



State of Illinois
Illinois Department on Aging

Illinois Department on Aging
**Illinois Commission
on LGBTQ Aging**

March 1, 2025

Honorable Members of the General Assembly and Governor:

Public Act 102-0885 as codified in 20 ILCS 105/3, formed the Illinois Commission on LGBTQ Aging effective May 16, 2022. By statute, the Commission will examine the impact of State and local laws, policies, and regulations on LGBTQ older adults and make recommendations to ensure equitable access, treatment, care and benefits, and overall quality of life; examine strategies to increase provider awareness of the needs of LGBTQ older adults and their caregivers and to improve the competence of and access to treatment, services, and ongoing care, including preventive care; and carry out other duties.

Background:

The Commission was created to investigate, analyze, and study the health, housing, financial, psychosocial, home-and-community-based services, assisted living, and long-term care needs of LGBTQ older adults and their caregivers. The Commission is charged to make recommendations to improve access to benefits, services, and supports for LGBTQ older adults and their caregivers. The Commission, in formulating its recommendations, shall consider the best policies and practices in other states and jurisdictions.

Current:

The following members serve on the Commission as of March 31, 2025:

Mary Killough – Ex-Officio	Aneesha Gandhi – <i>resigned</i>	Alexis Martinez
Donald M. Bell – Chair	Dr. Keith Green	Kim Mank
Michael Maginn – Vice-Chair	Dary Mien	Britta Larson
Billy Rogers – LGBTQ Advocate	Daisy Feidt – <i>resigned 02/12/2025</i>	Channyn Lynn Parker
Christian Castro	Charles Koehler	Sarah Myerscough-Mueller
Kim L. Hunt	Caprice Carthans	– IHFS Designee
Taylor Tefft	Dr. Kathleen Robbins	Caronina Grimble – IDHS Designee
Phyllis Johnson – <i>resigned</i>	Stefanie Clark	Angela Simmons – IDVA Designee
<i>01/22/2025</i>	Jeff Berry	Jennifer Epstein – IDPH Designee
Dr. Virginia Quinonez – <i>resigned</i>	Danie Muriello – <i>resigned</i>	
<i>08/28/2024</i>	<i>01/06/2025</i>	

The body held its first quarterly meeting on January 18, 2023, to discuss the purpose of the Commission and operational matters (future meeting dates, required trainings, etc.) in furtherance of its statutory mandate to propose recommendations to improve access to benefits, services, and supports for LGBTQ older adults and their caregivers. The Commission has convened on January 18, 2023, March 14, 2023, June 7, 2023, September 6, 2023, March 6, 2024, June 5, 2024, September 4, 2024, December 4, 2024, and March 5, 2025 and has created the following subcommittees to ensure intentionality in its work:

HIV and Aging and Long-Term Survivor (HALTS) Subcommittee – The HALTS Subcommittee seeks to address the isolation paradox among long-term survivors of HIV and plans to identify and/or create ways for people to connect socially, to combat the negative impacts of social isolation. The Subcommittee will identify culturally sensitive and appropriate training for healthcare and social service providers who care for those living with HIV.

Healthcare Subcommittee – The Healthcare Subcommittee seeks to enhance healthcare access for LGBTQ Illinoisians who are aging. The Subcommittee will assure that health care is delivered in a safe and welcoming manner by building provider competency, assuring that patients know their options and rights. The Subcommittee hopes to increase healthcare utilization among the LGBTQ Aging Population by examining how LGBTQ Illinoisians utilize healthcare and the overall patient experience.

Outreach and Training Subcommittee – The Outreach and Training Subcommittee seeks to develop statewide training curricula to improve provider competency in delivery of health, housing, and long-term support services to the LGBTQ+ aging community. In addition, the Subcommittee plans to create an outreach plan to identify training needs within and outside of the LGBTQ+ aging community and address apprehension within the LGBTQ aging community in utilizing mainstream providers.

Housing Subcommittee – The Housing Subcommittee seeks to identify and address challenges and concerns with the provision and availability of LGBTQ+ affirming housing, home care and long-term care. This will be accomplished through a comprehensive review of data, analysis of existing resources and provision of testimony which will inform recommendations for policies, procedures, and best practices to address this issue.

Commission Activities to Date:

- Created a purpose statement in March 2023.
 - ☐ The Commission will examine the impact of State and local laws, policies, and regulations on LGBTQ older adults and make recommendations to ensure equitable access, treatment, care and benefits, and overall quality of life; examine strategies to increase provider awareness of the needs of LGBTQ older adults and their caregivers and to improve the competence of and access to treatment, services, and ongoing care, including preventive care; and carry out other duties.
- Hosted a brainstorming discussion to identify healthcare needs for LGBTQ aging population (March 2023). Those needs include:
 - ☐ Long-Term Care
 - ☐ Rural Access
 - ☐ Veterans
 - ☐ HIV Long-Term Survivors
 - ☐ Transgender and access to gender affirming care
 - ☐ Reproductive health care needs for those of all gender identities
 - ☐ Persons with disabilities
 - ☐ Behavioral health needs and lack of support

- Information Gathering
 - The Commission discussed preventing premature admission and scheduled time with IDoA and HFS to learn about the admission to Long-Term Care institutions, including the assessment process as well as the Pre-Admission Screening, Resource and Referral (PASRR) process.
 - The Commission explored the challenges that aging LGBTQ+ individuals face when needing assistance with activities of daily living, balancing care options with a desire to age in place rather than moving into an institutional setting. The Commission met with Britta Larson, with the Center on Halsted, to discuss barriers LGBTQ+ seniors face with home and community-based service options.
- Golden Rainbows of Illinois South (GRIS) conducted a Listening Session in Carbondale utilizing questions developed by the Healthcare Subcommittee.

HIV and Aging and Long-Term Survivor (HALTS) Subcommittee

The Subcommittee has convened on March 13, 2023, June 1, 2023, November 13, 2023, December 20, 2023, February 8, 2024, March 14, 2024, April 11, 2024, May 9, 2024, June 13, 2024, July 11, 2024, August 15, 2024, September 19, 2024, October 17, 2024, November 14, 2024, December 12, 2024, January 12, 2025, and February 13, 2025, and has:

- Created a purpose statement
- Discussed other state HIV and aging plan
- Hosted SAGE to present on the HIV long-term care bill of rights and other advocacy issues
- Discussed the need to prioritize HIV and aging issues in the next State Plan on Aging
- Discussed the need to coordinate among local and state partners to discuss issues and identify priorities for going forward
- The Reunion Project welcomed 200 participants from collaborative agencies as well as stakeholders

Healthcare Subcommittee

The Subcommittee has convened on March 24, 2023, April 28, 2024, June 1, 2023, June 23, 2023, August 25, 2023, September 22, 2023, October 27, 2023, January 26, 2024, and March 22, 2024, and has examined two priorities/action steps:

- Strategies to increase provider awareness of the needs of LGBTQ older adults and their caregivers with a focus on improving the competence and access to quality treatment, services, and ongoing and preventive care.
- Policies and procedures or the absence thereof that promote premature admission of LGBTQ older adults to institutional care. Examine what potential cost savings which exist as a result of providing lower cost and culturally responsive home and community-based alternatives to institutional care.

Outreach and Training Subcommittee

The Subcommittee has convened on March 28, 2023, April 25, 2023, May 30, 2023, June 27, 2023, July 25, 2023, September 26, 2023, October 24, 2023, January 16, 2024, February 20, 2024, March 19, 2024, April 16, 2024, May 21, 2024, June 18, 2024, July 16, 2024, August 20, 2024, September 17, 2024, and December 17, 2024, and is:

- Developing Subcommittee goals and a work plan
- Reviewing reports focused on priorities for LGBTQ+ older adults.
- Reviewing LGBTQ and older adult centered training curricula and opportunities
- Developing an understanding of what is needed, including cost, for a robust statewide training initiative.

Goals/priority tasks identified by the Subcommittee:

- Develop parts of a program that are practical, measurable and have documented impact on people providing services and those receiving
- Understand how patients/clients see cultural competency demonstrated
- Conduct an inventory of trainings currently being provided
- Identify best practices in LGBTQ cultural competency
- Build awareness about the Commission
- Survey hospitals, including teaching hospitals, to see what they request and what needs to be augmented
- Explore the need for cultural competency training for medical students
- Creation of a training framework

Housing Subcommittee

The Subcommittee has convened on March 13, 2023; April 12, 2023; May 17, 2023; June 14, 2023; July 19, 2023, August 16, 2023, September 17, 2023, December 29, 2023, January 8, 2024, January 17, 2024, February 21, 2024, March 8, 2024, April 24, 2024, May 15, 2024, June 12, 2024, June 26, 2024, July 10, 2024, July 17, 2024, August 7, 2024, August 21, 2024, January 15, 2025, February 19, 2025 and is:

- Developing goals and a work plan
- Reviewing housing reports focused on priorities for LGBTQ+ older adults
- Reviewing LGBTQ and older adult challenges experienced in long-term care facilities
- Developing an understanding of what is needed, including cost, for a robust statewide housing initiative

The Commission will continue to meet at a regular quarterly cadence to develop and finalize recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by the March 31, 2026, deadline.

Respectfully,



Mary Killough,

Acting Director

Illinois Department on Aging



State of Illinois, Department on Aging

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Senior HelpLine (8:30am – 5:00pm, Monday – Friday):
1-800-252-8966; 711 (TRS)

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