



Governor Cooper Signs Executive Order to Highlight Commitment to Building an Age-Friendly State

Order directs the state to develop a comprehensive plan for aging, strengthen the caregiving workforce and enhance transportation options

Yesterday, Governor Roy Cooper issued [Executive Order No. 280](#) directing action to continue the state's commitment to building an age-friendly state. The Executive Order brings a whole-of-government approach to support North Carolina's aging population.

"Our rapidly growing and diverse older adult population strengthens our state and communities," Governor Cooper said. "We're going to continue our work to make North Carolina the best place in the country to grow older."

[Executive Order No. 280](#) directs the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) along with expert working groups to develop a Multisector Plan for Aging. The Order also directs NCDHHS and the North Carolina Department of Commerce to convene a Caregiving Workforce Strategic Leadership group to develop and implement recommendations to bolster the caregiving workforce. It also directs NCDHHS to develop recommendations to improve adult protective services.

The Order also directs the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to improve access to outdoor spaces, the North Carolina Department of Transportation to improve transportation options and the North Carolina Department of Information Technology to improve access to broadband and digital literacy.

"I am so grateful for Governor Cooper's leadership in signing this executive order to make North Carolina a place where all people can thrive throughout life's seasons," said Mary Penny Kelley, Executive Director of Hometown Strong. "By joining the Livable Communities network, North Carolina joins a consortium of other states working to advance policies to help a growing demographic. It's an honor to be a part of the incredible dedicated team that worked to make this possible."

"In just a few short years, there will be more people living in North Carolina over age 65 than under 17," said Joyce Massey Smith, Director of the Division on Aging and Adult Services for NCDHHS. "To address this unprecedented shift in the age of our population we are committed to capitalizing on the benefits of an older population as we provide them with the services and support they need in order to thrive."

"Nearly 3.7 million North Carolinians live in communities that have joined the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and are working on age-friendly improvements" said Mike Olender, Director of AARP North Carolina. "The state's enrollment into the Network coupled with the executive order will be the glue that holds us all together to collaborate, will accelerate progress and will inspire even more improvements to our cities, towns, and rural areas that benefit North Carolinians of all ages."

Approximately 1.7 million North Carolinians are aged 65 or older. By 2030, one in five North Carolinians will be older than 65. The Executive Order builds on the Governor's previous actions supporting older adults. In 2022, Hometown Strong in the Governor's Office and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services partnered with AARP to conduct the [Age My Way NC survey](#) which assessed North Carolinians' needs and preferences with regards to aging.

Read the [Executive Order](#).

