

RESPECT FOR
YESTERDAY,
SUPPORT FOR
TODAY,
PLAN FOR
TOMORROW



Aging Matters

June 2023 Newsletter from the Illinois Department on Aging

Office of
Governor JB
Pritzker

Message From Director Paula Basta



News and
Events

Illinois' State
Plan on Aging

Find Services
in Your Area

Senior
Illinoisans Hall
of Fame

License Plate
Discount

Happy June and happy Pride Month to all LGBTQ older adults and allies! As the only out head of any state department on aging in the country, I'm proud of Illinois' commitment to [advancing equity](#) for LGBTQ elders. To learn how we're doing this, I invite you to attend a future meeting of the [Illinois Commission on LGBTQ Aging](#), an advisory body to state lawmakers that is working 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.

As June soon turns to July, August will be here before we know it. Please save the date of August 14 for Senior Day at the Illinois State Fair. A full list of Senior Day events and activities will be published in next month's newsletter.

Until then, you can find up-to-date event information by accessing the new [calendar](#) feature on our website. For information about IDoA [programs and services](#) you may be eligible for, contact the Senior HelpLine toll-free at 1-800-252-8966, 711 (TRS), or via email at aging.ilsenior@illinois.gov. In most instances, we will help you get connected to a local office in your area.

Sincerely,

Pride Month

As we [celebrate Pride](#), we must remember that there would be no Pride Month if it wasn't for the efforts of the LGBTQ elders who fought against unfair laws and treatment.

Donald Bell, 73, a co-chair of the Illinois Commission on LGBTQ Aging, has a long history of activism. As someone who lives at the intersection of several social demographics, Bell first became involved in the fight for racial justice as a high school student. In college, he delved into issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, while recognizing the dangers of being outed at the time: "Our lives were at risk, not only socially, they were physically at risk. Gay bashing was certainly a norm of the times, just as lynching was a norm of the times still...Activism was not a part of trying to be cool, activism was a part of survival."

Half a century later, it's still about survival for Bell, who is involved in an advocacy campaign with other residents of the LGBTQ-friendly Town Hall Apartments, after [building managers removed their security services](#) with only a few days' notice.

Whether it's about the safety of his own geographic community or the LGBTQ community, Bell feels compelled to work toward improving the lives of others like himself. These sentiments are shared by Billy Rogers, co-founder of the LGBTQ advocacy group [Golden Rainbows of Illinois South](#), and who is also the first person to serve as the Illinois Commission on LGBTQ Aging's LGBTQ Older Adult Advocate.

Like Bell, Rogers was selected by Gov. JB Pritzker to serve on the statewide commission. A resident of Du Quoin, he brings a somewhat different perspective than the Chicago-based Bell, but at the same time shares a passion for advocacy, largely fueled by his own experiences as a member of the LGBTQ community. Rogers and his husband [have experienced discrimination by health care professionals](#), which he refuses to tolerate: "I'm fearless when it comes to issues like that. I just won't take it anymore. I don't have to take it."

Rogers was graciously humble throughout our interview with him, but he did acknowledge the role his generation played in paving the way for younger members of the LGBTQ community "to identify however they like. We elders honor that, and we think the youth of today is incredible...we have to honor them too."

Celebrating and honoring the LGBTQ community lasts far beyond Pride Month. And it's not all about parades and flags. Pride is about history - and the ongoing fight for equity for LGBTQ older adults.



Pictured: Bell (left), Rogers (center), and other members of the Illinois Commission on LGBTQ Aging at *Bridging the Gap for the Aging LGBTQ Community in Southern Illinois*, a summit

Talk and be heard at the SAGE LGBTQ+ Elder Hotline. The hotline connects LGBTQ+ older adults with certified crisis responders who can provide information about community support resources. If you are an LGBTQ+ elder or care for one, call the free SAGE LGBTQ+ Elder Hotline at **877-360-LGBT(5428)**.

The hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in English and Spanish, with

Additional Reading and Resources:

-[Disrupting Disparities: Challenges and Solutions for 50+ LGBTQ Illinoisans](#)

-Read the Illinois Commission on LGBTQ Aging's [March 2023 report](#) to the General Assembly

-Watch Rush Generations' [Aging with Pride Lecture](#)

Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month



This June, during Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month, IDoA is joining the Alzheimer's Association and the Illinois Department of Public Health to help raise awareness of Alzheimer's disease and available resources.

The IDoA Communications team recently sat down with Jessica Link, dementia coordinator for the state of Illinois, to ask her about her role, statewide efforts to support individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD), and how each of us can get involved in the cause.

Tell us a little about yourself and your role as the statewide dementia coordinator. What are some of your primary responsibilities? What does a typical day look like for you?

I started as the first dementia coordinator with the Illinois Department of Public Health in February 2021. The position was legislatively established to implement the Alzheimer's Disease Illinois State Plan in collaboration with the Alzheimer's Disease Advisory Committee. In my role, I coordinate dementia efforts across state agencies, strengthen partnerships with community stakeholders and partners, and coordinate statewide efforts that increase awareness of dementia and access to the services and supports available for individuals living with dementia, their families, and caregivers. A typical day never looks the same—you can find me attending meetings, talking to stakeholders and partners, writing

reports, learning on national webinars, conducting grant work, and pretty much doing anything that helps Illinois to become more dementia capable. Trained as a licensed clinical social worker, I enjoy the variety of responsibilities and strive to keep health equity at the center of our programmatic activities.

I've heard that Illinois has an Alzheimer's disease plan. Who is this plan for? How is it used to increase dementia capacity in Illinois?

The Alzheimer's Disease Illinois State Plan was established in January 2014 and produced by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) in conjunction with the Alzheimer's Disease Advisory Committee (ADAC), other state agencies, and relevant Alzheimer's disease stakeholders. The plan is for any person, community, agency, institution, or organization that has the means and interest in helping implement the recommendations. The goal is to help serve persons living with dementia and caregivers impacted by Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD), and "to guide" ADRD-related efforts within the state. The intention of the plan is to strategize approaches that are equitable, culturally, and linguistically responsive; create meaningful change; and reduce health disparities. Updates are made every three years and the current [2023-2026 Alzheimer's Disease Illinois State Plan](#) is posted on the IDPH website.

June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month. What is IDPH or its partner organizations doing this month to raise awareness about Alzheimer's disease?

IDPH recently launched a quarterly e-newsletter called "The Healthy Brain Newsletter" to deliver education and information about healthy cognitive aging, ways to support brain health, and relevant community resources. Our second newsletter was released on June 12. You can sign up to receive The Healthy Brain Newsletter [here](#)! Also in June, the Alzheimer's Association will be hosting [The Longest Day](#). People from across the world will fight the darkness of Alzheimer's disease, the most common cause of dementia, on June 21 by selecting an activity of choice and raising funds for the Alzheimer's Association. See how Illinois is celebrating The Longest Day [here](#).

This month and beyond, how can Illinois best support those living with ADRD and their care partners? If someone I know has been newly diagnosed, are there specific resources you'd recommend?

I think awareness and kindness both go a long way in supporting those living with dementia and their care partners. There can be negative perceptions or attitudes toward people living with dementia who may be struggling with their memory or abilities in public. Illinoisans can educate themselves about [Alzheimer's and Related Dementias](#) so that they understand the diseases, as dementia can affect memory, thinking, and behavior. Perhaps what would be most impactful is to extend kindness, have patience, and even offer help to those you suspect may be living with dementia in your neighborhood and community. For those who have been newly diagnosed, the Alzheimer's Association has a great [page](#) for help and support, and a 24/7 helpline (1-800-272-3900). The Illinois Department on Aging also has its Senior HelpLine with staff you can talk to about programs and services offered in Illinois (toll-free at 1-800-252-8966, 711 (TRS), or via email at aging.ilsenior@illinois.gov).

Get Ready to Renew Your Medicaid



GOT MEDICAID?



HFS

Illinois Department of
Healthcare and Family Services



abe.illinois.gov



Get ready to renew your Medicaid! Medicaid customers have not had to renew their Medicaid coverage since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Medicaid pays for healthcare, like doctor visits, prescription medicine, and urgent emergency services.

Now Illinois is starting renewals again to see if people are still eligible. Everybody's renewal date is different, so it is critical that you get ready to renew.

Don't risk losing your Medicaid! Here is what you need to do:

Click Manage My Case at abe.illinois.gov to:

- Verify your mailing address under "contact us."
- Find your due date (also called redetermination date) in your "benefit details".

Watch your mail and complete your renewal right away.

If you are no longer eligible for Medicaid, connect to coverage at work or through the official Affordable Care Act marketplace for Illinois, GetCoveredIllinois.gov.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day



World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, observed annually on June 15, serves as a call to action for individuals, organizations and communities to raise awareness about the abuse, neglect and exploitation of older adults. Every year, an estimated one in 10 older Americans are known victims of elder abuse, neglect or exploitation. Experts believe, however, that such abuse is significantly underreported, in part because many communities lack the social supports that would make it easier for those who experience abuse to report it. Research suggests that as few as one in 14 cases of elder abuse come to the attention of authorities.

Illinois' [Adult Protective Services \(APS\)](#) program aims to prevent and resolves instances of abuse against older adults and persons with disabilities aged 18-59 living in the community. The program is coordinated through 36 local provider agencies, whose trained caseworkers investigate allegations of abuse and connect victims with appropriate resources. During fiscal year 2022, the most recent reporting period for which data is available, the APS program received nearly 20,000 reports of suspected abuse, neglect, self-neglect, and exploitation.

Anyone can make a report of suspected abuse of an older adult or person with a disability by calling Illinois' **24-hour APS hotline at 1-866-800-1409**. For information on common types of abuse and warning signs to watch for, [click here](#).

If you suspect **abuse or neglect of a resident living in a long-term care facility**, contact your [local ombudsman](#) through Illinois' [Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program](#). Ombudsmen are advocates for residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities, who work to improve residents' care and quality of life. Their services are always free and confidential.

[Read Governor Pritzker's Proclamation](#)

Juneteenth

JUNE 19

JUNETEENTH

FREEDOM DAY



Juneteenth marks the date in 1865 when the last enslaved African Americans learned from Union soldiers in Texas that they were free, more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed.

In 2021, Governor JB Pritzker signed legislation making Juneteenth an official state holiday in Illinois.

Coming Soon: Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Coupons

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides low-income older adults with access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, and herbs from approved farmers in Illinois. Eligible older adults can receive five \$10 vouchers (for a total value of \$50), which are redeemable for fresh produce at participating farmers' markets and farm stands in 37 Illinois counties.

Vouchers are available on a first come, first served basis, typically beginning around late June or early July. Contact your local [Area Agency on Aging](#) to find out when and where they are distributing the vouchers.

For additional information, visit the [Department of Human Services' website](#).

Employment Opportunities

Ombudsman Training Coordinator (Social Services Program Planner III)

Work Location: Springfield

Salary: \$5,536 - \$8,279 monthly

Application Deadline: June 23, 2023

Job Responsibilities:

1. Oversees statewide training for ombudsmen, volunteers, and advocates involved with the Office of the State Ombudsman.
2. Provides technical assistance to designated ombudsmen, provider entities and/or Area Agencies on Aging.
3. Represents IDoA on mandated committees and boards.
4. Assists in the management and evaluation of the Ombudsman Program's required statewide reporting and tracking system.
5. Responds to correspondence and inquiries from concerned parties regarding the Aging community and other related inquiries.
6. Provides analyses and/or input in internal planning meetings to design and administer services, legislative proposals, and budget plans for the overall comprehensive Ombudsman Program.
7. Performs other duties as required which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

[View application instructions](#)

Data Analyst (Management Operations Analyst I)

Work Location: Springfield

Salary: \$4,982 - \$7,369 monthly

Application Deadline: June 23, 2023

Job Responsibilities:

1. Serves as Data Analyst for the Community Care Program (CCP) and other alternative care analyses within the Department on Aging.
2. Researches, evaluates, and executes subsequent policy for the demonstration and fiscal aspects of various Home and Community Based Demonstration Projects.
3. Confers with management to provide program, policy, and operational support through such means as evaluation of existing program operations, recommendations to improve availability of statewide services, and development of legislative analyses including fiscal implications.
4. Works directly with other data analysis staff and program staff in the development of reports.
5. Performs other duties, as required, or assigned, which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

[View application instructions](#)

Budget Analyst (Executive I)

Work Location: Springfield

Salary: \$4,982 - \$7,369 monthly

Application Deadline: June 23, 2023

Job Responsibilities:

1. Conducts cost studies on operations for State and Federally supported programs which are administered by the Department to assess and verify programmatic and legislative proposals.
2. Collects, compiles, and enters financial information into computerized spreadsheets and database programs to increase the efficiency by which information is retrieved.
3. Works with supervisor on tracking of payroll data for use in personal service projections and tracking.
4. Assists when needed with annual work on Illinois Legislative forms (ISLs), budget submissions, and budget book online systems.
5. Determines cash needs based on grant obligation and administrative needs, and tracks funds from outside sources as needed for support to management.
6. Performs special projects relating to standardizing grant budgets and tracking mechanisms to assist with compliance requirements of the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA).
7. Performs other duties as required which are reasonably within the scope of the duties

enumerated above.

[View application instructions](#)

For a full list of open positions, check the [State of Illinois job board](#).

Events Recap

Grundy County Health Department Hosts Inaugural Senior Expo



Over 1,000 people attended the Grundy County Health Department's inaugural senior expo at Jennifer's Garden Banquet and Convention Center in Morris on May 31. Dozens of vendors, including IDoA's outreach team and Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) staff, offered resources and information about Medicaid and Medicare, benefits programs, transportation, and more.

IDoA Staff Participate in Illinois Adult Day Services Association's Annual Meeting

On June 5, IDoA Director Paula Basta and several staff members participated in the Illinois Adult Day Services Association's annual meeting in Lisle.

Did you know that Illinois has at least 69 adult day service centers that offer health monitoring, medication supervision, personal care and recreational/therapeutic activities to older adults? Learn more about adult day services [here](#).



Rush Generations' Aging with Pride Lecture Features IDoA Panel



In observation of Pride Month, Rush Generations hosted their annual Aging with Pride lecture on June 7. During the 90-minute virtual event, staff members from IDoA, AgeOptions, and West Suburban Senior Services discussed the work being done by Illinois' Aging Network to serve LGBTQ older adults. Watch the YouTube recording of the event [here](#).

Upcoming Events



The Illinois State Fair announced its theme and discount days for 2023! Join us for Senior Day on Monday, August 14, when adults aged 60 and over receive free admission.

New this year, stick around the next day for "Twosday" and pay only \$2 for admission to the fairgrounds.

The next meeting of the [Resident and Family Support Council](#) will be on Tuesday, June 27 at 3 p.m.

Registration is not required for this meeting. Join the Zoom call by clicking the link below.

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

Dispelling Myths Around **GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE FOR YOUTH**



VIRTUAL PRESENTATION w/Q&A (WebEx Presentation)

Date: June 27th **Time:** 12 – 1:30pm

- Address the myths and misinformation around medical gender-affirmation for youth and teens
- Explore the meaning and application of gender-affirming care for youth/teens beyond medical care
- Discuss the importance of adult support in the development, mental health, and overall wellbeing of transgender and non binary youth/teens
- Explore existing supports and resources for young people in Illinois



RegisterHere:

<https://illinois.webex.com/webex/register/r8d91ba05e6e976c29c70a60d18010ed7>



The Sad Truth...

It Matters Where You Live

A comprehensive look at the changing needs and demographics of Suburban Cook County

Presenters of Qualitative Report

Tamar Heller Ph.D.

(UIC) Department of Disability and Human Development, College of Applied Health Sciences

Michael Gelder, MHA

(UIC) Department of Disability and Human Development, College of Applied Health Sciences

Kelly Hsieh, Ph.D.

(UIC) Department of Disability and Human Development, College of Applied Health Sciences

Presenter of Quantitative Report

Rob Paral

Principal at Rob Paral and Associates

Moderator

Rev. Kirsten Peachey, MSW, MDiv, DMin

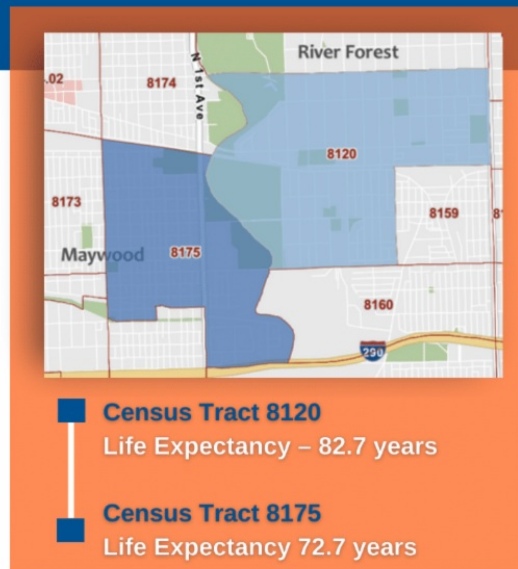
Advocate Health Midwest & Chair of AgeOptions DEI Committee

Wednesday, June 28, 2023 | 8:30 A.M.

Crowne Plaza Chicago SW
300 S Frontage Rd,
Burr Ridge, IL 60527
Breakfast will be provided.



click or scan the QR to register.



Respondents

Paula Basta, MDiv

Director of Illinois Department on Aging

Kiran Joshi, MD, MPH

Cook County Department of Public Health

Maria del Socorro Pesqueira

President of Healthy Communities Foundation

Shellie Williams, MD

University of Chicago



Call 708-383-0258 or visit www.ageoptions.org for more information

Items of Interest

[A 96-year-old former marathon runner who still competes in races shares his 3 tips for longevity, including daily soup and long phone calls with friends](#)

[Illinois Senior Centers: Not Just for Aged](#)

[Aging With HIV: Recognizing Unique Needs and Challenges](#)

[What I Think of When I Think of Juneteenth](#)

[Staying Fit With Age-Related Pain: Top 5 Tips for Older Adults](#)

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**](#)