

## Mature Workers

While many people think of older adults as retirees, the truth is millions of Americans aged 55+ work full or part-time jobs every day. The reasons they work are varied, but for many it's a matter of necessity to remain financially secure and independent. Others work to stay active and engaged in their communities.



As the population ages, older Americans will play an increasingly important role in our economy and America's leadership in the world marketplace. By 2019, over 40% of Americans aged 55+ will be employed, making up over 25% of the U.S. labor force. The Committee on Economic Development indicates that employers rate older workers high on characteristics such as judgment, commitment to quality, attendance, and punctuality.

## Employment

- In 2013, over 31 million Americans aged 55+ were employed, and 1.7 million were actively seeking work. (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS])
- In 2013, older workers represented 21.8% of the U.S. workforce, a significant increase from 1999 when they accounted for just 12%. (BLS)
- Weekly earnings vary by age and gender. In the 55-64 age group, median weekly earnings for men were \$1,011 in 2013 and \$779 for women. (BLS)

## Unemployment

- Mature workers made up 10.7% of the unemployed population in the U.S. in 2013. (BLS)
- The economic downturn that began in 2008 hit older workers hard. By May 2010, 60% of unemployed older workers had been out of work for six months or longer, and 43% had been without a job for more than a year. (CNN)
- Although the rate of unemployment among mature workers is lower than younger populations (4.4% in June 2014), older workers who do become unemployed spend more time searching for work. The average duration of unemployment for older jobseekers in June 2014 was 48.1 weeks, compared to 28.5 weeks for those under age 55. (AARP Public Policy Institute)

## Part-time & Multiple Jobs

- Part-time work is appealing to many older workers who want to scale back but still remain in the workplace; however, many older workers work part-time because of the weak job market or because they cannot find full-time work. In 2013, just over 1 million adults aged 55+ said they took a part-time job “for economic reasons.” (BLS)
- In June 2014, 4.7% of workers aged 55+ held more than one job. Doing so may indicate an inability to find a job that pays enough hours. (AARP Public Policy Institute)

## Discouraged Mature Workers

- Discouraged mature workers are not looking for work because they believe that none is available, employers will find them too old, they lack the necessary schooling/training, or they face other types of discrimination.
- In June 2014, 198,000 mature workers indicated they wanted employment but were not in the workforce. (AARP Public Policy Institute)

## NCOA's Role

NCOA offers programs and hope for mature workers seeking to reenter or remain in the workforce.

### Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

NCOA manages 27 SCSEP offices under a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor. SCSEP helps adults aged 55+ return to or remain active in the workforce by providing job

training, job search services, and on-the-job experience. Learn more at [ncoa.org/SCSEP](http://ncoa.org/SCSEP).

### Senior Environmental Employment (SEE) program

The SEE program allows workers aged 55+ to share their skills and expertise with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). SEE positions range from clerical to technical and professional assignments as technicians, writers, engineers, scientists, and accountants working for the environment. NCOA is one of six national aging organizations administering the SEE program through a cooperative agreement with the EPA. Learn more at [ncoa.org/SEE](http://ncoa.org/SEE).

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### About NCOA

*The National Council on Aging (NCOA) is a respected national leader and trusted partner to help people aged 60+ meet the challenges of aging. Our mission is to improve the lives of millions of older adults, especially those who are struggling. Through innovative community programs and services, online help, and advocacy, NCOA is partnering with nonprofit organizations, government, and business to improve the health and economic security of 10 million older adults by 2020. Learn more at [ncoa.org](http://ncoa.org) and @NCOAging.*

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