

RESPECT FOR
YESTERDAY,
SUPPORT FOR
TODAY,
PLAN FOR
TOMORROW



Aging Matters

Nov. - Dec. 2021 Newsletter from the Illinois Department on Aging

Office of
Governor JB
Pritzker

Message From Director Paula Basta



Be Socially
Engaged While
Practicing
Social
Distancing

With the holiday season quickly approaching, many of us are making plans to visit family and friends, or preparing to welcome out-of-town guests into our homes. It's a busy time of year, and between whipping up family recipes and shopping for everyone on your list, there's a lot to get done before the holidays arrive. One task that's too important to skip: getting your COVID-19 booster shot.

Find a Vaccine
Location Near
You

If you received the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine this past spring, it's likely been around six months since your second dose. You may be wondering whether you really need a booster, and if you're 65 or older, health experts say yes. [Click here to watch a video message](#) from Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike about vaccine booster shots for older adults. Alternatively or additionally, you can [download our informational flyer here](#). The flyer is also available [in Spanish](#).

IDoA COVID-19
Vaccine
Resources

You can receive your booster shot at your local pharmacy, health department, or primary care physician's office. You can also get your COVID-19 questions answered at any time of day by calling the Department of Public Health's COVID-19 hotline at **1-800-889-3931**.

Looking For
Services?

We've come a long way from last year, but the pandemic is not over, and we still need to exercise caution when gathering with loved ones - especially grandchildren who may be too young to receive the vaccine. Getting your booster shot once you're eligible is the best way to protect yourself and those around you from COVID-19. For further guidance on how to celebrate the holidays safely, please visit the [IDPH](#) and [CDC](#) websites.

Upcoming
Webinar

On behalf of all of us at IDoA, I wish you and your families a peaceful and enjoyable holiday season, and a new year filled

Events

#VaxUpIL - All in Illinois Campaign

with health and happiness. To our service providers and partners, family caregivers, community volunteers, and all who support older adults, thank you. As we observe Veterans' Day tomorrow, I'd also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our veterans for your sacrifice and bravery.

If you need help accessing services to stay healthy and independent, or have questions about the Department's programs for which you may be eligible, please contact the Senior HelpLine at **1-800-252-8966**.

Medicare Open Enrollment Runs Through Dec. 7

The Medicare Open Enrollment period occurs every year from October 15 through December 7, with coverage changes taking effect on January 1. Not sure if your current Medicare plan is the best plan for you? There are many resources available to help make this process easier for Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers, including Illinois' [Senior Health Insurance Program \(SHIP\)](#). During Open Enrollment, trained and certified SHIP counselors can help you review and compare plan options to find the coverage that best fits your unique needs. All services are free, and SHIP counselors do not sell or solicit any type of insurance. To find a SHIP counselor near you, call **1-800-252-8966**.

Other resources that may be helpful:

- [Medicare.gov](#) is the official government website for people with Medicare. On their website, you can check out this [blog post](#) that has tips for 2021 Open Enrollment, [find 2022 Medicare plans](#), [find someone to talk to about Medicare](#), and more.
- The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has [general information on the Medicare program](#) and [answers to common questions about Open Enrollment](#).
- The Social Security Administration has [information on Medicare](#), including what each of the different Parts covers, answers to commonly asked questions, how to apply online, and more.
- [Healthcare.gov](#) is a website maintained by the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services focused on the Healthcare Marketplace®. Medicare isn't part of the Marketplace, but HealthCare.gov has [information on Medicare](#) that individuals can use.

November is NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVERS MONTH

#CaregiverAnd

Celebrated every November, National Family Caregivers Month (NFCM) is a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country. It offers an opportunity to raise awareness of caregiving issues, educate communities, and increase support for caregivers.

This year's theme, #CaregiverAnd encourages family caregivers to celebrate the passions and interests that enrich their lives. Learn how you can participate by visiting <https://www.caregiveraction.org/CaregiverAnd>.

You can also read President Biden's [NFCM proclamation here](#).

2021 Senior Hall of Fame Awards Congratulations to this year's honorees!

Each year, the Department on Aging recognizes a few select older adults for their outstanding dedication and service to the community by inducting them into the Senior Illinoisan Hall of Fame. Meet our 2021 inductees:



Cynthia Worsley, 78, of Sandwich in the community service category: A proponent of the aging population for nearly 40 years, Cynthia is the outgoing executive director of Fox Valley Community Services, a nonprofit organization serving older adults in DeKalb, Kane, Kendall and LaSalle counties. When COVID shut down their in-person programming last spring, Cynthia and her staff worked tirelessly and creatively to keep older adults engaged and combat social isolation. She, along with her staff, made

hundreds of wellness calls, delivered baskets of cheer, implemented a new series of parking lot activities, and distributed over 1,500 units of PPE to older adults and community members. Cynthia was also a driving force behind the opening of a new adult day service center in DeKalb to help older adults in the area continue living vibrant, independent lives and avoid early nursing home placement.

Jerry Stefl, 73, of LaGrange in the education category: An art and design educator at both the K-12 and higher education levels, Jerry has dedicated his career to cultivating high quality educators and programs for students and teachers. For 33 years, he divided his teaching time between Carl Sandburg High School in Orland Park and the School of the Art Institute Chicago, where he led future educators in fieldwork experiences, as well as taught Continuing Studies courses for students from age 8-80. Working with the Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education, Jerry helped infuse arts learning with the STEM curriculum, a project in which he is still engaged. Jerry also serves in many volunteer roles, including as an advisor to the College Board's AP program, and he was an early member and leader of the Illinois Art Education Association, which has served tens of thousands of teachers



and millions of students.



The late Richard Hopper of Riverton in the performance and/or graphic arts category: Richard started his career as a public servant at the age of 29, eventually becoming Chief of Police for the Village of Riverton. He took great pride in serving his community, responding to calls during the day and at night would answer any emergency calls on the “red phone” at his residence and respond alongside his deputies. In 1978, Richard transferred to the Sangamon County Sheriff’s Office, where he swore to serve and protect for

the next 23 years. Richard was a man with strong ethics, a deep respect for and knowledge of the law, and a love of music. He played in many bands from age 14 to 72, and started a band called [Jonnie and the Cyclones](#), which produced a record.

Harriet Hawkins, 73, of Oak Park in the labor force category: With a nursing career spanning 50 years, Harriet is recognized as an expert in the field of pediatric nursing and a compassionate advocate for the smallest patients. Since 1982, she has worked at Lurie Children’s Hospital, where she has held various roles, including Resuscitation Coordinator, member of the Neonatal/Pediatric Transport Team and Clinical Educator. Aside from her professional activities, Harriet donates her time to provide medical care to individuals experiencing homelessness at the Housing Forward Medical Clinic, and she has volunteered in more than a dozen countries. Harriet has dedicated her life to serving and healing others, at home as well as abroad, and has touched countless lives throughout her career.



Shop Safely This Holiday Season

Every year during the holiday season, the Illinois Attorney General's Office issues an annual Safe Shopping Guide that highlights potentially hazardous toys, children's products, and household items that have been recalled over the past year.

Please be on the lookout for this helpful resource to become available soon. If you're buying any gifts online or secondhand, click [here](#) to learn about previously recalled children's products.

The Attorney General's Office is also cautioning older adults about a telephone scam that tends to pop up this time of year, targeting residents over the age of 65.

In a grandparent scam, a caller claiming to be the target's grandchild says they are in trouble or

physical danger, and asks the target to wire money immediately. To help detect and avoid this scam:

- Resist the urge to act immediately, no matter how dramatic the story.
- Verify the person's identity by asking questions that a stranger couldn't possibly answer.
- Call the family member at a phone number that you know to be genuine.
- Check the story out with someone else in your family or circle of friends, even if you've been told to keep it a secret.
- Don't wire money or send a check or money order by overnight delivery.

Older adults who receive any unsolicited call asking them to send or wire money should report the call to the Attorney General's Senior Citizen Consumer Fraud Hotline at **1-800-243-5377**.

See the latest scams reported in your area with the [AARP Fraud Watch Network Scam-Tracking Map](#).

Items of Interest

[Veterans Day 2021 Freebies, Deals and Savings](#)

[Thanksgiving Movies to Watch All Month](#)

[De-stress With These 15 Hilarious TV Sitcom Thanksgiving Episodes](#)

[Create the Perfect Do-it-Yourself Spa Night](#)

[6 Ways to Extend the Season for Outdoor Socializing](#)

[8 Medicine Cabinet Essentials for Cold and Flu Season](#)

[Technology Tools to Help Guard Against Elder Financial Abuse](#)

[Resources, Gadgets and Tools to Care for an Older Adult at Home](#)

[Mobility Problems: What to Do When a Loved One Has Trouble Getting Around](#)

[6 Ways to Prevent Someone With Dementia From Wandering or Getting Lost](#)

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)**

