

October 9, 2024

RE: Definition of Ageism

To whom it may concern,

We are writing on behalf of the 398 undersigned organizations and individuals to suggest an update to the definition of the word, “ageism.”

Your current definition of ageism is: “prejudice or discrimination against a particular age-group and especially the elderly.”

We suggest a small, but important change: “prejudice or discrimination against a particular age-group, especially older people.”

The National Center to Reframe Aging is the nation’s leading organization dedicated to reshaping the conversation about older people. Research from the National Center to Reframe Aging, conducted with our research partner the FrameWorks Institute, a research-driven think tank, has found that using the term “elderly” evokes negative attitudes towards aging. A more neutral term such as “older people” does not have this deleterious connotation.

This finding derives from [Finding the Frame: An Empirical Approach to Reframing Aging and Ageism](#), an extensive, rigorous, multi-method study that queried more than 10,400 Americans on aging issues.

This updated definition aligns with language being used across the field of aging by organizations including the 10 organizations who comprise the Leaders of Aging Organizations² collective, [the National Institutes of Health](#), [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), and others. The revised definition also aligns with publication guidelines from the [American Psychological Association](#), [American Medical Association](#), and the [Associated Press](#) that have been adopted to align with this research.

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The undersigned represent a wide variety of professional societies, nonprofit groups and advocates—all committed to updating perceptions of aging and reshaping the conversation about older people.

Please contact Patricia D'Antonio at the Gerontological Society of America at pdantonio@geron.org should you have any questions or if you would like to discuss this further.

Regards,

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Vice President of Policy and Professional Affairs, Gerontological Society of America
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Organizations

Age Guide	Center for Aging & Disability Education & Research at Boston University School of Social Work
Age Strong Commission, City of Boston	Center for Gerontology @ Concordia University Chicago
Age-Friendly University Global Network	Center in the Park
AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois	Center for Medicare Advocacy
Aging servicesAF St. Cloud	City of Minnetonka Senior Services
Aging with Grace, Inc.	Coalition for Home Repair
American Dental Hygienists' Association	Collinsville Faith in Action
American Federation for Aging Research	Diverse Elders Coalition
American Geriatrics Society	East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging (ECIAAA)
American Society on Aging	Egyptian Area Agency on Aging
Archstone Foundation	Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario
Association of Illinois Senior Centers	Elder Justice Coalition
Association of Public Health Nurses	ElderSource
BDS Healthy Aging Networks, Inc.	Foggy Bottom West End Village
Caldwell Senior Center Inc	
Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of Elders (CARIE)	

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Gerontological Society of America
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Graduate Certificate in Gerontology
Grantmakers in Aging (GIA)
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Healthy Communities of the Capital Area
Healthy Peninsula
iAging
Illinois Partners for Human Service
JFS Rochester
Juanita C. Grant Foundation Inc.
Justice in Aging
LifeSpan Network
Midland Area Agency on Aging
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
National Center to Reframe Aging
National Council on Aging
National Institute of Senior Centers
Norfolk MA Council on Aging
North Central Area Agency on Aging
NYC Department for the Aging

Oasis Rochester
Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging
Phoenixville Area Senior Center
Region IV Area Agency on Aging
RRF Foundation for Aging
Rush Center for Excellence in Aging
San Antonio Area Foundation
Senior Friendship Centers, Inc.
Senior Resources of West Michigan
Southwestern CT Agency on Aging
The John A. Hartford Foundation
The Maryland Umbrella Group
The Oasis Institute
The Oral Health Nursing Education and Practice Program (OHNEP)
The Santa Fe Group
The Senior Source
The SCAN Foundaiton
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