

The State of Washington



Proclamation

WHEREAS, approximately 18 percent of Washington state residents are 65 years of age or older; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that one quarter of people 65 and older will fall each year, and falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries among older adults in the United States; and

WHEREAS, greater than 1-in-3 falls result in an injury that requires medical treatment or restriction of activity for at least one day, and in 2024, falls led to 1,133 deaths, 27,340 hospitalizations and 102,013 emergency department visits; and

WHEREAS, falls are the most common cause of traumatic brain injuries among Washington state residents 65 years of age and older, with falls accounting for 65 percent of fatal traumatic brain injuries among older adults; and

WHEREAS, falls can lead to depression, loss of mobility and loss of functional independence; and

WHEREAS, the average hospitalization charge for an unintentional fall among Washington state residents ages 65 and older was \$88,287 in 2024; and

WHEREAS, the financial toll for falls among older adults is expected to increase as the population ages and may reach \$101 billion per year nationally by 2030; and

WHEREAS, injuries from falls are a largely preventable community health problem; and

WHEREAS, evidence-based programs reduce falls by utilizing cost-effective strategies, such as exercise programs to improve balance and strength, medication management, vision improvement, reduction of home hazards, and fall prevention education; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Falls Prevention Coalition is working to increase awareness of this issue, promote multidisciplinary strategies to prevent falls and encourage residents to take steps to protect those who are at increased risk of falling;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Ferguson, governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim September 21-25, 2026, as

Falls Prevention Awareness Week

in Washington, and I urge all people in our state to join me in this special observance.

Signed this 21st day of August, 2026


Governor Bob Ferguson

