

RESPECT FOR
YESTERDAY,
SUPPORT FOR
TODAY,
PLAN FOR
TOMORROW



Aging Matters

September - October 2022 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

It is with bittersweet feelings that I announce the retirement of Deputy Director Lora McCurdy after more than seven years of service to IDoA and many more to the state of Illinois. While Lora's expertise and contributions will certainly be missed here at the Department, we wish her well in this next stage of life. Lora's retirement is effective November 30, but in the meantime, we are beginning our search for qualified candidates to fill her position. Please see the job description below and feel free to share it with your networks.

Thank you to everyone who completed our newsletter survey last month. If you haven't gotten to it yet, you still have time! Simply click the button below to access the 2-minute survey. Responses are completely anonymous and will be accepted through the end of September.

[Take the survey](#)

Also, make sure you're following us on social media so that you don't miss any updates between newsletters! IDoA is on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#). We also maintain an [events calendar](#) on our website, which we are in the process of updating.

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, 1-888-206-1327 (TTY), or via email at aging.ilsenior@illinois.gov. In most instances, we will connect you with a local office in your area.

Sincerely,



**#VaxUpIL - All
in Illinois
Campaign**

Vacancy Announcement: Deputy Director

The Illinois Department on Aging seeks an individual who is passionate about serving and advocating for Older Illinoisans working with the Director to provide dynamic and strategic leadership for our agency's program areas.

This position will plan, direct, and evaluate the activities of the Division Managers responsible for functions pertaining to planning and program development, home and community services, and communications and outreach, to assure policy formulation and implementation is consistent with overall departmental policies, objectives, and goals; consult with the Director and other management staff to integrate and coordinate the diversified activities and functions of the Department and resolve administrative problems and implement programmatic and other improvements concerning department services; assist in preparing the department budget and guide the overall estimates and rationale for funding requests and improvements for department programs; establish, develop, and maintain effective working relationships with other state, federal, and local units of government, the Illinois General Assembly, area agencies on aging, provider, labor, and community organizations; supervise staff, assigning and reviewing the work of subordinates and monitors government, non-for-profit, and philanthropic efforts to improve services and care for elders and their caregivers.

This position will primarily work in IDoA's Springfield Office, but some remote work may be possible. Statewide travel is required. This position is an Exempt, at-will position with the payroll title of Senior Public Services Administrator. Salary compensatory to experience of the candidate.

Minimum Qualifications

1. Requires knowledge, skill, and mental development equivalent to completion of four years of college, preferably with courses in business or public administration.
2. Requires prior experience equivalent to four years of progressively responsible administrative experience in a public or business administration.

Preferred Qualifications (In Order of Significance)

1. Prefers at least 3 years of experience demonstrating extensive knowledge of agency programs, service directives, activities, and operational systems.
2. Prefers at least 3 years of experience demonstrating ability to analyze administrative problems and adopt an effective course of action.
3. Prefers at least 2 years of experience demonstrating progressively responsible experience within Human/Social Services.

To Apply: send a cover letter and resume to Selma D'Souza, Chief of Staff via email: Selma.Dsouza@illinois.gov by September 30, 2022.

A Recap of Senior Day 2022 at the Illinois State Fair



We kicked off Senior Day 2022 in the Illinois Building, alongside Governor JB Pritzker, Lieutenant Governor Juliana Stratton, and the Directors of the Departments of Public Health, Agriculture, and Healthcare and Family Services.

Among a crowd of older adults, dozens of whom got their second COVID-19 booster shot on-site, IDoA launched a new campaign called ["Long Live Illinois"](#) to ensure Illinois seniors are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations. With paid media, including radio and targeted digital ads, and strong community partnerships, the Illinois Department on Aging is leaving no stone unturned in our effort to make sure older Illinoisans live long, healthy lives.

On Senior Day, Governor Pritzker also announced the launch of the [Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly \(PACE\)](#). Governor Pritzker [described the program](#) as "an innovative model that delivers a much-needed alternative to traditional nursing facility care. This program won't just help our seniors — it will help whole families, too, by giving them the support they need to keep their family units together."

PACE providers are anticipated to begin providing services to Illinois seniors in state fiscal year

2024, joining 31 other states that currently have operational PACE programs.

To learn more, you can catch up on Senior Day media coverage via the links below, or click the button to watch video footage of Director Basta and Governor Pritzker's remarks.

[Seniors enjoy their day at Illinois State Fair](#)

[Illinois State Fair hosts "Senior Day"](#)

[Illinois launching community health care program for seniors](#)

[Watch the video](#)

September is National Senior Center Month

Celebrated every year in September, Senior Center Month is a time to shine a light on senior centers, showing the entire nation how vital they are to the health and well-being of a community. Senior centers provide countless hours of support and encouragement to older adults, and have become integral to health care delivery in our communities by providing COVID-19 guidance, vaccine education, and vaccinations to their participants. And they've played a role in addressing an issue that we all knew was important even before the pandemic: social isolation.

That's why the 2022 theme for Senior Center Month is Strengthening Community Connections. Director Basta had a wonderful time connecting with older adults and staff at the Southwest Regional Center last week, where she enjoyed a picnic lunch, mariachi music, and even got her annual flu shot.



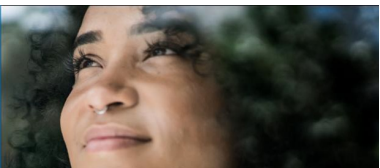
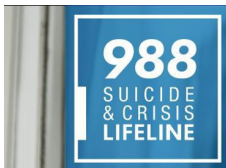
To find a senior center near you, view [this list](#) or call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966.

Additional reading:

[Senior Center Spotlight: Arlington Heights Senior Center Showcases Cooperation](#)

Suicide Prevention Awareness Month: We Can All

Help Prevent Suicide



Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in the U.S., affecting people of all ages. Older adults are especially vulnerable to suicide for a number of reasons, ranging from grief over the passing of loved ones to

chronic illness.

If someone you know is thinking about suicide, there are simple yet powerful steps you can take, including calling 988, to help save their life. Dialing 988 connects people in crisis (or concerned friends, family, and caregivers) directly to the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, where counselors provide free, unbiased, and confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

[Learn more about 988.](#)

Additional reading:

[Suicide and Older Adults: What You Should Know](#)

Recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month



Hispanic Heritage Month is observed each year from September 15 to October 15. This year's theme, "**Unidos: Inclusivity for a Stronger Nation**," encourages us to ensure that all voices are represented and welcomed to help build stronger communities and a stronger nation.

Additional reading:

[Latino/Hispanic Heritage Month: An Important time for Area Agencies on Aging to Connect with the Latino and Hispanic Communities](#)

[We Must Support Our Hispanic/Latinx Caregivers](#)

[Honoring the Stories of Hispanic Caregivers Unites Us All](#)

Age Well and Stay Falls Free During Falls Prevention Awareness Week

The coronavirus pandemic has changed a lot of things. One thing that's still the same? Falling is NOT a normal part of aging. Falls remain a leading cause of injury for people aged 65 and older, threatening older adults' safety and independence and generating enormous economic and personal costs. However, through practical lifestyle adjustments, evidence-based falls prevention programs, and clinical-community partnerships, the number of falls among older adults can be substantially reduced.



Falls Prevention Is A Team Effort

Family & Friends

Ask family and friends
to help check and rid your
home of falls hazards.

ncoa | FallsFree
National Council on Aging



To check their risk for a fall, older adults can utilize the National Council on Aging's online falls risk assessment tool, available at no cost, at <https://www.ncoa.org/age-well-planner/assessment/falls-free-checkup>. The 12-question survey screens for the most common falls risk factors. Those who score highly on the assessment are encouraged to download their Falls Free CheckUp report to share with their doctor or health care provider, as well as take steps to make their home safer to navigate. The [CDC's Check for Safety brochure](#) is available as a guide.

For additional tips and interventions to prevent falls, contact your local [Area Agency on Aging](#) or Illinois' statewide Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966.

Additional resources:

[6 Falls Prevention Steps to Help Your Older Loved Ones](#)

[INFOGRAPHIC: 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall](#)

[INFOGRAPHIC: 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall \(Spanish\)](#)

[VIDEO: 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall](#)

[VIDEO: 6 Steps to Prevent a Fall \(Spanish\)](#)

[Debunking the Myths of Older Adult Falls: 10 Myths](#)

[Get the Facts on Osteoporosis, Falls, and Broken Bones](#)

[How the Right Shoes Can Protect You From Falling](#)

[How to Prevent Falls with Home Safety Modifications](#)

[How Your Local Fire Department Can Help with Falls Prevention](#)

Read Governor Pritzker's Falls Prevention Awareness Week Proclamation

Recognizing the Vital Role of Older Adults in the Workforce During National Employ Older Workers Week

Held annually during the last full week of
September, National Employ Older
Workers Week is intended to increase

awareness of older workers and develop innovative strategies to recruit, promote and retain them. IDoA is taking this opportunity to highlight the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which provides on-the-job skills training to individuals 55 or older who have very low income. Since its inception, SCSEP has helped over one million older adults nationwide enter or reenter the workforce.



The program is federally funded but administered in Illinois by the state Department on Aging, through the Area Agencies on Aging. Eligible participants are adults at least 55 years of age whose income does not exceed 125% of the federal poverty level. SCSEP places enrollees – usually for 20 hours a week at minimum wage – with local nonprofits and public agencies that help them build job skills and earn a modest income while giving back to their community. Participants also receive personalized employment-related counseling designed to assist them in securing permanent, unsubsidized employment.

SCSEP has a total of 1,572 authorized positions or slots throughout the state of Illinois, including 320 slots that are designated for IDoA and 1,252 slots for national providers. To find an SCSEP program near you, contact your local [Area Agency on Aging](#) or the statewide Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966.

Celebrate Ageism Awareness Day With Us on Oct. 7



The Illinois Department on Aging and the [American Society on Aging](#) will celebrate Ageism Awareness Day on Oct. 7, 2022. Modeled after the United Nation's International Day of Older Persons (Oct. 1), Ageism Awareness Day provides an opportunity to draw attention to the existence and impact of ageism in our society.

The most widespread and socially accepted form of prejudice, ageism is defined by the World Health Organization as “the stereotypes (how we think), prejudices (how we feel) and discrimination (how we act) towards others or oneself based on [age](#).” Evidence shows ageism is widespread in society and can be found everywhere, from our workplaces and health systems to stereotypes we see on TV, advertising and in the media.

A few facts about ageism, which affects people of any age and harms all:

- There are many forms of ageism, including internalized, cultural, implicit and benevolent.
- Ageism decreases quality of life and can shorten lifespan by [7.5 years](#).
- Although it is universal, people do not always take ageism as seriously as they do other forms of inequity.
- Ageism intersects with, and exacerbates, all other discriminatory “isms.”
- In media, underrepresented older adults most often reflect negative stereotypes.
- According to the United Nations, on a global scale, [one in two people are ageist](#).

How can you help fight ageism? Check out the links below.

From AARP, learn [5 Smart Ways to Fight Age Discrimination](#).

[What Are Some Solutions for Ageism?](#)

[NCOA Collaborates with Google to Remove Ageism from Advertising](#)

October is Residents' Rights Month



Inspiring **Unity** within
Our Community

National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care

Across the country, residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities, their family members, ombudsmen, citizen advocates, facility staff and others will honor the individual rights of long-term care residents by celebrating [Residents' Rights Month](#) in October. Designated by the [National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care](#), this month highlights the importance of listening to residents who live in our country's nursing homes, assisted living and board and care facilities.

Throughout the pandemic, residents of long-term care facilities were disconnected from the resident and staff communities within their facilities when activities and group dining were limited. Residents were disconnected from the broader local community when visitation was restricted and many residents were unable to leave their facilities to participate in outside activities. This year's Residents' Rights Month theme - **Inspiring Unity within Our Community** - emphasizes the importance of fostering meaningful community within the facility and encouraging residents' connection to their local community.

Illinois' [Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program](#) will be marking the month with various activities and sharing information about how you can exercise your rights. Stay tuned!

Medicare Open Enrollment Period Begins Oct. 15

With the Medicare open enrollment period set to begin Oct. 15, older adults looking to change their existing Medicare plan can receive free, personalized assistance through the Illinois Department on Aging's (IDoA) Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP).

During open enrollment, which runs from Oct. 15 through Dec. 7, people who are already enrolled in Medicare have the opportunity to review their current coverage and switch to a different plan for the following year. To make this process easier



for Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers, Illinois' SHIP program offers statewide health insurance counseling services through a network of 325 sites and 1,100 trained and certified counselors. SHIP counselors can answer questions about Medicare, Medicare Supplement, long-term care insurance, Medicare HMO's, private fee-for-service and other health insurances. All services are free, and SHIP counselors do not sell or solicit any type of insurance.

Aside from open enrollment assistance, SHIP counselors can also help soon-to-be eligible individuals with Medicare sign-up questions. To find a SHIP counselor near you, call 1-800-252-8966 or visit <https://www2.illinois.gov/aging/ship/Pages/default.aspx>. You can also compare details of Medicare plans at <https://www.medicare.gov/plan-compare/#/?lang=en&year=2021>.

Watch Out for the Grandparent Scam

Grandparent scams play on the love grandparents share with their grandchildren.

In a "grandparent scam," you get a call or email from someone who claims to be your grandchild. The caller says there's an emergency and asks you to wire money immediately. The "grandchild" claims he or she has gotten into some kind of trouble, e.g. an car accident, a mugging, or they need money for bail or to pay customs fees to get back into the U.S. from another country. The scammer says, "Grandma/Grandpa, can you help me? But don't tell my mom or dad." Beware! There's a good chance this is an imposter trying to take your money!

Scammers will often try to trick you into providing information that helps them impersonate your grandchild. A typical conversation may go like this:

You receive a phone call from someone who greets you with, "Hi, Grandma."

You: "Hi."

Scammer: "Do you know who this is?"

You: "Jeremy?"

Scammer: "Yes, Grandma. This is Jeremy."

Without knowing it, you provided the scammer with the name of a grandchild. The scammer proceeds to impersonate your grandchild and asks you not to tell other family members until it's too late.

If someone calls, emails or sends a text message claiming to be a family member or friend desperate for money, take the following steps:

- Resist the urge to act immediately, no matter how dramatic the story.
- Verify the person's identity by asking questions a stranger couldn't possibly answer.
- Call the family member at a phone number 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 or courier.

Report this type of call or any strange unsolicited calls asking you to send or wire money to the Illinois Attorney General's Senior Citizen Consumer Fraud Hotline at 1-800-243-5377 or 1-800-964-3013 (TTY).

[Download the Grandparent Scam brochure from the Illinois Attorney General's Office.](#)

Upcoming Senior Fairs



Many state legislators are hosting senior fairs this fall! Join us at one of the events below.

State Senator Jill Tracy and State Representative Randy Frese's Senior Health Fair in Quincy

When: Tuesday, September 27, 2022 from 9 to 11 a.m.

Where: The Kroc Community Center
405 Vermont St, Quincy, IL 62301

State Senator Turner's Senior Fair in Decatur

When: Thursday, September 29, 2022 from 9 to 11 a.m.

Where: Macon County Senior Center
1430 N 22nd St, Decatur, IL 62526

State Senator Turner's Senior Fair in Taylorville

When: Tuesday, October 4, 2022 from 9 to 11 a.m.

Where: Taylorville Senior Center
701 W Adams St, Taylorville, IL 62568

State Representative Robyn Gabel's Senior Fair in Evanston

When: October 15, 2022

Where: Robert Crown Community Center
1801 Main St, Evanston, IL 60202

Items of Interest

[Connecting Older Adults in Illinois During the Pandemic](#)

[How to Build Your Technical Confidence: Strategies for Older Adults](#)

[Application period opens for federal government's LIHEAP program. Here's what you need to know](#)

[Older adults prioritize healthy eating on a budget, as they adjust to inflation reality](#)

[Elections Guide for Older Adults: How to Stay Safe While Voting](#)

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](#)