

# Older Americans Month Event Planning Tips

- **Plan:** Start planning early and set clear goals. Identify people who can help, including volunteers and vendors. Communicate regularly with your planning team and track major decisions. Select your event date and time early in the planning process. Create an agenda as one of the first steps and be sure that speakers, special guests, and key stakeholders have the time reserved.
- **Partner:** Join forces with others in your community who can provide in-kind services, volunteers, or materials. They may also have connections to speakers or entertainers. Local businesses, like restaurants, may agree to provide door/game prizes, such as gift cards. Partners also can help to draw attention to your activities online, reaching a wider audience.
- **Promote:** Develop a publicity plan to promote your event. Use traditional strategies, like newspaper ads and community board flyers, as well as newer media—your website, blog, and/or social media accounts. Communicate early and often. You might also consider contacting a local reporter.

Conduct registration online via any of the free options available. If you have an existing email distribution list, use it. Virtual invitations can make your email stand out.

- **Produce virtually:** Choose a platform that fits your budget. Free or low-cost options may work for smaller events of up to 100 people. Make sure the platform is accessible for participants and includes any special features

you need (e.g., recording, whiteboard, breakout rooms). Conduct a dry run well in advance to refine logistics and troubleshoot technical issues.

Remember, attention spans are shorter online. Aim for an hour-long event and include breaks if it will be longer. Assign at least one moderator to answer questions, engage participants, and keep time. Interact as much as possible, engaging people with games, polls, and/or Q&A segments.

- **Produce in person:** Safety is always a priority. Follow all relevant local, state, and CDC guidance for in person events in your area. Think about logistics – is the location accessible? Is there ample parking? Do you need to rent any equipment, furniture, or supplies?

Consider bringing standard event items such as refreshments; public address (PA) system and other audio/visual equipment; pens and notepads; handout materials; decorations; and photo release forms ([sample release](#)).

- **Publish:** Post a summary of the event on your website and highlight key aspects on social media. Make sure to tag the accounts of any partners who helped you and use a few relevant hashtags. Include photos or graphics to gain traction for your posts.

If possible, gather feedback on what participants liked/disliked during this phase. If you have any future activities planned, use this opportunity to promote the next event.