Oregon White House Conference on Aging

What is the Oregon White House Conference on Aging?

The Oregon White House Conference on Aging is Oregon’s satellite version of the National White House Conference on Aging. It is a groundbreaking opportunity for local Oregon policymakers from a variety of disciplines, in partnership with advocates and consumers, to offer their perspectives on state and national policy issues that impact older Oregonians, their families, and their communities.

The first White House Conference on Aging (WHCoA) was held in 1961, with subsequent conferences in 1971, 1981, 1995, and 2005. These conferences have been viewed as catalysts for development of aging policy over the past 50 years.

Issues that impact older adults impact people of all ages, and this conference will offer a variety of viewpoints and opportunities for diverse stakeholders to come together and recommend policies that benefit people of all ages in communities throughout Oregon.

What are the topics that will be discussed at the Conference?

There are four general themes that will be explored at the Conference, including:

Economic security: Pensions are becoming a thing of the past, and people are having to plan for later life using personal savings. Relatedly, older workers can positively contribute to the economy while helping to contribute to their own financial security.

Long term services and supports: Whereas nursing facilities were once the only option for some older adults in need of long-term services and supports, the recent focus on home and community based options such as assisted living and adult foster care have added numerous choices. What will the next options be, and how can city planners and others help make these options part of the greater community?

Healthy aging: This is a growing focus area, with greater emphasis on prevention and wellness. Livable communities with adequate housing and transportation are
another part of healthy aging. And we must focus on reducing health care disparities and promoting cultural competencies and health equity.

Elder Justice: Elder abuse impacts one out of every 10 persons over 60, and victims of financial abuse lose $2.9 billion a year. This loss doesn’t just affect older people – it affects entire families. Oregon has developed many strategies related to prevention and investigation of abuse claims, as well as efforts to keep consumers engaged and informed.

What is the Conference agenda?
This full day conference will feature a morning keynote by Nora Super, Executive Director of the 2015 White House Conference on Aging from Washington, DC. The remainder of the morning will include panel discussions based on the four themes mentioned above, with expert panelists providing information and new perspectives on issues. After a complimentary lunch and keynote, participants will take part in a facilitated process to develop recommendations that will be sent to Washington, DC for review at the National White House Conference on Aging in July, as well as used as a basis for policy changes here in Oregon.

Who Should attend the Conference?
If you are a local policymaker, consumer, or advocate, we welcome your participation. Only with these three groups working in concert can we achieve balanced proposals that have the potential to impact older adults and the communities in which they live. City and County Planners, Transportation Planners/Managers, City Managers, City Councilors, County Commissioners, Mayors, Housing Authority Staff, and Parks and Recreation Staff are particularly encouraged to attend, as are older adults, their families, and advocates for aging services in local communities.

Space is limited, so please register early.

How can I register for the conference?
Registration will be available online and by mail in March.

Who can I contact with questions?
If you have questions, please contact ann.e.mcqueen@state.or.us, and please allow two business days response time.