



State of Illinois
Illinois Department on Aging

Illinois
Department
on Aging

**ANNUAL
REPORT**
FY2023



Respect for Yesterday // Support for Today // Plan for Tomorrow



A message from Director Paula Basta

To the Honorable Governor JB Pritzker and Members of the General Assembly:

It is my pleasure to submit the Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report for the Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA). This report reflects IDoA's mission of administering quality and culturally appropriate programs that promote partnerships and encourage independence, dignity, and quality of life.

IDoA—in coordination with our statewide network of aging services providers, community organizations, and other stakeholders—is committed to helping older adults live independent and fulfilling lives. Our programs and services support a vision that embraces positive aging, rejects ageist stereotypes, and addresses social isolation as a public health concern.

We continue to observe that social isolation and loneliness are two lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, we celebrated National Senior Center Month with the theme Strengthening Community Connections. Centers across the state hosted special events, programs, and celebrations throughout September to raise awareness about the services they offer, helping connect older adults to valuable services and to each other. We also continue to facilitate referrals for technology and assistive devices aimed at enabling social connectedness through the Illinois Care Connections program.

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As we embrace post-pandemic changes to older adults' mindsets and habits, we recognize that COVID is still a major cause of serious respiratory illness. This year, we launched a marketing and outreach campaign designed to reach unvaccinated and undervaccinated older adults with messages that build confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine, overcome lingering hesitation, and combat misinformation. As new boosters became available and recommended, we incorporated messaging encouraging older adults to get fully protected. IDoA looks forward to continued collaboration with public health organizations in ongoing efforts to support older adults' health and well-being.

I am grateful for these and each of our existing partnerships, including with members of the Aging Network, state lawmakers, and all stakeholders concerned with supporting the highest quality of life for older Illinoisans.

Sincerely,

Paula Basta, M.Div.
Director, Illinois Department on Aging



MISSION

The Illinois Department on Aging serves and advocates for older Illinoisans and their caregivers by administering quality and culturally appropriate programs that promote partnerships and encourage independence, dignity and quality of life.

The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) strives for efficient and effective access to services that prevents or delays nursing facility placement and maximizes an individual's ability to remain as independent as possible within their community. Our services are delivered through the Aging Network comprised of IDoA, Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), Care Coordination Units (CCUs), the Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) and Senior Health Assistance Program (SHAP) sites, Aging provider agencies, senior centers and many other local organizations.

The Department engages in specific planning activities to identify needs and evaluate the adequacy of existing programs to serve those with the greatest need. While program eligibility varies based on funding sources, services offered through IDoA include: the federal Older Americans Act and the Community Care Program, which both serve persons aged 60 and older; the Benefit Access Program which serves persons aged 65 and older and persons with disabilities aged 16-64; the Adult Protective Services Program which protects persons aged 60 and older and persons with disabilities aged 18-59 living in the community; Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program and the Senior Community Service Employment Program for persons aged 55 and older; the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program which protects the rights of individuals aged 60 and older and persons with disabilities 18-59 living in a long-term care setting; and the Home Care Ombudsman Program which provides advocacy and assistance to protect the rights of older adults and persons with disabilities aged 18-59 living in the community.

IDoA serves and advocates for our nearly 2.9 million older Illinoisans and their caregivers and looks forward to continued collaboration with our Aging Network partners as we work together respecting yesterday, supporting today, and planning for tomorrow.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Director.....	3
Mission	4
Agency Operations.....	6
Strategic Priorities	6
Employees by Ethnicity	7
Budget	7
Older Americans Act.....	8
Information and Assistance	8
Nutrition Services	9
Child and Adult Care Food Program	9
Senior Community Service Employment Program	10
Transportation	10
Outreach.....	10
Senior Centers.....	10
Legal Assistance.....	11
Caregiver Support Program	11
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren	11
Volunteer Programs	11
Community Care Program	12
Adult Day Services.....	12
Emergency Home Response Service	13
Automated Medication Dispenser Service	13
In-Home Service.....	13
Comprehensive Care Coordination.....	13
Choices for Care	14
Senior Companion Program	14
Money Management Program	14
Adult Protective Services	15
Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.....	15
Home Care Ombudsman Program	16
Senior HelpLine	16
Benefit Access Program.....	16
Senior Health Insurance Program	17
Award Programs.....	18
Training and Education	18
Accomplishments	18
IDoA Organizational Chart 2023.....	20

AGENCY OPERATIONS

Since 2000, Illinois' older population (60 years of age and older) has grown from 1.9 million to nearly 2.9 million. It now represents 22 percent of the population in Illinois. By 2030, it is estimated that the 60 years of age and older population will increase to 3.6 million and will represent 25 percent of Illinois' population.

IDoA's mission is delivered through programs and services to older adults, including the Community Care Program (CCP). The CCP supports eligible older adults, who are at risk of being placed in a nursing facility, to remain in their own homes by providing in-home and community-based services.

The CCP provides services to any individual who meets all eligibility requirements. CCP is one of Illinois' nine 1915(c) waivers for home and community-based services under the Medicaid Program. Program core services include: Adult Day Service (ADS), Emergency Home Response Service (EHRS), Automated Medication Dispenser (AMD), and In-Home Service (IHS).

Unfortunately, far too many older adults or individuals with disabilities experience violations of their rights including abuse, neglect, poor care, isolation and lack of choices and meaningful activities.

The Adult Protective Services Program and the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, as well as the Home Care Ombudsman Program, are meant to protect individuals from harm and improve the quality of life for residents in the community and long-term care settings.

A large piece of our mission also comes from our responsibility of being the state-administering agency for the Older Americans Act. This federal act supports older adults who wish to stay in their homes by restructuring the delivery of services to include home-based services, as well as institutional care.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Implement innovative and evidence-based programs to support older adults' ability to remain in the community and avoid premature institutionalization.
- Maximize federal, state, local and private resources to increase healthy aging options and social programs for older adults.
- Promote responsive management, accountability and advance technologies to meet the needs of the most vulnerable while creating efficiencies in statewide systems.
- Protect older adults and persons with disabilities by strengthening interagency collaboration to prevent abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Expand and ensure equitable access to programs that address the social determinants of health with a focus on identifying and understanding the needs of historically underserved and diverse populations.

EMPLOYEES BY ETHNICITY

At the end of FY23, the agency had a headcount of 144 employees. The Department achieved parity in all workforce categories in accordance with its Affirmative Action and Minority Employment Plans. The Department will continue to fill vacancies in a timely manner while also securing and retaining a qualified and balanced workforce that is representative of the Affirmative Action categories, pursuant to the State Personnel rules and AFSCME contract provisions.

FY22 Employees by Ethnicity (percentage)	
White	69.72%
African American	16.90%
Hispanic	10.56%
Asian	2.82%
Other	0
Total	100%

BUDGET

Program	FY23 Budget	FY23 Spend
Community Care Programs	\$1,237,713,300	\$1,194,934,252
Community Supportive Services	\$148,740,300	\$58,575,010
Adult Protective Services	\$40,400,000	\$21,359,722
Nutrition Services	\$190,431,200	\$87,411,609
Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program	\$21,150,000	\$7,319,103
Senior Employment Services	\$5,948,100	\$3,517,181
Senior Health Assistance Program	\$2,800,000	\$2,780,625
Senior Helpline	\$6,377,800	\$4,180,785
TOTAL	\$1,653,560,700	\$1,380,078,286



Illinois Department on Aging is committed to advancing equity and accessibility in its programs and services and improving data collection procedures to support this goal.

OLDER AMERICANS ACT

Older Americans Act (OAA) funded programs serve older adults who reside in neighborhoods throughout Illinois. Available services fall into categories of access, in-home and community-based services, as well as nutrition, legal assistance, employment assistance and caregiver support. These services are coordinated through the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and a network of community service providers. Many organizations rely on volunteers to help support the delivery of these services.

At filing of this report, OAA Federal Fiscal Year (FFY 23) 2023 is unavailable. The OAA data provided below is for FFY 22. IDoA will file an amended report when OAA FFY 23 data becomes available.

In FFY 22, programs funded by the OAA served more than 406,924 seniors aged 60 or older. Although the funding is relatively small, these supportive services have a very positive impact on the quality of life of older adults and help them to remain independent in their communities.



INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

There are many overlapping federal and state programs with different eligibility requirements. Older adults and their caregivers often need help to understand what services are available and whether they qualify. Beginning with a simple telephone call to one of Illinois' local information and assistance providers, an older adult or a family caregiver can receive up-to-date information on a wide range of community-based programs and benefits.



Information and assistance service providers can also provide information on respite services, in-home services, transportation, home-delivered meals, pharmaceutical assistance, income tax and property tax assistance programs, Medicare, Medicaid and much more. Trained staff are ready to share facts about available services and public benefit programs to help older adults and those who care for them. In FFY22, staff at local sites across Illinois received 742,626 calls from older adults or their caregivers.

NUTRITION SERVICES

In FFY22, there were 113,448 older adults who received nutrition services. This included 33,932 older adults who received congregate meals and 79,516 older adults who received home-delivered meals. Congregate meals are served weekdays in over 39 sites throughout Illinois that include senior centers, churches, senior housing facilities, restaurants and community buildings. The program provides a nutritionally balanced meal that must include 33 percent of the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) established by the Food and Nutrition Board of the Institute of the National Academy of Sciences.

Home-delivered meals are an option for an older adult who may have difficulty leaving their home and cannot personally prepare a nutritious meal. Volunteers who deliver meals have an important opportunity to check on the welfare of the homebound older adult and report any health or other problems that they may observe during their visits.

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) promotes the routine consumption of fruits and vegetables as a part of the daily diet. The goals of the program include providing resources to improve the health and well-being of Illinois' seniors through increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables and aiding in the development of additional market opportunities for farmers. Checks for seniors are distributed at local senior facilities through the cooperation of IDoA, AAAs and Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago. These checks can be redeemed for fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers' markets in 36 counties. The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program season is July 10 to October 31.



CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

The Adult Day Service (ADS) component is administered at the federal level by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and at the state level through IDoA. The goal of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is to improve the diets of functionally impaired adults and persons 60 years of age and older by providing ADS Centers with reimbursement for nutritious, well-balanced meals. Centers must provide a community-based, non-residential group program designed to meet the needs of functionally impaired adults through an individual plan of care. In lieu of ADS licensure, CACFP approval is met through obtaining a Community Care Program (CCP) contract. There were 778,184 CACFP breakfasts, lunches and supplemental snacks served to approximately 3,617 participants on average per month who were enrolled in ADS during FFY22.

SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a federally funded program administered through the U.S. Department of Labor based on the Older Americans Act (OAA). The OAA supports community service employment and training opportunities. Funding is provided to SCSEP, also known as the Title V Program, under the OAA and the Senior Employment Specialist Program (SESP). Both programs are administered by the IDoA with the cooperation of the AAAs, community action agencies, and organizations that focus on providing employment services. The service is offered to unemployed, low-income persons who are 55 years of age and older and actively looking for employment. To qualify for the program, SCSEP participants must meet the income criteria, which is 125 percent of the current federal poverty rate. In FFY22, the Department served 320 seniors statewide.



TRANSPORTATION

Many older adults cannot drive because of poor hearing, vision loss, or other health conditions. Some may not own an automobile. Transportation is the link that ensures older adults' access to the services and opportunities that help them remain independent. Transportation helps older adults access health care, social and nutritional services, employment, as well as family and friends. Through transportation funded services, older adults made more than 326,649 trips in FFY22 to and from locations within their communities.

OUTREACH

Outreach services target those older adults in Illinois' communities who are difficult to contact and may not be aware of available programs. Outreach staff visit with older adults or their caregivers to inform them about benefits and services, encourage them to participate in programs, and help with enrollment into services. In FFY22, 17,552 older adults were assisted through the Aging Network's outreach efforts.



SENIOR CENTERS

Local senior centers have regular operating hours and are often the community's focal point for older adult services. Senior centers provide excellent opportunities for socialization, relaxation and participation in a variety of programs and activities. Senior center services may include congregate meals, transportation, education, counseling, legal assistance and health screenings to assist older adults in the community. In FFY22, the Department funded 100 senior centers statewide.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

There are six senior legal assistance providers in Illinois that offer services to adults 60 years of age and older. Legal assistance providers advocate for and represent older clients in civil cases particularly those involving abuse, neglect, financial exploitation, consumer fraud, landlord tenant relationships, nursing home residents' rights and conflicts over benefit programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. They also help with simple estate planning, living wills, and powers of attorney. In addition, they perform research and provide education on a variety of legal issues. Legal assistance providers contributed 33,168 hours of assistance to older adults in FFY22.

CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Caregiver Support Program assists families caring for older adults, as well as grandparents or older relatives who are caregivers for children 18 years of age and younger. Services include information and assistance, respite, individual counseling, support groups and caregiver training. In addition, supplemental services are provided locally on a limited basis to complement care provided by caregivers. Supplemental services may include assistive devices, legal assistance, school supplies or other gap-filling services to address a short-term caregiver emergency. There are 162 Caregiver Resource Centers in Illinois.

GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

In 2021, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were an estimated 263,890 children under the age of 18 living in a grandparent headed home with more than 71,839 grandparents caring for their grandchildren in Illinois. IDoA, in cooperation with the Kinship Navigator Task Force, works to locate, assist and promote awareness of older caregivers who are currently raising their family's children. The Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Program began in 1996 with a grant from the Brookdale Foundation. Financial support from the Illinois General Assembly and other resources allows IDoA to continue with established support groups, financial and technical assistance, information, and assistance to grandparents. Funding also supports conferences and workshops, as well as training to professionals. There were 1,539 grandparents/other relative caregivers served in FFY22. Of those served, 1,086 were aged 55 or older and 453 were under the age of 55. There were also 2,404 children served.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

Foster Grandparents Program

Foster grandparents are role models, mentors and friends to children with needs. The program provides a way for volunteers aged 55 and older to stay active by serving children and youth in their communities.



Volunteers may assist with physical or speech therapy, help with homework or simply be there as a surrogate grandparent. The program helps abused and neglected children; mentors troubled teenagers and young mothers; provides care for premature infants and children with disabilities; provides different generations opportunities to grow together; and improves the lives of children while enriching the lives of volunteers. In FY22, 581 Foster Grandparent Program volunteers provided over 504,780 hours of service through 10 projects located throughout the State of Illinois.

COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM

IDoA administers the Community Care Program (CCP). The CCP is a major initiative to prevent the unnecessary institutionalization of people in Illinois who are 60 years of age and older. The program is designed to meet the needs of older adults who have difficulty with household and personal care tasks. CCP services include In-Home, Adult Day, Emergency Home Response and Automated Medication Dispenser Services. CCP served approximately 64,750 elderly individuals each month in FY23, thereby successfully diverting or delaying many of those individuals from entering a nursing facility.

CCP is a viable and cost-effective alternative to a nursing facility. CCP is supported by General Revenue Funds and the Commitment to Human Services Fund as appropriated by the General Assembly. A portion of the cost for Medicaid-eligible participants is reimbursed to Illinois through a federal Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver. The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS), as the state Medicaid agency, has authorized IDoA to manage the Persons who are Elderly Waiver as the operating agency. Participants are evaluated through an initial comprehensive care assessment to determine their need for service and a person-centered plan of care is developed in collaboration with the individual. Six-month visits and annual reassessments are completed face-to-face to ensure ongoing needs are identified and met.

ADULT DAY SERVICE

Adult Day Service (ADS) is designed especially for older adults who want to remain in the community but cannot be home alone during the day due to a physical or cognitive impairment. ADS also provide respite for family caregivers, especially those who are employed outside the home, as well as socialization for isolated adults. Transportation is also provided at many of the ADS sites.

Services offered in ADS sites include health monitoring, medication supervision, personal care and recreational/therapeutic activities. Nutritious lunches and snacks are served, and special diets are provided. Several centers specialize in providing care to participants diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders while others target specific ethnic populations.



During FY23, there were 76 ADS sites that provided community-based services to an average monthly caseload of approximately 1,250 participants.

EMERGENCY HOME RESPONSE SERVICE

Emergency Home Response Service (EHRS) is a 24-hour emergency communication link to assistance outside the home for older adults with documented health and safety needs and mobility limitations. This service is provided by a two-way voice communication system consisting of a base unit and an activation device worn by the participant that will automatically link the older adult to a professionally staffed support center. EHRS is a CCP core service provided to improve the independence and safety of participants in their own homes and help reduce the need for nursing home care. In FY23, an average monthly caseload of approximately 29,000 participants utilized the service.

AUTOMATED MEDICATION DISPENSER SERVICE

Automated Medication Dispenser Service (AMD) is a portable, mechanical system for individual use that can be programmed to dispense or alert the participant to take non-liquid oral medications through auditory, visual or voice reminders; to provide notification of a missed medication dose; and to provide 24-hour technical assistance in the participant's residence. The AMD unit is connected to a Department approved support center through a telephone line or wireless/cellular connection in the participant's residence. In FY23, an average of 200 participants utilized the service each month.



IN-HOME SERVICE

In-Home Service helps with general household activities such as cleaning, planning and preparing meals, doing laundry, shopping and running errands. In-Home Service Aides assist participants with personal care tasks such as dressing, bathing, grooming and following special diets. IDoA contracted with 163 home care agencies to meet the needs of an average monthly caseload of approximately 58,200 older adults in FY23.

COMPREHENSIVE CARE COORDINATION

The foundation of CCP is Comprehensive Care Coordination (CCC) provided by a statewide network of community-based Care Coordination Units (CCUs). CCC is a holistic approach to assessing the needs of older adults to help them access supportive services and supports so they can live safely and independently in the community. This system provides coordination among CCP services and federal Older Americans Act Title III funded services, as well as local service and supports options. In FY23, CCC served approximately 80,500 older adults.

CHOICES FOR CARE

IDoA provides a universal nursing home pre-admission screening for adults aged 60 and older seeking admission to a nursing facility. In accordance with state law, all persons seeking admission to nursing facilities must be informed of all available care options prior to admission, regardless of the individual's income, assets or funding source. Care coordinators from the CCUs conduct the screenings, primarily in hospitals, immediately prior to patient discharge.

The screening process gives older adults and their families the opportunity to ask questions and to understand community-based services and supports, as well as institutional options for continuing care. In instances of short-term nursing facility placement for purposes of rehabilitation or convalescence, care coordinators may conduct follow-up screenings in the nursing facilities to aid transition back into the community when possible. IDoA provided 103,746 pre-screenings in FY23 to seniors who were considering placement in a long-term care facility.

SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM DEMONSTRATION

The Senior Companion program provides an array of assistive, supportive companionship services to seniors by utilizing volunteers, aged 55 or older, who have limited income. Services are available to CCP participants who have been determined to need companionship in conjunction with current In-Home or Adult Day Service. The Senior Companion Program not only assists participants, but it also provides economic and social benefits for the volunteers as well as respite for family caregivers. Senior Companion Services is a program of AmeriCorps Seniors. In FY23, there were three Senior Companion Demonstration Programs covering eight counties in Illinois, and there was an average monthly caseload of 40 seniors utilizing this service.

MONEY MANAGEMENT DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Illinois Volunteer Money Management is a financial services program that matches trained volunteers to assist low-income older adults who have difficulty managing their personal household budgets, paying bills, keeping track of banking records, balancing checkbooks, intervening with creditors, completing medical forms, and handling other issues related to personal finances. The volunteers also serve as Representative Payees who are designated by the Social Security Administration (SSA) to manage the monthly benefits of certain beneficiaries. IDoA-contracted CCUs screen, train, match and supervise the volunteers. In FY23, there were 17 Money Management Demonstration Programs covering 59 counties in Illinois serving 593 participants.

The Illinois Volunteer MONEY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Individuals must be active Community Care Program (CCP) participants and/or have a substantiated Adult Protective Services (APS) case and meet program requirements. Local Program sites will conduct an assessment to determine if the Money Management Program can be helpful. For more information regarding the program and to be referred to a local agency, contact the Illinois Department on Aging Senior HelpLine: 1-800-252-8966 (Voice) 1-888-206-1327 (TTY)

Local program sites, contracted by the Illinois Department on Aging, recruit, select, train and match volunteers to assist seniors in managing their finances. Ongoing support and supervision are provided.

Referrals are made to the local program site by social service agencies, Area Agencies on Aging, Care Coordination Units, Adult Protective Services Programs, the Social Security Administration, family, friends or other concerned persons. The trained volunteer and local program coordinator meet with each client to explain the program and assess the individuals needs.

Who is Eligible?

Individuals must be active Community Care Program (CCP) participants and/or have a substantiated Adult Protective Services (APS) case and meet program requirements. Local Program sites will conduct an assessment to determine if the Money Management Program can be helpful. For more information regarding the program and to be referred to a local agency, contact the Illinois Department on Aging Senior HelpLine: 1-800-252-8966 (Voice) 1-888-206-1327 (TTY)

What Will the Volunteer Money Manager Do?

Bill Payer volunteers will provide opening and organizing of mail, budget setup, checkbook balancing and bill paying services for seniors who remain in control of their finances, but need some help keeping things in order.

Representative Payee volunteers are appointed by the Social Security Administration to manage monthly benefits of a participant determined incapable of handling his or her own finances. A separate account is opened with checks automatically deposited. The representative payee manages and pays the participants' expenses from this account.

Program Safeguards

- Insurance coverage of participants funds is provided by each individual Money Management local program site.
- Volunteers are carefully selected, trained and provided ongoing support.
- Volunteers only work from one designated account with a limit.
- Volunteer activity and accounts are monitored regularly.

"When you trust someone, you don't have to worry."

"My son is not calling me asking for money since he knows someone is helping. I feel safer financially."

"Having this help has been a lifesaver — no more overdrafts at the bank or nasty creditors calling. Now I can finally start saving money."

— Program Participants

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES

The Department's Adult Protective Services (APS) Program responds to reports of alleged abuse, neglect and exploitation (ANE) of adults aged 60 and older and adults with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 59 who live at home. In addition, the program responds to reports of self-neglect (SN) which refers to a condition that is the result of an eligible adult's inability to perform essential care tasks that substantially threaten his or her own health.

In FY23, the program responded to 20,896 reports of ANE/SN. Trained caseworkers with 36 local agencies throughout the State conducted investigations and worked with adults to resolve abusive, neglectful or exploitive situations and arrange appropriate interventions. Referred services provided included in-home care, counseling, medical assistance, legal intervention or other assistance depending on the risk presented.



FY23 initiatives included an emphasis on quality assurance expansion with the development of a new team and the continued focus on data collection and reporting. These quality assurance efforts are aimed at ensuring that clients are receiving superior service by APS investigators and mitigating identified risk in the most efficient way possible. Additionally, the APS program began development of a prevention screening tool that is intended to identify possible signs of abuse within the community and proactively refer clients to services. The intention of this project is to mitigate risk factors of abuse and ensure that situations do not progress to the point at which an APS investigation would be necessary.

LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

As mandated by the federal Older Americans Act and the Illinois Act on the Aging, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP) was established to protect the rights of those individuals who live in a variety of long-term care settings.

The five primary Ombudsman services are: investigation; regular presence visits; issue advocacy; consultations; and resident and family council support. Quality resident care and residents' rights are top priorities for the Ombudsman Program, which includes 17 Regional LTCOPs. In FY23, there were 72 full-time staff, 19 part-time staff, and 34 volunteers.

In FY23, the Ombudsman Program responded to 7,934 complaints. Most of the complaints filed were fully or partially resolved to the satisfaction of the resident involved. In addition, the Program handled 36,392 consultations and made 14,101 facility visits.

HOME CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM

The Home Care Ombudsman (HCO) Program is housed within IDoA's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Office. The goal of the HCO Program is to empower, advocate on behalf of, and protect the rights of individuals who live in the community and receive services to help them stay in their homes. The HCO work to resolve complaints made by, or on the behalf of, persons enrolled in the Medicare Medicaid Alignment Initiative (MMAI) or select Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) waivers when the rights of the individuals are violated. During FY23, the HCO Program responded to 114 requests for information, opened 136 cases related to HCBS and MMAI, and completed 59 community education sessions.

SENIOR HELPLINE

The Department's statewide toll-free Senior HelpLine provides information and links older adults and their caregivers to local services. Professionally trained staff assess individuals' needs and provide referrals to home and community-based service options such as in-home services, home-delivered meals, caregiver support, and Medicare counseling. In addition, the Senior HelpLine staff answer the dedicated Adult Protective Services (APS) Hotline. The staff complete reports of suspected abuse, neglect, financial exploitation and self-neglect of adults over the age of 60, as well as persons with disabilities between the ages of 18 to 59 living in the community. The Senior HelpLine relays information to the appropriate APS agencies for investigation and follow-up.

In FY23, the Senior HelpLine responded to 154,772 calls. Approximately 56 percent of the calls received during the period were regarding the Benefit Access Program that determines eligibility for free rides on fixed transit systems and Secretary of State license plate discounts. Elder Rights, including protective and legal services of adults living in the community and long-term care settings, were 14 percent of the calls received; CCP services were nine percent of the calls received; Medicare counseling, private health insurance and related health coverage plans were nine percent of the calls received; and OAS services, such as nutrition and transportation, were four percent of the calls received. The remaining calls received were from individuals seeking assistance with a range of services including assistive technology, health, and housing.

BENEFIT ACCESS PROGRAM

The Benefit Access Program determines eligibility for a license plate discount from the Secretary of State's Office and free rides on fixed route transit systems in Illinois. To qualify, an individual must be 65 years of age or older, or at least 16 years of age and disabled. In addition, eligibility is determined through residency and income utilizing an online web-based application.

In FY23, IDOA processed 134,848 Benefit Access Applications resulting in 88,588 license plate discounts; 52,369 Seniors Ride Free enrollments; and 24,648 Persons with Disabilities Ride Free enrollments.



SENIOR HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM (SHIP)

The Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) provides objective counseling, advocacy, and enrollment assistance to Illinois' Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers. SHIP counselors are certified to perform personal searches using the Medicare plan finder tool comparing Part D prescription drug plans and Medicare Advantage plans to facilitate the best choices for individuals receiving benefits. During the 2023 Open Enrollment Period, counselors assisted thousands of beneficiaries change their Part D plans to more affordable options, with an overall cost savings of 1.8 million dollars for an average of \$1,200 saved per beneficiary. SHIP counselors also utilized the Inflation Reduction Act benefits that cap all insulin drug prices to no more than \$35 per month, savings hundreds of dollars per beneficiary in drug plan costs.

Due to the increasing number of Medicare eligible beneficiaries needing assistance in applying for Medicare Parts A and B, counselors also facilitate enrollments by working closely with Social Security Administration (SSA). For FY23, SHIP counselors assisted more than 76,000 beneficiaries with enrollment into Medicare, Medicare Savings Programs, and Extra Help for Part D.

During FY23, overall, SHIP counselors assisted approximately 92,000 beneficiaries using a hybrid approach of in-person and remote online counseling. SHIP also provided outreach and education to over 86,000 individuals during community webinars, drive-through health fairs, vaccination clinics, and food pantry pickups. Also, face-to-face events were offered this past year and were popular with retiree organizations and township offices.

The Senior HelpLine and the 1-800 Medicare Customer Service Center referred beneficiaries to more than 300 SHIP certified sites for assistance in their communities. Counseling at the local level is performed in many languages to help alleviate health disparities that exist due to cultural differences. In addition, counselors who work for the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are able to reach the disabled Medicare population and screen for various other services that may improve the quality of life for individuals in Illinois.

IDoA's Senior Health Insurance Program aims to provide accurate objective counseling, assistance and advocacy relating to Medicare, private health insurance and related health coverage plans.



AWARDS

IDoA recognizes individuals that have made outstanding contributions to their communities through the annual Senior Illinoisans Hall of Fame, initiated by the General Assembly in 1994. The Hall of Fame commemorates the achievements and contributions of residents aged 65 and older. Inductees are recognized for their contributions in four areas including Community Services, Education, Labor Force and Performance and/or Graphic Arts. Inductees are selected through a statewide nomination and judging process. Since its inception, nearly 137 people have been inducted into the Hall of Fame.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

In FY23, IDoA recertified 865 Care Coordinators and trained 318 new Care Coordinators. During this same time, IDoA trained 929 new homecare supervisors. This was a significant increase from the previous year, and partially reflective of workforce turnover trends. In addition, during FY23, three new provider trainings were held adding 24 new contracted agencies to provide CCP In-Home and Adult Day Services.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY23, IDoA proposed Community Care Program (CCP) additions to the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) that included fall detection technology and GPS monitoring to the Emergency Home Response Service. In addition, IDoA continued its commitment to supporting both paid and unpaid caregivers, ensuring access to nutritious home-delivered meals, and upholding its commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

IDoA worked closely with State agency partners, including the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS), to remind people to renew their Medicaid coverage following the ending of the COVID Public Health Emergency (PHE). Efforts included educating Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) counselors, Case Coordination Units (CCU), and other Aging Network partners on how to best direct individuals needing assistance with Medicaid redetermination. State partners are working together so that eligible individuals don't lose their benefits, or if no longer eligible for Medicaid, are referred to other sources for help such as Medicare and [GetCoveredIllinois.gov](https://www.getcoveredillinois.gov).

FY23 included a number of advancements within the Office of Adult Protective Services (APS), the most primary being the implementation of the Quality Assurance team. This team is consistent of a Quality Assurance Administrator and two Quality Assurance Specialists who are tasked with the completion of intensive monitoring and case review activities to ensure compliance with applicable regulations as well as due diligence for client safety. This team has revolutionized the case review protocol and incorporated crucial elements to ensure that APS investigators are going above and beyond the minimum standard for the safety of clients.

Additionally, the APS training team has continued to advance the Simulation training project and also contracted and completed an evaluation of the training with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. This evaluation shed light on the strengths of the training with participants reporting overwhelmingly that the training better prepared them for actual casework and also identified recommendations to continue to grow the training moving forward.

IDoA kicked off Senior Day 2022 at the Illinois State Fair in the Illinois Building, alongside Governor Pritzker, Lieutenant Governor Stratton, and the Directors of the Illinois Departments of Public Health, Agriculture, and Healthcare and Family Services. During the kick-off event, Governor Pritzker announced the upcoming 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.”

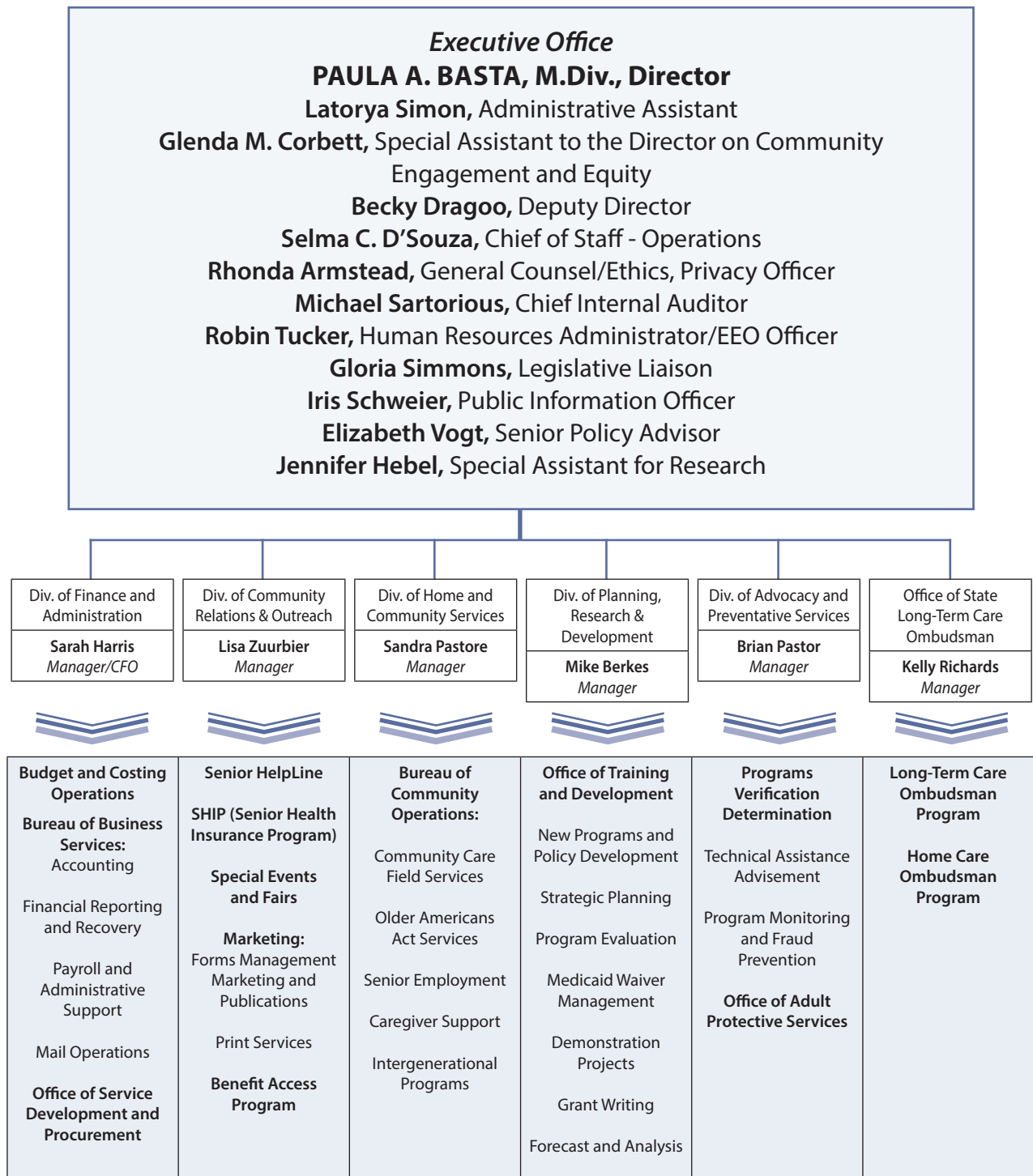
Also on Senior Day, IDoA launched a marketing and outreach campaign to continue its efforts urging older adults to get up to date on their COVID-19 vaccinations. The campaign utilized paid media, including radio and targeted digital ads, and strong community partnerships to build confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine and resulted in more than 25 million social media impressions.

The first meeting of the Illinois Commission on LGBTQ Aging was held on January 18, 2023. The Commission was created per Public Act 102-0885 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. The Commission is charged to make recommendations to improve access to benefits, services, and supports for LGBTQ older adults and their caregivers.

SHIP met with Chiquita Brooks-LaSure, CMS Administrator, to discuss the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. Benefits of the Act include capping insulin prices at \$35 per month and covering the costs of vaccines, including shingles, for people with Medicare Part D. During FY23, the SHIP team educated certified counselors across the State to best assist Medicare beneficiaries in understanding these new provisions.

Illinois Department on Aging Organizational Overview

June 30, 2023







State of Illinois, Department on Aging

One Natural Resources Way, #100
Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271
<https://ilaging.illinois.gov/>

Senior HelpLine (8:30am – 5:00pm, Monday – Friday):
1-800-252-8966

For deaf and speech-impaired communication over the telephone, dial Illinois Relay at 711.

Adult Protective Services Hotline (24-Hour):
1-866-800-1409

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