

**New York City Department for the Aging
Annual Report of the Advisory Council
Local Law 122 Report 2023**

In compliance with Local Law 122 of 2020, the following is the annual report of the New York City Department for the Aging Advisory Council activities outlined during its meetings for 2023, as well as the biennial older adult workforce development report.

**NYC AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
AGENDA**

Tuesday, March 28th, 2023

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Attendance: Isabel Ching, William Dionne, Saeeda Dunston, Jeremy Kaplan, Evelyn Laureano, Maria Luna, Claudette Macey, Katherine Martinez, Mohammad Razvi, Beth Shapiro, Susan Stamler, Eartha Washington, Rabbi Moshe Wiener, Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez, Siveem El Nashar, Michael Ognibene, Eric Rivera, Jennine Ventura, Edgar Yu

Introductions & Welcome Remarks – *Isabel Ching, Chairperson*

Chairperson Ching called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m. Katherine Martinez moved to approve the minutes and Maria Luna seconded the motion.

Commissioner’s Report – *Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez, Commissioner*

Commissioner Cortés-Vázquez discussed joining the New York State Master Plan for Aging Council, comprised of leaders from agencies across government to address the needs of older New Yorkers through statewide programs and policies. As the NYS Department of Health (SDOH) and the NYS Office for the Aging coordinate the State Master Plan, and SDOH has focused on long-term care in relation to older adults, it is the Commissioner’s goal to ensure that the State Master Plan reflects a community care approach. NYC Aging also entered into an agreement with Age Friendly Ireland and Age Friendly Dublin City as both Dublin and New York City are advanced cities moving from age-friendly practices toward age-inclusive initiatives.

Cabinet for Older New Yorkers Update – *Jennine Ventura, Assistant Commissioner, Interagency Collaboration*

Jennine Ventura provided an update on the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers, which is an interagency collaborative of 23 NYC agencies established to realize and institutionalize an age-inclusive New York City through structural, legislative and systemic solutions. Cabinet member agencies cover various services and resources, including health, housing, public safety, social services, and transportation. Initiatives launched by the Cabinet include:

- NYC Public Schools Anti-Ageism Resource Guide pilot in 13 high schools in Brooklyn South;
- NYC Department of Youth & Community Development My NY Story intergenerational storytelling initiative in 10 NYC Housing Authority communities citywide with 100 participants including youth and older adults;
- NYC Health + Hospitals, Department of Health & Mental Hygiene and Mayor’s Public Engagement Unit Frontline Professionals Training on community-based aging services to address social determinants of health of older patients; and
- NYC Department of Transportation Age-Inclusive Older Adult Pedestrian Engagement & Collaboration with older adult center members across the city.

Older Adult Sentiment Index Survey (OASIS) & Customer Service Experience – *Michael Ognibene, First Deputy Commissioner/Chief Operating Officer*

Michael Ognibene presented that the initial agency customer experience initiative launched last year, and the next initiative is slated to begin this year. In addition, the Older Adult Sentiment Index Survey or OASIS was implemented via kiosks in 18 older adult centers from March through May of this year. The survey inquires about age, friendliness, cleanliness, and likelihood to return. The questions can be updated as well, and the basis is to gauge older adult views on customer service in a short five-question survey.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

NYC AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
AGENDA
Wednesday, October 5th, 2023
4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Attendance: Isabel Ching, Saeeda Dunston, Lewis Goldstein, Jeremy Kaplan, Tara Klein (for Susan Stamler), Evelyn Laureano, Blondell Lighty, Maria Luna, Claudette Macey, Katherine Martinez, Nancy Miller, Mohammad Razvi, Beth Shapiro, Rabbi Moshe Wiener, Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez, Daneen Ausby, Rosemary Leahey, Sandy March, Ryan Murray, Michael Ognibene, Eric Rivera, Jennine Ventura, Edgar Yu

Introductions & Welcome Remarks – *Isabel Ching, Chairperson*

Chairperson Ching called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m. Lewis Goldstein moved to approve the minutes and Claudette Macey seconded the motion.

Commissioner’s Report – *Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez, Commissioner*

Commissioner Cortés-Vázquez introduced Ryan Murray, Executive Deputy Commissioner & Chief Program Officer, who oversees the Bureau of Community Services and the Bureau of Active Aging and Social Services. The Commissioner also discussed the “Talent is Timeless” grand finale held at the United Palace of Cultural Arts on September 28th, 2023, which can be viewed on [NYC Aging’s YouTube channel](#). Ways to further the momentum across the city to combat ageism following the older adult talent competition were raised, including sending a letter to *The New Yorker* in response to an ageist depiction on a recent cover. In addition, the Commissioner stated that she is traveling to Ireland in the upcoming week to speak at a conference and share best practices on building age-inclusive cities and the latest milestones achieved by the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers. The Commissioner also welcomed input to ensure the [New York State’s Master Plan for Aging](#) has a greater impact and covers issues such as ageism and community care.

Profile of Older New Yorkers – *Rosemary Leahey, Senior Research & Data Analyst, Program Evaluation & Research*

Rosemary Leahey presented the [U.S. & NYC Older Adult Population Comparison 2023](#), which includes the following data compiled from the 2021 American Community Survey 5-year Estimate:

- 1.77 million older New Yorkers (age 60+);
- Older New Yorkers are more diverse than the national average as more than 60% are people of color;
- Almost 50% of older New Yorkers speak languages other than English at home, and 30% are limited English speakers;
- NYC older adults are more likely to live alone, with frailty, and receive SNAP benefits than older adults nationally;
- Older New Yorkers are more likely to live below the poverty line than US older adults; and
- By 2010, older adults surpassed school-age children as a percentage of the New York City population with the percentage continuing to grow.

Annual Plan Summary – *Sandy March, Senior Policy Analyst, Data Quality & Policy Compliance*

Sandy March provided an overview of the [New York City Department for the Aging Annual Plan Summary](#), describing the agency’s planned strategic goals, programming, budget, and service levels. Advisory Council members were invited to attend the public hearings and advocate to New York State to ensure New York City receives its fair share of funding.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Older Adult Workforce Development Report

The NYC Department for the Aging (NYC Aging) supports older New Yorkers through Older Adult Workforce Programs that help unemployed or underemployed adults age 55 and older find work opportunities that utilize their skills and knowledge. Our current workforce programs include the Older Adult Employment Program, Silver Corps, Silver Stars, and Civic Engagement Employment Service (ReServe).

Connecting older New Yorkers to meaningful employment opportunities is critical. As the city's population of adults age 60+ continues to grow, and as life-expectancy rebounds post-pandemic, the need for employment later in life will also grow. NYC Aging remains focused on growing older adult employment opportunities and finding ways to continue investing in our existing programs and services.

Older Adult Employment Programs

The older adult employment programs offered by NYC Aging are intended to help supplement the financial needs of older adults through meaningful work. In addition to supporting financial security through employment, these programs combat social isolation faced by older adults, build their skills both in workplace environments and with technology, provide an avenue for connection to other social services, and reinforce the importance of a multigenerational workplace. NYC Aging currently operates three older adult employment programs. Two of our programs are funded through federal grants, and our other programs connect older adults to employment opportunities at NYC government agencies or local non-profit organizations to support their operations.

- **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP):** The SCSEP program is for New Yorkers age 55 and older who are currently unemployed and have a household income at or below 125% of the federal poverty level, who are looking to learn new employable skills and are committed to actively seeking employment. NYC Aging is a sub-grantee for federal funding for this program and is at service capacity in some boroughs.
- **Silver Corps:** Funded by AmeriCorps Seniors, the Silver Corps pilot program is our newest employment program serving older New Yorkers. Silver Corps serves older New Yorkers age 55 and older. Participants who are at or below 400% of the Federal Poverty Level are eligible to receive a stipend and travel allowance. The program offerings include credentialing, job readiness training, support in securing employment, and much more. Ageism in the workplace is detrimental to our society, and this program came about following the impacts of job loss during the pandemic. Programs like Silver Corps work to address the displacement of older workers.
- **Civic Engagement Employment Services (ReServe):** In addition to SCSEP and Silver Corps, NYC Aging contracts with ReServe, Inc. to match retirees age 50 and older who seek part-time work with NYC government agencies. Retirees come from an array of professional backgrounds, including social work, law, marketing, human resources, health care, education, retail, finance, and trade.
- **Silver Stars:** NYC Aging also manages the Silver Stars program, which works with NYC agencies to place City government retirees in part-time, temporary work assignments. City government retirees help agencies meet business needs and support organizational growth by sharing their knowledge and experience with newer workers without the demands of traditional, full-time employment.

Cabinet for Older New Yorkers

In addition to our direct work to support the employment needs of older adults, NYC Aging also partners with other agencies through the Cabinet for Older New Yorkers (Cabinet) to further support the needs of older adults. In September 2022, NYC Aging was appointed chair of the NYC Cabinet for Older New

Yorkers, a first-of-its-kind, multi-agency collaborative convened by Mayor Adams to support services, projects, and policies benefitting older adults across New York City. Through the Cabinet, the 23 member agencies facilitate coordination and efficiency across departments, leverage resources, and shape current and future services to better serve the broad and varied needs of older adults as they age-in-place. Cabinet members cover multiple facets of City services and resources, including public safety, housing, transportation, health, and social services. Collectively, these city agencies will work together to eliminate silos and create joint action and innovation to ensure that New York is a city for all ages. As part of the Cabinet, City agencies will collaborate in eliminating age-related barriers and inequities in services and develop cross-agency solutions to address challenges facing older New Yorkers. The Cabinet will also review current and future City initiatives and projects to ensure they are age-inclusive and accessible to adults over 60 years old.

NYC Commission on Human Rights Collaborations

Since the Cabinet was launched, NYC Aging has partnered with other Cabinet member agencies to address older adult workforce needs. One example is a collaboration with the NYC Commission on Human Rights (CCHR). NYC Aging and CCHR implemented an initiative to educate older workers about age discrimination and their rights in the workplace. CCHR trains new cohorts of SCSEP participants returning to the workforce on the NYC Human Rights Law and Age Discrimination in Employment. The training highlights the intersectionality of age discrimination, protected classes, disparate treatment, disparate impact, and retaliation. The trainings are conducted on a monthly basis in both English and Spanish.

NYC Department of Consumer & Worker Protection Collaborations

Another example is a partnership with the NYC Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP). DCWP now offers a reskilling and training opportunity in tax preparation for older workers. SCSEP participants learn and build skills as tax preparers and provide services through the NYC Free Tax Prep program. NYC Free Tax Prep helps New Yorkers meet the full potential of their refunds, including valuable tax credits like the enhanced New York City Earned Income Tax Credit, at no cost to them. To be eligible for NYC Free Tax Prep services, single filers must earn \$59,000 or less in 2023 and families must have a household income of \$85,000 or less. The DCWP training provides opportunities for older workers to find meaningful employment and build a career network, while expanding access to this impactful service.

Interagency Talent and Workforce Development Cabinet

Additionally, in August of 2022, Mayor Adams signed Executive Order 22, which established a new vision for workforce development in New York City and formally established the newly named Mayor's Office for Talent and Workforce Development (NYC Talent). Executive Order 22 stipulated the creation of a Mayoral Taskforce comprised of individuals outside city government – including representatives from businesses, labor unions, nonprofits, funders, and other organizations – charged with recommending citywide goals, developing a framework for evaluating public investments, and making recommendations for improving employment outcomes for all New Yorkers, including older workers.

Other Partnerships

As referenced earlier, NYC Aging established a new partnership with AmeriCorps Seniors—a federally funded partner—to launch Silver Corps. NYC Aging was selected as one of two Workforce Development Senior Demonstration Program grantees in the country. This pilot serves as the precursor to a national federal funding opportunity for the AmeriCorps Seniors Workforce Development Senior Demonstration Program to support older workers. NYC Aging has also worked to cultivate public-private partnerships to serve older workers and establish training and career pathways. We work with a number of local and

regional employer partners to understand and address their labor force needs. NYC Aging ultimately helps to facilitate linkages between older workers seeking employment to employers seeking talent.

Looking Toward the Future

There are many opportunities provided through programs run by NYC Aging which serve the workforce needs of older adults. We remain committed to further cultivating the necessary supports that older adults need. While these programs have seen successful outcomes in training older adults and placing them in long-term permanent employment, we are still combatting the effects of the pandemic and the continual presence of ageism in the workforce. Some of those opportunities for future development include:

- ***Continuing to combat ageism in the workplace*** by educating older adults, employers, and the general public regarding the pervasive nature of age-related discrimination. This encompasses our work to both help older adults identify and avoid ageism when looking for work, and educating potential employers on how implicit ageism negatively affects the workplace.
- ***Creating on-ramps for older workers to find job opportunities*** by making new connections between our workforce development programs and groups, organizations, or societies that work with employers. NYC Aging has been doing this by connecting many of New York City's Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to our programs, but more work can be done to further improve these connections.
- ***Requiring all city-contracted businesses or non-profit organizations to meet annual hiring targets*** for older adults. This would give parity to the City's push to ensure that those with city contracts are creating opportunities for young people through internships. In a similar way, we want to ensure that older workers have the same preference for work opportunities.
- ***Identify industry-wide training programs to develop older workforce initiatives through new connections for older adult workforce programs. Building off the success of cabinet initiatives like our work with DCWP to train older adults as tax preparers, we are looking for industry-wide training opportunities to develop new initiatives for older adult employment.***