



**JB Pritzker, Governor**  
**Paula A. Basta, M.Div., Director**

---

*Respect for Yesterday*  
*Support for Today*  
*Plan for Tomorrow*

[Click here to visit our website for an accessible version of this letter.](#)

**Find A Vaccine  
Location**

**IDoA COVID-19 Resources**

June 16, 2022

Dear Aging Network:

Memorial Day weekend may have marked the unofficial start of summer, but it's finally feeling like summer out there! I hope you've been [staying safe](#) from this week's scorching temperatures. For information about the warning signs of heat-related illnesses, cooling centers that are open throughout the state, and other extreme heat safety tips, please reference our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) feeds, and feel free to share the graphics and posts with your networks.

Yesterday we observed World Elder Abuse Awareness Day with events across the state bringing together aging advocates and community members to raise awareness about ending adult abuse and neglect. To all of you who work with our APS staff, thank you for your commitment to ensuring Illinois' older residents and adults with disabilities are treated with the respect they deserve.

Your ability to handle serious allegations with sensitivity and compassion, and a dedication to justice, does not go unnoticed. We at IDoA recognize both the difficulty of the work that you do and the tremendous difference you make in the lives of the most vulnerable.

June is also Pride Month, an observance near and dear to my heart as an LGBTQ older adult myself (and part of a growing population of older Illinoisans)! [SAGE \(Advocacy and Services for LGBT Elders\)](#) estimates that nationwide, the number of LGBTQ adults who are 50 or older will grow from roughly 3 million in 2018 to 7 million by 2030. In Illinois currently, one-quarter of the estimated 506,000 LGBTQ adults are over the age of 50.

Though resilient, LGBTQ older adults face [significant disparities](#) that are rooted in discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, racism, a lack of legal and social recognition, a reliance on chosen family, reduced access to inclusive services, and other social determinants of health and well-being. Disparities are often compounded and thus even greater for the estimated 1 in 5 LGBTQ older adults of color.

Countering heterosexism, genderism, and transphobia are essential to an age-friendly state, and I'm so appreciative of all of you who have completed SAGE's [LGBT aging training](#), and of our AAAs who are offering inclusive and affirming programs for LGBTQ older adults and allies, like [Thrive with Pride by AgeOptions](#), [PrideLinc by AgeLinc](#), and others.

During Pride Month and beyond, we continue to lift up and celebrate LGBTQ older adults. Check out the photos below from a wet and rainy Springfield PrideFest!



Later this month, IDoA will be marching in the [Chicago Pride Parade](#), and I'll also be visiting Center on Halsted, the Midwest's most comprehensive community center dedicated to advancing and securing the health and well-being of LGBTQ people of Chicagoland, for a meet and greet with residents of the Center's Town Hall senior apartments.

June has already been a busy month for the Aging Network, and I've enjoyed attending many of our partner organizations' special events. From the American Association of Retired Asians' 13th annual fundraising dinner and gala to the [North Shore Senior Center's 65th anniversary open house](#), it's been great to visit with older adults in person and update them about what we have going on at the Department.

Speaking of which, please mark your calendar now for one of my favorite events of the year, Senior Day at the Illinois State Fair, on August 15. In addition to our usual activities in the Illinois Building, IDoA will have a presence in the Governor's Tent during all 10 days of the fair. We hope to see you there!

As always, thank you for your continued hard work and your dedication to Illinois' older adults. Please stay cool, and continue to stay safe and well.

Sincerely,

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

---

The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with appropriate State and Federal statutes. If you feel you have been discriminated against, call the **Senior HelpLine** at (800) 252-8966; (888) 206-1327 (TTY)

