



COLORADO

AARP STATE FACT SHEET

AARP Colorado is proud to represent and serve 703,666 AARP members age 50+ in the state.

We are committed to championing access to affordable, quality health care for all generations, providing the tools needed to save for retirement, and serving as a reliable information source on issues critical to Americans age 50+. AARP and the AARP Foundation are also working to improve the lives of Coloradans through vital services including job training and placement, and driver safety and tax assistance programs.

Age 50+ voters: 77 percent of Coloradans age 50+ voted in the 2008 election, in which voters sent a clear message that it's time for elected officials from both sides of the aisle to come together to solve our nation's problems.

AARP: Working To Improve the Lives of All Coloradans

- ✓ **Providing Real Relief:** We are working with Congress to support struggling workers by:
 - Extending unemployment insurance for the more than 25,019 Coloradans hardest hit by the economic crisis.
- ✓ **Reforming Health Care:** We are working with Congress to fix our broken health care system by:
 - Making quality health care more affordable for the families and employers in Colorado now spending more than \$11,195 a year on premiums alone; and
 - Ensuring all Americans have access to care, especially the 89,235 uninsured Coloradans age 50-64.
- ✓ **Helping the Most Vulnerable:** We are working with Congress to pass legislation that would help more low-income Americans with access to health care by:
 - Strengthening SCHIP and Medicaid to ensure that more than 51,939 Colorado children and 535,200 of the most vulnerable Coloradans get the care they need.
- ✓ **Aging in Place:** We are working with Congress to ensure that the 89 percent of individuals age 50+ who wish to remain in their homes as long as possible can by:
 - Expanding access to home and community-based services through Medicaid – the largest payer of long-term care – which spent only 22 percent of long-term care dollars in Colorado on home and community based-services for older adults and adults with physical disabilities and 78 percent on institutional care for the same population in 2007.
- ✓ **Strengthening Medicare:** We are working with Congress to improve and strengthen Medicare, which provides health care for more than 574,263 Coloradans, by:
 - Putting more emphasis on quality and efficiency, capping out-of-pocket expenses in Medicare, and making prescription drugs more affordable.
- ✓ **Ensuring Social Security:** We are working with Congress to strengthen Social Security for current and future generations by:
 - Reaching a balanced and bipartisan solvency agreement that will preserve Social Security's role as a guaranteed floor of income security, as it now does for the 616,232 Coloradans who are currently receiving Social Security.
- ✓ **Promoting Retirement Savings:** We are working with Congress to ensure that every American has a simple, dependable way to save for retirement at work by:
 - Enacting Automatic IRA legislation, which would help many of the estimated 875,000 Coloradans who currently do not have access to a retirement savings plan at work.
- ✓ **Addressing the Housing Crisis:** We are working with Congress to help people facing foreclosure so they can stay in their homes while paying off their debt, including:
 - Allowing bankruptcy judges to restructure mortgage loans for primary residences, which would help over 11,025 age 50+ Coloradans who are in or near foreclosure.

AARP: Fighting for Coloradans

AARP Colorado has nearly 704,000 members, 52 percent of our potential membership. Our activist database is unrivaled, boasting over 104,500 members who have requested to be part of the largest consumer advocacy organization in the state. Approximately 1,200 volunteers are appointed, many of whom work in the advocacy arena on federal, state, and municipal issues. Our volunteer structure consists of two lead volunteers in each of our seven Congressional Districts who develop and maintain relationships with the U.S. Senate and Congressional staffs and also are members of the Legislative Advocates Team which focuses on state specific issues such as obtaining funding for the Older Coloradans Act. Members are kept informed through use of e-mail, newsletters, opinion leader forums, community conversations, and phone trees.

In 2007, AARP, Business Roundtable, National Federation of Independent Business and the Service Employees International Union launched Divided We Fail (DWF) – an effort to get our elected officials to break partisan gridlock and discuss tangible ways to solve our health care and economic security problems. Through DWF, AARP Colorado organized events on college campuses, in rural communities, hosted Congressional debates and bird-dogged Presidential candidates whenever they were in town. Since the beginning of 2007, over 42,000 Coloradans have joined the DWF. In 2008, AARP Colorado engaged in voter education efforts, including: disseminating 74,000 Colorado-specific voter guides that contained the candidates' answers to critical problems facing the 50+ population.

In 2008, AARP strongly supported House Bill 1108 which increases the Older Coloradans cash fund by three million dollars. Services that help keep seniors at home and independent are provided by Older Coloradans funds and include congregate meals, Meals-on-Wheels, and nursing home ombudsman services.

AARP Foundation: Serving Colorado

The AARP Foundation provides services that improve the lives of Coloradans of all generations.

- ✓ **AARP Tax-Aide** is the nation's largest, free, volunteer-run tax preparation and assistance service available to low- and moderate income taxpayers, with 52 locations throughout Colorado. AARP-trained and IRS-certified volunteers helped 33,332 Coloradans, including those eligible to file for their economic stimulus checks, as well as filing EITC returns for nearly 2,624 Coloradans.
- ✓ **Older Workers:** There are more than 701,003 age 50+ workers in Colorado, providing value to public, private and nonprofit sectors. As the need to work later in life increases, older workers need to be prepared to meet the skill demands of the twenty-first century workplace. That's why AARP provides assistance to older workers in need, through programs such as:
 - **WorkSearch**, which connects job seekers to viable community job opportunities to improve their economic self-sufficiency. WorkSearch provides career information, job training, and related employment services to individuals with limited resources. If a job-seeker is 55 or older and income eligible, he or she may enroll in **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)**, which places older adults at local "host agencies" for on-the-job training and skill development with the goal of securing permanent employment. In 2008, WorkSearch and SCSEP helped more than 1,995 Coloradans connect to local job opportunities.

AARP Contact Information

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