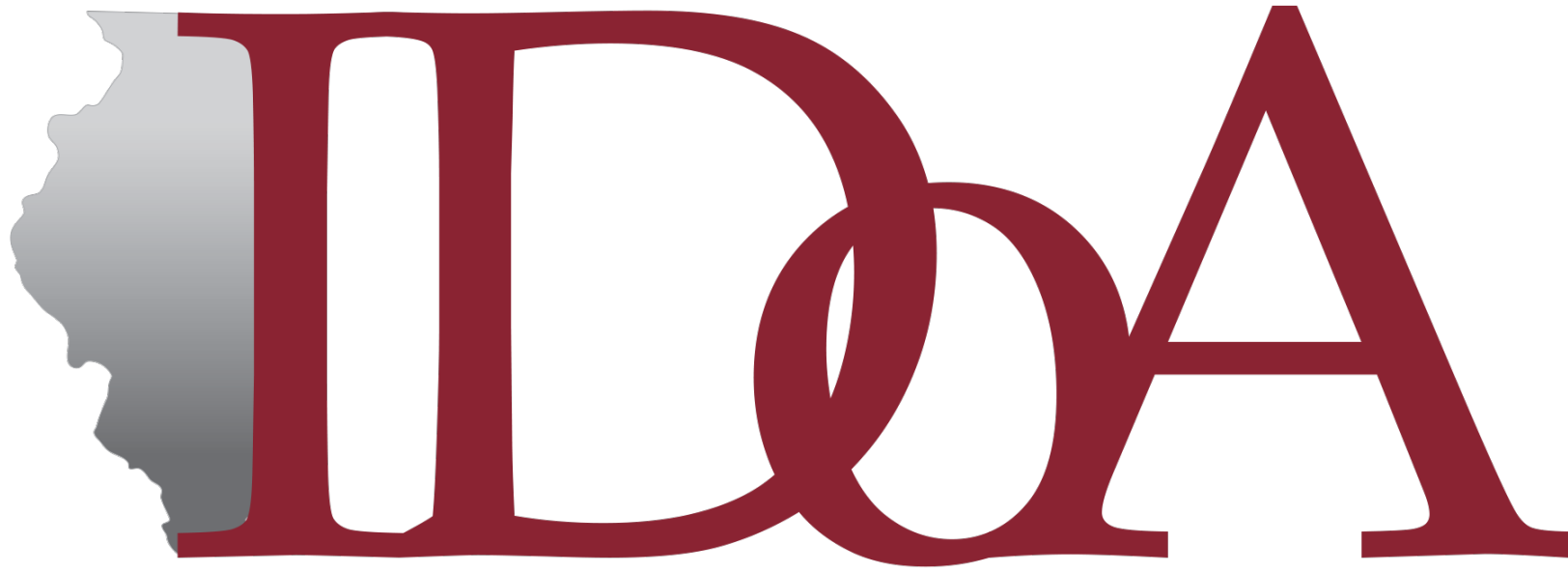




Illinois Department on Aging

Illinois Care Connections FY27 Provider Training

Jennifer Hebel, IDoA
Terri Worman, IATP
Jeannine Zinck, IATP

The **MISSION** of the Illinois Department on Aging is to **serve and advocate** for older Illinoisans and their caregivers by administering **quality and culturally appropriate** programs that promote **partnerships** and encourage **independence, dignity, and quality of life.**



Illinois Department on Aging



Meeting Logistics

Please ensure that your full name is displayed in Zoom. To edit your name:

- Click on the Participants icon in bar at the bottom of the screen
- Hover over your name and then select the ... prompt that will appear
- Select Rename and change your display name

Attendees are muted for this meeting

- This helps reduce background noise for the speaker, other attendees, and for the meeting recording
- To ask a question or make a comment, please use the Chat or Q&A features at the bottom of the screen. IATP and IDoA staff will be monitoring and responding to questions.
- Submitted questions not answered in the chat live will be addressed at the end of the session

To turn on live captioning and live translation in Zoom:

- Click the CC icon on the bottom left corner to adjust your settings.
- If you have captioning or translation needs not met by this feature, please contact Aging.Training@illinois.gov before the next scheduled meeting to arrange other options

Use of AI Meeting Assistant Tools

Recording Meetings and Generating Transcripts

- IDoA and IATP are using Zoom to record this meeting and live closed-captioning is being offered. The recording, slides, and closed-captioning will be available after the event on the IDoA website at <https://ilaging.illinois.gov/forprofessionals/referrals-to-il-care-connections.html>

Meeting Attendees

- Please disable your AI meeting assistants during all IDoA meetings.
- If AI meeting assistants are still present after this AI policy announcement, staff will remove them from the meeting.

Thank you for your understanding as we work together as technology changes and evolves.

Today's Agenda

- Overview of Illinois Care Connections history and program goals
- Review FY27 program overview
- Address defining Illinois Care Connections eligibility and need
- Discuss FY27 program changes
- Review referral process and referral form
- Questions?

Illinois Care Connections (ICC)

Federal Grant

Utilized CARES Act funding to increase social connectedness among older adults and persons with disabilities

State Funded

Provided CCP older adults with tablets and internet to address social isolation

Current Iteration

Any older adults age 60+ who live in the community eligible to receive tablets, internet, assistive technology, and limited DME

FY27 Grant Overview

\$2.0M available in state funding

Updated referral form

Training in AT/ICC available from IATP

Only persons living in the community are eligible and does not include those living in nursing facilities, independent living facilities, or residential facilities. HUD/Senior housing units are eligible

Equipment provided as a **long-term loan** to participant

FY27 Grant Overview (continued)

Referrals may be submitted by:

- Care Coordination Units (CCUs)
- Adult Day Service providers (ADS)
- Adult Protective Service providers (APS)
- Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)
- AAA-funded entities
- Home Care Ombudsmen (HCO)

What ICC Offers

Eligible Items

- Tablets and other computer equipment
- Internet **only** if older adult does not have internet and cannot afford it
- Vision and hearing equipment
- Devices to help with Activities of Daily Living
- Assistive communication technology
- Smart home devices

What ICC Offers

(continued)

Ineligible Items

- Disposable items
- Food
- Rent/Utility assistance
- **Items covered by Medicare/Medicaid**
- Home modifications/repairs
- Hearing aids
- Cellphones

Responsibilities for Program

Provider

Identifies older adult in need of assistance

- IDoA strongly encourages all providers to ensure ICC is being utilized when assisting older adults

Accurately and thoroughly fills out and submits referral form **with the older adult's input and consent**

Informs older adult that IATP will be in contact

Assists IATP with contacting participant if needed

May be asked to assist with equipment delivery if problems arise

Ensures that there is a “need” and not a “want” and may deny an ICC referral if the participant does not meet eligibility requirements

Responsibilities for Program (continued)

IATP

Contacts participant to determine specific need

Conducts in-person visits

Evaluates equipment that best meets the older adult's need

- May loan the equipment for a short period of time to evaluate appropriateness

Purchase and distribute equipment to older adult for long-term loan

Provide technical assistance to participant

Accept unused equipment to be recirculated in program

Defining Need

- An **ICC referral MUST** address a functional, cognitive, social, or psychological need that the older adult has that prevents them from completing a task in their home or community or causes them to be socially isolated
- No income/asset requirements
- First come, first serve basis for CCP and non-CCP
- “Want” is not enough
- Provider may deny an ICC referral if there is insufficient need
 - Contact IATP at iatp.care@iltech.org with specific questions
 - Participants who wish to dispute non-referral may contact the Senior Helpline

Defining Need

(continued)

Examples of instances to consider an ICC evaluation

- Enable caregiver to access home
- Repeated falls
- Isolation/abuse
- Difficulty performing self-care tasks
- Difficulty eating/drinking
- Communication/Hearing problems
- Unable to participate in hobbies
- Telehealth appointments
- Necessary online shopping

Questions to Ask When Determining Need

When evaluating a request for ICC, ask yourself:

Will the...

- Device have a direct impact on helping a person stay connected to their family?
- Device make them safer in their home?
- Participant be able to use the technology without assistance?
- Device make completing daily tasks easier and have a direct impact on their life?
- Device reduce caregiver burden?
- Participant have access to the equipment through another program?
 - Insurance, Medicaid, Medicare, DME lending closets, ESS, afford themselves

Examples of Need vs. Want

“Want”

I heard that I'm owed free stuff

I want what my neighbor got

I was told I can get items every year

For my kids/grandkids to use

To watch tv

I may need it one day

Because I want it

Examples of Need vs. Want (continued)

“Need”

I have a lot of appointments but don't have reliable transportation

I keep falling

I can't see to pay bills/cook/etc.

My hands hurt when I do X/Y

I want to stay in touch with my family

I want to learn online

I have trouble standing for long periods of time

I can't hear when I'm at church/restaurant/party

I can't afford internet but I need it for X

Program Start

Referrals open **July 20, 2026 at 9:00AM**

Referrals will **close around mid-Spring or when funds run out**, whichever is sooner

FY27 referral code to be shared and sent to eligible providers by email

Links to referral form available at:

- ilaging.illinois.gov/forprofessionals/referrals-to-il-care-connections.html
- care.iltech.org

FY27 Program Changes – DME

Reminder: ICC is **payor of last resort** for items that can be covered by Medicaid and/or Medicare

- Mobility devices including canes, walkers, rollators, powered wheelchairs, etc. (Medicaid & Medicare)
- Bathroom safety aids, such as commodes, lifts, and bathtub seats in some instances (Medicaid)

Covered items must be submitted to Medicaid/Medicare **before** sending to ICC for fulfillment

Resources for additional information:

- [Medicare.gov DME Coverage](#)
- [Medicaid DME Reference List](#)
- [DME of America List of DME](#)

FY27 Program Changes – Internet & Resources

No internet renewals for non-CCP participants in FY27

Internet renewals for CCP participants will be considered on a case-by-case basis but participant must attempt to source own internet first

IATP is working with T-Mobile to establish a separate program through a third party for ICC participants, with scaling levels of cost and internet speed, paid for by participant

Pembroke Township in Kankakee County cannot be served by ICC for internet at this time, due to lack of service options

- Illinois Broadband grant funds awarded

Two new resources being developed

- ESS or ICC?
- Evaluation of need across ICC functional categories

Referral Reminders from **IATP**

- ICC is a **needs-based program** designed to help an older adult stay more independent in their home.
- Be sure you have **talked with the older adult or have them present** when filling out the referral form.
- **Fill out all required information** – you cannot submit the referral form until you have.

Referral Reminders from IATP (continued)

Include a **valid phone number** and/or **email address** for the older adult.

Use the **Referral Notes box** at the end to tell us anything else we need to know.

Check the final box on the form to submit it.

After the Submission

If the **form is completed and no questions are necessary**, the device(s) will be shipped directly to the program participant, usually within 1-2 weeks of the referral.

If **additional questions are necessary based on the details in the referral**, additional time will be needed before the device can be shipped – delaying the process for the participant.

Tell older adults **they will get a call from IATP with a (217) area code if we have any questions** so we can be sure they are getting the correct device or devices for their personal needs.

Need Assistance? Have Questions?

Contact **IATP ICC Staff** at (217) 522-7985 or email us at iatp.care@iltech.org

Check out the “**ICC Referral User Guide for Agencies**” on our website for tips and reminders <https://iltech.org/services/icc-aging>