

Documents on this website are being reviewed and updated as necessary to comply with President Trump's executive orders.

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CHAMPION YOUR HEALTH: MAY 2026

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[History](#)

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History of Older Americans Month

When Older Americans Month was established in 1963, only 17 million living Americans had reached their 65th birthday. About a third of older Americans lived in poverty and there were few programs to meet their needs. Interest in older Americans and their concerns was growing. A meeting in April 1963 between President John F. Kennedy and members of the National Council of Senior Citizens led to designating May as "Senior Citizens Month," the prelude to "Older Americans Month."

Historically, Older Americans Month has been a time to acknowledge the contributions of past and current older persons to our country, in particular those who defended our country. Every President since Kennedy has issued a formal proclamation during or before the month of May asking that the entire nation pay tribute in some way to older persons in their communities. Older Americans Month is celebrated across the country through ceremonies, events, fairs, and other such activities.

Older Americans Month Themes

- 2025—[Flip the Script on Aging](#)
- 2024—[Powered by Connection](#)
- 2023—[Aging Unbound](#)
- 2022—[Age My Way](#)
- 2021—Communities of Strength
- 2020—Make Your Mark

- 2019—Connect, Create, Contribute
- 2018—Engage at Every Age
- 2017—Age Out Loud
- 2016—Blaze a Trail
- 2015—Get into the Act
- 2014—Safe Today. Healthy Tomorrow.
- 2013—Unleash the Power of Age
- 2012—Never Too Old to Play
- 2011—Older Americans: Connecting the Community
- 2010—Age Strong! Live Long!
- 2009—Living Today for a Better Tomorrow
- 2008—Working Together for Strong, Healthy and Supportive Communities
- 2007—Making Choices for a Healthier Future
- 2006—Choices For Independence
- 2005—Celebrate Long-term Living
- 2004—Aging Well, Living Well
- 2003—What We Do Makes A Difference.
- 2002—America: “A Community for all Ages”
- 2001—The Many Faces of Aging
- 2000—In the New Century ... The Future is Aging
- 1999—Honor the Past, Imagine the Future: Towards a Society for All Ages
- 1998—Living Longer, Growing Stronger in America
- 1997—Caregiving: Compassion in Action
- 1996—Aging: A Lifetime Opportunity
- 1995—Aging: Generations of Experience
- 1994—Aging: An Experience of a Lifetime
- 1993—No theme selected (proclamation signed on May 25, 1993)
- 1992—Community Action Begins with You: Help Older Americans Help Themselves

- 1986—Plan on Living the Rest of Your Life
- 1985—Help Yourself to Independence
- 1984—Health: Make it Last a Lifetime
- 1978—Older Americans and the Family

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Back to Top



Every May, ACL leads the nation's observance of Older Americans Month (OAM), a time to recognize older Americans' contributions, highlight aging trends, and reaffirm commitments to serving the older adults in our communities.



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Advancing independence and inclusion of older adults and people with disabilities

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living