

# The State of Washington



## Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, Washington state is home to more than 1.9 million Americans ages 60 and older who enhance our communities through their diverse life experiences and contributions; and

**WHEREAS**, Washington prides itself on its long-term services and supports system, one of the top in the nation, allowing older adults to stay in their homes and live independently longer; and

**WHEREAS**, Washingtonians recognize that as we address the ongoing public health crisis and its disproportionate impact on older adults, and especially older adults of color and LGTQIA, we should value the wisdom and resiliency of our older adults, many of whom survived and prevailed through the historical and ongoing trauma of systemic racism, the women's rights movement, the Stonewall Uprising, wars and conflicts, economic crises and recessions, and other trying times in our nation's history; and

**WHEREAS**, Washingtonians have stepped up to support older adults in their lives during this crisis in myriad ways, including through the Area Agencies on Aging, who have, despite a pandemic-induced workforce shortages across the aging network, delivered more than 3.7 million home-delivered meals; improved virtual service delivery and telemedicine access; promoted vaccine and booster access through education and partnerships with health providers; supplied paid and unpaid caregivers with essential personal protective equipment (PPE); and adjusted programs to meet seniors' needs; and

**WHEREAS**, Washingtonians believe in home and community-based services that promote independence and choice among our older adults to encourage quality of life on their own terms; and

**WHEREAS**, Washington is committed to supporting individuals who are older to live and thrive in the community and setting of their choice by: reducing hunger and food insecurity through senior nutrition programs; offering other supports such as transportation, home modifications, legal services, and mental health support; providing family and kinship caregiver support; focusing on equity, diversity, and inclusion in policy development and service provision; developing and sustaining ways to reduce social isolation through both virtual and in-person approaches, including volunteer service opportunities; involving older adults in health promotion opportunities like Powerful Tools for Caregiving, Enhance Fitness, Wisdom Warriors and Alzheimer's Cafes; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2022 theme of Older Americans Month, "Age My Way," reminds us that older adults in Washington have choices about where and how they age, and that they can plan to stay in their homes and live independently in their communities as long as possible;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Jay Inslee, Governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim May 2022 as

### *Older Americans Month*

in Washington, and I encourage all people in our state to join me in this special acknowledgement of older adults and the people who serve them as powerful and vital individuals who greatly contribute to our society.

Signed this 25<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2022

Governor Jay Inslee

