

Age-Friendly New Jersey Advisory Council: March 7, 2023

Topics: Governor's Budget, Employment

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Janet Sharma's Meeting notes

Governor's budget:

- Affordability (senior freeze, property tax reduction)
- Home & Community Based Services (care workers)
- \$13 million to develop housing options for those in institutions to transfer to other places
- Critical wage enhancements
- Affordability for older adults – increase limits for PAAD and Senior Gold
- JACC Jersey Assistance for Community Caregiving
- Create of a Caregiver Hub website to help unpaid caregivers navigate resources
- Advance age-friendly practices via community grants
- Services and supports for DHS including older adults (and others)

Cathy Rowe, New Jersey Advocates for Aging Well

Certified age-friendly employment programs (CAFÉ) support:

- Social connections, funds to live where they want, impact on mental health and social connections.
- Focus on DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) does not usually include age. Some COVID workarounds have accommodated older workforce.
- Supports people over age 50 with competitive pay and benefits based on best practices in human resources, with options for flex schedule & remote work

NJ Department of Labor - SCSEP

- Senior Community Service Employment Program for 55+
- Family income no more than 125% of federal poverty
- Must participate in training and actively seeking employment
- Primarily libraries and nonprofits – 20 hrs/wk minimum wage
- Employment seems so obvious but it's something that we hadn't really addressed as a top priority.
- Lots of talk about opportunities for older adults to find meaningful work, either for pay or as a volunteer. Need for infrastructure to support volunteering at nonprofits. Also need avenues for retired professionals to find meaningful opportunities – with or without pay.

Update on Public Listening Sessions for NJ Age-Friendly Blueprint:

- Both are full with those who signed up to testify; quite a bit of written testimony has already been submitted.