

Commission on Aging Montgomery County, Maryland



2021-2022 Operations Handbook

Commission Members and Staff

Officers

Barbara Selter, Chair
Edgar Rivas, Vice Chair
Janice Zalen, Secretary
Richard Jourdenais, Budget and Finance Advisor

Committee Chairs

Aging in Community: Wayne Berman and Monica Schaeffer
Communications: Jean Dinwiddie and Beverly Rollins
Health and Wellness: Neal Brown and Marsha Weber
Public Policy: Morris Klein and Ryan Wilson

Executive Committee

(Comprised of CoA Officers and Committee Chairs)

Commission Members

Wayne Berman, Neal Brown, Virginia Cain, Elizabeth Carrier, Jean Dinwiddie, Joyce Dubow, David Engel, Nkiru Ezeani, Arunima Ghosh, Richard Jourdenais, Morris Klein, Kendell Matthews, Nanine Meiklejohn, Ruby Moone, Sibon Ncube, Karon Phillips, Laurie Pross, Edgar Rivas, Beverly Rollins, Monica H. Schaeffer, Barbara Selter, Katie Smith, Mary Sweeney, Tho Tran, Hillery Tsumba, Marsha Weber, T. Ryan Wilson, Arthur Williams, Janice Zalen

County Staff CoA Assignments

Pazit Aviv: Aging in Community
Shawn Brennan: Full CoA Activities; Executive Committee; Public Policy Committee
Tremayne Jones: Administrative Duties
Jennifer Long: Communications
Tina Purser-Langley: Health and Wellness

Patrice McGhee: Director, Area Agency on Aging
Odile Brunetto: Chief, Aging and Disability Services

Liaisons

Monique Gardner, African American Health Program; Sara Swarr, Montgomery County Department of Recreation; David Engel, GROWS; Denise Israel, Montgomery County Department of Transportation; Lorraine Driscoll, Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs; Marcia Pruzan, Age-Friendly Montgomery; Jim Resnick, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue; Arlee Wallace, African American Health Program; Chuck Kaufmann, CoA Alumni Association

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Important Internet Links

CoA Website

Includes CoA calendar of events; committee minutes; links to the CoA's cable TV program, *50+ in Montgomery County*; links to multiple resources including reports, fact sheets, and letters of testimony.

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/coa

CoA Bylaws

The Commission on Aging was established by the County Council in 1974. The purpose of these Bylaws is to implement the CoA's statutory authority and to carry out its powers and duties as set forth in the Montgomery County Code.

[CoA Bylaws](#)

Recent CoA Annual Reports

The commission shall submit an annual report to the County Executive and the County Council summarizing its activities, needs, recommendations and the degree to which the goals of the commission are being met.

[Annual Reports](#)

Montgomery County Senior Site

Provides information on such topics as consumer issues, employment, caregiving, housing, safety, senior services, calendar of events, and senior center locations. Established by the County Executive and is maintained by the County's Public Information Office.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/>

The "Publications" section found on the left-hand column contains 14 interesting and useful older adult documents. Click on "View All" or go to:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/publication.html>

Senior Agenda

In 2012, the Commission on Aging developed a "Senior Agenda" laying out its vision for the County's older adults in seven different areas.

[Senior Agenda](#)

Robert's Rules of Order

The CoA follows Robert's Rules of Order in conducting its meetings.

<https://robertsrules.com/>

CoA Briefing Book

Produced in 2018 with a target audience of soon-to-be elected officials, the CoA Briefing Book highlights the Commission on Aging's mission, some of its key activities and accomplishments, and, demographic trends and major quality-of-life challenges for Montgomery County's older adults and their families.

[Briefing Book](#)

Age-Friendly Montgomery

Age-Friendly Montgomery County is an initiative to enhance the County as a wonderfully diverse *Community for a Lifetime*--a place where all residents can age, thrive to their full potential, and contribute as a powerful resource in making our County a better, stronger, more inclusive community for everyone. The initiative is affiliated with the World Health Organization and AARP's Age-Friendly States and Communities Network.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/age-friendly.html>

Senior Summits

On Thursday, December 3, 2015, Montgomery County Executive, Isiah Leggett, convened a Summit on Aging. This Summit was the second such event to take place in the County.

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/Resources/Files/Summit_On_Aging_report-2015.pdf

The first Senior Summit was a daylong event held on November 20, 2008, at the Universities of Maryland at Shady Grove campus and was attended by nearly 300 stakeholders. Former County Executive, Ike Leggett, devoted his entire day to attending the Summit, sharing his vision of the County as it relates to senior issues and learning from other participants.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior/summit.html>

Senior Initiative

For his fiscal year 2019 Operating Budget, Former County Executive, Ike Leggett, included a multi-year, cross-departmental project to (1) improve coordination, community outreach, and promotion of programs designed to serve seniors, and (2) identify and plan for the short and long-term needs of older adults.

[Senior Initiative](#)

In addition, the County's fiscal year 2022 approved budget includes approximately \$40 million in tax-supported resources identified for seniors, including funds for community organizations that augment County services for older adults. The approved budget also includes \$17 million in non-tax supported resources for the older population.

Where to Apply for CoA Membership

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/boards/>

Glossaries of Aging-related Terms

CoA members may find glossaries of aging-related terms valuable; becoming familiar with these terms will help to have commissioners on the same page during its discussions. Listed below are weblinks to a few excellent resources.

- Westchester County (NY) Public/Private Partnership for Aging Services: <http://westchesterpartnership.org/resources/glossary-of-aging-related-terms/>
- The Georgia Center for Positive Aging, originally founded by Congregationalist Churches in Atlanta and now the consumer arm of Leading Age Georgia: <http://www.centerforpositiveaging.org/glossary.html#A>
- AARP offers a useful Caregivers Glossary: <https://www.aarp.org/caregiving/basics/info-2019/caregiver-glossary.html>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation: <https://aspe.hhs.gov/glossary-terms>

Acronyms

AAHP	African American Health Program
ADRU	Aging and Disability Resource Unit
AIC	Aging in Community (Committee)
AAA	Area Agency on Aging
AAHI	Asian American Health Initiative
A&D	Aging and Disability (Services)
CASSA	Chinese American Senior Services Association
CoA	Commission on Aging
CPD	Commission on People with Disabilities
EC	Executive Committee
HCA	Housing and Community Affairs
GROWS	Grass Roots Organization for the Well-being of Seniors
H&W	Health and Wellness (Committee)
JCA	Jewish Council for the Aging
JSSA	Jewish Social Service Agency
KCSCGW	Korean Community Service Center of Greater Washington
LHI	Latino Health Initiative
AMSS	American Muslim Senior Society
MoCo	Montgomery County
MDOA	Maryland Department of Aging
MDH	Maryland Department of Health
SNP	Senior Nutrition Program
PPC	Public Policy Committee
VAS	Vietnamese American Services

About the Commission

History

The Commission on Aging was established by Montgomery County in 1974 pursuant to a requirement of the Federal *Older Americans Act of 1965*, that there be an Advisory Council to the Area Agency on Aging. (42 U.S.C. Sec. 3001 et. seq.; MC Code Article III, Sec. 27-34.) It operated under the auspices of the County Council until August 1987 when its operation was transferred to the Executive Branch. In creating the commission, the Council declared:

It is hereby declared to be the public policy of the County to promote and initiate programs to improve conditions of the aging or elderly in the County; to work toward elimination of restrictions which impede older citizens from full participation in the mainstream of community life; and to assist and stimulate all levels of government and the community to be more responsive to the needs of the County's older citizens.

There is a national network of 622 Area Agencies on Aging. In Montgomery County the AAA is located within the County's Department of Health and Human Services and plays an important role in supporting the Commission on Aging. The CoA relies on the AAA Director and staff for much of its functioning including advice and recommendations; in fact, the CoA must depend on AAA experience and knowledge for almost all aspects of its work. In addition, the AAA staff maintain an historical knowledge of CoA activities. See more of the CoA's recent history in the appendices.

Vision

To enable older adults to live quality lives, regardless of their abilities, so that Montgomery County is their community for a lifetime.

Mission

Recognizing Montgomery County's diversity and that older adults are the fastest growing demographic in the County, the CoA will serve as a valued voice for older adults.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commitment

We are committed to being a just, inclusive, anti-racist, anti-agist, and equitable community that values and honors the unique qualities, wisdom and lived experience of all people. We are steadfast in our commitment to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community, where all are able to meaningfully contribute and thrive.

Purpose

The CoA serves as an advocate for the health, safety, and well-being of the County's older residents. It supports both safety net services for the frail elderly and programs to meet the interests and needs of older adults who want to age in their communities.

Values

Everything the CoA does is guided by compassion, collaboration, reliability, integrity, and respect.

Goals

The goals of the CoA are to:

- Advocate for the safety net for older adults regardless of budgetary pressures;
- Monitor County government programs to increase responsiveness to the needs of older adults;
- Focus attention on the capacity of older adults to participate fully in community life;
- Advocate for the range of support services for older adults who choose to remain independent in their community and/or their own homes (“Aging in Place”).

The Commission’s Work

The commission identifies significant issues where its voice on the needs of older adults can make a difference. It advises the County Executive, County Council, the Department of Health and Human Services (including Aging and Disability Services and the Area Agency on Aging), as well as other County departments on the interests, needs and problems of older adults in the County. The CoA conducts public meetings and reviews and comments on community policies, programs, and actions that affect older persons with the intent of ensuring maximum coordination and responsiveness to older persons.

The CoA’s letters and reports can be addressed to the County Executive, the County Council, County government officials and departments, the State legislation, components of the U.S. Federal government, and the public and other advocacy groups.

At the County level: The CoA provides oral and written testimony on legislative, budget, and program issues and priorities before the County Council; meets with members of the Council and Executive branch department directors; has ongoing communication with department staff; and collaborates with other County boards, committees, commissions, and stakeholders on issues of mutual interest. The CoA also engages with non-profit partners, private sector groups, and other stakeholders to identify challenges and develop solutions.

At the State level: The CoA responds to proposed legislation in the General Assembly and communicates with relevant State agencies and members of the Montgomery County Delegation on issues of concern to older adults in the County.

At the Federal level: The CoA, as needed, writes letters to the White House and to our Congressional representatives and/or supports Congressional/Executive Branch outreach conducted by national organizations who represent our older adult population.

With the exception of its co-sponsorship of the *50+ in Montgomery County* cable television program and discrete community outreach and education efforts, the commission does not administer or operate programs, or adopt or enact regulations or legislation.

Commission Membership

The Commission on Aging consists of no fewer than 18 members appointed by the County Executive, subject to confirmation by the County Council. Members must be County residents of whom a majority shall be age 60 and older. Members include: those who participate in or who are eligible to participate in programs under the *Older Americans Act*; local elected officials or their designees; individuals who are or who have been active in government, business, industry, labor, community service, religious, social services, education, the professions; and representatives of major organizations or agencies concerned with aging.

The term of office of each of the appointed CoA members is three years. A member must not serve more than two consecutive terms. Members shall continue in office until their successors are appointed and approved.

CoA members are allowed three absences during a year. They are expected to actively participate in at least one committee.

CoA members receive no compensation for their services. All CoA meetings are open to the public.

Powers of the Commission

The commission shall have the power and it shall be its duty:

- (a) To research, assemble, analyze, and disseminate pertinent data and educational materials relating to activities and programs which will assist in meeting the needs and solving the problems of the aging; to cooperate with public and private agencies, organizations and individuals in identifying and solving the problems of the aging; and to develop and conduct, as appropriate, in cooperation with County government, other services and programs dealing with the problems and needs of the aging.
- (b) To review plans of primary concern to the aging that are developed by other commissions, agencies, offices, and departments of the County government.
- (c) To develop an information and referral system for all services in the County related specifically to the needs of the aging.
- (d) To institute and conduct educational and other programs, meetings, and conferences to promote the welfare of the aging. In the performance of its

duties, the commission shall cooperate with all interested citizens, community, business, professional, technical, educational, health and civic organizations.

- (e) To cooperate with the County Executive and all governmental agencies concerned with matters within the jurisdiction of the commission.
- (f) To study and investigate by means of public or private meetings, conferences and public hearings, conditions which may result in unmet needs or in discrimination or prejudice because of age.
- (g) To advise and counsel the residents of the County, the County Council, the County Executive and the various departments of County, State and Federal governments on matters involving the needs of the aging, and to recommend such procedures, programs, or legislation as it may deem necessary and proper to promote and ensure equal rights and opportunities for all persons, regardless of their age.
- (h) To work to remove the unmet needs or discrimination or prejudice on the basis of age in such areas as housing, recreation, employment, education, community services, and related matters.
- (i) To adopt such rules and procedures as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this article; to keep a record of its activities and minutes of all meetings; such records and minutes shall be on file and shall be open to the public at reasonable business hours upon request.
- (j) To prepare and submit to the County Executive a budget to include the recommended appropriation for its own operation. In submitting a recommended budget for carrying out the operation of the commission, the County Executive shall take into consideration the recommendations of the commission, and if requested by the commission, grant a hearing to the commission.

How the Commission Does Its Work

The CoA becomes aware of older adult issues in any number of ways: HHS staff raise them at a general meeting, individual commissioners or committees bring them to the attention of the other commissioners; or invited guest speakers discuss them with members of a committee. How the CoA acts on the issue is largely a matter of how quickly it has to respond, and also the magnitude and importance it places on the issue.

Because of the limited timeframe that the State legislature is in session or when the County's budget is being formulated, the commission usually acts quickly to prepare a statement or a response to those issues with time constraints. Such documents are usually prepared by or sent to the Public Policy Committee by another committee for the Public Policy Committee's review to ensure its legal and substantive accuracy. After the PPC

finishes its review, the document is then sent to the Executive Committee for its approval. At that time, based upon the need for an urgent response, the Executive Committee can decide whether the document should go before the CoA or whether it (the Executive Committee) has the authority to approve it.

On other matters where time is not a critical factor, issues may either arise in a committee or be referred to a committee or a task force to study. That committee/task force reviews the topic by doing its own research and by meeting with experts to discuss it. After completing its investigation, the committee/task force will prepare a report of its findings. This report is then forwarded to the Public Policy Committee for review, to ensure recommendations are consistent with previous CoA positions, and for legal and substantive accuracy. After Public Policy finishes its analysis, the report is either returned to the committee/task force for suggested revisions or submitted to the Executive Committee for its review.

The Executive Committee will discuss the proposed report and either submit it to the entire CoA for review or request that the committee/task force make revisions. If it is returned to the committee/task force, usually that committee/task force will again submit its revised draft to the Public Policy Committee for a second review. Public Policy will then again either return it to the committee/task force suggesting further revisions or re-submit it to the Executive Committee.

Once the Executive Committee approves the report, it is then submitted to the entire CoA for its review and approval. If a quorum of the current CoA members approves the document then it is distributed. If it is not approved, the CoA members can decide to return it to the committee/task force that prepared it for more revisions, or table the study, or decide not pursue the study.

CoA Interactions with the County Aging and Disability Staff

Montgomery County's Area Agency on Aging resides within the County's Aging and Disability Services, which is part of the County's Department of Health and Human Services. The CoA acts as the Advisory Council to the AAA.

AAA staff attend each monthly full commission, and the monthly committee meetings. They provide information and resources to CoA members so that they can carry out their activities. They also provide administrative support to the commission and maintain its webpage.

CoA Collaborations and Partnerships

The commission collaborates with other boards, committees, commissions, the Age-Friendly Montgomery Initiative, and stakeholder groups. Several such entities send liaisons to commission meetings, and some commission members serve as liaisons to

other boards, committees, and commissions. The commission looks for opportunities to collaborate with other groups on common issues. In addition, most commission members are active in other organizations supporting older adult services.

Protocol for Meeting with Councilmembers and the County Executive

In March of each year, the CoA reviews the County Executive's budget for items affecting older adults, particularly those that the CoA has identified as priorities. Members then meet in teams of two or three with Councilmembers and/or their staff to advocate for those priorities and discuss other issues of concern. All CoA members are expected to participate in at least one such meeting. As a resource, members receive a one-to-two-page set of talking points prepared by the Public Policy Committee and approved by the Executive Committee.

Health and Human Services staff schedules the appointments and CoA members sign up to participate. A good practice is for each team to include a member who is familiar with the issues and/or the meeting process. Meetings take place at the Council building or virtually and usually last about 30 minutes.

HHS prepares packets containing the CoA Annual Report, CoA membership list, the CoA budget priorities statement, and other relevant material. Each CoA member will receive a packet, and the team will also receive a packet to give to the Council member with whom they are meeting. Members can pick up these packets at the HHS office.

Before the meeting, the CoA team gets together for a few minutes to discuss strategy (e.g., who will speak to which issue). Following the meeting, the team provides a short summary of the discussion to the CoA chair, who shares it with other commission members.

As with any such advocacy, CoA members are representing the Commission on Aging, not their personal opinions or those of other organizations with whom they are affiliated.

Meetings

The commission meets in every month except July and August; however, members may decide to meet in July to discuss special topics such as its budget priorities. Members are expected to serve on one or more of the committees. The committees are: Aging in Community, Health and Wellness, Communications, and Public Policy. These committees also meet monthly. To help inform the commission's advocacy and priority activities, both full commission and committee meetings frequently include invited guests who share their expertise on relevant topics. Meetings are also attended by representatives from other Montgomery County commissions, boards, committees, Departments, and Agencies, and other stakeholders. All meetings are open to the public. During the meetings of the full commission, in addition to hearing from invited guests,

commissioners receive updates on important issues from HHS and other County staff as well as status reports from each of the commission’s committees.

Commissioners may serve as liaisons to other relevant organizations and groups. Commissioners also meet with the County Executive, County Councilmembers, Department Directors and staff, State legislators, members of the public, and others in order to advance programs, services, and policies on behalf of County older adults.

Attendee Participation Rules via Zoom

During the COVID pandemic the CoA has been meeting virtually by Zoom call. To ensure that meetings run smoothly HHS staff developed the following Zoom rules:

- Meetings may be conducted informally, but each person speaking should identify themselves when they speak, so that telephone attendees will know who is speaking.
- In larger groups or where meetings have been conducted more formally, members or other attendees should electronically “raise their hands” and the chair can recognize them.
- For members or others attending by telephone who cannot “raise their hands,” the chair can ask if anyone attending by telephone would like to speak, and then recognize them.
- When attending a Zoom meeting by telephone call, participants can raise their hand by clicking on *9 on the keypad. This will then notify the host that a user has raised their hand.

Meeting Attendance Policy

Unless law provides another method, a member who misses more scheduled meetings or hearings than the allowed absences, or who misses three consecutive meetings, is automatically removed and must write a letter to the County Executive to request continuance. Allowed absences are as follows:

Number of Meetings Held in 1 Year	Allowed Absences
1-4	1
5-8	2
9-12	3
13-16	4
17+	5

When a member is removed through absence, the presiding officer must promptly notify the County Executive and all members of the commission, including the member being removed. The County Executive may waive the resignation for illness, emergency, or other good cause.

Minutes and Reports

The commission shall submit an annual report to the County Executive and the County Council summarizing its activities, needs, recommendations and the degree to which the goals of the commission are being met. The CoA also submits a quarterly report of its activities.

The CoA's Secretary is responsible for assuring timely preparation, accuracy, and distribution of CoA meeting minutes to members. An Official File of the Minutes of the CoA is maintained in the office of the AAA Director. In addition, minutes of meetings of the committees are also prepared.

Committees and Task Forces

Committees

The CoA uses a committee process to develop positions on budget and legislative priorities. Committee members examine issues in depth and make recommendations to the Executive Committee (which is comprised of the CoA officers and all committee chairs), and to the full commission. CoA members are expected to actively participate in at least one committee. The CoA's current committees include:

Executive Committee

- Consists of the chair, vice-chair, secretary, budget and finance advisor, chairs of committees, and the immediate past chair of the CoA.
- Reviews and coordinates the activities of the CoA.
- Develops and proposes priorities, policies, and recommendations, including those related to the County budget, for consideration and approval by the CoA, and implements approved CoA priorities, policies, and recommendations on behalf of the CoA as appropriate.
- Ensures that there is a process in place for tracking and monitoring the implementation of approved CoA priorities, policies, and recommendations.
- Implements procedures, including new member orientation, to ensure that every CoA member is aware of his or her responsibilities.
- Works closely with the Director of the Area Aging and staff for guidance on much of its functioning.

Aging in Community

- Identifies issues that enable older adults to age either in their own homes or in other environments in the community and provides recommendations to the CoA for advising County leaders.
- Advises CoA on advocating for the development and implementation of a transportation and mobility plan that addresses the diverse transportation needs of older adults in the County.

- Monitors implementation of County housing and zoning policies so that older adults have greater choices in dwelling types.
- Recommends action to the CoA on relevant issues related to Aging in Place/Community such as Villages, outdoor spaces and buildings, employment, and safety & security as needed.

Communications

- Makes recommendations for the CoA to advise the County government on communication and outreach services to meet the needs of the growing and diverse population of older adults.
- Heightens visibility of the CoA through projects such as older adult public information campaigns.
- Collaborates with other commission committees to identify information and awareness needs of County older adults, develop communication messages, and propose communication approaches, including through the use of technology.
- Supports outreach and communication to stakeholder groups.
- Advises CoA leadership concerning outreach and communication related to advocacy and to combat ageism, including outreach to diverse older adult communities.
- Produces a monthly cable program for older adults entitled *50+ in Montgomery County* (formerly *Seniors Today*).
(<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ccm/seniorstoday.html>).
- Advises other CoA committees, as needed, and the commission about the needs of older adults through outreach and communications with diverse communities.

Health and Wellness

- Focuses attention on both the physical and mental health needs of older adults, including home- and community-based services and elder abuse prevention.
- Assesses and evaluates health and wellness issues.
- Develops and provides recommendations to the CoA about health and wellness issues to advise County leaders.

Public Policy

- Examines policies, programs, and proposals of the local, State, and Federal governments for their effect on the lives of County older adults.
- Recommends advocacy positions to the commission.
- Cooperates with legislators and other government officials on design and development of policies and services to enhance the lives of County older adults.
- Collaborates with other commission committees on advocacy efforts, especially finalizing letters and reviewing CoA reports.
- Provides direction and support to the CoA on visits with County Council visits, communication with elected officials, and the annual Legislative Breakfast.

Task Forces

When topics or situations arise that do not fall under the purview of one committee, the CoA may decide to conduct a swift and/or pointed investigation. In those cases the chair may request that a special task force be established, consisting of CoA members who volunteer to participate. Task forces are not permanent and generally only research specific topics. Although they are not subject to the same reporting requirements as the full CoA and the committees, they often issue reports to the Executive Committee and the full CoA for review, and if necessary, approval. Every year, task forces are formed to interview and select new CoA members, nominate new CoA officers, and to review nominations for the Neal Potter Award.

Committee Chair Tasks and Responsibilities

The CoA chair appoints chairs of the committees. When at all possible, each committee will have two co-chairs.

While individual committees engage in different activities, the core responsibilities/tasks of all committee chairs/co-chairs include:

Co-chairs may decide with each other how they divide or share tasks. Some tasks, e.g., taking minutes, identifying speakers, can be delegated to other members of the committee.

- Conduct monthly committee meetings.
- Identify committee goals and priorities for the coming year.
- Develop meeting agenda a week prior to meeting; send to the appropriate staff contact and Tremayne Jones (Office Services Coordinator) for distribution.
- Identify potential speakers; coordinate invitations with appropriate staff contact; send thank you note following meeting.
- Ensure that meeting minutes are taken.
- Review draft minutes, send to the appropriate staff contact and Tremayne Jones (Office Services Coordinator) for distribution.
- Engage commissioners in the work of the committee, including current issues, summer study. Some members may be interested in following and reporting on a particular issue.
- Collaborate with other committees. This might entail holding joint meetings on common issues or working with Public Policy on legislative and/or budget advocacy.
- Encourage knowledgeable stakeholders to attend committee meetings.
- Solicit and review potential summer study proposals.

Executive Committee and Full Commission

- Participate in monthly meetings of the Executive Committee and of the full commission.
- Report on committee activities and contribute to quarterly and annual reports.
- Participate in electronic or in person discussions of CoA business as appropriate between meetings.

The CoA relies on the AAA Director and staff for much of its functioning. Each committee is assigned a professional AAA staff person to lend support such as reporting on current County activities and coordinating with the committee.

CoA Alumni

After leaving the CoA, retired commissioners are invited to join the CoA Alumni group to continue advocating for older adults in Montgomery County. The Alumni members often participate in CoA committee meetings as well as full CoA meetings. Members engage in such activities as organizing projects, providing testimony, and submitting letters in support of older adult programs.

General Commission Calendar

January

The CoA prepares its *Annual Report*; reviews pertinent County, State, and U.S. proposed legislation; interviews CoA applicants, monitors the Maryland General Assembly

February

CoA members review proposed legislation and interview of CoA applicants continue

March

The County Executive unveils proposed budget priorities on or around March 15; The CoA reviews that budget and identifies priority items that are included and not included in the budget; the CoA prepares testimony detailing its budget priorities; appointment and orientation of new CoA members.

April

CoA members meet with County Council members individually; the CoA chair provides budget priorities testimony (oral and written) to the full County Council at one of a series of budget hearings.

May

The CoA holds its annual Public Forum (formerly known as the Stakeholders Meeting); the County Council approves a budget; the CoA thanks the County Council for passing a budget; the CoA monthly meeting includes a presentation from the AAA Director and the Aging and Disability Director on the budget process and on CoA priority items that were or were not funded.

June

The CoA holds its annual planning meeting and identifies preliminary budget priorities for the following fiscal year; reviews CoA Member Handbook.

July (discretionary session as directed by the chair)

The CoA votes on its budget priorities for the following fiscal year.

August

No meeting of the full CoA

September

Appointment of a CoA officer nominating committee and CoA membership interview panel; identify CoA priorities for County Council policy priorities, CoA commissioners meet with Montgomery County department directors to discuss budget needs and presents its budget priorities (written and oral) to the HHS Director.

October

The CoA prepares and provides testimony to the HHS committee of the County Council. Prepares for the annual Legislative Breakfast.

November

The CoA testifies on CoA State priorities at the Montgomery County State Delegation Public Hearing (written and oral testimony); hosts a Legislative Breakfast with Montgomery County State Delegation and U.S. Members of Congress representing Montgomery County to discuss CoA budget priorities including a discussion of CoA priorities for the delegation; distributing legislative packets, and providing testimony about proposed legislative initiatives

December

Appointment of new CoA officers; also the CoA presents a written statement of budget priorities and meets with the County Executive.

In Addition

The Age Friendly Montgomery Advisory Group meets about every other month.

The HHS Director meets quarterly with the chairs of the commissions pertinent to HHS.

Council Bills are introduced throughout the year and the CoA testifies as indicated.

Application Procedures, Terms, and Expectations

Information regarding how to apply to be a CoA member is posted on Montgomery County's website (<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/boards/index.html>). At the website, individuals are directed to an application with instructions on what information is needed. Applicants of diverse backgrounds, professions, genders, geography, disabilities, ethnicities, and ages are encouraged to apply. Members of County boards, committees, and commissions may not serve on more than one such group at a time. The County Executive's appointments are subject to confirmation by the County Council. Applications forwarded to the Council for confirmation may be made public as part of the confirmation process. Members must complete training on the Maryland Open Meetings Act and basic parliamentary procedure.

Members serve three-year terms without compensation but are eligible for reimbursement for travel and dependent care for in-person meetings attended. The commission currently meets the fourth Thursday of each month from 9:00a to 12:00p and is active 12 months a year. Commissioners attend and actively participate in a monthly meeting of the full CoA, a monthly meeting of one of its CoA committees, and planning and participation in other CoA advocacy and outreach efforts, including an annual Public Forum, an annual State Legislators' Breakfast, and meetings with individual County Councilmembers.

Required Training

Maryland *Open Meetings Act* Training

All CoA members and staff are required to take *Open Meeting Act* training. The training takes approximately 2.5 hours and consists of six lessons. It should be completed as soon as possible; however, if the participant can't complete the training all at once, it may be broken up into multiple sessions *using the same computer*. Instructions include:

Click on the link to the Training site:

http://www.igsr.umd.edu/VLC/OMA/class_oma_intro1.php

Fill out and print a certificate of completion. Certificates must be printed immediately upon completion of the training – after the training is completed, the certificates will not be accessible.

Each individual trainee should electronically scan and save their certificate.

Each individual trainee should upload the certificate using the form on the County's "Boards, Committees, and Commissions" webpage (see below for weblink). Individuals should complete the online form, which includes a field for the staff liaison's email address and generates an email to the staff liaison with the certificate attached. Staff liaisons should then track the participation of their boards, committees, and commission members.

Click on the link to upload the training certificate of completion:

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/boards/training/Certificate.html>

Parliamentary Procedure Training

All CoA members and staff are required to take Parliamentary Procedure Training within 90 days of their confirmation. The Training is online, and consists of viewing a short video, taking a quiz, receiving a certificate by email and uploading the certificate.

Link to BCC Parliamentary Procedure Training:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/boards/training/parliamentary-procedures.html>

Each individual trainee should electronically save the certificate received by email.

Each individual trainee should upload the certificate received by email using the form on the BCC webpage. Individuals should complete the online form, which includes a field for the staff liaison's email address and generates an email to the staff liaison with the certificate attached. Staff liaisons should then track the participation of their BCC members. Below is a link to the form to upload a certificate:

Link to upload training certificate of completion:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/boards/training/certificate.html>

Appendices

Recent Older Adult Initiatives in Montgomery County

Age-Friendly Montgomery

Committee Meetings and Zoom Links

CoA Budget Priorities for FY23 Budget

Montgomery County Organizational Chart

Department of Health and Human Services Organizational Chart

Aging and Services Organizational Chart

Reimbursement Form

Recent Older Adult Initiatives in Montgomery County

Senior Summits

The first Senior Summit was a daylong event held on November 20, 2008, at the Universities of Maryland at Shady Grove campus and was attended by nearly 300 stakeholders. The Summit was held to identify and plan for meeting needs of the growing population of older adults in the County and ensure that Montgomery County becomes a home where older adults can live safe, healthy, and vital lives. Former County Executive, Isaac “Ike” Leggett, devoted his entire day to attending the Summit, sharing his vision of the County as it relates to older adult issues and learning from other participants. Former County Councilmembers George Leventhal, Michael Knapp and Roger Berliner spoke on behalf of the County Council. Mr. John McCarthy, former Montgomery County State’s Attorney, was a guest speaker and a representative from the Office of former Senator, Barbara Mikulski, spoke on her behalf. Participants at the Senior Summit prioritized recommendations by popular vote, then broke into work groups to brainstorm action steps that could help the County achieve the recommendations goals. This process produced 177 different potential action steps for further consideration.

On Thursday, December 3, 2015, Former Montgomery County Executive Leggett convened a second Summit on Aging. The 2015 Summit provided an opportunity to review the many policies, programs, and accomplishments resulting from the 2008 event and to focus on efforts going forward that allow older adults of all socioeconomic, ethnic, and diverse backgrounds to live and thrive in the County. The 2015 Summit on Aging brought together more than 400 stakeholders from government, business, non-profit, advocacy, faith-based, and healthcare organizations as well as many older adult residents of the County.

Senior Agenda

In 2012, the Commission on Aging developed a “Senior Agenda” laying out its vision for the County’s older adults in seven different areas. Former County Executive, Ike Leggett, and the Montgomery County Council endorsed the Senior Agenda with a commitment for the County to be a “Community for a Lifetime.” Since then, the County has undertaken a number of effective initiatives that support that goal, including becoming part of the World Health Organization’s (WHO) international network of Age-Friendly Communities.

Age-Friendly Montgomery

Age-Friendly Montgomery County is an initiative to enhance the County as a wonderfully diverse *Community for a Lifetime* – a place where all residents can age, thrive to their full potential, and contribute as a powerful resource in making our County a better, stronger, more inclusive community for everyone. (See more about the Age-Friendly Montgomery initiative below).

County Executive Senior Initiative Budget

For his fiscal year 19 Operating Budget, former County Executive, Ike Leggett, included a multi-year, cross-departmental project to (1) improve coordination, community outreach, and promotion of programs designed to serve older adults, and (2) identify and plan for the short and long-term needs of older adults. The County Executive's primary focus was on issues that directly affect older adults: age- and dementia-friendly community, housing, food security, transportation, safety, engagement, and communication.

Briefing Book

The objective of the Briefing Book was to bring newly elected officials and their assistants, and newly appointed Department Directors key information. Produced in 2018, the CoA Briefing Book highlights the Commission on Aging's mission, some of its key activities and accomplishments, and, importantly, describes the major issues that it believes continue to be quality of life challenges for Montgomery County's older adults and their families.

Public Forums

Each year the CoA hosts a Public Forum (formerly called a Stakeholder Meeting) to address issues facing older adults. Within the past few years, the Forum has highlighted such topics as family caregiving, the Montgomery County Age-Friendly Initiative, older adult diversity issues, and social isolation.

Legislative Breakfasts

For many years, the commission has hosted an annual Legislative Breakfast to meet with members of the County's delegation to the State legislature. County staff are also invited. The Breakfast provides the commission, delegation members, and County staff the opportunity to share accomplishments of the past year and to identify issues and priorities for the upcoming legislative session.

Age-Friendly Montgomery

In 2014, the CoA learned about a World Health Organization initiative called Age-Friendly Cities. To learn more about it, the commission conducted a summer study in 2015, and, upon completing its research, recommended that the County enroll in the Initiative. Supported by the County Executive and County Council, the County enrolled in the program via the AARP Age-Friendly Network of Communities that is affiliated with the World Health Organization. This took place at the County's 2015 Summit on Aging.

Prior to enrollment, for several years a "Senior Subcabinet" met regularly and reported to the County Executive on programs and services for the older population. This work group eventually became the Age-Friendly Montgomery Advisory Group. The Advisory Group is co-chaired by the heads of the Departments of Recreation and Health and Human Services and includes: other County Department Directors and their representatives, the chair of the Commission on Aging, representatives from more than 40 partners from all sectors of the community, and the County's Dementia Friendly program.

As a highly collaborative program, Age-Friendly Montgomery plans, implements, and conducts those programs and services that support older residents so that they can live and thrive in Montgomery County throughout their lives. It operates under the framework of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities which is designed to help localities in the US and across the globe (through the World Health Organization) prepare for and support the needs of the rapidly growing older population. Several Age-Friendly Montgomery efforts are initiated and undertaken with advocacy by the Commission on Aging.

The ten Age-Friendly Montgomery work groups, or domains, focus on programming in specific topic areas, including: Communication and Outreach; Civic Involvement; Elder Abuse Prevention; Employment; Health and Wellness; Home and Community Based Services; Housing; Planning, Open Spaces, Parks, and Community Buildings; Senior Public Safety; and Transportation and Mobility.

The Age-Friendly structure has proven to be a highly successful model for cross-government and outside organization work. It shares common interests with the commission and its committees and task forces. The Age-Friendly Senior Fellow, the commission chair, and many commission members regularly participate in the work of these groups.

Difference Between the CoA and Age-Friendly Montgomery

The CoA is an advisory-only body established under the *Older Americans Act*. It does not develop or conduct any programming or services itself. The CoA belongs only to Montgomery County and was 1) in place decades before there was an Age-Friendly movement, and 2) was the driving force behind the County joining the AARP Age-Friendly network.

The Age-Friendly program is part of a national and global network. Montgomery County's participation in Age-Friendly is a public/private partnership between government and the community that involves those who actually do the day-to-day work of planning, developing, implementing, running, and maintaining the programs and services that support the older population. It is overseen by the Age-Friendly Montgomery Advisory Group.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS & ZOOM LINKS

Aging in Community (AIC)

2nd Tuesday of the month at 9:30AM

Co-Chairs: Wayne Berman, Monica Schaeffer

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85965041415?pwd=R0lySm0zKzZOazdOci9jMFRVTUh3dz09>

Communications Committee (CC)

3rd Monday of the month at 1PM

Co-Chairs: Jean Dinwiddie, Beverly Rollins

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89329960229?pwd=bnYxdHhBQ0ZtQkp2QW5Cd3owcFhldz09>

50+ in Montgomery County Planning Group

1st Friday of the month at 1PM

Co-Chairs: Jean Dinwiddie, Beverly Rollins

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82880078852?pwd=Uk5HL1A0bDhHNjVnem5tdzdrWXdKZz09>

Health & Wellness (H&W)

1st Tuesday of the month at 9:30AM

Co-Chairs: Neal Brown, Marsha Weber

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85225867625?pwd=UDBLRIVmUnI4eWxFREh6c3pUTjJCdz09>

Public Policy Committee (PPC)

2nd Thursday of the month at 9:30AM

Co-Chairs: Morris Klein, Ryan Wilson

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85209262163?pwd=TFIJWE9hWW5MWVl1Qm9JaTk4QW1tZz09>

Commission on Aging Monthly Meeting

4th Thursday of the month at 9:30AM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82088998765?pwd=dk16SjBBRG5PTVVrUmNnUTdqaTFmUT09>



COMMISSION ON AGING

October 1, 2021

FY23 Budget Priorities (in order of priority):

1. Fund the expansion of in-home care to more older adults in the County, including residents without Medicaid.

The older adult population of Montgomery County is rising at an unprecedented rate. Many studies have confirmed that older adults overwhelmingly prefer to remain in their own homes and therefore actively seek home and community-based services (HCBS) to avoid or postpone nursing home placement.

The State of Maryland offers programs that assist low-income, disabled, and elderly individuals to live in the community, including Medicaid waivers and assistance from other State and Federal funding. Eligibility guidelines (financial and medical) are strict and waiting lists are long. The Commission on Aging (COA) advocates for increased funding to expand the number of residents eligible for services and to decrease the time residents must wait to receive assessments and services. To help achieve these goals, the Commission recommends that the County increase staffing to improve the timeliness and quality of assessments that determine the eligibility of older adults to receive Medicaid waiver and other home and community-based services.

Many older adults lack financial resources to cover the costs of HCBS but have income or resources exceeding the eligibility requirements for Medicaid. (Generally, income cannot exceed about \$2400/month.) They struggle to afford the support they need to allow them to remain safe and to thrive in their homes, such as meal preparation, light housekeeping, transportation, medication management and caregiving support, services that also help prevent social isolation and loneliness. The COA urges the County to increase the funding available to support those currently ineligible for Medicaid but who need these kinds of services to enable them to be live well in their homes.

A significant issue for many in this population is that they are unable to afford the four-hour care segments required by local home care providers. While many older adults only need short-term custodial assistance, the business model of many home care providers relies on offering services in large blocks of time, making the services unaffordable. To address this issue further, the COA recommends that the County study the feasibility of using home care staff to serve multiple individuals in geographic proximity, enabling residents to afford services and home care providers to offer shorter segments of care.

Finally, the COA urges the County to examine innovative models in other communities that meet the medical and social needs of HCBC recipients, allowing them to age in place without compromising quality of life.

Department of Health and Human Services

401 Hungerford Drive, 4th Floor, Rockville, Maryland, 20850 240-777-1120, FAX 240-777-1436

2. Increase funding to help market/advertise services available for older adults.

The County offers a myriad of services for older adult residents with a wide range of needs and abilities. However, many older adults remain unaware of these valuable programs.

The CoA requests dedicated funding to market and advertise these services. These funds need to be administered with transparency and accountability. Examples of marketing materials may include signage on buses, postcard mailings, and printed brochures.

In addition, the COA requests assigned staffing to assist in the efforts to communicate the many available services. A Senior Fellow for Communications would be an ideal candidate for the assigned staffing.

3. Fund the Access HEARS program (supplying hearing devices and support) to lower income residents.

Statistics show that nearly two-thirds of people age 70 and older are affected by hearing loss, which is often associated with many health problems including dementia, social isolation, and hospital readmission. The current hearing care model of clinic-based, fee-for-service hearing care does not accommodate the needs of the majority of low-income, minority, and vulnerable older adults. Affording hearing aids, which can be the 3rd most expensive purchase for older adults behind house and car, is out of the question for many Montgomery County residents. For these reasons and others, the County needs a community-delivered approach to hearing care that is affordable and accessible.

Access HEARS has a proven model of care that increases access to hearing loss intervention and at a dramatically reduced cost compared to the traditional models. Access HEARS has been operating as a Baltimore-based 501(c)(3) with the mission of systematically addressing each of the barriers to providing hearing help to those who have not traditionally accessed care. In 2019, Access HEARS received grants from the Maryland Department of Aging for programs in Allegany and Garrett Counties. The Maryland pilot programs were very successful and the cost savings for intervention is about 90% compared to the traditional hearing aid care model.

With the anticipated expansion of over-the-counter hearing technology pending FDA regulations, the need to help older adults navigate the market, select a device, and learn how to use it successfully will also grow. By utilizing the Access HEARS model, the County can develop a sustainable model of hearing care that connects older adults with the technology that represents the future of hearing care. We ask the County to fund a program that will provide immediate benefit to the hearing health and overall well-being of the County older adult population.

4. (Tie) Restore cuts to the Escorted Transportation Program administered by Jewish Council for the Aging (JCA) and expand financial eligibility.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, the County reduced the budget for JCA Escorted Transportation in FY21 and FY22. As older residents have been vaccinated and have become more comfortable travelling, there has been a growing demand for escorted transportation trips. JCA has been providing more than the minimum number of monthly rides required in the FY2022 contract. At this pace, the allocated funds will be depleted by the end of January 2022 or earlier.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, rides have been limited to medical appointments with rare trips for errands or a pharmacy. The program was originally designed to provide transportation for many purposes

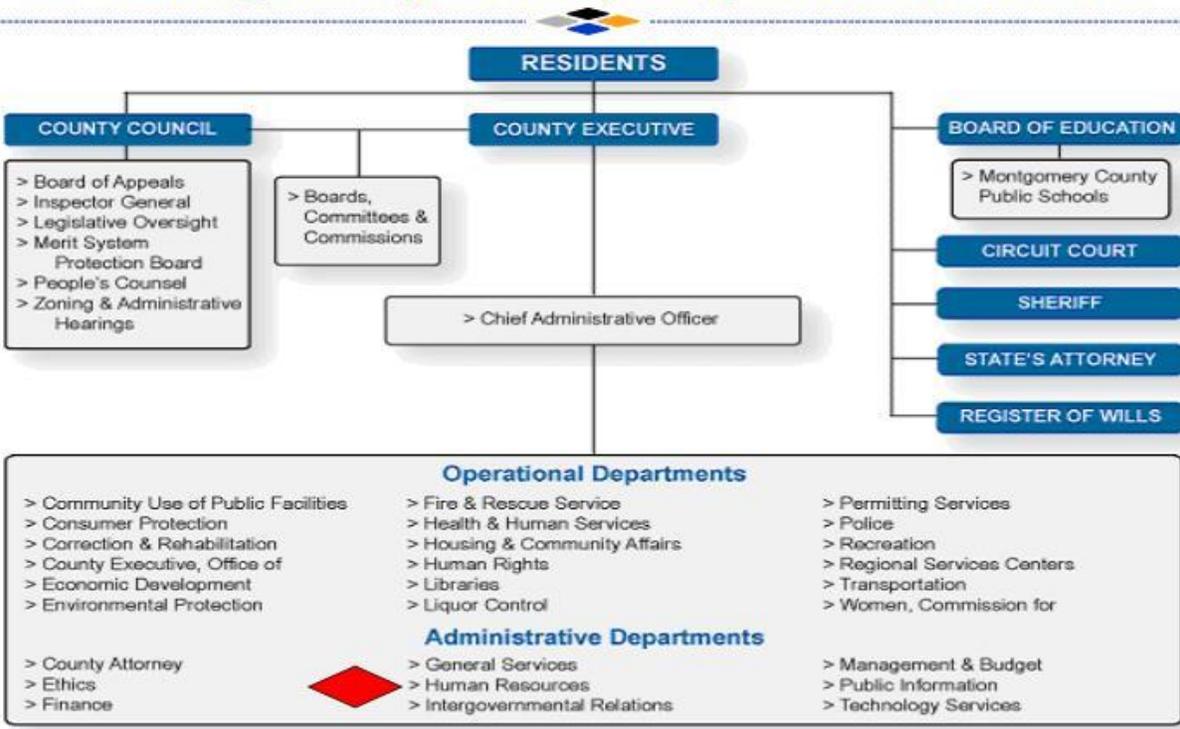
including socializing, shopping, and other life activities. Only with additional funds will the program be able to return to full pre-pandemic operating procedures. In addition, since the inception of the escorted transportation program in 2013, the financial eligibility has not increased (household income cannot exceed \$40,000/year). The Commission on Aging advocates increased funding to enable more older adults who require an escort to travel to re-engage in community life.

4.(Tie) Expand funding for the Housing Initiative Fund (HIF) to produce and preserve affordable rental housing, including older adult housing projects.

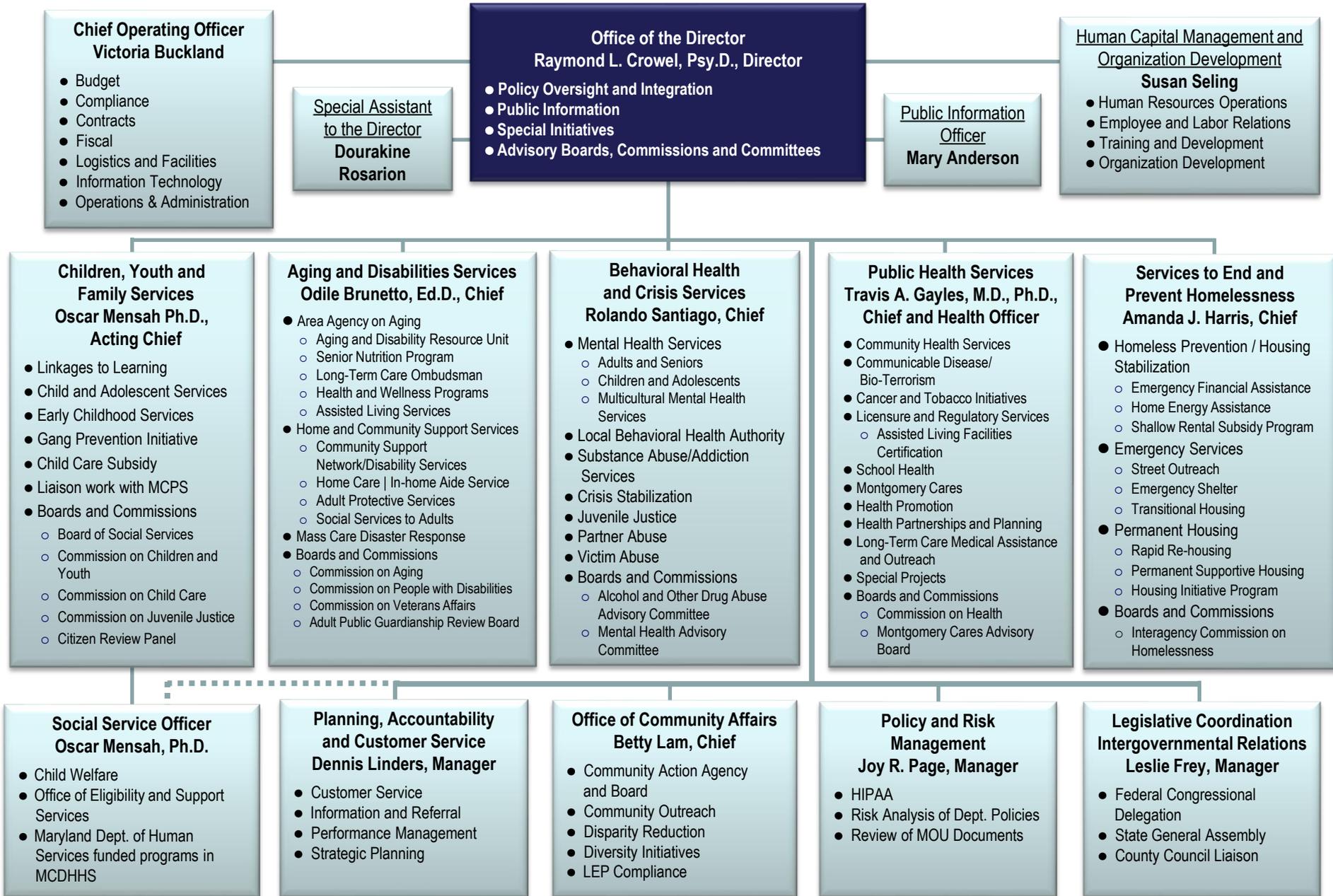
Older adults are the fastest growing group in the county. As their numbers grow, so will the number of older adult renters. In fact, by 2040, one in 5 residents will be 65 or older and one out of 3 will be 55 and older. Further, over 65% of senior renters are rent burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on rent. Seniors 75 and older face the greatest challenges because incomes tend to decline over time and housing cost burdens increase, with some paying more than half their income on housing.

Despite recent HIF funding increases, the County still will not have enough affordable housing to meet expected population increases. Compounding the problem, almost all areas along transit corridors are losing existing affordable housing, resulting in an increase in cost burdened renters. Rising rents will put more pressure on senior renters to choose between rent, food, and health care. The COA urges the County to continue its investment in producing and preserving affordable housing for older adults.

I. Montgomery County Organization Chart



Department of Health and Human Services – Organizational Chart



DEPARTMENT HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (DHHS) / AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES (A&D)
Point of Entry for Aging and Disability Resource Unit (ADRU) 240-777-3000 (Voice) 240-777-4575 (TTY) 240-777-1495 (FAX)

