GOVERNOR HOCHUL SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER TO CREATE NEW YORK’S FIRST-EVER MASTER PLAN FOR AGING

On Older New Yorkers’ Day, Executive Order Calls for Comprehensive Master Plan for Aging to Ensure Older New Yorkers Can Live Healthy, Fulfilling Lives While Aging with Dignity and Independence

Department of Health and Office for the Aging to Head a Master Plan for Aging Council; Convene a Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Governor Kathy Hochul today signed an executive order to create the state’s first-ever Master Plan for Aging to ensure older New Yorkers can live healthy, fulfilling lives while aging with dignity and independence. Signed on Older New Yorkers’ Day, the Executive Order directs the Commissioner of the State Department of Health and the Director of the State Office for the Aging to head a Master Plan for Aging Council, which will then gather input from relevant stakeholders to draft guidance for building healthy, livable communities that offer opportunities for older adults.

"As the first age-friendly state in the nation, we continue to take important steps to empower and support older New Yorkers," Governor Hochul said. "This Master Plan for Aging will provide us with tools to ensure our aging New Yorkers have access to quality long term care in healthy, livable communities where they can thrive."

Governor Hochul’s executive order is the first step toward building a comprehensive roadmap for meeting the socioeconomic needs of all generations of New Yorkers as they age. Building on New York State’s status as the first state in the nation to officially receive AARP’s age-friendly designation, the Master Plan for Aging will help to coordinate existing and new state policy and programs for older adults and their families, while also addressing challenges related to communication, coordination, caregiving, long-term care financing, and innovative care models with the overarching aim of furthering the ability for more to age with dignity and independence.

The executive order was signed in advance of the New York State Office for the Aging annual Older New Yorkers’ Day celebration, which honors volunteerism among older adults statewide. Starting at 1 p.m. today, this year’s virtual celebration will honor 94 older adults across the state for their unique contributions through civic
organizations, charities, in schools or libraries, on behalf of health and human services organizations or other non-profits, and through acts of kindness.

Health Commissioner Dr. Mary Bassett or her designee will chair the Master Plan for Aging Council, Office for the Aging Director Greg Olsen will serve as vice-chair, and relevant state agency commissioners and directors will serve as its membership. The council will then assemble a stakeholder committee, including members from health care and support service providers; consumers; informal caregivers; older adults - particularly those in communities experiencing disparities; health plan companies, labor and community-based organizations, employers, experts on aging, and academic researchers, among others.

Earlier this year, the State Department of Health established the Office of Aging and Long-Term Care to develop policies and programs to meet the needs of older New Yorkers and people with disabilities who require long-term care services and support. Created in July, this new office is working closely with the Office of Health Insurance Programs, the Office of Primary Care and Health Systems Management, and the state Office for the Aging to coordinate Department of Health activities related to aging New Yorkers.

**New York State Department of Health Commissioner Dr. Mary T. Bassett said,** "New York State has a long history of supporting a broad array of long-term care services and supports, and I want to applaud Governor Hochul for building upon that legacy with the State’s first Master Plan for Aging. The work of our department’s recently created Office of Aging and Long-Term Care will be guided by Governor Hochul's vision of a long term care system that is accessible, effective, and affordable, a system that will recognize the unique needs and expectations of each of the individuals it serves."

**New York State Office for the Aging Director Greg Olsen said,** "This Master Plan builds on a strong foundation that is already bringing together state agencies in a coordinated effort to provide opportunities and supports for older adults and their families. Under Governor Hochul's leadership, this strong, multi-systems response is achieving results across multiple domains, from health care to transportation, affordable housing to community development, and social determinants of health, with a strong emphasis on prevention of higher-cost services. The New York State Office for the Aging is proud to join the Department of Health, partner agencies, and stakeholders in a systematic effort to coalesce this work based on decades of experience working on behalf of New York’s older adults in the community."

**New York State Department of Health Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Long-Term Care Adam Herbst said,** "The Office of Aging and Long-Term Care will play a critical role in assuring that New York will have a healthcare system that is responsive to the needs of the State's growing numbers of older residents. It will help lead a broadly inclusive effort to develop the State’s first Master Plan for Aging, which will incorporate health care and public health initiatives to reform long term care."
Association on Aging in New York Executive Director Rebecca Preve said, "The Association on Aging in New York is thrilled that Governor Hochul, the New York State Office for the Aging, and the New York State Department of Health are working together to develop a comprehensive Master Plan for Aging. The Master Plan builds on the incredible existing work and progress already made in New York to ensure it is an age-friendly, inclusive, and accessible place to live for older adults and people of all ages. The plan provides an opportunity for gathering input from citizens, thought leaders, and experts in the public and private sectors who serve individuals across the lifespan, supporting New Yorkers to successfully age in place."

Health Foundation for Western and Central New York President Nora O'Brien-Suric said, "Thank you to Governor Hochul for today's executive order that solidifies her commitment to a comprehensive Master Plan for Aging in New York State. This is a landmark moment for New York's older adults and all people who value healthy aging across the state. The Health Foundation has advocated for New York to take this important step since 2021, when we were the first organization in the state to call for such a plan. Since then, we have been proud to help steward an independent, diverse coalition of nonprofit organizations and advocates—the New York State Master Plan for Aging Coalition—who collaborate to provide insight and recommendations that can help ensure the state's plan is inclusive, accountable, and community focused. We thank Governor Hochul and her team for helping to ensure that, at every stage of the plan's implementation, the needs of New York's older adults and the people who care for them are the top priority, and that this plan is a transparent and measurable process driven by the principles of health equity and healthy aging. By prioritizing the input of those who are closest to these issues, New York can proudly implement a plan that has the greatest possible long-term impact on the ability of all people to thrive at any age."

New York State Master Plan for Aging Coalition Coordinator Bob Blancato said, "Thank you to Governor Hochul for today's Executive Order for a Master Plan for Aging. This moment can be the catalyst for the development of a cross-sectional, equitable, intergenerational and transparent plan to guide New York into the future. The Executive Order provides a solid pathway for developing a Master Plan for Aging that will build on, add to and better coordinate existing state policies such as Age-Friendly New York State and Health and Age Across All Policies. We especially appreciate the Governor's recognition that the active involvement of stakeholders is vital for a viable plan. We look forward to having strong representation of our Coalition on the Stakeholder Advisory Council created by the Executive Order."

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The Master Plan for Aging builds on New York's status as the first age-friendly state in the nation, as designated by AARP and the World Health Organization in 2017. This status is designated based on eight domains of livability: outdoor spaces and buildings; transportation; housing; social participation; respect and social inclusion; work and civic engagement; communication and information; community and health services.

New York has the fourth-largest population of older adults in the U.S., with 3.2 million New Yorkers - about 16 percent of the population - over 65. New York’s population of those over the age of 60 is projected to grow to 5.3 million by 2030 with those over eighty years of age exceeding 1.2 million.

Roughly 36 percent of New York State's population is age 50 or older. This population contributes 43 percent - about $719 billion - to the state’s gross domestic product, generates $482 billion in wages and salary and contributes $72 billion in state and local taxes.

Adults older than 60 also commit more than 495 million hours of community service annually at an economic value of $13.8 billion. About 66 percent of this age group also own their own homes and have no mortgage.

Governor Hochul continues to champion initiatives to build a more age-friendly New York, including $300 million to build housing for older adults, part of the five-year $25 billion comprehensive housing plan that will create and preserve $100,000 units of affordable housing, statewide. This year's state budget also includes a $10 billion investment in health care infrastructure to increase the availability of community-based options that allow older adults to age in place.

The FY 2023 State Budget also provides $181.5 million, along with an addition $114.9 million in dedicated federal funding, for programs that support the independence of New York’s older adults and their caregivers through Office for the Aging programs and supports, including new and expanded innovations to combat social isolation with technology.

As part of the budget, Governor Hochul and the New York State Legislature increased seniors' eligibility for Medicaid and the Medicare Savings Program. For New Yorkers age 65 and up, the income limits will increase to 138 percent of the federal poverty level. This will ensure that more New Yorkers have access to reliable, affordable health coverage.