



Pennsylvania  
Department of Aging



# *Aging* Our Way, PA

A Plan for Lifelong Independence



GOVERNOR  
SHAPIRO  
PENNSYLVANIA.GOV

# Table of Contents

- A Message from Governor Shapiro .....3
- Older Adulthood is Changing, Pennsylvania is Preparing.....5
- Our Vision & Focus .....7
- Our Approach & Core Tenets .....9
- Rooted in Stakeholder Engagement .....12
- Anchored in Cooperation .....14
- Our Priorities.....15
- Our Strategies & Tactics.....16
  - Unlocking Access.....16
  - Aging in Community .....21
  - Gateways to Independence .....30
  - Caregiver Supports .....34
  - Education & Navigation.....36
- Next Steps .....41
- Acknowledgments.....42
- Appendix A: Acronyms.....45
- Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority .....47
- References.....59



Dear Fellow Pennsylvanians,

The residents of our great Commonwealth are living longer, healthier lives and growing more diverse every day. Pennsylvania is home to 3.4 million older adults, the fifth highest total in the country. These demographic trends – which reflect what is happening across the nation – are more than numbers on paper; they are a call to action for Pennsylvania to be a leader as the nation grows older and more diverse.

My Administration has gathered input and collaborated with stakeholders across the Commonwealth to develop *Aging Our Way, PA*, a 10-year multisector strategic plan to build more inclusive, supportive communities for older Pennsylvanians. This stakeholder engagement process was led by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA) and Pennsylvania's network of Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). Through their robust relationships at the local level, the AAAs engaged their local communities and held more than 200 listening sessions across all 67 counties. The work of the AAAs was crucial to gathering the stakeholder feedback that guided this Plan, and my Administration will continue to work with them to implement the positive changes that arose from that feedback.

The voices of older adults across the Commonwealth are woven into the development of this plan to reflect their preferences and needs – and ultimately fulfill its purpose. With *Aging Our Way, PA*, we will create a Pennsylvania where all older adults live with dignity and independence.

To organize critical strategies and actionable tactics, *Aging Our Way, PA* identifies five priorities: Unlocking Access, Aging in Community, Gateways to Independence, Caregiver Supports, and Education &

Navigation. These priorities will serve as an inclusive approach to ensuring that older adults age within their communities in a way that aligns with their preferences and needs, promotes independence, fosters inclusivity, and provides adequate support systems for older adults, caregivers, and care partners.

No single entity can address the holistic needs of the older adult population in our Commonwealth. This is a collective effort that relies on the continued engagement with older adults and their caregivers to validate that the plan is meeting their needs. State, regional, and community partners will be asked to build and maintain a comprehensive and sustainable system of supports for older adults.

This plan will help us anticipate and prepare for these demographic trends before they reach their peak. By allocating resources today, we prepare for tomorrow – and through this plan, we hope to keep as many older adults as possible from needing more costly supports in the future. This plan will change, adapt, and evolve based on continuous and progressive stakeholder engagement, data monitoring and evaluation, and emergent events.

Every older Pennsylvanian embodies a lifetime of knowledge and experience that we all should admire and celebrate. *Aging Our Way, PA* is a commitment to create a future in which we all have the resources we need to age with dignity and continue to be vital, active members of our communities for the entirety of our lives.

Sincerely,

Governor Josh Shapiro

# Older Adulthood is Evolving,

## Pennsylvania is Preparing.

Pennsylvania's population of residents aged 60 and over is rapidly increasing, reflecting a national trend (Figure 1). This trend, along with a declining statewide birth rate and longer life expectancies, means that Pennsylvanians over the age of 60 will soon outnumber those under the age of 20.<sup>1</sup> Understanding and embracing this demographic shift provides a unique opportunity to develop and execute a plan that will make the Commonwealth longevity-ready, age-inclusive, and prepared to benefit from the many contributions older adults provide.

The older adult population is also incredibly diverse – geographically, racially, culturally, and socioeconomically. This diverse, growing population of older adults contributes to the Commonwealth every day in limitless ways as employees and employers, consumers, volunteers, mentors, caregivers, and more. Our communities must be equipped with the resources and support needed to age the way we envision.

In January of 2023, Governor Josh Shapiro assumed office and introduced the initiative of developing a Master Plan for Older Adults to respond to these emergent trends as part of his first budget address. Executive Order 2023-09 (EO 2023-09), signed on May 25, 2023 by Governor Shapiro, formalized the project by directing the Secretary of Aging to lead the plan development, appointing the Pennsylvania Long-Term Care Council (LTCC) as a steering committee, and commissioning other state agencies to support this project.<sup>2</sup> Governor Shapiro set an ambitious deadline for *Aging Our Way, PA's* completion by February 1, 2024, ahead of his next budget address.

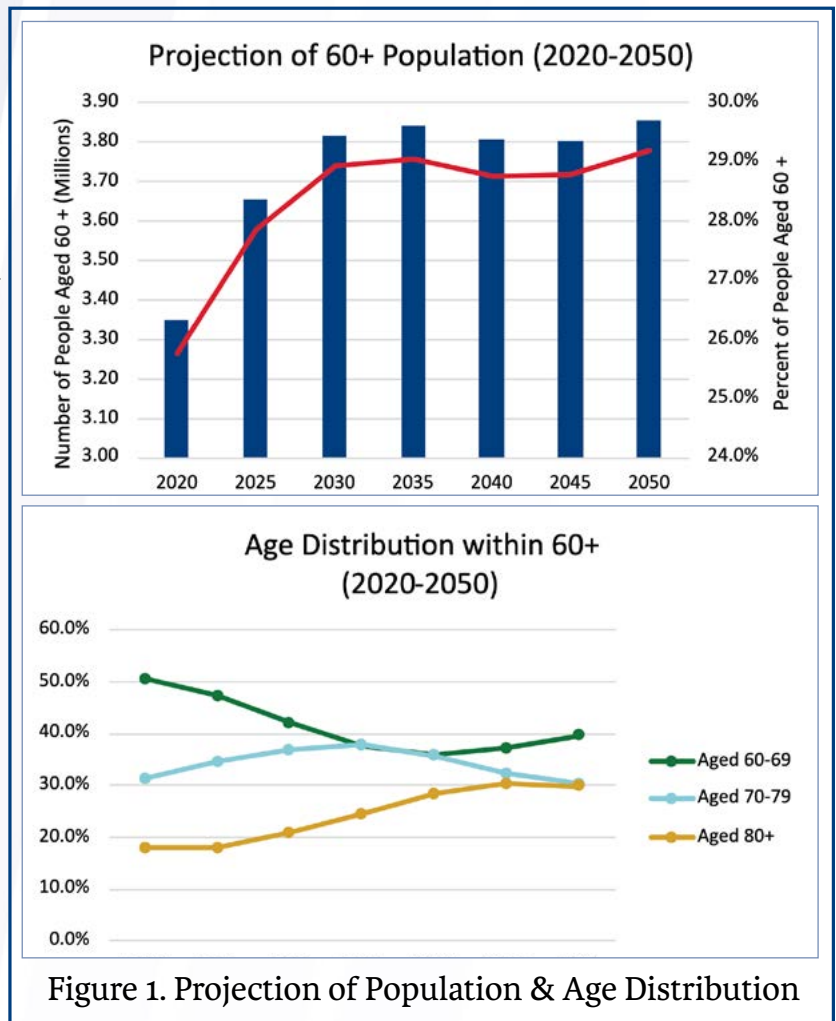


Figure 1. Projection of Population & Age Distribution



## Pennsylvania is Preparing.

The Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA) began the Multisector Plan for Aging (MPA) effort immediately after the Executive Order was signed, using the guidelines set by the Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) and recommendations from The SCAN Foundation and AARP. An MPA, also known as a Master Plan for Aging, is a general term for a state-led planning process that convenes multiple departments and agencies designed to foster cross-sector collaboration and improve the infrastructure and coordination of services for older adult populations.<sup>3</sup> This term

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*MPAs allow states to plan for the rapidly growing population of older adults, as well as the various compounding demographic shifts like increasing racial and ethnic diversity, increasing rates of solo-aging, and greater longevity among the oldest of the older adult cohort.*

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originated through the collaboration of a collective of organizations and funders that are working to mobilize financial, social, and intellectual capital to restructure state and local policies and convene a wide range of cross-sector stakeholders to address the needs of Pennsylvanians as we age. The collective includes the Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS), The SCAN Foundation, West Health, the May & Stanley Smith Charitable Trust,

the John A. Hartford Foundation, among others. MPAs allow states to plan for the rapidly growing population of older adults, as well as the various compounding demographic shifts like increasing racial and ethnic diversity, increasing rates of solo-aging, and greater longevity among the oldest of the older adult cohort. MPAs consider the entirety of institutional infrastructure that directly or indirectly affects older adults, including state, local, and federal policies and programs, as well as non-profit and private industry practices. Several states are actively developing and implementing MPAs.

# Our Vision & Focus

## Vision

*Aging Our Way, PA* will provide a unified and realistic plan to guide every older adult, caregiver, and stakeholder through a shared vision of how we, as individuals, determine to age our way with dignity, self-determination, and the supports and services we need to remain independent. In drafting this plan, the Commonwealth is committing to a future in which Pennsylvanians have the resources needed to continue to be vital, active, and respected members of our communities.

In this vision for the future, Pennsylvania will serve as a model for the nation, and prove that a community is only as strong as its commitment to inclusivity, respect, equity, and support for all of its residents. By embracing the AARP's Eight Domains of Community Livability framework (Figure 2) used by many of the states, cities and communities in the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities, we commit to creating a state where every Pennsylvanian, especially older adults, can experience happiness, dignity, and fulfillment.

## Focus

This plan is designed to establish priorities that will transform the aging services system to promote health, well-being, and independence over the next 10 years and beyond. These priorities are built on a stakeholder driven approach utilizing information gathered from older adults themselves, community advocates, experts and professionals across various fields, and other external stakeholders. The strategies and tactics informed by this engagement



Figure 2. Eight Domains of Livability

process support and prioritize the vision of an age-friendly Pennsylvania over the next decade and beyond.

To highlight the impact of the plan and the issues that an age-friendly Pennsylvania can address, we are presenting a series of scenarios, like the one below about George, to illustrate the imperative nature and value of this plan. These characters are neither real people, nor are they intended to be stereotypes. Rather, they capture individual experiences and perspectives that have been gathered directly from older adults, caregivers, people with disabilities, or other stakeholders. This approach was designed to ensure that the characters are not only respectful and accurate, but also deeply rooted in authenticity. We are grateful to the many individuals and organizations whose contributions and input substantiate and shape these characters. The stories are a valuable tool for practicing empathy, emphasizing person-centeredness, and illustrating the remarkable diversity of circumstances that Pennsylvanians encounter throughout their lives as they age. These characters allow for a deeper understanding of the individuals that the Commonwealth serves.

## George

George is a 95-year-old widower and a father of seven. He is a retired master welder with the Bethlehem Steel Corporation and a Korean War combat veteran. George lives with his daughter, a registered nurse, who currently owns the house George built in the 1950s with money he received through the GI Bill and where he raised his family. George can still drive and to ensure his safety and the safety of others, he voluntarily takes a driver's exam every year. He has a history of cardiac problems and suffered a massive heart attack that resulted in a double bypass surgery. George's doctors diagnosed him with congestive heart failure, but he has not experienced any changes in cognition or thinking skills. George's primary sources of income are Social Security, a pension, and a small amount of savings. He is unwilling to consider nursing home services because he does not think he needs them. His other children agree, although his daughter who lives with him worries about his overall health and safety when he is at home alone and when he is driving. He occasionally experiences loneliness and depression and often reflects on the number of people in his life that he has lost.

The *Aging Our Way, PA* plan will help veterans like George, by bolstering the continuum of community supports on which we all rely as we age.



## Approach

PDA leveraged the framework developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and adapted by AARP for the United States to support the advancement of livable communities. This framework includes Eight Domains of Livability (Figure 2 on page 7) to assess the characteristics of a community or state that make it more accessible to the 60+ population (with benefits for all residents) described in detail below. The availability and quality of these domains are known to positively impact the well-being of older adults and help make communities more livable for people of all ages across the world.

PDA relied on Pennsylvania's Aging Network to lead community engagement (reference page 12) to gain an understanding of the current realities of aging. Pennsylvania's Aging Network includes the 52 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and associated Senior Community Centers (SCCs). The AAAs possess a deep understanding of the latest programs, funding opportunities, and policy changes at the local level, ensuring that older adults receive the most current and relevant information and support.

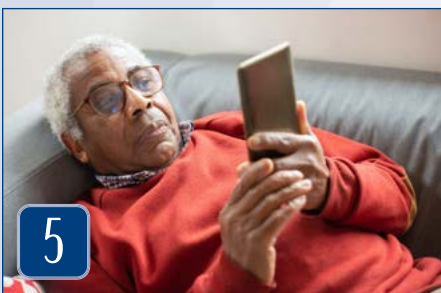
Through these Listening Sessions, stakeholders provided insights that define the ideal experience for an older Pennsylvanian as outlined by these eight domains:

- 1 Respect and Social Inclusion:** Pennsylvania is characterized by inclusivity and appreciation for the contributions, wisdom, and experiences of older adults. Stereotypes and prejudices are actively challenged, ensuring that older Pennsylvanians of all backgrounds are valued members of their communities, free from discrimination based on age, ability, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or other characteristics.
- 2 Housing:** Older adults live where they choose, in well-maintained structures, universally functional quarters, in safe neighborhoods, and hospitable communities. Alternative and affordable options and adaptations are readily available to meet changing needs and desires for housing. Older adults can choose a housing option that includes appropriate housing design and close proximity and access to services and amenities such as grocery stores, libraries, and community centers. Alternative options and adaptations are readily available to meet changing needs and desires for housing.



**Transportation:** Older Pennsylvanians can move throughout their community and never feel isolated due to a lack of transportation options or mobility impairment. Pedestrian modes of travel, which may be aided by mobility devices like wheelchairs, walkers, and scooters, are enjoyable and facilitated over smooth and well-maintained sidewalks. Pedestrians are not impeded by cracked pavement, overgrown roots, snow and ice coverings, or other hazards. Drivers are responsive to the rules around crosswalks. Older adults are practicing safe driving, agreeing to driving exams as appropriate, and are freshly aware of alternative means of mobility. If an older adult is not comfortable operating a personal vehicle, they can depend on reliable, timely, accessible, and useful transit options with stops that provide shelter from the elements, a place to sit, and are well-placed near community resources.

**4 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:** Our public community spaces like playgrounds, state parks, libraries, places of worship, and businesses will be vibrant, clean, accessible, and comfortable, offering inviting and safe atmospheres that encourage physical activity, social interaction, local shopping, and activity in shared community spaces.



**Communication and Information:** Older Pennsylvanians and their caregivers know where and how to receive immediate, accurate information, warm referrals, help in navigating available resources, and ongoing support. Information reaches everyone, can be understood by anyone, and is offered in different forms to meet the abilities, preferences, and needs of older Pennsylvanians. Older adults who choose to use technology can confidently use their favorite devices and securely access widespread broadband.

**6 Social Participation:** A thriving culture offers older Pennsylvanians numerous opportunities for social engagement and recreation. Essential community spaces host workshops, art exhibitions, games, and other options for socialization with people of the same and different ages and backgrounds. These opportunities help counter the loneliness and social isolation many older adults experience as part of their daily lives.

**7 Civic Participation and Employment:** Older Pennsylvanians are encouraged and supported in their endeavors to contribute to the workforce or engage in volunteer opportunities. Businesses and organizations recognize the wealth of experience and knowledge older individuals bring, pay fair wages for time and expertise, and accommodate requests for flexibility that enable workers to be effective in their positions.

**8 Health and Community Supports:** Comprehensive, holistic healthcare services promote physical, behavioral, financial, social, and emotional wellness, prevention, and early intervention. The network of public and private providers offers high-quality community supports and health services that are affordable and readily available. Older adults and caregivers are informed and empowered to heal and thrive in the manner that they choose, that best suits their preferences and circumstances.

## Core Tenets

This plan, from its initial development and continuing throughout its future evolution, is anchored by five core tenets:

- Transparency and inclusion involving significant stakeholder- and public-facing engagement as well as a strong communication plan.
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion embedded in all phases of development, addressing disparities and promoting equity and inclusion regardless of a person's age, gender and gender expression, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status, socioeconomic status, geographic location, genetic information, and other characteristics not yet identified.
- Principles of person-centered planning, valuing older Pennsylvanians holistically with careful consideration to each person's unique needs and preferences.
- Creation of a living document that will evolve through the 10-year span of the plan based on the changing needs and preferences of older Pennsylvanians.
- A reframe of how we think about, talk about, and value older adults to recognize the momentum, experience, longevity, economic contributions, and wisdom of older adults and how these individuals add energy, vitality, and possibility to Pennsylvania.

Since the inception of this project through EO 2023-09, a comprehensive process (Figure 3) was outlined to organize project activities, especially gathering and interpreting data from various sources to identify and develop the priorities, strategies, and tactics defined in the plan. PDA committed to incorporating the expressed perspectives, needs, and direction of stakeholders into this plan and its ongoing evolution. Stakeholder input was gathered through multiple means and channels to ensure that as many stakeholders as possible had the opportunity to provide feedback. Review the Acknowledgments section on page 42 for a list of our partners and collaborators.

PDA, in partnership with the statewide network of AAAs and the Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging (P4A), sponsored over 200 Listening Sessions, holding at least one session in each of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, to gather input from individuals and groups either engaged with or affected by older adult and disability related services, programs, and infrastructure. Stakeholders were also invited to submit comments by mail, an online form, or e-mail.



Figure 3. *Aging Our Way, PA* Development Process

This complementary, multi-pronged approach to stakeholder engagement provided more than 20,000 points of engagement that allowed the PDA staff to understand the needs and perspectives provided. PDA, through academic and community partners, including the University of Pittsburgh, issued a Needs Assessment to document the baseline for older adult and disability services, infrastructure, and programming and to identify clear gaps or barriers that need to be

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*The Needs Assessment included a randomized, representative sample of 900 older adults and older adults with disabilities to present a more objective understanding of perspectives and barriers related to older adult quality of life.*

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addressed by the plan. The Needs Assessment included a randomized, representative sample of 900 older adults and older adults with disabilities to present a more objective understanding of perspectives and barriers related to older adult quality of life.

The Needs Assessment survey was also offered publicly in digital and printed forms and distributed to stakeholders, community partners and their networks to broaden the understanding of perceived barriers to older adults in accessing services and infrastructure. Nearly 7,000 people completed this survey.

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*This plan builds upon an existing community infrastructure and parallel improvement efforts across the state.*

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PDA staff analyzed and interpreted all the stakeholder data received through the Listening Sessions and the Needs Assessment and identified common themes across the AARP's eight domains: access and availability, affordability, health and safety, awareness, and quality. These findings were presented to the Steering Committee as Summary Reports for each of the eight domains. The Steering Committee was led by the LTCC as directed in EO 2023-09, and included commonwealth agency staff as appointed by their respective secretaries, Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), and supporting consultants.

Steering Committee members reviewed and further analyzed the data presented by PDA staff and their academic partners. After further iterative analysis, the Steering Committee members met throughout the months of October and November of 2023 to translate the data into eight domain-focused recommendation reports. These recommendation reports included priorities, strategies, and measurable and actionable tactics that PDA used for the creation of the *Aging Our Way, PA* plan.

This plan builds upon an existing community infrastructure and parallel improvement efforts across the state. Many state agencies, boards, and commissions administer plans, policies, and programs that have direct and implicit impact on the lives of older adults, people with disabilities, and family caregivers. Therefore, including members of the interagency workgroup on the Steering Committee was instrumental in ensuring that this work was not done in silos but a collective effort.

PDA will continue engaging with each of these agencies to coordinate efforts, formalize collaborative partnerships, elevate common goals, and align the execution of strategies in concert. Review Appendix B on page 46 for a list of state agencies and their acronyms.

*Aging Our Way, PA* is a 10-year strategic plan designed to help transform the infrastructure and coordination of services for Pennsylvania's older adults. The recommendations provided by the Steering Committee were synthesized into five Priorities, 36 Strategies, and 163 Tactics that will usher necessary and actual change to create a longevity-ready Pennsylvania.

*Aging Our Way, PA* is a living document that is designed to be refreshed and advanced as priorities shift based on stakeholder needs and tactics are executed over the next 10 years and beyond. Any changes will be published as needed, through an Implementation and Progress Update. *Aging Our Way, PA* will be advanced through five Priorities:



## Unlocking Access

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We will design and offer equitable, affordable, and available options and opportunities that older adults may choose from for healthy and engaged lives, regardless of ability; socioeconomic status; racial, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural backgrounds; or geographical location.



## Aging in Community

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We will remediate barriers that prevent older adults from remaining in their own homes, maintaining familiar surroundings, staying connected to their communities, and living in secure dwellings.



## Gateways to Independence

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We will promote unhindered mobility by designing transportation systems that allow older adults' safe, convenient, and autonomous use of transportation services.



## Caregiver Supports

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We will build a comprehensive catalogue of supports and enhancements that provide caregivers with help at home, respite, training, and navigation tools.



## Education & Navigation

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We will lead a coordinated network of community and partners to raise public awareness of services for older adults, provide information that reaches everyone and is understandable by all, ensure timely and streamlined connection to assistance with any need, and resolve the challenging problems that older adults face in their daily lives.

# Our Strategies & Tactics

The strategies identified are critical approaches to advance the implementation of each priority. The tactics are specific and measurable actions to direct resources that address the barriers faced by stakeholders, including policy proposals, new programs or program changes, research proposals, proposed new and changed legislation, or funding requests, to support each strategy.

## Unlocking Access



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*This priority aims to dismantle barriers, fostering a respectful and inclusive environment for older adults across diverse backgrounds and needs, unlocking various aspects of community life.*

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As we age, our ability to obtain the appropriate services, infrastructure, and resources becomes increasingly challenging, due to systemic drivers and health disparities within the older adult population. Technology plays a vital role in contemporary life, with increasing interest among older adults in utilizing it to connect with loved ones. Many express a desire for training and improved accessibility of broadband services to safely and effectively use devices. Regardless of ability, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, language, culture, location, or age, people should have access to ample and accessible options that allow us to age in the way we choose. Living with a disability should never impede active and fulfilling involvement in our communities. Resources to prevent and treat depression, anxiety, addiction, and other mental illnesses should be readily accessible within our communities. Cultural and language competency is essential to effective communication and outreach, especially for historically marginalized groups who may encounter language and cultural barriers when accessing critical information related to housing, transportation, health services, and employment opportunities. This priority aims to dismantle barriers, fostering a respectful and inclusive environment for older adults across diverse backgrounds and needs, unlocking various aspects of community life. Addressing the Unlocking Access priority will empower older adults to engage and access resources available to have healthy and fulfilling lives.





## Unlocking Access will be advanced through 10 Strategies and 30 Tactics:

### Improving access and availability of long-term services & supports (LTSS) among vulnerable populations

1. Expand and fund the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program within the Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA) for individuals receiving home- and community-based services (HCBS).
2. Establish and maintain an appropriately staffed Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders (ADRD) office within PDA.
3. Review and amend provider licensure requirements that impede long-term care facility admission for older adults living with dementia.
4. Review licensure requirements for skilled nursing facilities (SNF), Assisted Living Residences (ALRs), Personal Care Homes (PCHs), and administrators with respect to older adults living with dementia and amend policies and requirements to ensure facilities promote a culture of safety and reduce barriers for admission to facilities providing dementia-capable care.
5. Author a Long-Term Care Patient Bill of Rights that will protect the rights and dignity of older adults in the long-term care system, especially historically marginalized people. <sup>4</sup>

## Maria

Maria became a caregiver when her sister, Rosa, was diagnosed with cancer. Already busy with a full-time job, Maria needed to keep her job because neither she nor Rosa had health insurance. She even obtained a second job just to pay for rent, medicine, and put food on the table. She also had to pay for an aide for Rosa. As a Latina woman who doesn't speak English well, Maria found it extremely challenging to find resources for her and her sister because of the lack of language access. When Rosa passed away, Maria was left overwhelmed with grief, paperwork, funeral expenses, medical bills and her own health challenges. She has been meeting with a support group to help her work through these feelings. Because of her experience supporting her sister, Maria wants to become a professional caregiver. She believes she could provide good quality, compassionate care to other older adults, just as she did for Rosa.

*Ageing Our Way, PA* will support multicultural Pennsylvanians with language-appropriate resources and services, including mental health, housing, transportation, employment, and social opportunities.



6. Increase the availability and quality of comprehensive physical and mental health services, social engagement, and supportive accessibility adaptations for incarcerated older adults, including expanding older adult enrichment programming.
7. Review licensure requirements for skilled nursing facilities (SNF), Assisted Living Residences (ALRs), Personal Care Homes (PCHs), and administrators with respect to older adults with LTSS needs and behavioral health issues, including substance use disorder and those leaving the justice system, and modify policies and requirements to ensure facilities promote a culture of safety and reduce barriers for admission to facilities when needed and preferred.

## **Creating opportunities for more payment flexibility in LTSS**

8. Expand the Quality Investment Pilot (QIP) Program, and use data from this program to support the development of value-based payment mechanisms.<sup>5</sup>
9. Support and improve long-term care facilities by expanding the Long-Term Care Resiliency, Infrastructure Supports, and Empowerment (LTC RISE) program.<sup>6</sup>

## **Reviewing service coverage in Medicaid**

10. Reestablish chore services as a benefit in Community HealthChoices (CHC).<sup>7</sup>

## **Expanding access to supplemental services**

11. Advocate for Medicare to include coverage of dental, vision, and hearing services.

## **Increasing access to nutritious food**

12. Advocate for expanded funding for home delivery of the Senior Food Box program<sup>8</sup> to meet the demand.
13. Expand access to mobile farmers markets across the Commonwealth, particularly for older adults in communities with limited access to fresh nutritious foods.
14. Expand awareness among older adults and throughout the Aging Network of eligibility for nutrition-related programs, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Senior Food Box Program, and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program.<sup>9</sup>

## **Addressing behavioral health barriers**

15. Advocate for mental health parity in Medicare and explore opportunities for advocacy with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to address parity in Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans.<sup>10</sup>



16. Explore the use of community mental health block grant funds to bridge access gaps, especially in rural areas, to connect older adults to behavioral health services, including addiction services, telehealth, and in-home monitoring.
17. Increase access to behavioral health providers for long-term care recipients of nursing facility services, personal care, and assisted living.
18. Advocate for Medicare coverage of mental health crisis intervention, mobile mental health therapy, peer support services/certified peer specialists, and targeted case management.
19. Increase access to evidence-based resources and training related to detecting and reducing the risk of suicide in older adults.

## **Bridging the digital divide and expanding digital literacy**

20. Advocate for increased funding for digital literacy programs available to older adults and individuals with disabilities through the Bureau of Library Development, and utilize libraries and Senior Community Centers as host sites.
21. Collaborate with the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (PBDA) to expand broadband access to rural Pennsylvanians by implementing the PBDA Digital Equity Plan.<sup>11</sup>
22. Create grants for programs that provide older adults with devices, training, and technical support for digital connectivity.

## **Increasing accessibility of community spaces**

23. Establish grants for rural libraries to offer social engagement opportunities and expand availability of accessible meeting spaces.
24. Incentivize the integration of Universal Design principles and Smart technologies in new and existing Senior Community Centers.

## **Offering language and accessibility**

25. Create and distribute a comprehensive accessibility guide and assessment tool for outreach and communication, including parameters for multiple languages, accessible formats, print and digital media, and dissemination channels to ensure cultural and linguistic sensitivity.
26. Expand accessible voting sites that allow for older adults and individuals with disabilities to participate in all elections.



27. Fund the expansion of volunteer poll translator recruitment to ensure that polling locations have translators available to assist older adult voters.

## **Promoting inclusive social opportunities**

28. Create more opportunities for intergenerational community-building, social participation, and food growth through the support of new and existing urban agriculture projects.
29. Ensure social engagement opportunities are designed to be inclusive and equitable for diverse individuals.
30. Develop a statewide online platform that offers virtual health and wellness programming, connection to information and resources, and opportunities for virtual social engagement.<sup>12</sup>



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***This priority elevates a comprehensive approach to create a state where older adults can thrive within their homes and communities, in the way that they choose.***

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Aging in Community is the idea of creating supportive, inviting, inclusive, and accessible communities where older adults can live comfortably and feel valued. This concept is broader than just remaining in our own homes, or “aging in place,” which can be challenged by our changing needs as we age. Most homes are not designed for accessibility, and it can be difficult to introduce necessary design features after construction. It is especially difficult to adapt older homes to improve accessibility. It can be expensive to pay for these modifications and eligibility criteria can limit access to assistive programs, especially for “near poor” older adults – individuals with income levels between 100% and 125% of the federal poverty level and those on strained, fixed incomes.<sup>13</sup> Providing direct care services at home is vital to enable older adults to age in their communities and stay connected to friends and neighbors. Home- and community-based care is often more cost-effective than residential care.

Remaining socially connected as we age gives everyone a sense of belonging, purpose, and increased self-worth, and is one of the primary contributing factors to aging well. Keeping employment opportunities attractive and available to older adults also helps to address existing and anticipated workforce shortages.

AAAs, SCCs, Older Adult Daily Living Centers, and Living Independence for the Elderly (LIFE) programs are part of the continuum that offer a broad range of services that we may need as we age. This priority elevates a comprehensive approach to create a state where older adults can thrive within their homes and communities, in the way that they choose. This priority is a commitment to ensure that aging is not a journey endured in isolation but embraced as an integral part of vibrant, interconnected community life.



## Aging in Community will be advanced through 13 Strategies and 73 Tactics:

### Increasing the capacity and capability of the Aging Network

31. Create a resource for community partners that guides local implementation of *Aging Our Way, PA* and the development of local collaboration efforts.
32. Provide educational workshops and resources to advance the Aging Network's ability to form and maintain relationships with other local and regional organizations, create diverse funding streams, develop new or innovative services and supports, and modernize the delivery of services to address the evolving needs of the older adults they serve in their community.
33. Design and launch a grant writing education program to advance the Aging Network's ability to pursue external competitive grants.
34. Encourage relevant state and local agencies within the Aging Network to use validated tools (e.g., UCLA Scale of Loneliness) to measure loneliness and social isolation and provide direction with subsequent interventions to connect those at risk to social participation opportunities.<sup>14</sup>

## Annette

Annette is an active leader in her community, a retired teacher, and a mother of three. She resides in the home she owned with her late husband. Annette is in good health and volunteers as a teacher's aide at the school where she used to work and as a member of her church's steward board. Annette really loves her neighborhood and is close to the few friends she has left. She still drives and often takes care of friends who do not have loved ones nearby to help, yet she could use some help as well. Annette can barely pay her mortgage and the rest of her bills, and sometimes relies on her church for support with food. Annette's daughter has asked her repeatedly to move in with her, concerned for her mother's safety and the declining conditions of the neighborhood. Annette cannot afford housing in safer areas, does not want to be a burden to her daughter, and doesn't want to give up her independence. Lately, she feels her age has made her a target. Because she is hard of hearing, Annette has noticed some people either disregard her or assume she has a decline in mental capacity. This has made getting basic assistance even more difficult, and Annette has been constantly questioned about her capacity and ability to take care of herself.

Explore how *Aging Our Way, PA* will help people like Annette access a variety of supports to age in community.



35. Create grant opportunities for Aging Network Partners to enhance local communication, outreach, and branding efforts.
36. Research older adult and near older adult preferences to inform an action plan to reframe Senior Community Centers and congregate meals to better promote membership and participation.
37. Create a Community Needs Assessment template to assess and improve the quality and satisfaction with Senior Community Center service and program offerings, operations, and environment.

## **Identifying and supporting programs that help older adults live in the community**

38. Advocate for increased legal support funding for older adults, including victims of fraud and abuse.
39. Highlight the use of supported decision-making and all other appropriate options to provide the least restrictive alternatives to guardianship.
40. Expand and fund innovative, unique, and creative models to expand affordable housing opportunities.
41. Expand and increase the number of people served and access to more services in the Help at Home (OPTIONS) program.<sup>15</sup>
42. Expand and support the Community Aging in Place Advancing Better Living for Elders (CAPABLE) program throughout the state.<sup>16</sup>
43. Provide financial support to fund smart home and smart wearable technology for people who do not qualify for CHC or OPTIONS.
44. Expand and fund Shared Housing and Resource Exchange (SHARE) model to additional counties and extend the model to more populations including veterans and reentrants.<sup>17</sup>
45. Conduct research on expansion of shared living programs to align with Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing statewide goals.<sup>18</sup>
46. Support funding and policy to create age-friendly, Dementia-friendly, and ADA-compliant communities to improve access and availability.



47. Use 1115 waiver authority to expand access and supports for housing for individuals who are eligible for Pennsylvania's Medicaid program.<sup>19</sup>

## **Creating and improving community infrastructure**

48. Conduct a survey of municipal governments in the Commonwealth to assess current sidewalk inventories, document best practices for toolkits and technical assistance for municipal governments to maintain and enhance sidewalk inventories, and educate municipalities about grant opportunities for funding sidewalk and streetscape improvement projects.
49. Create and fund community planning and action grants and technical assistance opportunities to coordinate funding and resources for community infrastructure projects such as sidewalk repairs, transit stops, parking enhancements, and lighting installation.
50. Obtain a Statewide AARP Age-Friendly Designation and encourage more localities to seek out AARP Age-Friendly Community designations.<sup>20</sup>
51. Improve connections between mass transit and public outdoor recreation opportunities, specifically the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) supporting the Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Active Transportation Plan.<sup>21</sup>
52. Prioritize funding for sidewalks in Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) grant programs.
53. Support PennDOT's Strategic Highway Safety Plan to support older adult driving, pedestrian, bicycle and transit safety.<sup>22</sup>

## **Improving the accessibility of public outdoor spaces**

54. Develop and promote the creation of easy trail loops in community and state parks.
55. Ensure that Pennsylvania state parks have accessible parking and bathrooms and increase the availability of beach wheelchairs, and accessible kayak launches and fishing access.
56. Increase the availability of adaptive facilities and equipment in parks and community spaces, including adult changing tables and park benches.
57. Expand skills-based learning opportunities for outdoor recreation activities targeted specifically for individuals with limited access to outdoor experiences.





58. Fund tree plantings and urban tree cover to ensure additional shading in local parks and improve healthful access to the outdoors.
59. Improve accessibility to all water-based recreation, including the installation of canoe and kayak launch sites, for people of all abilities on recreational lakes within state parks.
60. Increase access to “First Time” equipment kits and public programs in outdoor recreation.
61. Support DCNR goal of having a park/trail within a 10-minute walk of every PA resident.
62. Support DCNR’s assessment project to catalogue 10,000 miles of trails, particularly through an accessibility lens, to inform decisions and to prioritize areas of improvement.
63. Evaluate and update printed materials, displays, and other programming created and distributed by DCNR to include cultural diversity and ensure inclusive content.

## **Recognizing parks and green spaces as an integral part of community life**

64. Conduct research to identify priority communities in need of strategic recreation investments to increase available green spaces.
65. Create a Pennsylvania Rx for Nature program to increase health and happiness as well as foster environmental stewardship.<sup>23</sup>
66. Support skilled nursing facility residents’ access to recreation therapy, socialization, and education opportunities that address loneliness in residential nursing facilities.
67. Engage diverse users, including career and technology education students and staff, in the management, planning, and design of outdoor recreation spaces and access opportunities.
68. Increase capacity of public land managers to maintain infrastructure by securing necessary staffing and funding levels as well as increasing intra- and interagency cooperation.
69. Use data to prioritize communities without access to recreation areas and partner with county and local planners to improve access.
70. Use state grant programs to fund community-based programs that advance health and wellness and connect Pennsylvanians with outdoor recreation programming for older adults.



71. Expand public access to outdoor recreation facilities through joint-use agreements with school districts and universities, in adherence with safety and security policies.
72. Support the Recreation Engagement Coalition (REC) as they develop a toolkit to create outdoor connection for individuals across the lifespan.<sup>24</sup>

### **Expanding utility assistance programs**

73. Advocate for the reauthorization and enhancement of important utility-related consumer protections (Title 66, Chapter 24).<sup>25</sup>
74. Simplify intake process for Universal Service Programs.<sup>26</sup>
75. Support the expansion of utility assistance programs for older adults, including the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP).

### **Addressing accessibility needs in housing**

76. Create partnerships between PDA, the housing sector, and health and social service experts to develop and administer aging-specific grants for older adults experiencing homelessness.<sup>27</sup>
77. Explore temporary housing options for older adults with complex needs who are transitioning to permanent housing, including but not limited to those who have experienced homelessness, institutionalization, or incarceration.
78. Incentivize the integration of Universal Design principles and Smart Technology in new housing constructions.<sup>28</sup>
79. Increase access to Assistive Technology to enhance housing accessibility for individuals with complex needs.
80. Support the development of independent and “visitable” living communities to ensure that older adults, particularly those with lower income levels or specialized needs, have options for rightsizing their housing.
81. Research how to engage with diverse audiences on topics related to housing to promote positive outcomes.



## Increasing affordability of housing

82. Advocate for legislation that requires higher-density options, such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) or Elder Cottage Housing Opportunities (ECHOs), to be considered in local zoning and planning regulations.<sup>29 30</sup>
83. Increase use of land trusts and banks to promote more inventory with long-term affordability, with a focus on serving older adults.
84. Repurpose underutilized university spaces, consistent with standard surplus disposition processes, to create housing for older adults through continuing market research, pursuing financing and funding opportunities, and age- and disability-friendly planning.
85. Propose tax-related changes that would make housing more affordable for older adult homeowners.

## Increasing the affordability of home modifications

86. Expand funding, increase availability, and review eligibility of home repair programs to expand access to home modification and repair services.
87. Provide increased funding for home modifications services through Medicaid waivers.

## Creating affordable social opportunities

88. Advocate for the expansion of colleges and universities to offer free or discounted education to older adults and individuals with disabilities.
89. Advocate for the expansion of the Senior Companion program to all counties throughout the state.<sup>31</sup>
90. Establish a comprehensive discount program for older adults and caregivers to participate in community activities.

## Promoting a diverse range of social opportunities

91. Collaborate with arts and cultural organizations to provide meaningful ways for different generations to connect and participate that foster dialogue and appreciation between groups, community enrichment, and self-expression, including art exhibitions, museum visits, concerts and festivals.



92. Develop artist-in-residence program opportunities to connect Senior Community Centers and artists who have completed the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Academy for Creative Aging.<sup>32</sup>
93. Encourage the growth and creation of innovative respite programs, including Memory Cafes and other models to support persons living with AD/RD and their care partners.<sup>33</sup>
94. Engage schools and libraries to create and promote intergenerational programming that includes young adult students and older adults.
95. Explore opportunities for congregate-meal providers to attract program participants by offering alternative menu, medically-tailored, and culturally-tailored meal options in addition to traditional hearty meals.

## **Promoting the value of the older adult worker**

96. Strengthen workplace flexibilities that allow older adults to continue working and seek new employment through the achievement of Barrier Remediation subgoals from the 2024-2028 Pennsylvania Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan.<sup>34</sup>
97. Expand funding for the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) program for outreach to raise awareness and increase access to the program.<sup>35</sup>
98. Design accessible instructions and create filters for customizable job searches on PA CareerLink® filters to highlight the many flexible opportunities.
99. Include more specific older adult age groups on the Labor and Industry Older Workers by Industry Dashboard to increase awareness of the economic impact that older adults have on the PA economy.
100. Launch a multi-year grant program to establish volunteer coordinators in libraries and community-based organizations.

## **Protecting financial security**

101. Expand partnership between Attorney General's Office, Department of Banking & Securities (DOBS), and community advocacy organizations such as Center for Advocacy for the Rights & Interests of Elders (CARIE) and AARP Pennsylvania to expand educational programs that inform older adults about how to recognize and report common scams and frauds.



102. Expand the existing PDA's Financial Exploitation Task Force with state and local law enforcement agencies to investigate and combat fraud and scams targeting older adults.
103. Research and promote models for flexible work opportunities to support people as they age, experience a disability, or become homebound.



Transportation allows us to access essential services, such as medical appointments, grocery stores, and social events. However, as we age, we often encounter challenges in finding suitable transportation, hindering our autonomy to participate in daily activities, access essential services, and maintain social connections. Gateways to Independence seeks to alleviate the challenges voiced by community members by fostering an environment where older adults have a spectrum of transportation options tailored to their specific needs. This includes accessible public transit, door-to-door services, community-driven transportation, and routine driver

safety education for older adults that use personal vehicles. As we age, maintaining mobility and access to transportation becomes increasingly crucial for our overall



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***Gateways to Independence seeks to alleviate the challenges voiced by community members by fostering an environment where older adults have a spectrum of transportation options tailored to their specific needs.***

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well-being and continued engagement within our communities. These barriers are frequently much steeper for people living in urban areas and those who have mobility-impairing disabilities. Community members expressed concerns over little-to-no public transit in rural areas, limitations of where public transit will take passengers, behavior of other passengers when using public transit, and the accessibility of public transit vehicles for individuals with disabilities. By repairing the cracks, bridging the gaps, eliminating inconveniences, and enhancing infrastructure, older adults can live more independently, fostering connections and enabling them to participate fully in their communities.

# Gateways to Independence



## Gateways to Independence will be advanced through 5 Strategies and 21 Tactics:

### Ensuring driver safety for older adults

104. Encourage older adults and individuals with disabilities to seek vehicle modifications needed to maintain use of vehicles, including those necessary for employment.
105. Increase awareness of existing safe driving education programs.
106. Invest in additional programming related to Older Driver Safety Awareness Week.

### Improving transportation systems to better serve the community

107. Develop a rider awareness advertising program that highlights ADA requirements and respectful behavior.

## Franny

Franny had a spinal cord injury in her early 20s, but she has never let her spinal cord injury stop her from accomplishing her goals. Now age 61, Franny is married, has three children, and works full-time at an advertising agency. She has made use of personal assistant services and has a responsive and helpful service coordinator. Franny values her independence, but her mobility level decreased due to physical changes in her 40s. Driving has become exhausting for Franny. She typically drives to work because the city where she lives doesn't enforce maintenance of the sidewalks and many of them are impassable for a wheelchair. Franny doesn't want to use the bus because it is not reliable or flexible enough for her to get to work on time. Uber and Lyft claim to have accessible options, but the app won't let her select an accessible vehicle. Even though Franny only lives four blocks from her office, the service would cost \$28 round trip. She still has four more years until she retires. She has been thinking about getting reevaluated for different driving adaptations. Franny remains eligible for Community HealthChoices (CHC) through the Medical Assistance for Workers with Disabilities (MAWD) program, and she is involved in the local Center for Independent Living (CIL). With the assistance of a service coordinator and using available programs, Franny is now accessing home adaptations and an evaluation from a certified driving specialist to update her adaptive equipment. She was also reassessed for an additional 11 hours a week of attendant services. A lifetime of navigating resources and programs has enabled Franny to take advantage of existing programs as her needs have changed.



108. Develop and disseminate a best practice guide for transit driver recruitment and retention.
109. Develop and implement or improve ADA, accessibility, and dementia-friendly trainings for transit authority employees.
110. Improve coordination between transit providers, the Veterans' Administration (VA), and VA medical facilities to address gaps in access to services for veterans, including veterans in rural areas.
111. Provide resources to modernize the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) van program and develop a fleet replacement schedule.<sup>36</sup>
112. Conduct research to investigate and evaluate the Shared Ride program, rideshare programs, and other third-party options for their effectiveness in meeting the needs of older adults, or as cost-effective alternatives to buses or vans on low travel days and after hours.

## **Increasing coordination between transportation stakeholders**

113. Advocate for local coordination, zoning changes, and other mechanisms to support transit-oriented development of retirement and older adult living communities.
114. Conduct an evaluation and develop toolkits which may include innovative ideas for county and municipal governments to maintain and improve public transit services.
115. Establish an Older Driver Task Force of transportation stakeholders, including but not limited to transit providers, state agencies, and advocates to improve older driver safety.
116. Evaluate the inclusion and engagement of older adults and people with disabilities in Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Planning Organizations (RPOs) to advance aging and disability equity.<sup>37</sup>
117. Increase awareness and utilization of the PennDOT Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP).<sup>38</sup>
118. Support Pennsylvania House Resolution 174 for the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study and issue a report on the current status, management, and implementation of mass or public transit in Pennsylvania's rural communities.<sup>39</sup>





## **Using alternatives to public transportation to reduce gaps in access**

119. Advocate to increase the availability of paratransit and accessible rideshare vehicles.
120. Educate non-profit organizations on PennDOT's Private Non-Profit Vehicle Grant to fund vehicles for transportation of older adults and persons with disabilities.<sup>40</sup>
121. Educate personal care attendants and recipients that the delivery of transportation is covered under Medicaid-funded personal care services.
122. Inventory and raise awareness of existing technology solutions that assist people with specialized transportation, including Find My Ride, Fareless Payment, and Vehicle Locators.<sup>41</sup>

## **Utilizing funding opportunities to maximize efficiency and efficacy of public transit**

123. Enhance awareness of competitive rural transportation grants available through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and related technical assistance available through PennDOT.<sup>42</sup>
124. Evaluate the funding and distribution of Pennsylvania Lottery funds for the Shared Ride program to maximize efficiency and impact.



*Caregivers and care partners play an undeniably life-sustaining and necessary role tending to the well-being of older adults.*

Caregiver Supports focuses on strengthening the direct care workforce and supporting care partners by cultivating better systems of support, education, and assistance to ensure more sustainable, competent, and exceptional care for older adults. Caregivers and care partners play an undeniably life-sustaining and necessary role tending to the well-being of older adults. Some of us do not always recognize the hard and compassionate work that caregivers do. They are older adults supporting spouses, partners, friends, and other loved ones. Caregivers are supporting our adult children with intellectual or developmental disabilities. They are raising our grandchildren and caring for our neighbors. Despite their invaluable contributions, the emotionally and physically demanding work of caregivers is neither adequately recognized nor supported in ways that ensures that this high-quality care is sustainable. Like many states, Pennsylvania is confronted with a shortage of direct care workers and staggering job turnover rates. Low wages, minimal onboarding, and limited growth prospects stifle the recruitment and retainment of a well-trained, consistent direct care workforce. The inadequate supply of direct care workers multiplies the difficulties families face as they piece together supports and services for their loved ones.

## Caregiver Supports will be advanced through 2 Strategies and 6 Tactics:

### Strengthening the direct care workforce

125. Update and develop an implementation plan for the 2019 Blueprint for Strengthening Pennsylvania's Direct Care Workforce, starting with recommendations to enhance wages, benefits, training, and development of a career ladder.<sup>43</sup>
126. Change Scope of Practice laws to allow healthcare paraprofessionals and other individuals involved in supporting the clinical and long-term care needs of older adults and individuals with disabilities to perform functions they are qualified to perform.
127. Advocate for changes to federal and state laws to allow legal immigrants and refugees who qualify to be hired as direct care workers.



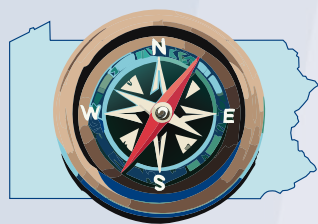
## Supporting caregivers and care partners

128. Develop a statewide Caregiver Toolkit, including information on supports and resources and a caregiver screening tool.
129. Expand existing opportunities for education, training, and case management for caregivers.
130. Explore the establishment of a tax-free savings and incentives account for caregivers.

*Gina*

Gina, 51, is the mother of four children. She is very close to her parents and lately has noticed that her parents' health and abilities are changing. Gina meets every new challenge, condition, and adjustment head on, and brings an irreplaceable sense of comfort and stability that enables her parents to maintain their autonomy and happiness. Recently, Gina's mother has been displaying signs of dementia, which has been demanding more time and attention from Gina. Her patience and composure have been tested as she feels the strain of her caregiving responsibilities. It has not been easy. She wants to continue providing the best care possible for her parents, but the current system of supports and services falls short, leaving her overwhelmed and frustrated. Gina has tried to look for help to give her a little bit of time to catch up, but home care is expensive and unreliable, and she has to re-explain the complexities her parents' individual needs to each care aide. Gina's dedication to her parents' care has come at the expense of her own personal life. Gina can no longer hold a full-time job to support her family and is feeling a swell of negative emotions – irritability, exhaustion, and guilt. Gina dreams of a day to herself, to be more than just a constant caregiver: a day to catch up on laundry, clean up around her home, and perhaps find a moment to simply relax. Gina is a caregiver, a mother, a daughter, and a wife. She is someone who has given so much to those around her that she has lost sight of her own needs. Gina needs some help so that she can continue doing the hard work that her family counts on.

Keep reading to understand how the *Aging Our Way, PA* plan will help Pennsylvanians like Gina to manage caregiving responsibilities.



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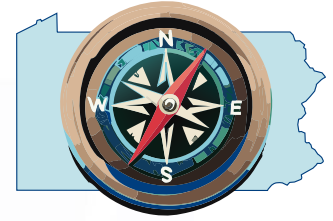
***State, local, and community programs need to reach older adults with crucial information related to housing, transportation, social and employment opportunities, and health and community services.***

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Pennsylvania is already home to a wealth of valuable resources, programs, and offerings that older adults want and need. However, these resources are underutilized due to barriers like fragmented information sources, technological discomfort, language disparities, and concerns about scams. State, local, and community programs need to reach older adults with crucial information related to housing, transportation, social and employment opportunities, and health and community services.

Community members are interested in a trusted, well-known contact point connected to a live person for accurate information, smooth referral and handoff, and follow up. Every older adult has unique and sometimes complex circumstances that call for person-centered guidance and planning that puts the needs and desires of the individual at the center of the plan, prioritizing what matters most to the individual lives of older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers. All Pennsylvanians want to experience customer service that ensures timely, quality assistance across interconnected needs rather than seeking assistance for every need within fractured systems, through distinct services and resources in separate jurisdictions.

This priority includes tactics to better ensure that Pennsylvanians' information will be secure and protected and that they will have the knowledge, competency, and tools to engage with the digital world safely, independently, and purposefully. Education & Navigation focus includes leading and coordinating research among academic and community partners to gain knowledge and a deeper understanding of the most complicated social and cultural problems that challenge an older adult's ability to live actively and be engaged in their communities.



## Lionel

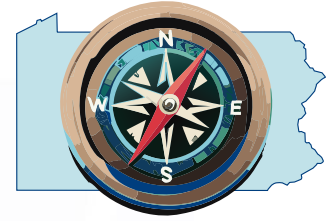
Lionel, 70, has never married, and he does not have any children. While he has a history of behavioral health challenges and would benefit from help around his house, he doesn't believe he could afford any services. Because of his financial strain, Lionel has sometimes forgone refilling prescriptions to pay for food. Lionel's doctor recommended that he connect with the county agency and provided Lionel with the phone numbers to get connected to supports. Lionel would like to talk to a real person, but when he called to find assistance with meals, prescriptions, and housekeeping, no one answered the phone. A recorded message required him to push a number to reach the department he wished to speak with; Lionel became frustrated and hung up the phone. Lionel also contacted the county mental health agency. A live person answered the phone, but due to Lionel's age and insurance (Medicare), the agency referred him back to his doctor. Lionel's neighbor connected him with a local food bank since he has difficulty buying food after paying his other bills. Lionel used the food bank once but found it challenging to manage the large food box on the public bus. Lionel's journey to find services to stay in his home would have been smoother if he could have one number to call, answered by a live person to help him navigate the human services system.

*Aging our Way, PA* will help remove barriers and streamline access to services and ongoing support systems.

## Education & Navigation will be advanced through 6 Strategies and 33 Tactics:

### Augmenting navigation

131. Establish at least one dedicated navigator in every AAA equipped with standardized training in case management, information and referral tools, customer service, and resources related to health services and community supports, housing, social engagement, and transportation.
132. Refresh the PA Link program by conducting a comprehensive program evaluation, redesigning a local and statewide No Wrong Door System, establishing channels for information and referral, managing a statewide resource database for case management, exploring outreach systems for follow-up and assistance, and launching a public awareness campaign.<sup>44</sup>
133. Utilize community spaces, such as Senior Community Centers and libraries, to provide information to connect older adults and individuals with disabilities to services and supports.



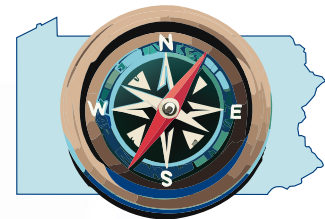
134. Improve and increase the network of local community partners, organizations, and places where older adults often look for resources to enhance their awareness of and connection to the Aging Network.

### **Raising awareness of existing opportunities**

135. Launch a public awareness campaign to expand the availability and use of Older Adult Daily Living Centers and LIFE programs and promote the broad range of services as an alternative option to more costly service utilization, such as personal assistance, nursing facilities, and hospital stays.
136. Develop and provide a toolkit to Senior Community Centers and other community-based organizations and for legislators to use at older adult fairs and similar locations to address volunteer and mentorship opportunities in their area.
137. Expand an awareness campaign of volunteer opportunities, utilizing existing resources, including information on the social and mental health benefits of volunteering.
138. Advocate for the creation of the Keystone Saves program.<sup>45</sup>
139. Increase outreach to art and culture professionals to enroll in the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Academy for Creative Aging.
140. Launch a campaign to promote awareness around accessibility-related housing resources and options.
141. Lead an education and awareness campaign for community-based organizations on best practices for intergenerational programming, such as the models promoted by the Pennsylvania Intergenerational Network (PIN) and Generations United.
142. Promote coordination between the AAAs, the Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF), and other agencies to support education and outreach of grandparents raising grandchildren.

### **Reaching and representing communities**

143. Reimagine PDA's Inside Aging publication as a printed and digital newsletter containing state-level resources, news, events, and significant dates for older adults, local community partners, municipalities, and legislators.<sup>46</sup>



144. Research cultural and linguistic barriers faced by diverse populations in accessing needed communication and information.

## **Preparing for emergencies**

145. Develop and build upon activities and mechanisms for older adults, families, and communities to plan and prepare for individual and public emergencies, especially those who live in nursing homes, are homebound, or belong to historically marginalized communities.

146. Expand awareness among older adults and caregivers of protocols for emergency communication, including those available in multiple languages and accessible formats.

## **Educating the community**

147. Address ageism and ableism that may be present with hospitals and other providers of mental health, substance use disorder (SUD), and long-term services and supports through the use of various learning management systems.

148. Utilize the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) to ensure ageism and ableism is included in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training and education.

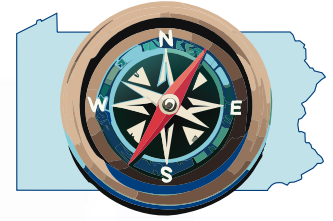
149. Conduct ageism and ableism education and training for all Commonwealth employees and contractors, members of the General Assembly, and the PA Judiciary and their staffs.

150. Develop and distribute an educational guide on voting rights, health care options and other community supports for previously incarcerated older adults returning to their communities, as well as their caregivers.

151. Develop and distribute marketing and educational materials to increase voting measures in assisted living, home care, and nursing homes.

152. Distribute existing resources for victims of abuse and neglect, including intimate partner or family member abuse, that contains resources for immediate help and assistance in multiple languages.

153. Expand education and training between public partners, community organizations, and stakeholders on alternative voting methods such as emergency ballot requests and mail-in ballots.



154. Expand programs to educate the Attorney General's Office, State and Local Police, Department of Insurance, and credit reporting agencies to improve safety supports and financial crime awareness.
155. Increase awareness and resources dedicated to early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of dementia, especially in diverse and underserved communities and populations with greater risk factors.
156. Launch a campaign targeting local officials regarding housing needs, options available, best practices, and promising models that would allow for more diversity in housing options.
157. Offer and promote ageism and ableism education and training for all employers conducting business in Pennsylvania.
158. Promote age-friendly university designation for the PA State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) schools.<sup>47</sup>
159. Provide annual professional development to public library staff on older adult services, including nutrition services, socialization opportunities, Medicare counseling, and evidence-based health and wellness programming.
160. Provide educational resources, in collaboration with advocacy organizations, on how to build or modify a home to allow for aging in place for those who would not otherwise qualify for Medicaid.

## **Leading and coordinating research**

161. Conduct independent and ongoing program evaluation of *Aging Our Way, PA* to assess and improve implementation progress.
162. Conduct a program evaluation to assess and improve marginalized or minority group access to older adult services.
163. Explore how the United Way of PA's Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) data can inform interventions related to housing, transportation, food, utilities, and other basic needs. Add PDA as owner and DCED and DHS as partners.<sup>48</sup>



*Aging Our Way, PA* is a commitment to older Pennsylvanians, and must be more than words on paper or a plan on a shelf. To achieve this, we have outlined several key next steps that will bring this plan to life and ensure that we are empowered to age our way and live in age-friendly towns, cities, counties, and regions across the Commonwealth.

## **Coordination, Collaboration, and Accountability**

Our commitment to the success of *Aging Our Way, PA* is dependent on the coordination and collaboration among our agency partners and private stakeholders. Everyone has a role to play and responsibility to uphold as we implement this plan. Appropriate mechanisms will be established to implement and execute each tactic outlined in the plan.

## **Transparency, Monitoring, and Reporting**

PDA pledges to conduct regular data monitoring, track tactic progress, and openly report plan impacts to the public through a publicly accessible dashboard.

## **Cost Avoidance and Savings**

Where possible, tactics in this plan will be used to divert older adults from needing higher cost services such as those paid by the Pennsylvania Medicaid program while supporting the expressed desire by individuals to age in their homes and communities.

## **Evaluation, Community Engagement, and Improvement**

We continue active engagement with our community members across the state to ensure that the voices of all older Pennsylvanians and caregivers, including the most marginalized, are incorporated into the plan. As a living document, the priorities will shift, the strategies will evolve, and the tactics will be developed to reflect the relevant needs of older Pennsylvanians.

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# Appendix A: Acronyms

Acronyms	Name of Office, Business, Title or Other Entity
AAA	Area Agency on Aging
AARP	No longer classified as an acronym
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADU	Accessory Dwelling Unit
AFFH	Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Plan
ALICE	Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed
ATP	Active Transportation Plan
BH	Behavioral Health
CAPABLE	Community Aging in Place - Advancing Better Living for Elders
CARIE	Center for Advocacy for the Rights & Interests of Elders
CHC	Community HealthChoices
CHCS	Center for Health Care Strategies
CMS	Center for Medicare/Medicaid Services
DAV	Disabled American Veterans
DCW	Direct Care Worker
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
ECHO	Elder Cottage Housing Opportunity
EO	Executive Order
HCBS	Home & Community Based Services
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
IIJA	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
LBFC	Legislative Budget and Finance Committee
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer +
LIHEAP	Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program
LIHWAP	Low Income Household Water Assistance Program
LTAP	Local Technical Assistance Program
LTC	Long-Term Care
LTC RISE	Long-term Care Resilience, Infrastructure Report, and Empowerment
LTCC	Long-Term Care Council
LTSS	Long-Term Services and Supports
MPA	Multisector Plan for Aging
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NF	Nursing Facility
OCYF	Office of Children, Youth, and Families
OPTIONS	Help at Home
P4A	Pennsylvania Association for Area Agencies on Aging
PIN	Pennsylvania Intergenerational Network
QIP	Quality Investment Pilot
REC	Recreation Engagement Coalition

# Appendix A: Acronyms

Acronyms	Name of Office, Business, Title or Other Entity
RPO	Regional Planning Organization
SHARE	Shared Housing and Resource Exchange
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SUD	Substance Use Disorder
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
WHO	World Health Organization

Acronyms	List of State Agencies
AGO	Attorney General's Office
BLD	Bureau of Library Development (within PDE)
DCED	Department of Community & Economic Development
DCNR	Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
DDAP	Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs
DGS	Department of General Services
DHS	Department of Human Services
DLI	Department of Labor & Industry
DMVA	Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs
DOBS	Department of Banking & Securities
DOC	Department of Corrections
DOH	Department of Health
DOR	Department of Revenue
DOS	Department of State
FBC	Fish & Boat Commission
FPC	Food Policy Council (within PDAg)
GBO	Governor's Budget Office
GCLGBT	Governor's Commission on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Affairs
GPO	Governor's Policy Office
OA	Office of Administration
OCL	Office of Commonwealth Libraries (within PDE)
OVR	Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (within DLI)
PASSHE	Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education
PBDA	Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority
PCCD	Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency
PCOA	Pennsylvania Council on the Arts
PDA	Pennsylvania Department of Aging
PDAg	Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
PDE	Pennsylvania Department of Education
PEMA	Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency
PENNDOT	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

# Appendix A: Acronyms

PGC	Pennsylvania Game Commission
PHRC	Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission
PSP	Pennsylvania State Police

# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority

## Unlocking Access (1-30)

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
1	Expand and fund the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program within PDA for individuals receiving home and community-based services (HCBS).	PDA	
2	Establish and maintain an appropriately staffed Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Disorders (ADRD) office within PDA.	PDA	
3	Review and amend provider licensure requirements that impede long-term care facility admission for older adults living with dementia.	DOS DOH	DHS
4	Review licensure requirements for skilled nursing facilities (SNF), Assisted Living Residences (ALRs), Personal Care Homes (PCHs), and administrators with respect to older adults living with dementia and amend policies and requirements to ensure facilities promote a culture of safety and reduce barriers for admission to facilities providing dementia-capable care.	DOH	DHS
5	Author a Long-Term Care Patient Bill of Rights that will protect the rights and dignity of older adults in the long-term care system, especially historically marginalized people.	DOH	DHS GCLGBT PHRC PDA
6	Increase the availability and quality of comprehensive physical and mental health services, social engagement, and supportive accessibility adaptations for incarcerated older adults, including expanding older adult enrichment programming.	DOC	
7	Review licensure requirements for skilled nursing facilities (SNF), Assisted Living Residences (ALRs), Personal Care Homes (PCHs), and administrators with respect to older adults with LTSS needs and behavioral health issues, including substance use disorder and those leaving the justice system, and modify policies and requirements to ensure facilities promote a culture of safety and reduce barriers for admission to facilities when needed and preferred.	DOH	DHS DOC DOS DDAP PDA
8	Expand the Quality Investment Pilot (QIP) Program, and use data from this program to support the development of value-based payment mechanisms.	DOH	

# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
9	Support and improve long-term care facilities by expanding the Long-Term Care Resiliency, Infrastructure Supports, and Empowerment (LTC RISE) program.	DOH	
10	Reestablish chore services as a benefit in Community HealthChoices (CHC).	DHS	
11	Advocate to Medicare to include coverage of dental, vision, and hearing services.	PDA	DHS
12	Advocate for expanded funding for home delivery of the Senior Food Box program.	PDAg	
13	Expand access to mobile farmers markets across the Commonwealth, particularly for older adults in communities with limited access to fresh nutritious foods.	PDAg	PDA
14	Expand awareness among older adults and throughout the Aging Network of eligibility for nutrition-related programs, such as SNAP, Senior Food Box, and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program.	PDAg	PDA DHS
15	Advocate for mental health parity in Medicare and explore opportunities for advocacy with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to address parity in Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans.	PDA	DHS
16	Explore the use of community mental health block grant funds to bridge access gaps, especially in rural areas, to connect older adults to behavioral health, including telehealth and in-home monitoring.	PDA DHS	
17	Increase access to behavioral health providers for long-term care recipients of nursing facility services, personal care, and assisted living.	DHS	DOH DDAP PID
18	Advocate for Medicare coverage of mental health crisis intervention, mobile mental health therapy, peer support services/certified peer specialist, and targeted case management.	PDA DHS	
19	Increase access to evidence-based resources and training related to detecting and reducing the risk of suicide in older adults.	PDA	
20	Advocate for increased funding for digital literacy programs available to older adults and individuals with disabilities through the Bureau of Library Development, and utilize libraries and Senior Community Center as host sites.	PDA	PDE DCED DLI
21	Collaborate with the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority (PBDA) to expand broadband access to rural Pennsylvanians by implementing the PBDA Digital Equity Plan.	DCED	PDA
22	Create grants for programs that provide older adults with devices, training, and technical support for digital connectivity.	DCED	PDE
23	Establish grants for rural libraries to offer social engagement opportunities and expand availability of accessible meeting spaces.	PDA	PDE
24	Incentivize the integration of Universal Design principles and Smart technologies in new and existing Senior Community Centers.	PDA	DCED



# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority



ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
25	Create and distribute a comprehensive accessibility guide and assessment tool for outreach and communication, including parameters for multiple languages, accessible formats, print and digital media, and dissemination channels to ensure cultural and linguistic sensitivity.	PDA	OA DLI
26	Expand accessible voting sites that allow for older adults to participate in all elections.	DOS	
27	Fund the expansion of volunteer poll translator recruitment to ensure that polling locations have translators available to assist older adult voters.	DOS	
28	Create more opportunities for intergenerational community-building, social participation, and food growth through the support of new and existing urban agriculture projects.	PDAG	PDA
29	Ensure social engagement opportunities are designed for diverse individuals to be inclusive and equitable.	PDA	
30	Develop a statewide online platform that offers virtual health and wellness programming, connection to information and resources, and opportunities for virtual social engagement	PDA	

## Aging in Community (31-103)

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
31	Create a resource for community partners that guides local implementation of <i>Aging Our Way, PA</i> and the development of local collaboration efforts.	PDA	
32	Provide educational workshops and resources to advance the Aging Network's ability to form and maintain relationships with other local and regional organizations, create diverse funding streams, develop new or innovative services and supports, and modernize the delivery of services to address the evolving needs of the older adults they serve in their community.	PDA	
33	Design and launch a grant writing education program to advance the Aging Network's ability to pursue external competitive grants.	PDA	
34	Encourage relevant state and local agencies within the Aging Network to use validated tools (e.g., UCLA Scale of Loneliness) to measure loneliness and social isolation and provide direction with subsequent interventions to connect those at risk to social participation opportunities.	PDA	
35	Create grant opportunities for Aging Network Partners to enhance local communication, outreach, and branding efforts.	PDA	
36	Research older adult and near older adult preferences to inform an action plan to reframe Senior Community Centers and congregate meals to better promote membership and participation.	PDA	
37	Create a Community Needs Assessment template to assess and improve the quality and satisfaction with Senior Community Center service and program offerings, operations, and environment.	PDA	

# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
38	Advocate for increased legal support funding for older adults including the victims of fraud and abuse.	PDA	DHS AG DOR PABar
39	Highlight the use of supported decision-making and all other appropriate options to provide the least restrictive alternatives to guardianship.	PDA	
40	Expand and fund innovative, unique, and creative models to expand affordable housing opportunities.	PDA	DCED PHFA PDA DHS
41	Expand and increase the number of people served and access to more services in the Help at Home (OPTIONS) program.	PDA	
42	Expand and support the Community Aging in Place Advancing Better Living for Elders (CAPABLE) program throughout the state.	PDA	DHS
43	Provide financial support to fund smart home and smart wearable technology for people who do not qualify for CHC or OPTIONS.	PDA	DHS
44	Spread and fund Shared Housing and Resource Exchange (SHARE) model to additional counties and expand the model to more populations including veterans and reentrants.	PDA	DHS DOC DMVA
45	Conduct research on expansion of shared living programs to align with PHRC'S Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing statewide goals.	PDA PHRC	
46	Support funding and policy to create age-friendly, dementia-friendly, and ADA-compliant communities to improve access and availability.	DCED	
47	Use 1115 waiver authority to expand access and supports for housing for individuals who are eligible for Pennsylvania's Medicaid program.	DHS	
48	Conduct a survey of municipal governments in the Commonwealth to assess current sidewalk inventories, document best practices for toolkits and technical assistance for municipal governments to maintain and enhance sidewalk inventories, and educate municipalities about grant opportunities for funding sidewalk and streetscape improvement projects.	DCED	PennDOT
49	Create and fund community planning and action grants and technical assistance opportunities to coordinate funding and resources for community infrastructure projects such as sidewalk repairs, transit stops, parking enhancements, and lighting installation.	DCED	PennDOT
50	Obtain a Statewide AARP Age-Friendly Designation and encourage more localities to seek out Age-Friendly Community designations.	PDA	DCED
51	Improve connections between mass transit and public outdoor recreation opportunities, specifically the DCNR supporting the PennDOT Active Transportation Plan.	DCNR	PennDOT
52	Prioritize funding for sidewalks in DCED grant programs.	DCED	PennDOT
53	Support PennDOT's Strategic Highway Safety Plan to support older adult driving, pedestrian, bicycle and transit safety.	PennDOT	PDA PSP

# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
54	Develop and promote the creation of easy trail loops in community and state parks.	DCNR	
55	Ensure that Pennsylvania state parks have accessible parking and bathrooms and increase the availability of beach wheelchairs, and accessible kayak launches and fishing access.	DCNR	
56	Increase the availability of adaptive facilities and equipment in parks and community spaces, including adult changing tables and park benches.	DCNR	
57	Expand skills-based learning opportunities for outdoor recreation activities targeted specifically for individuals with limited access to outdoor experiences.	DCNR	
58	Fund tree plantings and urban tree cover to ensure additional shading in local parks and improve healthful access to the outdoors.	DCNR	
59	Improve accessibility to all water-based recreation, including the installation of canoe and kayak launch sites, for people of all abilities on recreational lakes within state parks.	DCNR	
60	Increase access to “First Time” equipment kits and public programs in outdoor recreation.	DCNR	
61	Support DCNR goal of having a park/trail within a 10-minute walk of every PA resident.	DCNR	
62	Support DCNR’s assessment project to catalogue 10,000 miles of trails, particularly through an accessibility lens, to inform decisions and to prioritize areas of improvement.	DCNR	
63	Evaluate and update printed materials, displays, and other programming created and distributed by DCNR to include cultural diversity and ensure inclusive content.	DCNR	
64	Conduct research to identify priority communities in need of strategic recreation investments to increase available green spaces.	DCNR	
65	Create a <i>Pennsylvania Rx for Nature</i> program to increase health and happiness as well as foster environmental stewardship.	DCNR	DOH PDA
66	Support skilled nursing facility residents’ access to recreation therapy, socialization, and education opportunities that address loneliness in residential nursing facilities.	DOH	DHS DCNR FBC PGC PDE PDA
67	Engage diverse users, including career and technology education students and staff, in the management, planning, and design of outdoor recreation spaces and access opportunities.	DCNR	PDE DCED
68	Increase capacity of public land managers to maintain infrastructure by securing necessary staffing and funding levels as well as increasing intra- and interagency cooperation.	DCNR	
69	Use data to prioritize communities without access to recreation areas and partner with county and local planners to improve access.	DCNR PennDOT	DCED

# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
70	Use state grant programs to fund community-based programs that advance health and wellness and connect Pennsylvanians with outdoor recreation programming for older adults.	DCNR	
71	Expand public access to outdoor recreation facilities through joint-use agreements with school districts and universities, in adherence with safety and security policies.	DCNR	PDE
72	Support the Recreation Engagement Coalition (REC) as they develop a toolkit to create outdoor connection for individuals across the lifespan.	DCNR	
73	Advocate for the reauthorization and enhancement of important utility-related consumer protections (Title 66, Chapter 24).	PUC	
74	Simplify intake process for Universal Service Programs.	PUC	
75	Support the expansion of utility assistance programs for older adults, including the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP).	DCED	DHS PUC
76	Create partnerships between PDA, the housing sector, and health and social service experts to develop and administer aging-specific grants for older adults experiencing homelessness.	PDA	DCED DHS
77	Explore temporary housing options for older adults with complex needs who are transitioning to permanent housing, including but not limited to those who have experienced homelessness, institutionalization, or incarceration.	DHS	PDA
78	Incentivize the integration of Universal Design principles and Smart Technology in new housing constructions.	DCED	DLI
79	Increase access to Assistive Technology to enhance housing accessibility for individuals with complex needs.	DHS	PDA DCED
80	Support the development of independent and “visitable” living communities to ensure that older adults, particularly those with lower income levels or specialized needs, have options for rightsizing their housing.	PHFA	
81	Research how to engage with diverse audiences on topics related to housing to promote positive outcomes.	DHS	PDA PHFA DCED
82	Advocate for legislation that requires higher-density options, such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) or Elder Cottage Housing Opportunities (ECHOs), to be considered in local zoning and planning regulations.	DCED	
83	Increase use of land trusts and banks to promote more inventory with long-term affordability, with a focus on serving older adults.	DCED	
84	Repurpose under-utilized university spaces, consistent with standard surplus disposition processes, to create affordable housing for older adults through continuing market research, pursuing financing and funding opportunities, and age- and disability-friendly planning.	PASSHE	DCED DGS
85	Propose tax-related changes which would make housing more affordable for older adult homeowners.	DOR	

# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
86	Expand funding, increase availability, and review eligibility of home repair programs to expand access to home modification and repair services.	DCED	DHS PDA PDAg PHFA
87	Provide increased funding for home modifications services through Medicaid waivers.	DHS	
88	Advocate for the expansion of colleges and universities to offer free or discounted education to older adults and individuals with disabilities.	PDE	PDA
89	Advocate for the expansion of the Senior Companion program to all counties throughout the state.	PDA	
90	Establish a comprehensive discount program for older adults and caregivers to participate in community activities.	PDA	
91	Collaborate with arts and cultural organizations to provide meaningful ways for different generations to connect and participate that foster dialogue and appreciation between groups, community enrichment, and self-expression, including art exhibitions, museum visits, concerts and festivals.	PDA PA Council on the Arts	
92	Develop artist-in-residence program opportunities to connect Senior Community Centers and artists who have completed the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Academy for Creative Aging.	PA Council on the Arts	
93	Encourage the growth and creation of innovative respite programs, including Memory Cafes and other models to support persons living with dementia and their care partners.	PDA	
94	Engage schools and libraries to create and promote intergenerational programing that includes young adult students and older adults.	PDE	
95	Explore opportunities for congregate-meal providers to attract program participants by offering alternative menu, medically-tailored, and culturally-tailored meal options in addition to traditional hearty meals.	PDA DHS	DOH
96	Strengthen workplace flexibilities that allow older adults to continue working and seek new employment through the achievement of Barrier Remediation subgoals from the 2024-2028 Pennsylvania Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan.	PDA	DLI
97	Expand funding for the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) program for outreach to raise awareness and increase access to the program.	DLI	
98	Design accessible instructions and create filters for customizable job searches on Pa CareerLink® filters to highlight the many flexible opportunities.	DLI	PDA
99	Include more specific older adult age groups on the Labor and Industry Older Workers by Industry Dashboard to increase awareness of the economic impact that older adults have on the PA economy.	DLI	
100	Launch a multi-year grant program to establish volunteer coordinators in libraries and community-based organizations.	PDA	PDE

# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
101	Research and promote models for flexible work opportunities to support people as they age, experience a disability, or become homebound.	PDA	DLI OA
102	Expand partnership between Attorney General's Office, Department of Banking & Securities (DOBS), and community advocacy organizations such as Center for Advocacy for the Rights & Interests of Elders (CARIE) and AARP Pennsylvania to expand educational programs that inform older adults about how to recognize and report common scams and frauds.	PDA	DOBS PSP AGO PDE
103	Expand the existing PDA task force with state and local law enforcement agencies to investigate and combat fraud and scams targeting older adults.	PDA	PSP DOBS

## Gateways to Independence (104-124)

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
104	Encourage older adults and individuals with disabilities to seek vehicle modifications needed to maintain use of vehicles, including those necessary for employment.	DLI DHS	PennDOT PDA
105	Increase awareness of existing safe driving education programs.	PennDOT	
106	Invest in additional programming related to Older Driver Safety Awareness Week.	PennDOT	
107	Develop a rider awareness advertising program that highlights ADA requirements and respectful behavior.	PennDOT	
108	Develop and disseminate a best practice guide for transit driver recruitment and retention.	PennDOT	
109	Develop and implement or improve ADA, accessibility, and dementia-friendly trainings for transit authority employees.	PennDOT	
110	Improve coordination between transit providers, the Veterans' Administration (VA), and VA medical facilities to address gaps in access to services for veterans, including veterans in rural areas.	PennDOT	DMVA
111	Provide resources to modernize the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) van program and develop a fleet replacement schedule.	DMVA	
112	Conduct research to investigate and evaluate the Shared Ride program, rideshare programs, and other third party options for their efficacy in meeting the needs of older adults, or as cost-effective alternatives to buses or vans on low travel days and after hours.	PennDOT	
113	Advocate for local coordination, zoning changes, and other mechanisms to support transit-oriented development of retirement and older adult living communities.	DCED	PennDOT
114	Conduct an evaluation and develop toolkits which may include innovative ideas for county and municipal governments to maintain and improve public transit services.	PennDOT	
115	Establish an Older Driver Task Force of transportation stakeholders, including but not limited to transit providers, state agencies, and advocates to improve older driver safety.	PennDOT	

# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
116	Evaluate the inclusion and engagement of older adults in Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Planning Organizations (RPOs) to advance aging and disability equity.	PennDOT	
117	Increase awareness and utilization of the PennDOT Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP.)	PennDOT	
118	Support Pennsylvania House Resolution 174 for the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct a study and issue a report on the current status, management, and implementation of mass or public transit in Pennsylvania's rural communities.	PennDOT	
119	Advocate to increase the availability of paratransit and accessible rideshare vehicles.	PUC PDA DLI PennDOT	
120	Educate non-profit organizations on PennDOT's Private Non-Profit Vehicle Grant to fund vehicles for transportation of older adults and persons with disabilities.	PennDOT	
121	Educate personal care attendants and recipients that the delivery of transportation is covered under Medicaid-funded personal care services.	DHS	
122	Inventory and raise awareness of existing technology solutions that assist people with specialized transportation, including Find My Ride, Fareless Payment, and Vehicle Locators.	PennDOT	
123	Enhance awareness of competitive rural transportation grants available through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and related technical assistance available through PennDOT.	PennDOT	
124	Evaluate the funding and distribution of lottery funds for the Shared Ride program to maximize efficiency and impact.	PennDOT	PDA

## Caregiver Supports (125-130)

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
125	Update and develop an implementation plan for the 2019 Blueprint for Strengthening Pennsylvania's Direct Care Workforce starting with recommendations to enhance wages, benefits, training, and development of a career ladder.	PDA	GPO DHS GBO DLI
126	Change Scope of Practice laws to allow healthcare paraprofessionals and other individuals involved in supporting the clinical and long-term care needs of older adults and individuals with disabilities to perform functions they are qualified to perform.	DOH	
127	Advocate for changes to federal and state laws to allow legal immigrants and refugees to be hired as direct care workers.	DOS	

# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority



ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
128	Develop a statewide Caregiver Toolkit, including information on supports and resources and a caregiver screening tool.	PDA	

## Education and Navigation (131-163)

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
129	Expand existing opportunities for education, training, and case management for caregivers.	PDA	DHS
130	Explore the establishment of a tax-free savings and incentives account for caregivers.	DOR	
131	Establish at least one dedicated navigator in every AAA equipped with standardized training in case management, information and referral tools, customer service, and resources related to health services and community supports, housing, social engagement, and transportation.	PDA	DHS PHFA DCED DDAP DOH DOC
132	Refresh the PA Link program by conducting a comprehensive program evaluation, redesigning a local and statewide No Wrong Door system, establishing channels for information and referral, managing a statewide resource database for case management, exploring outreach systems for follow-up and assistance, and launching a public awareness campaign.	PDA	
133	Utilize community spaces, such as Senior Community Centers and libraries, to provide information to connect older adults and individuals with disabilities to services and supports.	PDA	PDE
134	Improve and increase the network of local community partners, organizations, and places where older adults often look for resources to enhance their awareness of and connection to the Aging Network.	PDA	PDE
135	Launch a public awareness campaign to expand the availability and use of Older Adult Daily Living Centers and LIFE programs and promote the broad range of services as an alternative option to more costly service utilization, such as personal assistance, nursing facilities, and hospital stays.		
136	Develop and provide a toolkit to Senior Community Centers and other community-based organizations and for legislators to use at older adult fairs and similar locations to address volunteer and mentorship opportunities in their area.	PDA	
137	Expand an awareness campaign of volunteer opportunities, utilizing existing resources, including information on the social and mental health benefits of volunteering.	PDA	PDE
138	Advocate for the creation of the Keystone Saves program.	PDA	
139	Increase outreach to art and culture professionals to enroll in the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Academy for Creative Aging.	PA Council on the Arts	



# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
140	Launch a campaign to promote awareness around accessibility-related housing resources and options.	PDA	DHS P4A DCED PHFA
141	Lead an education and awareness campaign for community-based organizations on best practices for intergenerational programming, such as the models promoted by the Pennsylvania Intergenerational Network (PIN) and Generations United.	PDA	PDE
142	Promote coordination between the AAAs, the Office of Children, Youth and Families (OCYF), and other agencies to support education and outreach of grandparents raising grandchildren.	PDA	PDE
143	Reimagine PDA's Inside Aging publication as a printed and digital newsletter containing state-level resources, news, events, and significant dates for older adults, local community partners, municipalities, and legislators.	PDA	
144	Research cultural and linguistic barriers faced by diverse populations in accessing needed communication and information.	PDA	
145	Develop and build upon activities and mechanisms for older adults, families, and communities to plan and prepare for individual and public emergencies, especially those who live in nursing homes, are homebound, or belong to historically marginalized communities.	PDA	DOH PEMA PDE
146	Expand awareness among older adults and caregivers of protocols for emergency communication, including those available in multiple languages and accessible formats.	PDA	DOH PEMA
147	Address ageism and ableism with hospitals and other providers of mental health, substance use disorder (SUD,) and long-term services and supports through the use of various learning management systems.	DOH PDA	DDAP DHS PHA PDE DOS
148	Utilize the Department of Education and the PHRC to ensure ageism & ableism is included in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training and education.	PDE	PHRC
149	Conduct ageism and ableism education and training for all Commonwealth employees and contractors, members of the General Assembly, and the PA Judiciary and their staffs.	OA PDA	
150	Develop and distribute an educational guide on voting rights, health care options and other community supports for previously incarcerated older adults returning to their communities, as well as their caregivers.	PDA	DOS DOC PDE
151	Develop and distribute marketing and educational materials to increase voting measures in assisted living, home care, personal care homes, and nursing homes.	DOH	DHS DOS
152	Distribute existing resources for victims of abuse and neglect, including intimate partner or family member abuse, that contains resources for immediate help and assistance in multiple languages.	PDA	DHS PCCD PDE

# Appendix B: List of Tactics by Priority

ID Number	Tactic	Owner(s)	Partner(s)
153	Expand education and training between public partners, community organizations, and stakeholders on alternative voting methods such as emergency ballot requests and mail-in ballots.	DOS	
154	Expand programs to educate the Attorney General's Office, State and Local Police, Department of Insurance, and credit reporting agencies to improve safety supports and financial crime awareness.	DOBS	
155	Increase awareness and resources dedicated to early detection, diagnosis, and treatment of dementia, especially in diverse and underserved communities and populations with greater risk factors.	PDA	DOH
156	Launch a campaign targeting local officials regarding housing needs, options available, best practices, and promising models that would allow for more diversity in housing options.	DCED	
157	Offer and promote ageism and ableism education and training for all employers conducting business in Pennsylvania.	DCED DLI	
158	Promote age-friendly university designation for the PA State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) schools.	PASSHE	
159	Provide annual professional development to public library staff on older adult services, including nutrition services, socialization opportunities, Medicare counseling, and evidence-based health and wellness programming.	PDA	DHS PDE
160	Provide educational resources, in collaboration with advocacy organizations, on how to build or modify a home to allow for aging in place for those who would not otherwise qualify for Medicaid.	DCED	PDA PDE
161	Conduct independent and ongoing program evaluation of Aging Our Way, PA to assess and improve implementation progress.	PDA	
162	Conduct a program evaluation to assess and improve marginalized or minority group access to older adult services.	PDA	
163	Explore how the United Way of PA's Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) data can inform interventions related to housing, transportation, food, utilities, and other basic needs.	PDA	DHS DCED

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