

Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging

Kansas Silver Haired Legislature Volunteer Description

Summary: The Kansas Silver Haired Legislature (SHL) is a unicameral legislature composed of 125 representatives. All are over 60 and are elected from their county residence. The SHL develops bills and resolutions, which are presented to the Kansas Legislature and the Governor as recommendations for state policy.

Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging has one delegate for each county in the region. Emphasis is on the following:

- To Educate – Provide information to the community about issues and steps to take to advocate for bills and resolutions.
- To Advocate – Actions of the SHL inform the public and the Kansas Legislature about concerns of the older adults in the community.
- To Involve – The SHL provides thousands of older adults a way to become involved at the local, state and federal level by encouraging them to advocate for issues meaningful to older adults.

Essential Responsibilities:

- The SHL is to advocate for legislation introduced by the SHL.
- Testify at hearings on SHL legislation.
- Meet with older adults in their county/district on SHL legislation affecting the community 60 years of age and older.

Eligibility:

- Any Kansan aged 60 and over who is a registered voter may file for candidacy.
- Voters must live in the district in which they are voting.
- Silver Haired Legislator elections are conducted by Area Agencies on Aging across the state every two years. Candidate registration forms, petitions and filing instructions are available from any Area Agency on Aging.

Time Commitment:

- The Kansas Silver Haired Legislature meets each fall for three days in Topeka.
- The term of office is two years and elections take place every two years. Members may be re-elected. An application is available at SEKAAA.

Supports:

- The legislature provides an educational experience in the political process and provides an opportunity to identify priority concerns of Kansas senior citizens.

Benefits:

- Knowing that you are advocating for older adults and providing a voice for the older community at the state and federal level.