

From: Administration for Community Living <acl@public.govdelivery.com>
To: Kester, Tonykester@aging.sc.gov
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Subject: Olmstead Ownership for Older Adults

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Olmstead Ownership for Older Adults

By Edwin Walker, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aging

Today marks the 17th anniversary of a landmark Supreme Court decision. In [Olmstead v. L.C.](#) the Court ruled that people who need assistance with activities of daily living such as eating, bathing, dressing and walking cannot be unnecessarily segregated. They must receive services in the most integrated setting possible.

This decision, based on the Americans with Disabilities Act, has great implications for older adults.

All people should have the opportunity to live, work, retire, and contribute to diverse neighborhoods and communities, regardless of age or disability. The Olmstead decision has helped make that vision a reality for older adults and people with disabilities alike. In the 2006 and continued in the 2016 [Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act](#), Congress directed the Administration on Aging and state aging agencies to reshape the system that provides long-term services and supports to include more home-and-community-based services, expanding the concept and reality of aging in place.

This is just one example of a shift in funding, policy, and attitudes toward community living that reflects the spirit of the Olmstead decision. As a result, more and more Americans are living in the settings they choose and are engaging in their communities throughout all stages of their lives.

Olmstead is for all of us, and with an estimated 10,000 Americans turning 65 each day, it has never been more important to the aging community. I hope you will join me in adding the anniversary of the Olmstead decision to your calendars of dates to celebrate.

For more information on how Olmstead helps older adults:

[ADA at 25: Aging Advocates Celebrate Partnership And Progress](#): Issue Brief from the Justice in Aging Journal on the impact of the Olmstead decision and the Americans with Disabilities on older adults.

[Promoting Community Living for Older Adults Who Need Long-term Services and Supports \(PDF, 299KB\)](#): Issue Brief from the Center for Policy and Evaluation, Administration for Community Living

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