



Examples of Statewide Age-Friendly Initiatives

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Introduction

As states are investigating how to best support growing populations of older adults, statewide age-friendly initiatives are becoming increasingly common. These initiatives, including policies, programs, and strategies, are aimed at improving access to health care, long-term services and supports, and social, economic, and environmental resources in order to support the health, wellbeing, and independence of all residents.¹ Notably, statewide initiatives are able to promote more efficient, coordinated, and equitable use of resources.¹⁻³ For rural communities, this is of critical concern as they are home to a greater share of older adults than urban communities, and funding, workforce, and general resources for aging supports is often more limited or fragmented.^{2,4,5}

Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to provide examples of statewide and rural-focused initiatives that support aging in place for older adults. A complementary policy brief, [*Statewide Age-Friendly Initiatives: An Environmental Scan*](#),⁶ identified 33 age-friendly initiatives across 22 states, six of which included an explicit rural focus. This guide provides an overview of those initiatives.

Approach

To identify statewide age-friendly initiatives, the research team conducted an environmental scan using Google. Search terms included the state name, either “aging in place” or “age friendly” (policies, programs, or strategies that support the health, wellbeing, and independence of all people as they age), and the Boolean operator “AND” (e.g., “Arizona AND ‘aging in place’” or “Arizona AND ‘age friendly’”). This was replicated for each of the 50 U.S. states. Each statewide initiative that we discovered was documented in Excel. Additionally, we searched each initiative’s website to identify any explicit rural focus. This was done by reviewing the website’s navigation bar as well as using the website’s internal search bar or the Control+F function to find any mentions of “rural.” These findings were documented in Excel with a description and related focus areas.

Statewide Aging in Place Initiatives

The initiatives in this guide are not meant to be an exhaustive list, but rather are intended to provide examples of the scope of initiatives, and in particular, initiatives that include a rural focus. Additionally, the degree to which these programs are currently active varies. However, the range of initiatives serves to provide ideas of what is possible and how various states are approaching age-friendly strategies. The following tables provide a short description of each initiative, along with the main focus areas and where to access more information.

Nationwide Initiatives

These initiatives represent examples of organizations that have national networks to support states as they implement age-friendly strategies, policies, and programs. The provided descriptions reflect the overall network although participating states likely have unique strategies in place.

Initiative Name	Description	States Involved (As of February 2021)
AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities	AARP engages with elected officials, partner organizations, and local leaders to guide participating states and communities through the age-friendly network's assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation processes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New York, Massachusetts, Colorado, Florida, Michigan, and Maine
TFAH (Trust for America's Health) Age-Friendly Public Health Network	TFAH is partnering with state and local health departments to implement a public health framework to improve the health and well-being of older adults. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.tfah.org/initiatives/age-friendly-public-health/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Florida, Michigan, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Washington

State Initiatives with a Rural Focus

These initiatives have an explicit focus on rural communities, whether as a main focus, part of a priority focus, or as an underserved population. The focus areas included below are only those that are rural-specific. Initiatives may have others that are broader in scope.

Initiative Name (State)	Description	Rural Focus Area
Age Friendly AZ (Arizona)	Fostering collaboration between local governments, nonprofit agencies, academic institutions, and community groups, Age Friendly AZ promotes strategies that enable older adults to live their best lives, provide leadership and support, and serve as a source of information, education, resources, innovation, and solutions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.agefriendlyaz.org/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation
Age-Friendly Care, PA (Pennsylvania)	Age-Friendly Care, PA develops and designs partnerships and programming among geriatric centers, healthcare organizations, primary care providers, healthcare students, community organizations, and older adults to improve the care of older adults and persons living with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias in rural and underserved areas of PA. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://agefriendlycarepa.psu.edu/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Development; Provider Training and Education; Dementia-Friendly

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State Initiatives with a Rural Focus (continued)

Initiative Name (State)	Description	Rural Focus Area
Age Friendly Community Workgroup (Maine)	The Council's mission was to build a strong, multidisciplinary network that drew upon wisdom, experience, and data to influence policy, educate stakeholders, and advance initiatives that moved them toward their vision. As a result of this effort, the Tri-State Learning Collaborative (see State Initiatives below) was conceived and launched. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://mainecouncilonaging.org/afc-workgroup/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation
Age Friendly Minnesota (Minnesota)	A statewide policy to promote healthy aging that requires engaging with older adults as contributors to the social, economic and civic fabric of our communities, and encouraging physical and psychological health and well-being. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://mn.gov/dhs/age-friendly-mn/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies rural communities as one of nine underserved groups
Nevada Interprofessional Healthy Aging Network (NIHAN; Nevada)	The NIHAN develops interprofessional education training programs to enhance an integrated geriatrics healthcare workforce to improve health outcomes of older adults and to promote Age-Friendly Health Systems and Dementia-Friendly Communities in southern Nevada. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.nihan.care/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider Training and Education
Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging (Colorado)	The Strategic Action Planning Group on Aging is developing a comprehensive long-term strategic plan and recommending specific actions and bills to the General Assembly that address the impact of the shifting aging demographic. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://agingstrategy.colorado.gov/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation

State Initiatives

The initiatives below are examples of statewide efforts that do not include an explicit rural focus.

Initiative Name (State)	Description	Focus Areas
Age-Friendly Oregon Webinar Series (Oregon)	The Age-Friendly Oregon Webinar Series equips participants with tools and information to learn more about and become better advocates for age-friendly communities. Each features an age-friendly topic and highlights current research, best practices, and policy solutions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://states.aarp.org/oregon/age-friendly-oregon-webinar-series 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education and Resource Development

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State Initiatives (continued)

Initiative Name (State)	Description	Focus Areas
Age-Friendly Rhode Island (Rhode Island)	Age-Friendly Rhode Island is an interagency and cross-sectoral coalition that aims to build a community that enables older Rhode Islanders to live independently with the care, support, and resources needed to foster health, well-being, social connectedness, and a meaningful life. • https://agefriendlyri.org/	• General Aging and Health
Age-Friendly Summit (Oregon)	The Summit featured policy makers and advocates from around Oregon to share innovations and promising practices in housing, transportation, economic development, and health to make Oregon more age-friendly. • https://states.aarp.org/oregon/gov-brown-to-kick-off-age-friendly-summit	• Education and Resource Development
Age-Friendly Wyoming (Wyoming)	Managed by community volunteers, Age-Friendly Wyoming is being developed as an organization that covers all things age-friendly in Wyoming and supports building Wyoming communities that are safe and highly livable for people of all ages and abilities. • https://agefriendlywyoming.org/	• General Aging and Health
Age On (Nevada)	Age On is a non-profit organization that uses purposeful communication and education to drive change through advocacy, exposing problems, and developing solutions to eradicate ageism by understanding other underlying oppressions. • https://ageonmovement.org/	• Equity and Inclusion; Education and Resource Development
Connecticut for Livable Communities (Connecticut)	Connecticut for Livable Communities is an initiative to prepare Connecticut for its growing aging population while promoting policies that enhance the lives of older adults, enable people to stay in their homes and communities, and support choice, independence and dignity for all residents. • https://ctcwcs.com/livable-communities/	• Health and Social Services; Housing; Transportation
Delaware Aging Network (DAN; Delaware)	DAN is comprised of nonprofit organizations and aims to create an integrated, collaborative network of service providers to help seniors meet the challenges of growing older through expanded outreach and services. • https://www.delawareagingnetwork.org/	• Housing; General Aging and Health; Transportation

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State Initiatives (continued)

Initiative Name (State)	Description	Focus Areas
Kūpuna Aging in Place (KAP; Hawai'i)	KAP is a multi-year grant program supporting organizations that provide a range of supportive services for low- to moderate-income kūpuna (older adults) age 65 and older and their caregivers so that kūpuna in Hawaii are able to age in place. • https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/grants/kupuna-aging-in-place	• Grants; Health and Social Services; Caregiving
Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative (Massachusetts)	The Collaborative is a network of leaders across community, health and wellness, government, advocacy, research, business, education, and philanthropy who have come together to advance healthy aging and opportunities for health, participation, and security. • https://mahealthyagingcollaborative.org/	• General Aging and Health; Education and Resource Development; Dementia-Friendly
Master Plan for Aging (California)	The Master Plan is a blueprint for aging across the lifespan with five goals and 23 strategies. This calls on all California communities to build a California where people of all ages and abilities are engaged, valued, and afforded equitable opportunities to thrive as they age, how and where they choose. • https://mpa.aging.ca.gov/	• Housing; General Aging and Health; Inclusion and Equity; Caregiving; Economic Security
New Hampshire Alliance for Healthy Aging (NH AHA; New Hampshire)	NH AHA is a statewide coalition of stakeholders focused on the health and well-being of older adults in New Hampshire and works to promote its shared vision of communities that advance culture, policies, and services which support older adults and their families. • https://nhaha.info/	• Health and Social Services; Housing; Caregiving; Transportation
Safe Mobility for Life Coalition (Florida)	Working together with the Florida Department of Transportation and Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy at Florida State University, the Safe Mobility for Life Coalition's mission is to implement a strategic plan to increase the safety, access, and mobility for aging road users and eliminate fatalities and reduce serious injuries. • http://safemobilityfl.com/	• Transportation
Tennessee Dementia Friendly Communities (Tennessee)	The Tennessee Department of Health developed and maintains a toolkit to help communities become dementia friendly. Communities are encouraged to utilize sections of the toolkit that work best for the needs of the population they are serving. • https://www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/office-of-patient-care-advocacy/tennessee-dementia-friendly-communities.html	• Dementia-Friendly

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State Initiatives (continued)


Initiative Name (State)	Description	Focus Areas
Tri-State Learning Collaborative on Aging (TSLC; Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont)	TSLC supports, strengthens, and cultivates current community-based initiatives and systemic best practices that help older adults thrive in their homes and communities. The TSLC does this by building partnerships across sectors, informing public policy, changing attitudes about aging, and increasing knowledge among providers, advocates, and policy makers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://agefriendly.community/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Aging and Health; Education and Resource Development; Dementia-Friendly

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