

# *Age-Friendly Ocean County:* An Age-Friendly Process and Program Cycle

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# Session Overview

Describe how *Age-Friendly Ocean County* is achieving its requirements to maintain AARP Age-Friendly designation through five goals or milestones:

- 1) a cross-sector, County Advisory Committee;
- 2) community assessments;
- 3) a countywide communications campaign;
- 4) an Action Plan based on stakeholder engagement and assessment insights; and
- 5) dissemination of findings for potential replication in other Counties, with an emphasis on identifying municipal readiness for age-friendly action planning.



# Background

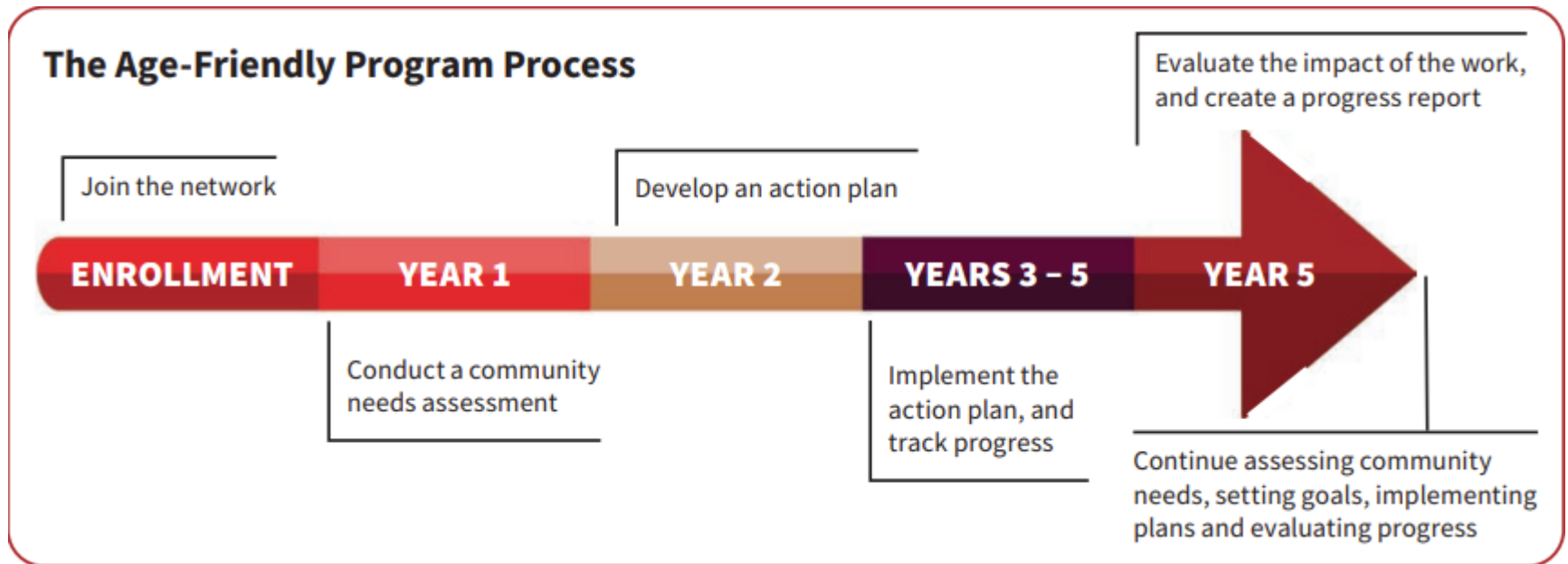
- New Jersey (NJ) is one of 12 U.S. state or territory members of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities, and Ocean County is one of four age-friendly counties in the state.
- Ocean County ranks second in the State for the largest percentage of adults aged 65 and older (22.2%) or 139,780 residents.\*
- In 2021, Governor Phil Murphy signed [Executive Order 227](#) calling for the formation of an Age-Friendly State Advisory Council within Human Services (DHS) and the development of an Age-Friendly Blueprint outlining strategies to advance age-friendly practices across the state.

\*Based on 5-year estimates of the American Community Survey (2017-2021)

# Background

- In 2023, the Ocean County Board of Commissioners signed a Letter of Commitment and adopted a Resolution expressing their desire and commitment to becoming Age-Friendly, making Ocean County the third NJ County at that time to officially become a member of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities.
- The [Blueprint](#) was released In May 2024, and in August 2024, DHS announced \$5.5 million to launch an Age-Friendly Community Grant Program to help advance practices prioritizing those in the Blueprint (e.g., housing, health care, transportation, socialization, employment, and communication and outreach).

# AARP Age-Friendly Program Process



Reference: AARP. (2014, January 1). *An introduction to the AARP network of age-friendly states and Communities*. AARP. <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2014/an-introduction.html>

# Summary

Age-Friendly Ocean County is an 18-month project that will employ innovative, multi-sectoral, and cross-departmental steps that will

- 1) Expand Ocean County's comprehensive aging network and current programs and services to identify, implement, and evaluate age-friendly policies, systems, and environmental conditions that will lead to sustainable and transformative action by achieving its five goals or milestones;
- 2) Fulfill Ocean County's requirements for AARP Age-Friendly designation;
- 3) Serve as a model for age-friendly designation and planning for expansion to other counties;
- 4) Identify three Ocean County municipalities for readiness for age-friendly action planning at the local level; and
- 5) Position Ocean County to leverage future state and national resources to implement and evaluate the strategies and best practices detailed in the Plan that improve communities for older adults and enable residents to remain in their homes as they age.



# Thank you!

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