

United Nations Principles for Older Persons

To add life to the years that have been added to life



The General Assembly ... Encourages Governments to incorporate the following principles into their national programmes whenever possible

Independence

1. Older persons should have access to adequate food, water, shelter, clothing and health care through the provision of income, family and community support and self-help.
2. Older persons should have the opportunities to work or to have access to other income-generating opportunities.
3. Older persons should be able to participate in determining when and at what pace withdrawal from the labour force takes place.
4. Older persons should be able to live in environments that are safe and adaptable to personal preferences and changing capacities.
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Participation

6. Older persons should remain integrated in society, participate actively in the formulation and implementation of policies that directly affect their well-being and share their knowledge and skills with younger generations.
7. Older persons should be able to seek and develop opportunities for service to the community and to serve as volunteers in positions appropriate to their interests and capabilities.
8. Older persons should be able to form movements or associations of older persons.

Care

9. Older persons should benefit from family and community care and protection, in accordance with each society's system of cultural values.
10. Older persons should have access to health care to help them to maintain or regain the optimum level of physical, mental and emotional well-being and to prevent or delay the onset of illness.
11. Older persons should have access to social and legal services to enhance their autonomy, protection and care.
12. Older persons should be able to utilize appropriate levels of institutional care providing protection, rehabilitation and social and mental stimulation in a humane and secure environment.
13. Older persons should be able to enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms when residing in any shelter, care or treatment facility, including full respect for their dignity, beliefs, needs and privacy and for the right to make decisions about their care and the quality of their lives.

Self-fulfillment

14. Older persons should be able to pursue opportunities for the full development of their potential.
15. Older persons should have access to the educational, cultural, spiritual and recreational resources of society.
16. Older persons should be able to live in dignity and security and be free of exploitation and physical or mental abuse.
17. Older persons should be treated fairly regardless of age, gender, racial or ethnic background, disability or other status, and be valued independently of their economic contribution.

(Implementation of the International Plan of Action on Aging and related activities, 74th Plenary meeting, 16 December, 1991)

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