



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: 10/21/2019

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Sterling

STATE: Massachusetts

POPULATION SIZE: 7,808

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 28.5%

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: BOS Chair: John Kilcoyne, BOS Vice Chair: Maureen Cranson and BOS Clerk: Arden Sonnenberg.

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: One Park Street, Sterling, MA 01564

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.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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

Veronica Buckley, Senior Center Director, and Kristen Dietel, Recreation Director, of Sterling's Age and Dementia Friendly Initiative bring complementary expertise in human services that crosses age boundaries. They bring a collaboration between social services and events that appeal to all ages and all abilities.

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](#).

Veronica Buckley vbuckley@sterling-ma.gov Kristen Dietel kdietel@sterling-ma.gov

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.**

In May 2016 Sterling Senior Center moved from the basement of the Town Hall on One Park Street, to its current location at 36 Muddy Pond Road. The Muddy Pond Road facility is new construction and the campus is next to the town school which encourages intergenerational programming. The Sterling Senior Center provides outreach, home cooked/congregate lunch meals, home delivered meals, social activities, and wellness programs. The move has led to increased participation at the Center to a total of 1050 unduplicated individuals since January 1, 2019 thru August 2019. The Sterling Senior Center is actively participating in the Workgroup to develop Age Friendly Initiatives. The Age Friendly Workgroup members include the Senior Center Director, the Recreation Department Director, the Library Director, the Fire Chief and other members of the Fire Department, Executive Director of an Assisted Living Facility, a member of the Council on Aging, and a member of Friends of the Sterling Seniors. The Workgroup has presented Age Friendly initiatives to Sterling's Master Plan Committee, which is in the process of developing an updated town wide Master Plan. Further, the Age and Dementia Friendly Workgroup will utilize information taken from an Age and Dementia Friendly Survey completed in 2018 for guidance and future goal setting. The survey was completed to assess community perceptions about Sterling's Age and Dementia Friendly environment. The Sterling Board of Selectmen have enthusiastically supported the Age and Dementia Friendly initiative.

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

Sterling approaches community engagement from an age neutral perspective. Older adults have always been an active group in the community. Sterling reaches out to all ages by providing programming that focus's on general interests, such as the arts, rather than limiting programming to what could be "age appropriate". Seniors serve now and have served in the past on the Select Board, Town Committees and Sub-committees, the Master Plan Committee(s) as well as on the Council on Aging and other community organizations. Seniors in Sterling's general population participate in an active Senior Center. Sterling's Senior Center collaborates with Sterling's Recreation Department and Sterling's Library to promote events and activities that appeal not only to Sterlings senior population, but also its younger set, the ultimate goal being to eliminate silos and enable cross fertilization of ideas to engage all citizens in the continued evolution of a shared culture.

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.

First, the ADF Workgroup is comprised of a number of town departments and community representatives in order to promote collaboration. In addition, the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator have been encouraging collaboration through instituting "All Boards and Committees Meetings" where multidisciplinary efforts to achieve goals are encouraged. Finally, the town is touting the recent rehab of a three sport recreational complex as a model of collaboration. This rehab was accomplished through the efforts of the BOS, the Recreation Department, the Senior Center, the Conservation Commission, the DPW and a citizens's group and was financed through local and state financing and grants. The project was completed ahead of schedule and under budget.

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?

Sterling continues to work to build upon our successes and address any limitations in meeting the needs of our residents. We are a small rural agricultural town in the process of planning through updating our Master Plan. The domains of the Age Friendly initiative correlate with topics being developed by our Master Plan Committee and its designated subcommittees. Our global contribution may lie in encouraging other small communities to participate in the age friendly movement and to utilize age friendly principles in designing their master plan.

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?

The Sterling community has a long history of caring for its residents and neighbors regardless of age and ability. Joining the AARP and WHO network enables us to formalize this process, learn from others and share our successes.

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.

