



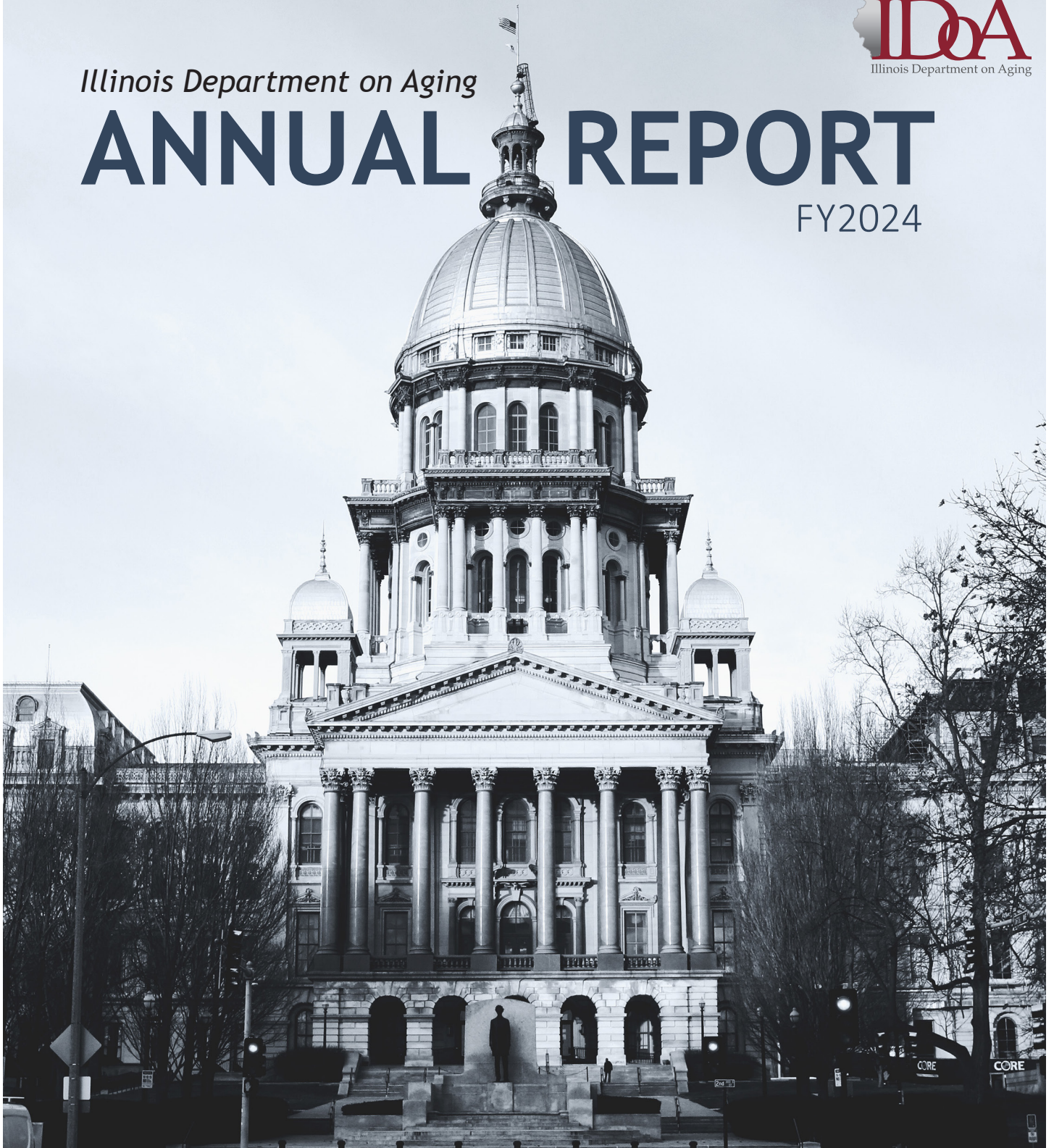
State of Illinois  
Illinois Department on Aging



*Illinois Department on Aging*

# ANNUAL REPORT

FY2024



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





## *A message from Acting Director, Mary Killough*

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

I am pleased to present the Department on Aging’s Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2024, recording how our agency and employees serve older adults and their caregivers throughout Illinois. This report reflects our mission of administering quality and culturally appropriate programs that promote partnerships and encourage independence, dignity, and quality of life.

At the core of our mission is the belief that all Illinoisans deserve to age with respect and dignity, with the support they need to thrive. Our programs and services—delivered locally through the state’s aging network—enhance the overall well-being of older adults from diverse backgrounds, including racial and ethnic minorities, the LGBTQ+ community, immigrants, people living with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias, and more.

As technology continues to evolve, it significantly impacts how older adults can maintain and improve their well-being. Recognizing this, the Illinois Care Connections (ICC) program makes technology and assistive devices more accessible to older adults experiencing social isolation, mobility challenges, vision or hearing loss, and other physical disabilities. This year, IDoA expanded eligibility for the ICC program to include all older adults living in the community, whereas previously participation was limited to those already enrolled in the Community Care Program. Alongside this increase in eligibility, we also expanded the stock and variety of devices available for distribution.

Understanding the vital role of caregivers in supporting older adults’ health and well-being, IDoA also took steps this year to raise awareness of resources available to family members providing unpaid in-home help to loved ones. We updated our website to enhance visibility of caregiver wellness and training resources, and to assess the extent to which currently available resources are meeting caregivers’ needs, IDoA hosted 20 roundtable discussions during FY24. Several hundred individuals attended these events both virtually and in person and shared their insights to help shape future caregiver-focused policies and initiatives.

IDoA highly values public and stakeholder input in our planning efforts to meet the needs and expectations of aging Illinoisans, their families, and caregivers. We look forward to continued opportunities for collaboration with service providers, our sister agencies in state government, and members of the General Assembly to ensure the highest quality of life for older adults for years to come.

Respectfully yours,

Mary Killough  
Acting Director



## 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.

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## 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 FY24, the agency had a headcount of 151 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 promptly while 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.

FY24 Employees by Ethnicity (percentage)	
White	67.55%
African American	16.56%
Hispanic	11.92%
Asian	2.65%
American Indian/Alaskan native	1.32%
Total	100%

## BUDGET

Program	Budget	Spend Budget	Budget
Community Care Program	\$1,352,801,300	\$1,328,140,911	\$1,536,207,500
Community Support Services	\$95,540,500	\$65,495,364	\$112,411,305
Adult Protective Services	\$40,400,000	\$26,243,500	\$40,400,000
Nutrition Services	\$143,531,200	\$103,239,006	\$141,536,400
Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program	\$17,950,000	\$8,721,985	\$12,975,000
Senior Employment Services	\$6,201,678	\$3,573,761	\$5,948,100
Senior Health Assistance Program	\$2,800,000	\$2,776,500	\$2,800,000
Senior HelpLine	\$7,812,000	\$4,248,635	\$8,144,300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,667,036,678</b>	<b>\$1,542,439,664</b>	<b>\$1,860,422,605</b>



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.

In FFY23, programs funded by the OAA served more than 471,104 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.

*At filing of this report, OAA Federal Fiscal Year (FFY24) 2024 is unavailable. The OAA data provided below is for FFY23. IDoA will file an amended report when OAA FFY23 data becomes available.*

### 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 FFY23, staff at local sites across Illinois received 820,484 calls from older adults or their caregivers.





## Nutrition Services

In FFY23, there were 131,441 older adults who received nutrition services. This included 56,225 older adults who received congregate meals and 75,216 older adults who received home-delivered meals. Congregate meals are served weekdays in over 50 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 participating 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 sites 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 1,016,971 CACFP breakfasts, lunches and supplemental snacks served more than 3,500 participants on average per month who were enrolled in the ADS during FFY23.



## 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, the Senior Employment Program (SEP), and the Senior Employment Specialist Program (SESP). All three 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 FFY23, the Department served 319 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 350,115 trips in FFY23 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 FFY23, 18,902 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 FFY23, the Department funded 101 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 34,799 hours of assistance to older adults in FFY23.

## 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 154 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 1,372 grandparents/other relative caregivers served in FFY24. Of those served, 932 were aged 55 or older and 440 were under the age of 55. There were also 1,878 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 FFY24, 417 Foster Grandparent Program volunteers provided over 423,819 hours of service through eight projects located throughout the State of Illinois.



## *The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program*

RSVP places volunteers aged 55 and older in community-based organizations. Volunteers use their skills and experience to help meet community needs and can choose how and where they serve. In FFY24, 4,448 volunteers provided 691,140 hours of service.

## **COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM**

The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) administers the Community Care Program (CCP). The CCP provides Comprehensive Care Coordination and services to prevent the unnecessary or premature 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 impacting their Activities of Daily Living. CCP services include Comprehensive Care Coordination Services, In-Home Services, Adult Day Services, Emergency Home Response Services, and Automated Medication Dispenser Services. The CCP served approximately 65,675 elderly individuals each month in FY24, thereby successfully diverting or delaying many of those individuals from entering a nursing facility. In addition, 54,800 elderly individuals received services each month through a Managed Care Organization (MCO).

The Community Care Program (CCP) is a viable and cost-effective alternative to a nursing facility. The 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 and any authorized representatives. Six-month visits and annual reassessments are completed face-to-face to ensure ongoing needs are identified and met.

### *Comprehensive Care Coordination*

The foundation of the CCP is Comprehensive Care Coordination (CCC) provided by a statewide network of community-based Care Coordination Units (CCUs) contracted with IDoA. The CCC process provides 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 FY24, CCUs served approximately 72,000 older adults with CCC.



### 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 may target specific ethnic or cultural populations.

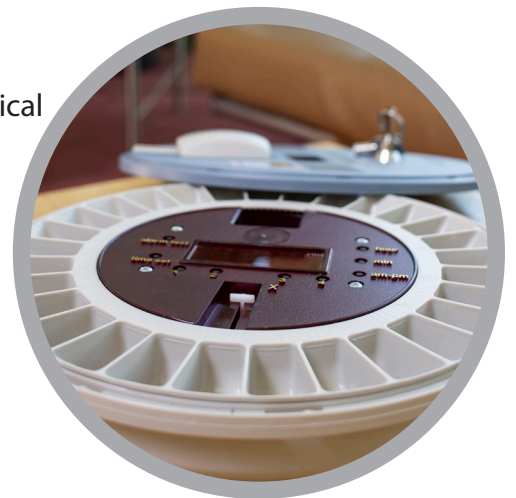
During FY24, there were 74 ADS sites with contracts with IDoA that provided community-based services to an average monthly caseload of approximately 1,300 participants.

### Emergency Home Response Service

Emergency Home Response Service (EHRS) is a 24-hour emergency communication link to assistance inside and 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 facility care. In FY24 GPS and falls detection were added to the EHRS Waiver. In FY24, an average monthly caseload of approximately 30,500 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 an IDoA-approved support center through a telephone line or wireless/ cellular connection in the participant's residence. In FY24, an average of 220 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. Additionally, homecare aides assist participants with personal care tasks such as dressing, bathing, grooming, and following special diets. IDoA contracted with 189 home care agencies to meet the needs of an average monthly caseload of approximately 59,200 older adults in FY24.

## Choices for Care

IDoA provides a universal nursing facility (NF) 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 screened to determine if they meet the threshold for eligibility for an NF level of care and 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 112,172 pre-screenings in FY24 to seniors who were considering placement in a long-term care facility.

## Senior Companion Demonstration Program

The Senior Companion Demonstration 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 FY24, there were 17 Money Management Demonstration Programs covering 59 counties in Illinois serving 599 participants.

**The Illinois Volunteer MONEY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM** is a protective service for limited income seniors who need help managing their finances.

**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 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.

**Testimonials:**  
"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

## ADVOCACY AND PREVENTION

### 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 FY24, the program responded to 22,178 reports of ANE/SN, demonstrating a 6% growth in annual intakes from FY23. Trained caseworkers with 35 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.

FY24 initiatives included an emphasis on quality assurance with the deployment of a new review protocol 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 underwent a comprehensive programmatic analysis aimed at identifying strengths and opportunities for growth within the program. This evaluation incorporated stakeholder engagement as well as a comparison of Illinois APS to other state APS programs and will be the cornerstone of strategic planning moving forward.



### 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 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 FY24, there were 76 full-time staff, 20 part-time staff, and 38 volunteers.

In FY24, the Ombudsman Program responded to 7,101 complaints. Most of the complaints filed were fully or partially resolved to the satisfaction of the resident involved. In addition, the Program handled 34,148 consultations and made 14,370 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 FY24, the HCO Program responded to 163 requests for information, opened 97 cases related to HCBS and MMAI, and completed 9 community education sessions.

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND OUTREACH

### 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 FY24, the Senior HelpLine responded to 154,003 calls. Approximately 48 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 15 percent of the calls received; CCP services were 12 percent of the calls received; Medicare counseling, private health insurance and related health coverage plans were 11 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 FY24, IDOA processed 118,079 Benefit Access Applications resulting in 82,301 license plate discounts; 43,872 Seniors Ride Free enrollments; and 18,937 Persons with Disabilities Ride Free enrollments.





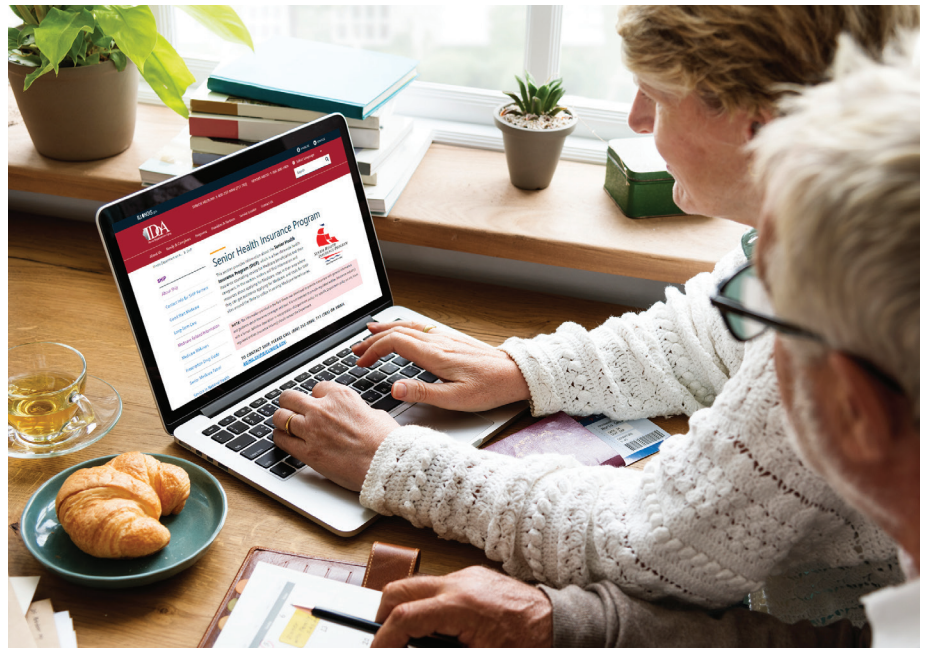
## Senior Health Insurance Program

The Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) provides objective counseling, advocacy, and enrollment assistance to Illinois Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and 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 who are eligible. During the 2024 Open Enrollment Period (October 15 through December 7), counselors assisted over 33,000 beneficiaries with plan comparisons and performed more than 12,800 enrollments into Part D and Advantage plans. This assistance saved over \$1.9 million dollars overall resulting in an average of \$1,695 in cost savings per beneficiary enrollment change.

Due to the increasing number of people who are turning 65 and going onto Medicare, counselors are facilitating Medicare Part A and B enrollments by working closely with Social Security Administration (SSA). There are many programs that help with Medicare costs and SHIP counselors educated 74,000 beneficiaries on the Medicare Savings Programs and Extra Help that subsidizes Medicare Part D. Approximately 8,175 applications were submitted for these important programs.

The Senior HelpLine and the 1-800 Medicare Customer Service Center referred beneficiaries to more than 300 SHIP certified sites in Illinois for assistance in their communities. SHIP counseling at the local level is performed in 23 languages to help alleviate health disparities that exist due to cultural differences. During FY24, SHIP counselors assisted approximately 102,558 beneficiaries with one-on-one counseling. SHIP also provided outreach and education to over 86,000 individuals during community webinars, health fairs, and speaking events.

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 150 people have been inducted into the Hall of Fame.

## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

In FY24, IDoA certified 304 new Care Coordinators and certified 760 new Homecare Supervisors. Training facilitated five new provider trainings over the fiscal year as part of the process for agencies to obtain a Community Care Program (CCP) agreement with IDoA.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

To gain insight into the needs and challenges of family caregivers, IDoA hosted 20 Caregiver Roundtables in FY24. The Caregiver Roundtables were held in partnership with the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) throughout Illinois. The information gathered helps the Aging Network better understand the evolving needs of family caregivers to develop holistic policy and programmatic solutions.

In FY24, IDoA implemented and enhanced Emergency Home Response Service (EHRS) with fall detection and GPS monitoring. The features enhance Community Care Program (CCP) participants' safety in their home and throughout the community. The new technology can recognize falls when they happen and automatically notify a local support center, increasing the likelihood that an older adult will be quickly found and brought to safety in the case of an incapacitating fall.

On October 3 and 4, 2023, IDoA hosted a Fall Conference at the University of Illinois Springfield. More than 600 members of the Aging Network attended the Fall Conference that included topics such as equity-centered practices, trauma-informed care, senior hunger, affordable housing and dementia screening and intervention. The event concluded with a celebration of IDoA's 50th anniversary and a proclamation from Governor JB Pritzker, along with a presentation of an oversized AARP membership card.

IDoA secured approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to allow Legally Responsible Individuals (LRIs) to serve as paid home care aides following expiration of the COVID Public Health Emergency (PHE). An LRI is any person who has a legal duty to provide care for an individual and includes a spouse, legal guardian, and power of attorney. The Department will implement the new policy in the next year.

IDoA, in collaboration with the Attorney General's Office, local law enforcement agencies and fraud prevention experts, hosted a one-day financial summit on fraud and scams. The goal of the summit was to help older adults and those who work with them learn the warning signs of financial fraud and scams and steps to avoid becoming a victim. Session topics included how to identify financial scams; how to protect yourself and your loved ones; and local, state, and federal reporting procedures and resources.

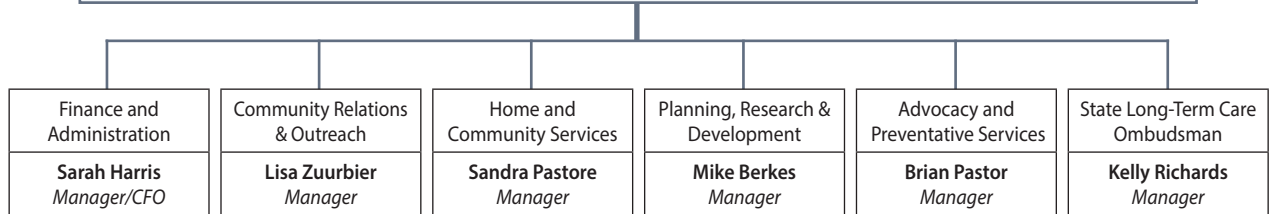
IDoA expanded Illinois Care Connections to include assistive technology and limited durable medical equipment alongside tablet bundles. Devices are available to all older adults at least 60 years of age to enable social connectedness; maintain health, safety, and well-being; and promote independence and community living. In FY24, Illinois Care Connections served 1,728 older adults in Illinois.

IDoA educated individuals leaving carceral settings about aging programs and services by attending events facilitated by the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDoC). Specifically, IDoA attended 19 Reentry Summits and Summit of Hope events in FY24 that focused on connecting parolees and soon-to-be-released individuals with resources. The goal is to support individuals leaving carceral settings by eliminating obstacles and expediting an individual's chance for success in the community.

## Illinois Department on Aging Organizational Overview June 30, 2024

**Executive Office**

**Mary Killough**, Acting Director  
**Benetta Davies**, Administrative Assistant  
**Becky Dragoo**, Deputy Director  
**Selma C. D’Souza**, Chief of Staff - Operations  
**Rhonda Armstead, General Counsel/Ethics**, Privacy Officer  
**Ellen Jennings-Fairfield**, Chief Internal Auditor  
**Robin Tucker**, Human Resources Administrator/EEO Officer  
**Gloria Simmons**, Legislative Liaison  
**Iris Schweier**, Public Information Officer  
**Elizabeth Vogt**, Senior Policy Advisor  
**Glenda M. Corbett**, Special Assistant to the Director  
 on Community Engagement and Equity  
**Jennifer Hebel**, Special Assistant for Research



<p><b>Budget and Costing Operations</b></p> <p><b>Bureau of Business Services:</b> Accounting</p> <p>Financial Reporting and Recovery</p> <p>Payroll and Administrative Support</p> <p>Mail Operations</p> <p><b>Office of Service Development and Procurement</b></p>	<p><b>Senior HelpLine</b></p> <p><b>SHIP (Senior Health Insurance Program)</b></p> <p><b>Special Events and Fairs</b></p> <p><b>Marketing:</b> Forms Management Marketing and Publications</p> <p>Print Services</p> <p><b>Benefit Access Program</b></p>	<p><b>Bureau of Community Operations:</b></p> <p>Community Care Field Services</p> <p>Older Americans Act Services</p> <p>Senior Employment</p> <p>Caregiver Support</p> <p>Intergenerational Programs</p>	<p><b>Office of Training and Development</b></p> <p>New Programs and Policy Development</p> <p>Strategic Planning</p> <p>Program Evaluation</p> <p>Medicaid Waiver Management</p> <p>Demonstration Projects</p> <p>Grant Writing</p> <p>Forecast and Analysis</p>	<p><b>Programs Verification Determination</b></p> <p>Technical Assistance Advisement</p> <p>Program Monitoring and Fraud Prevention</p> <p><b>Office of Adult Protective Services</b></p>	<p><b>Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program</b></p> <p><b>Home Care Ombudsman Program</b></p>





**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**

The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate against any individual because of his or her race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, order of protection status, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, or unfavorable discharge from military service in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities. If you feel you have been discriminated against, you have a right to file a complaint with the Illinois Department on Aging. For information call the Senior HelpLine: 1-800-252-8966; 711 TRS.