



JB Pritzker, Governor  
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Dear Aging Network:

I hope that this note finds you all safe and well. Over the past few weeks, most of us have seen the news coverage regarding the killing of George Floyd in Minnesota and others in Georgia and Kentucky, that have resulted in the ongoing protests. As Governor Pritzker said a couple of days ago, it is critical that we stand together to support each other during times like these regardless of our race or ethnic identity.

We work with people, and support communities and constituents of various races, ethnicities, religious affiliations and backgrounds. This is what we do; providing person-centered care to all of our older Illinoisans and supporting efforts to maintain their safety in their own homes. In keeping with the Governor's mission to promote and instill a culture of equity and respect for all people, I encourage you all to learn more about anti-racism efforts and how you can be an ally to people from other communities.

While opinions abound in our society, COVID 19 data has shown, that like injustice and violence, health inequities too have a stark and disparate impact on people of color. Human service agencies are the first to respond to heal, to comfort, serve, support, and protect. While we must continue to act, I encourage us to also think deeply about why we are so necessary and how we can be a part of a systems change.

These are truly unprecedented times, and it is especially important to take care of your emotional health and wellness. We are in a pandemic and with the protests, the stress on everybody is growing every day. Strength is knowing when to ask for help. I have included more information about emotional support services below.

The Warm Line is a team of Wellness Support Specialists who have experienced mental health and/or substance use recovery in their own lives. The Warm Line is a source of support - if you just need to talk. Call 1-866-359-7593 M-F 8am-5pm. Main menu; select option 2.

Call4Calm - Mental Health Support Hotline. The Illinois Department of Human Services' Mental Health Division has launched a free-of-charge, emotional support text line, Call4Calm, for Illinois residents experiencing stress and mental health issues related to COVID-19.

Individuals who would like to speak with a mental health professional can text "TALK" to 5-5-2-0-2-0, or for Spanish, "HABLAR" to the same number: 5-5-2-0-2-0. Once a resident sends a text to the hotline, they will receive a call from a counselor within 24 hours.

IDoA has also published resources to help connect older and disabled Illinoisans with family and loved ones to prevent distress and feelings of social isolation. Those resources can be found on the [IDoA website here](#).

As always, please know that we are grateful for all of the work you are doing as we continue **to support today, while planning for tomorrow**. Please stay safe and be well.

Sincerely,

Paula Basta, M.Div.  
Director, Illinois Department on Aging

Respect for yesterday. Support for today. Planning for tomorrow.  
[www.illinois.gov/aging](http://www.illinois.gov/aging)