

RESPECT FOR  
YESTERDAY,  
SUPPORT FOR  
TODAY,  
PLAN FOR  
TOMORROW



## Aging Matters

January - February 2023 Newsletter from the Illinois Department  
on Aging

Office of  
Governor JB  
Pritzker

### Message From Director Paula Basta



Be Socially  
Engaged While  
Practicing  
Social  
Distancing

Find a Vaccine  
Location Near  
You

IDoA COVID-19  
Vaccine  
Resources

Looking For  
Services?

Upcoming

Happy New Year! On behalf of the Department on Aging, I hope you had a wonderful holiday season and are settling in to 2023 with ease.

As I look forward to the year ahead, I can't help but feel proud of all the Department and our Aging Network accomplished in 2022. In partnership with AARP Illinois, Equality Illinois, Pride Action Tank and many others, we [passed a new state law](#) enhancing access to identity-affirming resources and services for LGBTQ+ older Illinoisans. We also worked with the Alzheimer's Association on a [new state law](#) that requires Community Care Program providers to complete an annual training on dementia care.

Throughout the year, we continued our efforts to support and serve older adults and promote healthy aging. During calendar year 2022, IDoA's Senior HelpLine answered more than 157,000 calls from older Illinoisans and their caregivers, and agency staff processed more than 126,000 applications for license plate discounts and free transit permits.

Sadly, we received more than 20,000 reports of suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation of older adults. [Adult Protective Services \(APS\)](#) caseworkers investigated each of these allegations with care and sensitivity, working with local law enforcement and providing resources to victims when appropriate. We aim to continue to empower older adults in the year ahead.

Helping ensure older adults can live safely at home, our [Community Care Program \(CCP\)](#) provided services to approximately 63,400 individuals in state fiscal year 2022. We

## Webinar Events

## #VaxUpIL - All in Illinois Campaign

have proposed to the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to add new services to CCP, including falls detection technology, assistive technology and environmental modifications. We also continue to focus on supporting both paid and unpaid caregivers, ensuring access to nutritious home-delivered meals, and upholding our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

As always, the Department on Aging is here to assist you however we can. For information about our programs and services for older adults and persons with disabilities, contact the Senior HelpLine toll-free at 1-800-252-8966, 711 (TRS), or via email at [aging.ilsenior@illinois.gov](mailto:aging.ilsenior@illinois.gov). In most instances, we will connect you with a local office in your area.

Please continue to stay safe and well.

Sincerely,



## White Crane Wellness Center Wins Governor's Engaging Aging Award



[White Crane Wellness Center](#) was the recipient of a 2022 Governor's Engaging Aging Award, presented annually to up to 13 community organizations that went above and beyond to make a positive impact in the lives of older adults over the past year. White Crane operates an Adult Day Wellness Program and facilitates a portfolio of nationally recognized evidence-based health programs, health education workshops, screenings, assessments, fitness programming and support services.

[Click here](#) to view photos from the Dec. 6 award ceremony.

## Governor Pritzker Attends Chicago Housing Authority Senior Gala





More than 1,300 older adults gathered at the Hyatt Regency on Wacker Drive on Saturday, Dec. 10 for the Chicago Housing Authority's annual senior gala. This year, attendees were joined by a special guest, Gov. JB Pritzker, who [delivered remarks](#) to the crowd. You can find [photos from the event here](#).

## Nominations Now Open for 2023 Senior Illinoisan Hall of Fame Awards



The Illinois Department on Aging is now accepting nominations for the 2023 Senior Illinoisan Hall of Fame awards, open to adults aged 65 and older who excel in the categories of community service, education, performance and/or graphic arts, and the labor force.

Nominations for 2023 inductees must be submitted by June 1. For more information or to submit a nomination, please visit

<https://ilaging.illinois.gov/resources/newspublicationsandreports/halloffame.html>.

Please consider making a nomination. You can also read about some of our 2022 inductees via the links below:

[A podcasting prosecutor](#)

[A chess coach and master gardener](#)

## License Plate Fee for Low-Income Older Drivers, Those With Disabilities Drops to \$10



Eligible older adults and persons with disabilities will see their annual license plate renewal fee reduced by more than half this year. Under [Public Act 102-0807](#), which took effect Jan. 1, drivers who qualify for IDoA's Benefit Access Program will pay only \$10 for their license plate stickers, a decrease from \$24 previously.

The Department on Aging's [Benefit Access Program](#) determines eligibility for a license plate discount from the Secretary of State's office and free transit on fixed route systems in Illinois. To qualify, residents must be at least 65 years of age or 16 years of age and disabled, as well as meet income requirements. For a household containing one person, the annual income cap is \$33,562.

To apply for the Benefit Access Program online, please visit <https://ilaging.illinois.gov/benefitsaccess.html>. For assistance with the online application, older adults can call IDoA's Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966.

**Those with specific questions about the price reduction, or about their vehicle's registration status, are encouraged to contact the Illinois Secretary of State's office at 800-252-8980.**

In the news:

[Under New Law, Illinois Seniors and Residents With Disabilities May Qualify for Discounted License Plate Fees](#)

[Illinois seniors may qualify for discounted license plate renewals](#)

[License plate fees to drop in 2023 for some Illinois residents](#)

[Personas mayores y con discapacidad califican para tarifas de matrícula con descuento](#)

## Medicare and Medicaid Now Fully Cover Preventive Vaccines



The federal Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 contained an important piece of money-saving health care news for older adults: Vaccines covered under Medicare prescription drug plans (Part D) and Medicaid are free in 2023.

[This article](#) from the National Council on Aging answers some questions you may have.

If you have further questions about what vaccinations Medicare will fully cover, or general questions about insurance coverage, contact our [Senior Health Insurance Program \(SHIP\)](#) at 800-252-8966 or [Aging.SHIP@Illinois.gov](mailto:Aging.SHIP@Illinois.gov).

If you're turning 65 in 2023, a SHIP counselor can also help you find the best Medicare plan for your needs.

## Catch Up On Your COVID-19 Protection This January



**Long Live catching up with old friends.**

Catch up on your COVID-19 protection this January.

Find your nearest booster today.  
[Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) 1-800-232-0233

COVID-19 kept us away from our friends for too long! Let's make up for all the missed moments and beat COVID-19 together by getting up to date on our vaccinations. Visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to find COVID-19 vaccines and boosters near you.

To share the above graphic on social media, check out our [Long Live Illinois campaign winter toolkit](#).

## Sangamon County Triad Aims to Educate Older Adults on Crime Prevention, Public Safety



TRIAD is a national program that began in 1988 when the National Sheriff's Association, International Association of Chiefs of Police and AARP signed a cooperative agreement to work together to reduce crime victimization and unwarranted fear of crime affecting older persons. The Illinois State TRIAD was formed in 1990 to guide a statewide response to the critical issue of crimes against older persons.

While several Illinois counties have TRIAD agreements, this newsletter issue recognizes the Sangamon County TRIAD, which was relaunched last year. The mission of the Sangamon County TRIAD is to build a trusting relationship between law enforcement, social services and older adults through education.

Their first event, a fashion show with a twist, aimed to help older adults recognize the various types of professionals who may be coming to their door for services, including law enforcement, CWLP, Ameren, delivery services and others. Representatives from more than 20 different agencies walked the runway, dressed in their typical attire, so that older adults will be better able to identify them in the community. A recording of the event is available below.



For more information about the Sangamon County TRIAD, including upcoming event details, you can follow their [Facebook page](#) or email [sangamontriad@gmail.com](mailto:sangamontriad@gmail.com).

**February is American Heart Month**



# Talk to your healthcare provider about your heart health.



Image source: [National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute](#)

February is American Heart Month, a time when the nation spotlights heart disease, a leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States.

[Learn what you can do to keep your heart healthy](#), including [choosing heart-healthy foods](#), [getting regular physical activity](#), [managing stress](#), and [getting enough good-quality sleep](#). Your healthcare provider can be an important partner in helping you set and reach goals for heart health, so be sure to ask about your risk of heart disease at your annual checkup.

For additional health and wellness tips, sign up for IDoA's bimonthly nutrition and wellness newsletter [here](#).

## Energy, Mortgage Assistance Still Available

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) application period is currently accepting applications through May 31, 2023 or until funding is exhausted. Eligible low-income households are encouraged to

## UTILITY BILL ASSISTANCE:

### Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is here to help.

Apply at [HelpIllinoisFamilies.com](http://HelpIllinoisFamilies.com) or call 1-833-711-0374



Illinois  
Department of Commerce  
& Economic Opportunity  
JB Pritzker, Governor



apply for natural gas, propane, or electricity bill assistance. Assistance is available to persons making up to two-times the federal poverty level, which is around \$55,000 a year/\$4,625 30-day gross income for a family of four or \$2,265 30-day gross income for a single person household. One-time payments will be made directly to energy service providers on behalf of recipients.

Interested applicants may apply online at [helpillinoisfamilies.com](http://helpillinoisfamilies.com) or in person at their [local agency](#).

Applicants may also call 1-833-711-0374 for assistance in 30 languages.

Additionally, the Illinois Housing Development Authority reopened its mortgage assistance program on November 1, 2022.

ILHAF provides up to \$30,000 in mortgage assistance to eligible homeowners — paid directly to the servicer, taxing body or other approved entity.

Homeowners in need of assistance can find more information at [illinoishousinghelp.org](http://illinoishousinghelp.org).

Applications will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2023.

## Are you behind on Housing Payments?

Find out if you qualify for **up to \$60,000** in emergency mortgage assistance.

**APPLY NOW**

[IllinoisHousingHelp.org/ILHAF](http://IllinoisHousingHelp.org/ILHAF)  
**OR CALL** (866) 454-3571



## Employment Opportunities

We're hiring! Applications for the below employment opportunities will be accepted through January 18.

[Accountant \(Upward Mobility\)](#)

[Account Technician II](#)

[Human Resources Associate](#)

[Account Technician I \(Upward Mobility\)](#)

For a full list of employment opportunities with IDoA, please check the [State of Illinois job board](#).

## Winter 2022 Events Recap





A big thank you to the nearly 300 older adults who joined us at AARP Illinois' Maximizing Your Money Summit featuring nationally syndicated financial columnist Terry Savage. Following Terry's keynote address, IDoA Director Paula Basta led a presentation on home and community-based services.

Read more about the event: [Financial Columnist Terry Savage Offers Money-Saving Tips to AARP Illinois Members](#)

Director Basta was a guest of honor at Hanul Family Alliance's Thanksgiving event, where older adults enjoyed delicious food, raffle prizes, musical performances and many laughs.

[View photos from this event](#) on Hanul Family Alliance's Facebook page.



## Upcoming Events

The Illinois Commission on LGBTQ Aging will convene its first meeting on Wednesday, January 18 at 3 p.m. Stakeholders and members of the public are invited to attend using the link below.

[Join meeting](#)

**Join from the meeting link**

<https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=m413e356c0b91c0ec3ffcd7831821c7f>

Meeting password: 37216950

**Join by phone**

+1-312-535-8110 United States Toll (Chicago)

+1-415-655-0002 US Toll

Having trouble dialing in? Try these backup numbers:

+1-415-655-0002 US Toll

**Global call-in numbers**

Attendee access code: 372 169 50

\* US Toll should only be used if the primary number does not work.

The next meeting of the Resident and Family Support Council is scheduled for Tuesday, January 24 at 3 p.m. The topic will be **Activities of Daily Living: What does this mean and what should it look like in long-term care?**

Registration is not required for this meeting. You can join the Zoom call by clicking the link below.

[Join the Resident and Family Support Council](#)

# OLDER AMERICANS MONTH



## AGING UNBOUND: MAY 2023

Every May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads the nation's observance of Older Americans Month (OAM). In 2023, ACL has chosen the theme, *Aging Unbound*. With this theme, we will have the opportunity to explore an array of aging experiences without being boxed in by expectations and stereotypes.

ACL and IDoA will be discussing the positive aspects of growing older, why everyone has a role to play in combating ageism – and how we all benefit when older adults remain engaged, independent, and included in their communities.

Stay tuned for event information and resources that you can use to celebrate OAM in your community!

## Items of Interest

[6 Ways to Eat Well as You Get Older](#)

[How to Create a Grocery Budget That Works for You](#)

[6 Money Habits to Break in 2023](#)

[What to Know About XBB.1.5, the Latest COVID Variant](#)

[Feeling Sick? How to Tell if It's a Cold, the Flu or COVID](#)

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)



[Visit our website](#)



