

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR OLDER ADULTS

Aging and Increased Participation in the Workforce

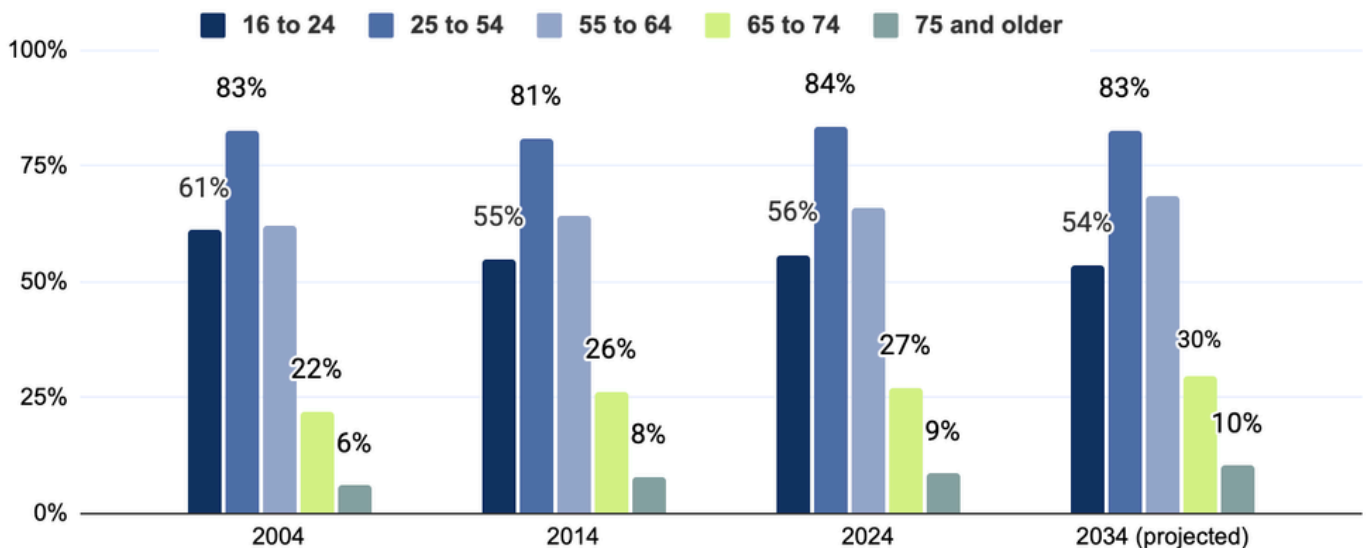


Tip Sheet No. 3, July 2024

Changing Workforces

Current research reveals useful insights into aging, workforce issues, and changing workforce dynamics that have significant implications for employers, policymakers, and older workers.

Civilian Labor Force Participation Rates by Age



U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2025)

Participation rate of older adults in the workforce has been steadily increasing over time, challenging conventional notions of retirement.

Drivers of Increased Older Adult Participation in the Workforce

- **Financial / Economic:** financial insecurity, limited retirement savings, and longer lifespans that delay retirement drive workforce participation
- **Policy and Pension:** aging policies aimed at reducing financial strain on public pension encourage workforce participation
- **Health and Longevity:** improved health prolongs workforce participation and older adults' desire to remain active, engaging lives motivates continued work
- **Technology and Flexibility:** technology expands work opportunities and flexible work options like telecommuting or part-time work increased work availability

Project Background

AmeriCorps Seniors funded a three-year research project of seven workforce development programs focused on older adults. These tip sheets reflect topics of interest to program staff, community partners and older workers. For more information on the project at <https://mainecenteronaging.umaine.edu/workforceresearch/>

Older Adults and Policies in the Workplace

Many studies emphasize the significance of policies in mitigating negative experiences for older adults in the workforce. These policies promote a productive work environment that values contributions from individuals of all ages.

CHALLENGES FACED BY OLDER ADULTS IN THE WORKPLACE

Age-related	Younger adult preferences in hiring, promotions, and training opportunities
Workplace culture	Potential isolation or feeling out of sync with younger colleagues
Work life balance	Juggling work responsibilities with caregiving or retirement planning
Career advancement	Limited opportunities for career progression or being passed over for younger colleagues
Health concerns	Managing health issues that may arise with age while maintaining job performance
Physical demands	Challenges with maintaining physically demanding roles
Adapting to Technology Challenges	Some older adults may need support learning new technologies essential for job roles; assess individual capacity and motivation

BEST PRACTICES FOR SUPPORTING OLDER WORKERS IN THE WORKFORCE

Encouraging Continuous Learning and Education	• Encourage learning by providing support for training programs and professional growth opportunities - Budget for skill development tailored to the needs of employees
Supporting Flexible Work Options	• Establish policies that allow for work schedules including part time roles, remote work options and adaptable hours • Use human resources technology to oversee and manage work arrangements effectively
Introducing Health and Wellness Initiatives	• Develop wellness initiatives targeting health concerns, among staff • Use wellness platforms and encourage employee engagement in wellness programs



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