



State Membership Application

To join the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States** 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.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: *OCTOBER 7, 2019*

Section 1: STATE DETAILS

NAME OF THE STATE: *Maine*

POPULATION SIZE: *1.3 million*

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: *28.45%*

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: *Janet T. Mills, Governor*

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: *1 State House Station Augusta, ME 04333*

Section 2: STATE CONTACT FOR THE AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY STATES

(The State contact is the staff member who is primarily responsible for carrying out the state-level work).

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Please describe the named person's role and department in the state's age-friendly initiative:

The Office of Aging and Disability Services (OADS) is an office within the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). OADS supports Maine's older and disabled adults by providing programs, including adult protective, brain injury and other related conditions, intellectual and developmental disability services, long term services and supports (LTSS), and aging and community programs.

Karen Mason is the Associate Director of Aging and LTSS programs within OADS and oversees programs that impact the health and safety of older Mainers, and adults with physical disabilities who need long-term services and supports. As the Associate Director of Aging and LTSS, Karen is also responsible for Maine's State Unit on Aging (SUA), which develops and administers the State Plan on Aging in accordance with the requirements of the Older Americans Act (OAA). The State Plan on Aging is currently being updated for 2020. Additionally, Karen is the DHHS representative on the Statewide Independent Living Counsel (SILC) and a participant on the Maine Council on Aging (MCOA).

While the work will be coordinated by DHHS, we will collaborate closely with the Governor's Office, the Department of Labor, the Department of Transportation, and Maine Housing.

Section 3: STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES, ENGAGEMENTS and COLLABORATIONS

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

Maine offers multiple policies, programs, and services for our aging population's benefit, funded with diverse funding streams. Programs that fall under OADS include, but are not limited to, nutrition and caregiver respite programs, adult day programs, homemaker services, in-home and community-based supports, advocacy and legal assistance programs, and independent housing options. These services are funded through a combination of federal and state dollars. Specific examples of programming, becoming more age-friendly in 2020, include Maine's Nutrition Program and Home and Community Based Services (HCBS):

- Maine is currently updating its rules for the Congregate Nutrition Program and the Home-Delivered Nutrition Program, which provide healthy meals in group settings, such as senior centers and faith-based locations, as well as for those who are homebound. In addition, this updated policy will put increased emphasis on nutrition counseling to better assist those special nutritional needs.
- Maine has convened an HCBS Advisory Group comprised of consumers and providers to ensure compliance with the CMS HCBS settings rule and maximize the independence of consumers across the State.
- Maine has also convened an Aging and LTSS Advisory Group of consumers, advocates and providers to make changes to expand access to LTSS and improve care coordination for consumers who access these services. The Aging and LTSS Advisory Group is also looking at federal opportunities to improve care for MaineCare members who also have Medicare (dual eligibles). This includes capitalizing on opportunities for data sharing with Medicare, exploring potential federal financial alignment initiatives that could lead to improved care and savings to the State, ensuring dually eligible members are enrolled in our Health Home programs and these programs are well-prepared to meet their needs, reviewing our Value-Based Purchasing quality improvement initiatives to ensure adequate focus is placed on this population, strengthening our contracts with D-SNP plans, and exploring how managed care organizations propose to serve these members through a partnership with MaineCare.

Also, Maine's housing finance agency, MaineHousing, offers programs to expand the supply of affordable housing for low to moderate income residents; to provide low income households with heating assistance; and to modify, repair or weatherize homes of low-income homeowners.

- Maine's Governor recently released \$15M in bonds to finance affordable rental housing for older adults. Evaluation of proposed housing includes the community's aging in place initiatives, the project's proximity to services and transportation, and broadband access sufficient to support telehealth.
- Maine offers home modification, repair and weatherization services. Community Aging in Place grants funded through state and bond dollars support low cost, high impact modifications for older adult homeowners. Tax credits, grants and loans are available for accessibility improvements to homes. MaineHousing is leading an effort to reduce energy costs by paying for the installation of heat pumps for over 10,000 low income homeowners.
- MaineHousing recently launched a community solutions matching grant to municipalities that are taking a lead role in creating or preserving affordable housing in their communities. The grants are flexible and locally driven; each successful municipality determines how best to address their affordable housing needs including the needs of older adults.

As Maine works toward becoming even more age-friendly in 2020, it is important to note that Maine was recently ranked #1 in the nation by U.S. News and World Report ([2019 Best States for Aging ranking](#)). Maine hopes to build on this success by joining the growing network of Age-Friendly States.

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

Under the Older Americans Act, every four years, OADS (as the designated State Unit on Aging) must submit a State Plan on Aging to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Community Living (ACL). This comprehensive plan provides a vision and direction for aging services, and a framework for activities related to programs and services for older adults. The current State Plan on Aging is being drafted for 2020, and as part of this process, OADS is reaching out to all areas of the state for feedback from stakeholders, about their experiences and needs. Feedback is coming from a range of communities, north to south, urban and rural, coastal and island, to provide a comprehensive understanding of issues impacting aging Mainers. The effort also includes outreach to under-represented communities including recent immigrants, members of the LGBTQ community and Maine's federally recognized tribes. In October 2019, eight (8) listening sessions around the state are underway, to gather input on the priorities and strategies that are important to older Mainers, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers. Maine will use this feedback as a starting point for its process and build upon it to fill gaps in our understanding of needs. Maine is committed to holding listening sessions annually. Maine will also form an Age-Friendly Steering Committee with older adults, representatives from key State departments, service agencies, and community organizations to provide guidance to the State's departments responsible for implementing these changes.

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

Maine will continue its efforts by promoting and engaging in collaborative work among agencies and departments. This will be achieved by appointing key contacts in each agency and department to field questions and work together on the Steering Committee for the implementation of age-friendly policies and programs. These partnerships will include, but are not limited to, Maine's Department of Labor, MaineHousing, the Maine Department of Transportation and multiple offices within DHHS. External stakeholders will also be involved in collaborative planning and implementation, including AARP Maine, the Maine Council on Aging, the Areas Agencies on Aging, and Legal Services for the Elderly. Maine has more AARP Age Friendly Communities than any other state, and their insight and participation are also essential.

4) Briefly describe the mechanisms the state has or is planning to put in place to facilitate engagement with communities to identify unique and disparate needs throughout the state.

In addition to the strategies discussed above (current stakeholder engagement through a Steering Committee and listening sessions), Maine will work with external partners and community leaders to collect data regarding Maine's unique and disparate needs. These external partners will include community providers that serve aging Mainers and who have insight into the needs of Maine's aging population. Such external partners would include, but not be limited to:

- AARP Maine. The organization has supported the completion of surveys and focus groups in its age-friendly community that provide feedback on community needs. This data is available for the statewide initiative. Also, AARP will release an updated Long Term Services and Supports Scorecard in 2020 which will have a wealth of information on LTSS status in Maine.
- Reports and data offered through the Maine Development Foundation statewide Maine Streets Program, feedback from Grow Smart Maine, and Build Maine; both organizations are looking at housing, transportation issues.
- Maine's Aging and Disability Resource Centers. Often called the Areas Agencies on Aging (AAAs), these programs are designed to serve all older adults, people with disabilities and their caregivers, who have long-term care community or program needs, and are often the entry point to publicly administered long-term supports. Our five AAAs in Maine serve as "one-stop-shops" to answer questions from older adults, or individuals with disabilities, about a wide range of in-home, community-based, and institutional services.
- The Maine Council on Aging (MCOA). This multi-disciplinary advocacy organization brings together hundreds of stakeholders throughout Maine, including municipalities that are identified as age friendly communities. The group has produced the Maine Blueprint for Action on Healthy Aging as well as the Maine Aging Initiative. MCOA has already done a great deal of work towards identifying barriers and opportunities that impact Maine's aging population and would be an essential partner moving forward with this initiative.
- Legal Services for the Elderly (LSE). With statewide coverage in Augusta, Bangor, Lewiston, Presque Isle and Scarborough, LSE provides persons age 60 and over with free legal advice regarding health care, health insurance, Medicare (including Part D), MaineCare (Medicaid), Social Security and other public benefits, pension and retirement benefits, powers of attorney, consumer matters including creditor and bankruptcy problems, physical and financial abuse, guardianship defense and other issues. LSE understands many of the legal and financial needs of Mainers across the state and can help identify where to focus our efforts in that regard.

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.

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

Maine hopes to share our experiences, not only as a state with a statistically large aging population, but as a place with urban, rural, coastal, and island communities. Maine's lessons learned can inform and educate future network members under similar circumstances, as we endeavor to be more age-friendly. In addition, we hope to provide AARP and WHO with data, research, metrics and methods to aid in the greater understanding of what healthy aging is, and what it can do.

Maine looks forward to sharing this information to support future efforts at creating evidence-informed policy and evaluation. We hope to share with others any initiatives and ideas that were successful here, and to learn from experiences elsewhere. We look forward to joining with the 60 Maine communities already designated communities as AARP Age Friendly Communities, the additional 62 self-designated Maine communities, and the 830 cities and communities in 41 countries around the world that are working towards becoming more age-friendly under this initiative. We know that our small steps here in Maine, when successful, can inform and inspire larger policy changes.

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

Maine's population, much like the rest of the world, is growing older and living longer. Maine is the oldest state in the nation. Older adults (60 and older) comprise 28.45% of the state's total population, and our median age is 44.9. Both statistics are expected to increase substantially in the coming years. Also, the number of working-age Mainers (ages 20-64) is projected to decline. We know that this shift in population will have major impacts on Maine's economy and workforce, especially regarding the availability of caregiver and program support across our state. In addition to confronting and planning for this reality, we also must prioritize steps that will enhance the quality of life for Mainers as they age.

Joining the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network will connect us to a larger community where we can learn and share knowledge and experiences with our partners, locally and globally. Maine embraces WHO's vision of an age-friendly world that treats everyone with respect.

7) Please provide a digital (JPG, PNG or PDF) file or link of a logo or other image that represents your state.

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



<https://www.maine.gov/sos/stateseal/>

