

# The Age-Friendly New Jersey Statewide Collaborative

## What is an Age-Friendly Community?

Age-friendly refers to how community features support the health and well-being of residents as they experience long lives. Age-friendly communities provide safe, walkable streets, affordable and accessible housing and transportation options, access to needed services, and opportunities for residents of all ages to participate in community life.

## What is the Age-Friendly New Jersey Statewide Collaborative?

The Age-Friendly New Jersey Statewide Collaborative is a group of New Jersey organizations and leaders working to promote state and local policies and practices that support long, healthy lives. It will initiate a statewide coordinated effort that will advance age-friendly state policies and accelerate the local implementation of policies and programs that support long lives. The Age-Friendly New Jersey Statewide Collaborative includes:

- **The Steering Committee:** a multi-sector group focused on coordinating and supporting the work of the collaborative, including setting high-level strategic direction and policies that guide the overall collaborative.
- **The Local Accelerator Sub-Committee:** a multi-sector group focused on identify, connecting, and advancing ways to accelerate local action and implementation support long lives in communities across New Jersey
- **The State Policy Sub-Committee:** a multi-sector group focused on identifying, prioritizing, and developing state advocacy strategies, policy, and practices that embed a person-centered and place-based approach to aging within and across a broad range of issues and sectors.

## How Can the Collaborative Foster the Creation of Age-friendly Communities?

Like many communities around the country and the world, New Jersey's demographics are shifting towards a population that is living longer. Currently at 23% of the population, by 2030 NJ's residents over the age of 60 will outnumber students in our schools. The time to prepare is now; and creating age-friendly places in a manner that results in long-term, systemic change requires deliberative processes and methods. Thoughtful collaboration and partnership are critical to organizing complex systems across disciplines at both state and local levels; while understanding that state and local policy and implementation are two distinct, but complementary components. This collaborative will create synergies across various sectors by:

- Encouraging the State of New Jersey to be more age-friendly in policies and engagement.
- Integrating an age-friendly perspective into state and local decision-making.
- Expanding the implementation of local actions that create age-friendly places and systems.
- Mobilizing and connecting community members and leaders engaged in age-friendly community building.
- Changing perceptions and conversations to reflect the inherent value of people as we age.