



STATE OF CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON AGING

THREE-YEAR

STRATEGIC PLAN

2026 – 2029

VISION

All Californians can age with dignity, security, and purpose.

Introduction

The California Commission on Aging (CCoA) is the principal advocacy body for the more than six million older Californians. Founded to ensure that the voices, needs, and rights of older adults are heard at the highest levels of state government, the Commission serves as a bridge between older Californians, policymakers, service providers, caregivers, and communities.

This Three-Year Strategic Plan for 2026–2029 charts a purposeful course for the Commission to deepen its policy impact, strengthen its relationships with key stakeholders, and expand its capacity to advocate effectively on behalf of older adults, adults with disabilities, and caregivers across California.

A Note on Context

California is home to the largest older adult population in the nation, and that population is growing rapidly. By 2030, one in five Californians will be over 65. This plan reflects the urgency and opportunity of that reality — positioning the Commission to be ready, relevant, and responsive.

Foundational Framework

Vision

All Californians can age with dignity, security, and purpose.

Mission

To serve as the principal advocacy body for older Californians and a catalyst for change that supports Californians as they age.

Core Values

The Commission's work is guided by five core values that shape every policy position, recommendation, and partnership:

Fairness, Equity & Inclusion

Every Californian, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, geography or ability, deserves equitable access to services, opportunities and representation.

Autonomy & Choice	Older adults have the right to make meaningful choices about their own lives, care, and communities.
Respect & Integrity	The Commission conducts its work with honesty, transparency, and deep respect for the people it serves.
Collaboration & Partnership	Systemic change requires working together — across agencies, organizations, and communities — to achieve shared goals.
Evidence-Based Recommendations	Policy positions are grounded in rigorous research, high-quality data, and the lived experiences of older adults, adults with disabilities, and caregivers.

Strategic Goals Overview

The 2026–2029 Strategic Plan is organized around three interconnected goals. Together, they define how the Commission will fulfill its mission and advance its vision over the next three years.

Goal 1	Be the trusted policy advisor on issues impacting older adults, adults with disabilities, and caregivers.
Goal 2	Inform advocacy and policy recommendations through research, data analysis, and strategic communication.
Goal 3	Foster strong relationships with key stakeholders.

Goal 1: Trusted Policy Advisor

Be the trusted policy advisor on issues impacting older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers.

The Commission's ability to influence policy depends first on its credibility. This goal focuses on positioning CCoA as the authoritative voice at the state level — an organization that policymakers, legislators, and agency leaders turn to when aging issues are on the agenda.

Strategic Objectives

- Establish CCoA as a primary state-level resource for aging policy consultation and legislative testimony.
- Build and maintain a rigorous, proactive policy agenda that aligns with the California Master Plan for Aging and Older Californians Act.
- Ensure policy positions reflect the full diversity of older Californians, including underserved and historically marginalized communities.

- Engage consistently with the Governor's office, state legislature, and key agencies,

Key Strategies

1.1 Legislative Engagement

- Develop an annual CCoA Policy Agenda at the start of each legislative season.
- Designate policy leads for each priority area, identified annually, e.g., housing and homelessness, behavioral health, workforce development, healthcare, economic security, long-term services, caregiving, etc.)
- Provide written testimony, commission appearances and/or public comments for hearings on aging-related legislation, in alignment with Commission priorities.
- Provide comments on proposed state regulations affecting older adults.
- Conduct *What Legislative Staff Need to Know about Aging and Disability* webinar and Legislative visits annually.
- Encourage Commissioner engagement with Legislators ongoing in-district.
- Submit position letters on legislation.
- Sponsor legislation.

1.2 Executive Branch Engagement

- Submit annual recommendations to the Governor's office on aging-related budget and policy priorities.
- Maintain relationships with Governor's Office and Administration officials focused on policy impacting older adults, adults with disabilities, and caregivers.

1.3 State Agency Engagement

- Establish consistent communication and collaboration with key state agencies and departments.

Three-Year Implementation Roadmap — Goal 1

Year 1

Build the Foundation (2026–2027)

- Publish and disseminate the CCoA Policy Agenda and share with Administration officials, Legislators, partner organizations, and stakeholders.
- Publish and disseminate a “Year in Review” summary with documented wins.
- Designate a policy lead for each priority area from within the Commission and/or establish a policy area committee or subcommittee.
- Establish engagement protocols with the Governor's Office, Legislature, and state departments.
- Identify key state departments for engagement such as California Health and Human Services Agency (CalHHS) and the California Department of Aging (CDA), Social Services, Health Care Services, Rehabilitation, Developmental Services, Housing and Community Development, Workforce Development Board, etc.

Year 2**Deepen Influence (2027–2028)**

- Cultivate additional opportunities for legislative testimony; track legislative outreach activities and policy outcomes tied to CCoA recommendations.
- Publish and disseminate a “Year in Review” summary with documented wins.
- Release an annual Policy Agenda with updated priorities.
- Track and increase engagement with the Governor’s Office, Administration officials, and state departments.

Year 3**Solidify Leadership (2028–2029)**

- Survey partners to better understand CCoA’s policy influence and credibility.
- Publish a three-year policy impact report documenting legislative wins, regulatory outcomes, and community reach.

Goal 2: Inform Advocacy & Policy Recommendations

Inform advocacy and policy recommendations through research, data analysis, and strategic communication.

Credible advocacy is built on credible evidence. This goal positions CCoA not only as a consumer of research but as a producer and curator of knowledge — synthesizing data, conducting analysis, and sharing accessible findings with state leadership, policymakers, advocates, and the public.

Strategic Objectives

- Leverage Research and High-Quality Data
- Disseminate Information, Findings & Recommendations

Key Strategies

2.1 Data Infrastructure and Capacity

- Build internal capacity to access, synthesize, and apply relevant data from state and federal sources.
- Subscribe to and maintain access to key state and federal aging datasets (The American Community Survey, California Health Interview Survey, the Census, CDA administrative data).
- Monitor the Master Plan for Aging data dashboard tracking key indicators for older Californians (poverty rates, health outcomes, housing cost burden, caregiver prevalence).

2.2 Research Agenda

- Leverage the Research and Policy Development Committee to guide evidence standards.
- Convene a panel of experts to explore a policy area in an informational hearing once per calendar year.
- Participate in relevant state advisory bodies to access and shape research priorities, as resources allow.

2.3 Strategic Communications and Dissemination

- Develop a multi-channel communications plan including publications, email, social media, and media outreach.
- Publish accessible policy briefs, data snapshots, and fact sheets on specific, key policy issues.
- Maintain a regularly updated public-facing knowledge hub on the CCoA website.
- Present findings at state, regional, and national conferences on aging, as resources allow.
- Publish an annual report to share findings of CCoA informational hearings.

Three-Year Implementation Roadmap — Goal 2

Year 1

Build the Evidence Foundation (2026–2027)

- Hire a Legislative and Research Analyst.
- Convene regular Research and Policy Development Committee meetings.
- Publish policy briefs on priority topics.
- Update CCoA website advocacy and initiatives webpages.
- Convene an informational hearing and publish a report to publicize the findings and recommendations.

Year 2

Expand and Disseminate (2027–2028)

- Increase publication output to two or more briefs or other materials annually.

Year 3

Sustain and Scale (2028–2029)

- Evaluate reach and impact of communications strategy; adjust based on outcomes.
- Present findings at one or more state, regional or national conferences.

Goal 3: Foster Strong Stakeholder Relationships

Foster strong relationships with key stakeholders.

No organization can solve the challenges facing older Californians alone. The Commission's strength is amplified by the relationships it builds and the coalitions it sustains. CCoA commits to being a proactive convener, connector, and collaborative partner.

Strategic Objectives

- Develop and maintain a comprehensive stakeholder map across all relevant sectors.
- Establish informal engagement mechanisms with Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), advocacy organizations, and community groups.
- Build relationships with the private sector, philanthropic organizations, and emerging service innovators to expand resource and influence.

Key Strategies

3.1 Government and Agency Partnerships

- Establish quarterly coordination meetings with the CDA and other state departments, as needed.
- Participate on relevant state advisory bodies (e.g., Alzheimer's and Related Dementias, Behavioral Health Planning Council, Aging and Disability Resource Connection, etc.)
- Engage with AAA through the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging (C4A). Encourage the Advisory Committee chairs of AAA, to participate in the Triple A Council of California (TACC).
- Meet and consult with TACC to exchange information and assist in training, planning, and developing advocacy skills.

3.2 Advocacy and Community Partnerships

- Foster partnerships with aging- and disability-focused advocacy organizations, coalitions, and academic institutions (C4A, California Foundation for Independent Living, Justice in Aging, California Collaborative for Long-Term Services and Supports, Aging and Disability Coalition, etc.)
- Leverage partnerships to support sponsored legislation and policy priorities through distribution of research, policy briefs, coalition letters and formal support at legislative hearings.
- Establish a CCoA Ambassador Program with former Commissioners.
- Build relationships with faith communities, cultural organizations, and ethnic media to reach underserved populations.

3.3 Private Sector and Philanthropy Engagement

- Identify and engage California-based, regional and national foundations.
- Develop a CCoA sponsorship and partnership framework for both public and private sector engagement.
- Explore joint initiatives with age-technology companies, health systems, and financial institutions.

3.4 National and Cross-Sector Networks

- Engage, as resources allow, with federal partners such as the Administration for Community Living and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on California-specific aging priorities, and Congress.
- Share best practices and policy innovations and engage with peer-state aging commissions.

Three-Year Implementation Roadmap

Year 1 Map and Connect (2026–2027)

- Complete a comprehensive stakeholder mapping exercise.
- Establish quarterly meetings with the California Department of Aging and the Governor's Office.
- Launch Ambassador Program with former Commissioners.
- Collaborate with five key advocacy organizations.

Year 2 Deepen and Diversify (2027–2028)

- Expand Ambassador Program statewide with at least 12 regional ambassadors.
- Launch private and public sector and philanthropy engagement framework.

Year 3 Sustain and Evaluate (2028–2029)

- Conduct stakeholder satisfaction and partnership effectiveness survey.
- Publish a partnership impact summary highlighting collaborative achievements.

Governance, Accountability & Evaluation

A strategic plan is only as strong as the systems put in place to implement, monitor, and learn from it. The Commission is committed to rigorous accountability — tracking progress transparently and adapting strategies based on evidence.

- The Executive Director and senior staff are responsible for day-to-day implementation of strategic initiatives.
- Each goal area will have a designated Commissioner or committee providing guidance.
- Progress will be reported to the full Commission annually.
- An annual implementation review will be conducted.

Key Performance Indicators

Goal	Key Metric	3-Year Target
Goal 1: Trusted Advisor	Legislative bills influenced by CCoA testimony	At least one CCoA-sponsored bill per session. Positions taken on bills. Testimony and public comments given.
Goal 1: Trusted Advisor	State agency consultation	Regular communication and meetings with state agencies and departments.
Goal 2: Research & Data	Policy briefs and fact sheets published	Six over three years

Goal 2: Research & Data	Media citations and press coverage	50% increase from baseline
Goal 3: Stakeholder Relations	Organizational engagement	Participation in at least three collaborative networks
Goal 3: Stakeholder Relations	Ambassadors are active	12+ statewide over three years

Annual Review and Adaptation

The Commission will conduct a formal mid-cycle review at the end of Year One and Year Two to assess progress, identify barriers, and adjust strategies as needed. External conditions — changes in state leadership, budget cycles, or the needs of older Californians — will be incorporated into an adaptive management process.

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

The Commission recognizes that a strategic plan is a living document. We will be transparent about what is working, honest about what is not, and willing to revise our approach in service of our mission and the people we serve.

A Call to Action

The next three years represent a pivotal moment for aging policy in California. A population growing older, shifting political priorities, a new Administration and a rapidly changing landscape of services and technology all demand that the Commission act with urgency, creativity, and collaboration.

This Strategic Plan is an invitation — to Commission members, partners, policymakers, and older Californians, adults with disabilities and caregivers themselves — to join in building a California where every person can age with dignity, security, and purpose.

"Aging is not lost youth but a new stage of opportunity and strength." — Betty Friedan

California Commission on Aging

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