



## 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](mailto: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: 11/5/2019**

**NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Somerset**

**STATE: Massachusetts**

**POPULATION SIZE: 17,105**

**PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 31.65%**

**NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: BOS Chair: David Berube,**

**BOS: Holly McNamara, BOS: Steve Moniz, Town Administrator: Richard Brown.**

**OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: 140 Wood Street, Somerset, Ma 02726**

### 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.

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

Shauna Geary serves as the Council on Aging Director. The COA's mission is to provide resources to ensure all seniors in our community have the tools and support they need to age with independence and dignity. Shauna assists seniors and families with housing issues, utilizing low income programs, and matching resources to needs. She oversees the daily operations at the busy senior center which is crucial to ensure seniors are not isolated and continue being a part of their community. In addition to this, she, along with staff operate a free transportation service for all community seniors.

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](http://AARP.org/Livable-Subscribe).

Coa@town.somerset.ma.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.**

The COA is currently housed at 115 Wood St. The historic building (which once served as an elementary school) shares a space with the Town nurse, and is attached to the Little Red Schoolhouse, which allows for intergenerational programming and easier access to the nurse, as well as shared services with that office. The Council on Aging provides free transportation, serves as a congregate meal site, hosts wellness and recreational programs five days a week, provides outreach, and serves as a general resource and referral service. I recently attended the Stakeholder Summit hosted by Bristol Elder Services and have hit the ground running with an age-friendly initiative called "Walk Safe Somerset," which provides free reflective vests to any senior who might walk in the community. This program promotes independence and safe travel for pedestrians. The COA board meets monthly and brainstorms ideas, programs and initiatives to ensure the community as a whole continues to be progressive and proactive for the aging population. Somerset also has a large TRIAD group, which consists of COA board members, both fire and police Chiefs, the COA director, local seniors, and representatives from the District Attorney's office and Sheriff's dept. This group's focus is safety, offering programs such as yellow alert, file of life, project life saver and free reflective address markers.

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

The Town of Somerset approaches all initiatives, groups and ideas with an Age-friendly mindset always including local seniors in all processes and ensures the population is represented on various boards. Recently, the town planner along with all departments has worked diligently to rewrite and upgrade our communities' master plan. Through the various stages of this process, our aging population has been invited to get involved by offering things such as daytime meeting with free transportation. This meeting plays a huge role in the master plan process as they help to isolate residents' concerns, desires and needs as the town continues to grow. With such a large population of seniors throughout the years many seniors have played key roles on many boards and committees, such as hiring sub-committees, school and election committees, and boards such as conservation, zoning, planning, COA, recreation. Other age-friendly action includes providing free transportation for all elections, special and annual town meetings to ensure all seniors are able to participate.

**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 Council on Aging board has worked diligently alongside the Board of Selectmen on many projects and programs aimed at preventing isolation and promoting safety among the older population. The COA board is currently working on forming a subcommittee which would focus exclusively on the Age-friendly initiative. The board will be comprised of COA staff, COA board members, seniors, and members of public safety and recreation departments. The local TRIAD group is a great example of the important work which is achieved by combining municipal departments, seniors and local stake holders. Through the master plan process we have been able to ensure that the vision of our town's future is viewed through the aging lens. This will ensure all progress is made with the mindset of being inclusive and accessible to all, especially our large population of residents aged 59+.

#### 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?

Through the Council on Aging Board, TRIAD group, and with the combined support of all municipal departments and leaders we as a community are dedicated to becoming more age-friendly. Our contribution would be to set the example of the force of a whole community supporting all aging residents. We are a small town with big ideas, and working together we are able to achieve more than we ever thought imaginable. Through speaking with leaders and other department heads I have strong support for this initiative and hope those supports will inspire other local communities to get involved for the betterment of their aging community members.

#### 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?

Our community is eager to be progressive in any way possible. Through reading about the great strides and successes made in other communities who have joined this network, we feel this would be a great opportunity for the entire town. Our community has always done our very best to ensure all decisions are made with seniors in mind. Joining this network will not only strengthen those values but help us to build a more age-friendly community by utilizing the resources and information available.

#### 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](mailto:livable@aarp.org).*

