging populations. The Village recognizes that a commitment to Aging in Place has global applicability and is eager to assist other communities in reaching similar goals.

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

Starting with a commitment to serving our seniors, a community-wide effort was made to be recognized as a Dementia-Friendly Community. In early 2019, the Village received that designation and is proud to be part of the Dementia-Friendly America network. In continuing to fulfill a commitment to Aging in Place, the Village's elected officials have supported policies and resolutions to make River Forest more age-friendly. Being part of this network will help to affirm all the wonderful things this community does for seniors and to ultimately put forward a more robust plan to address the needs of this population. With access to this network, the Village will continue fostering partnerships and build on the successes in other communities.

6) Provide a digital file or link of a logo or other image that represents your community and for which you have reprint rights. The image resolution should be at least 72 dpi. As an example of an image, here's ours:

Click here to add a link to where we can find your logo. Or, send a JPEG, PDF or PNG of your logo by email attachment to livable@aarp.org.

