

REACHING OLDER WORKERS FOR CAREERS IN OLDER ADULT SERVICES

INTRO

Americans are living longer. Over the next several decades, the number of us who are over 65 will nearly double to 88 million – and many of us will need help. Right now, we have a workforce crisis: there aren't enough people to provide high-quality help to older adults.

We need to encourage more people to join our field, including older workers.

BACKGROUND

As people live longer, many are finding that the traditional retirement age of 65 is no longer relevant. Employees are retiring later, trying out different jobs but for fewer hours, many are unready to leave work altogether, and many need to work simply to support themselves. The Government Accountability Office has reported that almost 30% of people older than 55 have no savings for retirement – or a pension. Working longer and not claiming full Social Security benefits until age 70 also may lead to higher Social Security benefits, perhaps as much as 32%.

WHO MAKES UP THIS GROUP

ABOUT 9 MILLION AMERICANS AGES 44-70



■ *they are in what are frequently called “encore careers,” — defined as providing an income, personal meaning, and social impact.*

■ *30% of people between ages 65 and 72 were looking for a job or already working.*

WHERE TO REACH OLDER WORKERS

- Search for one of the 2,400 American Jobs Centers (AJC) in your zip code at <https://www.careeronestop.org/> and let them know you would like to hire older adults.
- Reach out to community-based organizations and request time on the agenda to talk about job openings.
- Advertise in local newspapers — particularly in rural areas.
- Advertise on local radio stations.
- Advertise in your local senior center or reach out to all local places of worship, specifically, churches, synagogues, mosques, etc.
- Contact your local Senior Community Service Employment program at 1-877-US2-JOBS (1-877-872-5627) or through CareerOneStop's [Older Worker Program Finder](#).

TIPS FOR RECRUITING OLDER WORKERS

- Look at your current employees — is there a way for them to job share or work fewer hours as they become older?
- Reach out to former employees and start an alumni page on your website.
- Use language in your job descriptions such as experience and reliable; avoid language that limits years of experience.
- Provide in-service training for staff, e.g., nurses, about the latest best practices, or technology training – and highlight this information.
- Think through your wellness, reward, and recognition programs – benefits that younger workers enjoy may not be as appealing to older adults.
- Older adults have been working for years — allow as much autonomy as possible.
- Think through ergonomic requirements of the job.
- Allow people potentially interested in your field to volunteer or intern at your organization.
- Seek out or create networking events – you may find job switchers more easily at conferences or via LinkedIn than through traditional job postings that are geared to your typical candidates.
- See the [PHI factsheet](#) that stresses providing flexible schedules, emphasizing that your jobs will give back, and being able to provide new learning opportunities.

RESOURCES

Partner with:

- [AARP's Life Reimagined for Work Program](#)
- [American Society for Aging's Career Advantage](#)
- [Community Colleges in the Plus 50 Encore Completion Program](#)

(Sources: theladders.com, Forbes, U.S. News and World Report, Fox Business, National Council on Aging)