



AARP Network of Age-Friendly States & Territories

Well-designed, livable communities promote well-being and sustain economic growth, leading to happier, healthier residents – of all ages

The AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities (AFC) has created a new Age-Friendly State & Territorial membership program. In March 2017 the World Health Organization’s Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC) expanded its eligibility for membership to include sub-national levels of government, in recognition that actions by multiple levels of government are required in order to create environments in communities that are truly age-friendly. As such, any state or territory that joins the new **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States & Territories** program will also be simultaneously welcomed into the World Health Organization’s global network.

This evolution of the AARP Network to include higher levels of government reflects two key developments during the six-year period that the AFC Network has been in existence. First, as of July 1, 2019 with encouragement and assistance from AARP, the program has grown to include over 380 communities, representing over 87.5 million people. Given the work in many communities and the interest generated, a number of states where some of these communities reside have requested to participate in the network as well. Second, the experiences of communities enrolled in the network make clear as they develop and implement action plans, that local efforts can be either bolstered or stymied by policies or procedures at the state level. Partnership and aligned efforts between state and local jurisdictions can bring even greater impact to a community. Thus, a state that commits to become age-friendly will create a policy environment that empowers and supports communities in that state to more successfully become age-friendly communities.

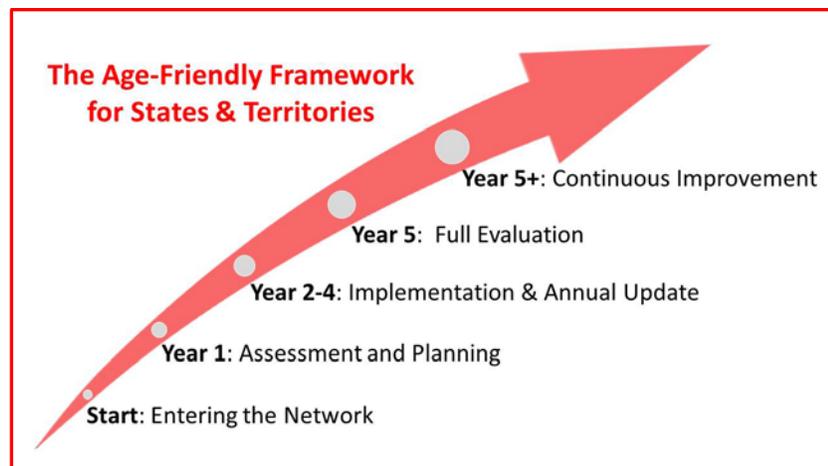
AARP Network of Age-Friendly States & Territories Process

To support the enrollment of States and Territories into the Age-Friendly Network, AARP has developed a 5 year process for states to follow when they enroll in the Network. The process is structured in three phases: Entering the Network; Planning; and Implementation & Evaluation.

Phase 1 – Entering the Network: Complete the Application Form and attach a letter of support from the Governor/Executive indicating a commitment to the Network of Age-Friendly States & Territories planning, implementation and continual improvement Framework

Phase 2 – Assessment & Planning (Year 1): This phase includes 4 steps:

- *Designate a lead department/agency responsible for the planning, execution and evaluation of the initiative, including clear structures and procedures to ensure accountability and sustainability. This includes:*
 - Convene an advisory body that includes representation from additional state offices and departments, local



government leadership, non-governmental and private sector stakeholders across the eight domains, as well as older adult residents who will be affected by the work set out in the action plan.

- *Conduct a baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the state or territory.* This includes:
 - Create a State Profile illustrating a demographic snapshot of the state related to older adults; Conduct an Analysis of State Collected Data/Information related to programs, services and funding; Conduct an Assessment of current age-friendly policies, procedures and legislation currently in place, as well as identifying policies that act as barriers to age-friendliness at the state or local level.
 - Engage in conversations/listening with community leaders and residents across the state to understand needs, priorities and perceptions of the age-friendliness of the state.
- *Develop a four-year action plan based on findings of the assessments.* This includes:
 - Apply an aging lens for planning, processes & decision-making and funding opportunities
 - Take actions to create an enabling operational and policy environment for the state & territory itself and for the local communities within its jurisdiction to become more age-friendly; Engage with representatives from diverse local communities
 - Define clear indicators for success and collect, aggregate and provide targeted local level age-friendly data
- *Consult with the relevant AARP state and national office early on and at appropriate junctures in the development of its plan.* This includes: Submit an action plan no later than 1 year after joining the Network and undertake a 4-year period of implementation and appropriate plan revision

Phase 3 – Implementation, Annual Updates & Year 5 Evaluation (Years 2-5): After approval of their action plan, Network members will be required to submit an annual update showing movement toward, and a five-year full evaluation showing level of attainment of, specific indicators/metrics identified in the action plan. Examples include:

- Procedural/regulatory changes made by State & Territory offices/departments/agencies
- Policy updates including legislative actions
- Inclusion of Age-friendly priorities in funding opportunities
- Tactics implemented to address the needs of unique and disparate communities
- Continued and active engagement of older adults, leadership from municipalities, and all state offices and departments throughout the Age-Friendly cycle.
- New opportunities and initiatives identified since development of initial plan

Phase 4 – Continuous Improvement (Years 5+): Upon completion of phase 3, states will be able to continue their membership in the Network by entering into further planning and implementation cycles.

Note: State & Territorial membership in the Age-Friendly Network does not connote membership on behalf of any local communities within that jurisdiction. Interested local communities must apply separately for membership to the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

Benefits to States and Territories of Joining the Network of Age-Friendly Communities

Direct benefits of membership include:

- Access to a global network of participating municipalities and to technical advice from aging and civil society experts at AARP
- Access to key information about the Network of Age-Friendly States & Territories, such as the latest news and information about best practices, events, results, challenges, and new initiatives
- Opportunities for partnership with other states and territories, both domestic and international
- Learning collaborations, mentoring and peer networking with other state & territory members of the Network.
- Public recognition of the state's commitment to become age-friendly
- Promotion through AARPs media channels