

SECTION 1

BACKGROUND

After identifying falls as the leading cause of death and injury in older adults in Benton and Franklin Counties, BFHD held the initial meeting of the Benton-Franklin Falls Prevention Coalition on January 9, 2018. The COVID-19 pandemic increased isolation and further highlighted risks to older adults. The members of the Falls Prevention Coalition realized there was more that could be done to support this population.

In 2021, Benton-Franklin Health District received the opportunity to work with the Washington State Department of Health, The Trust for America's Health, and the John A. Hartford Foundation to initiate steps towards creating an Age-Friendly Public Health System. Age-Friendly Public Health Systems can improve older adult health outcomes by promoting equity, impacting the social determinants, addressing social isolation, focusing on home and community, and strengthening partnerships.

SECTION 2

MISSION

The mission of the Safe & Healthy Aging Coalition is to connect and convene sectors and professionals that provide the supports, services, and infrastructure to promote equitable opportunities for health and wellbeing for the aging residents of Benton and Franklin Counties.

A Public Health Framework to Support the Improvement of the Health and Well-being of inclusive of three components:

- 1) promoting health, preventing injury, and managing chronic conditions;
- 2) optimizing physical, cognitive, and mental health; and
- 3) facilitating social engagement.

This definition intentionally does not equate healthy aging with the absence of disease and disability. Instead, it portrays healthy aging as both an adaptive process in response to the challenges that can occur as we age and a proactive process to reduce the likelihood, intensity, or impact of future challenges. Healthy aging involves maximizing physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being, while recognizing that aging often is accompanied by chronic illnesses and functional limitations, including lifelong conditions. It emphasizes the importance of meaningful involvement of older adults with others, such as friends, family members, neighbors, organizations, and the wider community.

SECTION 3

MEMBERSHIP

Coalition membership is comprised of individuals and organizations, both public and private, working to improve the lives of aging residents in Benton and Franklin Counties.

SECTION 4

GOVERNANCE

The Membership will actively serve to follow the coalition’s vision to promote healthy aging in our community by supporting the Coalition’s mission, efforts, and activities.

Duties of the Membership:

1. The Membership is responsible for approving and revising the action plan and any amendments.
2. The Membership is responsible for approving and revising the coalition charter and any amendments.
3. The Membership is responsible for supporting and carrying out the activities outlined in the action plan.

SECTION 5 FISCAL AUTHORITY

Benton-Franklin Health District is the current fiscal agent for any funds that may be obtained to support the functioning of the Benton-Franklin Safe and Healthy Aging Coalition.

As a governmental agency, the Benton-Franklin Health District does not hold 501(c)(3) status to fund coalition activities or initiatives. Therefore, our coalition emphasizes the vital need for partnerships to ensure resources for collective efforts toward the Safe and Healthy Aging Coalition mission.

Mailing address for funds: Benton Franklin Health District
7102 W Okanogan PI
Kennewick, WA 99336

SECTION 6 OPERATING PROCEDURES

Meetings: The Coalition shall strive to meet a minimum of six (6) times per year. Meetings will focus on information sharing, training and/or event opportunities related to healthy aging, building connections with state and local stakeholders and furthering the goals of the Coalition. Meetings will fall on the 4th Monday of the month at 3pm unless otherwise communicated. Monthly coalition meetings are open to the public. Meetings may be held virtually or in person.

Agenda: The agenda will be prepared in advance by the coalition coordinator or designee. Requests for agenda items must be submitted in advance to the coalition coordinator. The agenda will include member spotlights and data updates relevant to the population.

Decision Making: To the degree possible, consensus decision-making will guide the Coalition. The majority vote shall govern the implementation of policies, programs, and changes of the Coalition and its Leadership, except as otherwise provided by the policies and procedures.

SECTION 7 CHARTER AMENDMENTS

Changes to the Charter must be approved by the Coalition at any regular monthly meeting.