

# News Release

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## Recognizing the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Older Americans Month throughout 2023

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(Salem, OR) — The 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of [Older Americans Month](#) brings an opportunity all year to renew our commitment to being active participants in dismantling stereotypes about aging.

As Gov. Tina Kotek’s [proclamation](#) of Older Americans Month says, “Oregon can work to build even better communities for our older residents by: expanding our thinking about aging, combating ageism, valuing age as an asset and emphasizing the many positive aspects of aging, inspiring older adults to push past traditional boundaries and embracing the diversity within our aging population.” Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) works to remove barriers so that older adults can access the supports they need to live their best lives – in the communities they choose and at every stage of life.

“Discrimination of any kind is not acceptable, this includes ageism. We strive to ensure independence and choice for older adults in Oregon through services and supports that promote individual well-being and aging with dignity,” said Nakeshia Knight-Coyle, director of the ODHS Office of Aging and People with Disabilities (APD).

By the year 2034, Oregonians who are 65 and older will outnumber children under 18. Oregon is looking ahead to make Oregon an age-friendly state in which people of all ages are included, engaged in services and can thrive. APD’s programs honor an individual’s choice in addressing needs such as food insecurity through meals programs, financial instability through disability determination, crisis funds and employment programs, and provision of programs that offer people options to determine where they want to live and receive services and supports.

Oregonians can learn about programs and resources available in their communities by reaching the state’s Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC). The ADRC of Oregon provides information and referral services as well as options counseling to help older adults and people with disabilities find long-term care supports that meet their needs. ADRC

information and referral and options counseling services are free for everyone, regardless of age or income. The ADRC website features a searchable database of more than 5,000 statewide resources for things like medical care, meal sites and employment needs. The ADRC can be reached by phone at 1-855-ORE-ADRC (673-2372). To find resources on the ADRC website, visit: [www.adrcforegon.org](http://www.adrcforegon.org).

APD provides Oregon's older adults with choices through a wide variety of programs such as:

- Oregon Project Independence (OPI), which helps people remain in their own homes by providing in-home services. In 2022, OPI helped 1,850 people to stay in their own homes.
- Financial eligibility determination services that helped 180,000 older adults access Medicaid, Medicare premium, general assistance and SNAP benefits in 2022.
- Medicaid Long-Term Services and Supports helps eligible individuals receive services in their own home, in a licensed community setting or a nursing facility. All services are person centered and help the individual meet their goals. In the two-year period ending June 2021, 56,268 individuals received support.
- Meal programs, through the Older Americans Act, provide home-delivered meals and fund congregate meal sites to support physical health and access to nutritious meals. In 2022, more than 1.2 million home-delivered meals were provided and 310,568 meals were served at congregate meal sites to 20,614 older adults in Oregon.
- Adult Protective Services (APS) works in the community and in licensed care facilities to keep older adults safe from abuse. In 2021, APS assisted 13,554 alleged victims of abuse.

### **About the Office of Aging and People with Disabilities:**

APD's vision is to ensure Oregon's older adults, people with disabilities and their families experience person-centered services, supports and early interventions that are innovative and help maintain independence, promote safety, wellbeing, honor choice, respect cultural preferences and uphold dignity.

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