



Thriving Older People Goal:

All older people in Maine are valued and able to thrive and age in their workplaces and communities with health, independence, and dignity.

Why this issue is important: As we age, we are growing and learning – and gathering momentum through life experiences and insights. This momentum can contribute to building vital communities and a strong Maine economy. However, stereotypes and negative attitudes often hold Maine back. Indeed, our older people comprise a largely untapped resource for communities and workplaces. As a society, we need to adjust our attitudes and apply innovative approaches to the challenges and opportunities of our aging population. People older than 50 generate over \$7 trillion annually in U.S. economic activity. Maine’s older population has the potential to drive economic growth and innovation and to help improve the lives of everyone.

What we learned: In recent years, the field of aging in Maine has made great strides through the dedication of leaders, active community members, and committed organizations. Established organizations such as the Area Agencies on Aging and AARP have been joined by new networks, including the Maine Council on Aging, Maine Aging Caucus, and Tri-State Learning Collaborative on Aging, to coordinate learning and develop policies that help older people. Maine leads the nation in a groundswell of grassroots activity in the form of “age-friendly” initiatives. Although these initiatives face challenges related to infrastructure and sustainability, they share a common mission: to help older people age in their homes and communities.

Our vision: The general public, in particular policymakers, employers, and community leaders, view older people as an asset, the contributions of older people as valuable, and increased longevity as an opportunity. Communities are well-equipped to fully engage people as they age. Older people in Maine who want or need to continue working are able to find meaningful employment in workplaces that recognize their value.

Our strategies:

MaineCF will work to change the conversation about aging in Maine by building greater cohesion within the aging advocacy community. Shared language and messaging will help others view older people as assets, their contributions as valuable, and their increased longevity as an opportunity.

We will support communities with “age-friendly” initiatives and encourage innovative solutions at the local level to ensure communities are equipped to engage people as they age.

We will develop the community leadership skills of older volunteers and help build a network of grassroots advocates.

We will convene stakeholders around workforce development and aging issues, and coordinate with, and include, older workers in seeking solutions.

How you can help:

Give to the **Thriving Older People Fund** at MaineCF to advance activities, including :

- **Reframing Aging Initiative**—training aging advocates in new, evidence-based communications strategies to change how the general public and policymakers view and talk about aging and older people.
- **Grant support and technical assistance**—assisting communities engaged in age-friendly efforts.
- **Leadership development**—supporting and expanding networks of volunteers who can assist communities to fully engage people as they age.
- **Age-friendly workplaces**—convening stakeholders to develop strategies and disseminate tools for employers to retain, recruit, and retrain older workers.
- **Healthy aging data report**—compiling Maine statistics and information.

If you would like more background information about MaineCF's goal for thriving older people, please contact Senior Program Officer Laura Lee at llee@mainecf.org or 207-412-0838.