

NEWS RELEASE

Ilene Shapiro – Summit County Executive
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



ILENE SHAPIRO
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



DIRECTION HOME
AKRON CANTON
AREA AGENCY ON AGING & DISABILITIES

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Direction Home now accepting referrals to County-funded Aging in Place Program

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO—County Executive Ilene Shapiro and Direction Home Akron Canton Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities are pleased to announce their new joint initiative, the Aging in Place Program, is now accepting referrals. Supported with an initial \$4 million grant from Executive Shapiro and County Council, the program will help older adults remain in their homes, navigate the digital world, and provide basic needs like food. The County is utilizing state funds from the Department of Aging and federal American Rescue Plan Act funds for the grant. It has committed \$8 million in total for the program over the next two years.

Summit County residents aged 60 or older and their caregivers can call 877-770-5558 or visit www.dhad.org/refer to begin the screening and assessment process. Residents will then be assessed based on need by Direction Home. Those eligible to participate in the program will receive access to housing repair and one-time chore assistance, digital literacy, devices and internet access, and in-home care managed supports like personal care and home delivered meals. Direction Home is collaborating with its large network of providers, as well as Executive Shapiro's Department of Community Development, to provide services.

Like counties across the nation, Summit County's population of older adults continues to grow, with the portion of those 60 and older expected to exceed 20% by 2030. Older adults participate in their communities and contribute to a vibrant culture. Most older adults wish to remain in place as they age, but face barriers to maintaining their home or accessing critical support services. Many simply cannot afford to privately pay for these services.

"Aging in place is a term we all need to learn. Our older adults have told us loud and clear; they want to age in the place of their choosing. For most, this is their current home. Doing so can be a challenge, however," said Executive Shapiro. "This program will support large improvements like furnaces and windows, as well as smaller, but critical needs, like grab bars or ramps. Our older adults also need help in navigating an increasingly digital world and we are ready to assist. I know this collaboration with Direction Home is going to make a significant difference in the lives of our older adults and their caregivers."

“Direction Home is very excited about this new opportunity,” said Abigail Morgan, President and CEO. “Through this partnership we are able to ensure older adults in Summit County can age where they want, safe and successful in the place they want to call home. This is another example of how Summit County comes together to address issues for residents. As Summit County’s Area Agency on Aging, we will continue to advocate for programs and services that meet the needs for an Age Friendly community.”

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