



State of Illinois
Illinois Department on Aging



Illinois Department on Aging

ANNUAL REPORT

FY2025



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



A message from Director, Mary Killough

I am pleased to present the Department on Aging's Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2025, reflecting how our agency and employees serve older adults and their caregivers throughout Illinois. This important work is centered around our mission to administer quality and culturally appropriate programs that promote partnerships and encourage independence, dignity, and quality of life.

At a time when federal decisions are creating uncertainty for many Americans, older adult services matter more than ever. Older people deserve full participation in society, quality of life

and quality of care, access to supported decision-making, and protection from abuse and exploitation—all of which our programs help achieve.

There are, however, essential parts of healthy aging that relate to other sectors, such as housing and transportation. For the first time in a formal capacity, IDoA this year began working with dozens of public and private stakeholders to more holistically review and address barriers to aging equity.

This work began in earnest when Governor Pritzker signed Executive Order 2024-02 to establish a Multisector Plan for Aging, or MPA, in Illinois. The plan will eventually serve as a 10-year blueprint, setting out a range of policies and actions to address gaps in care or barriers to access. I am grateful to the experts lending their time and insight to this project and look forward to sharing the finished MPA very soon.

I am also deeply grateful to all the provider organizations who make up our Aging Network, not only for the work they do every day, but also for their powerful advocacy to grow and continue their work.

This past spring, the Illinois Association of Area Agencies on Aging led a statewide Day of Action to demand critical funding for the federal Older Americans Act, a lifeline for millions of older adults and caregivers across the state and country. From Chicago to Carbondale, Illinois' 13 Area Agencies on Aging and their local partners hosted more than 40 events that put a human face on the services that hang in the balance.

Even amid ongoing federal uncertainty, IDoA remains committed to delivering services to the older Illinoisans whose livelihoods depend on them. I invite you to learn more about our impact and service delivery model by reading this report, visiting our website at ilaging.illinois.gov, or connecting with the Area Agency on Aging serving your community.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Killough". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Mary Killough
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 FY25, the agency had a headcount of 173 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.

FY25 Employees by Ethnicity (percentage)	
White	65.90%
African American	19.65%
Hispanic	10.98%
Asian	1.73%
American Indian/Alaskan native	1.73%
Total	100%

BUDGET

The 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.

Community Care Program Budget in FY25: \$1,536,207,500	Spend Budget in FY26: \$1,510,720,498	Budget in FY26: \$1,695,183,100
Community Support Services Budget in FY25: \$40,400,000	Spend Budget in FY26: \$67,379,418	Budget in FY26: \$123,014,836
Adult Protective Services Budget in FY25: \$112,411,305	Spend Budget in FY26: \$27,408,496	Budget in FY26: \$42,574,900
Nutrition Services Budget in FY25: \$141,536,400	Spend Budget in FY26: \$100,956,465	Budget in FY26: \$159,565,000
Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Budget in FY25: \$12,975,000	Spend Budget in FY26: \$9,029,376	Budget in FY26: \$14,053,800
Senior Employment Services Budget in FY25: \$5,948,100	Spend Budget in FY26: \$3,452,633	Budget in FY26: \$4,690,300
Senior Health Assistance Program Budget in FY25: \$2,800,000	Spend Budget in FY26: \$2,673,533	Budget in FY26: \$2,800,000
Senior HelpLine Budget in FY25: \$8,144,300	Spend Budget in FY26: \$4,629,285	Budget in FY26: \$8,847,500
TOTAL FY25 Budget: \$1,860,422,605	Total FY26 Spend Budget: \$1,726,249,707	Total FY26 Budget: \$2,050,729,436



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 and related programs serve older adults who reside in communities throughout Illinois. Available services fall into categories of access, in-home and community-based services, as well as nutrition, legal assistance, evidence-based disease prevention and health promotion, 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 Federal Fiscal Year 2024 (FFY24), programs funded by the OAA served more than 478,457 seniors aged 60 or older. Although the funding has remained flat over the years, 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 the filing of this report, OAA FFY25 data is unavailable. Data is reported for the federal fiscal year, in accordance with federal requirements. The OAA data provided below is for FFY24, the most recent data available at the time of this report.

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 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 FFY24, staff at local sites across Illinois responded to 798,312 inquiries from older adults or their caregivers.

Nutrition Services

In FFY24, there were approximately 119,542 older adults who received nutrition services. This included 64,121 older adults who received congregate meals and 61,937 older adults who received home-delivered meals. Congregate meals are served at least five days per week 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 older adults who may have difficulty leaving their home and cannot personally prepare a nutritious meal. Volunteers and others who deliver meals have an important opportunity to check on the welfare of homebound older adults and report any health or other problems that they may observe during their visits.

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) promotes routine consumption of fruits and vegetables as part of a daily diet. The goal of the program is to provide resources that 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 can be used by income-eligible older adults and 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. This year the SFMNP program received an additional amount of funding from the Department of Human Services (DHS) through a block grant. Funding was distributed to existing SFMNP providers based on volume the preceding year.

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 offer a community-based, non-residential group program designed to meet the needs of functionally impaired adults, using an individualized plan of care for each participant. In place of ADS licensure, CACFP approval is met through obtaining a Community Care Program (CCP) contract. In FFY2024, more than 1.1 million CACFP meals (breakfast/lunch) and snacks were served to 3,700 enrolled participants on average per month.

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). SCSEP promotes meaningful, part-time, minimum-wage training opportunities in community service settings for

unemployed, low-income adults aged 55 and older who are actively seeking employment. A SCSEP participant must meet the age and income criteria, which is 125 percent of the current poverty rate, to qualify for the program. Funding is provided to support SCSEP, also known as the Title V Program, under the OAA and the Senior Employment Specialist Program (SESP). Both programs are administered by IDoA with the cooperation of the AAAs, community action agencies, and organizations that focus on providing employment services. In FFY24, SCSEP served 197 seniors statewide.

Transportation

Many older adults are unable to 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 enables older adults to access health care, social and nutritional services, employment opportunities, and maintain connections with family and friends. Through transportation-funded services in FFY24, older adults made more than 358,401 trips, including 16,603 more intensive assisted transportation units, to and from locations within their communities.

Outreach

Outreach services target those older adults in Illinois' communities who are difficult to contact and may be unaware 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 FFY24, 16,199 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 FFY24, the Department funded 101 senior centers statewide.



Legal Assistance

Six senior legal assistance providers in Illinois 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 40,674 hours of assistance to older adults in FFY24.

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 140 Caregiver Resource Centers in Illinois. In FFY24, 9,315 family caregivers of older adults and 1,080 older relative caregivers received counseling, training, care coordination, respite, or other caregiver services.

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

In 2023, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, an estimated 203,005 children under the age of 18 were living in a grandparent-headed household in Illinois. Of these households, nearly 68,000 grandparents were responsible for caring for their grandchildren. These figures highlight the significant role grandparents play in providing care and support for children across the state.

(Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. [Grandchildren Under 18 Years Living With a Grandparent Householder by Age of Grandchild. American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B10001](#). Accessed December 8, 2025.

U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. [Grandparents Living With Own Grandchildren Under 18 Years by Responsibility for Own Grandchildren by Presence of Parent of Grandchildren and Age of Grandparent. American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B10051](#). Accessed December 19, 2025.

Program funding also supports conferences and workshops, as well as training to professionals. There were 1,485 grandparents/other relative caregivers served in FY25. Of those served, 1,184 were aged 55 or older, and 301 were under the age of 55. There were also 2,508 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 FY25, 419 Foster Grandparent Program volunteers provided over 435,845 hours of service through eight projects located throughout the State of Illinois.



The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program

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 FY25, 4,751 volunteers provided 700,010 hours of service.

COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM

The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) administers the Community Care Program (CCP). The program 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. CCP is designed to meet the needs of older adults who have difficulty with household and personal care tasks, impacting their Activities of Daily Living (ADLs).

CCP includes Comprehensive Care Coordination (CCC), In-Home Services (INS), Adult Day Services (ADS), Emergency Home Response Services (EHRS), and Automated Medication Dispenser Services (AMD). In FY25, CCP served approximately 67,944 elderly individuals each month, thereby successfully diverting or delaying many of those individuals from entering a nursing facility. In addition, 55,479 elderly individuals received services each month through a Managed Care Organization (MCO).

CCP is a viable and cost-effective alternative to a nursing facility. The program 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 CCP is 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 OAA Title III funded services, as well as local service and supports options. In FY25, CCUs served approximately 70,420 older adults with CCC.



Adult Day Service

ADS is designed for older adults who want to remain in the community but are unable to be home alone during the day due to a physical or cognitive impairment. ADS also provides respite for family caregivers, especially those who are employed outside the home, as well as socialization for isolated adults.

Services offered in ADS sites include health monitoring, medication supervision, personal care, and recreational/therapeutic activities.

Transportation is also provided at many of the ADS sites. 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 FY25, there were 73 ADS sites contracted with IDoA that provided community-based services to an average monthly caseload of approximately 1,356 participants.



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 automatically links 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, Global Positioning System (GPS) and falls detection were added to the EHRS Waiver. Approximately 27,940 participants utilized the service each month in FY25.

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 FY25, an average of 129 participants utilized the service each month.



In-Home Service

INS 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 242 home care agencies to meet the needs of an average monthly caseload of approximately 62,438 older adults in FY25.

Choices for Care

IDoA provides a pre-admission screening for adults aged 60 and older seeking admission to a Nursing Facility (NF). In accordance with state law, all persons seeking admission to a NF must be screened to determine if they meet the level of care threshold for eligibility and be informed of all available care options before admission, regardless of the individual's income, assets, or funding source. Care Coordinators from the CCUs conduct the screenings, primarily in hospitals, immediately before patient discharge.

The screening process provides older adults and their families the opportunity to ask questions and understand community-based services and supports, as well as institutional options for continuing care. In instances of short-term nursing facility placement for rehabilitation or convalescence, care coordinators may conduct follow-up screenings in NFs to assist in the transition back into the community when possible. In FY25, IDoA provided 111,794 pre-screenings (in the acute setting prior to discharge) to older adults who were considering NF placement.

Senior Companion Demonstration Program

The Senior Companion Demonstration Program (SCP) offers a range of assistive, supportive companionship services to seniors through 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 INS or ADS. SCP not only assists participants, but it also provides economic and social benefits for the volunteers, as well as respite for family caregivers.

SCP is a program of AmeriCorps Seniors. There are two components to SCP (grant and fee for service). In FY25, there were three SCPs covering eight counties in Illinois, and an average of 35 seniors utilizing the service each month.

Money Management Demonstration Program

Illinois Volunteer Money Management is a financial services program that pairs trained volunteers with low-income older adults who have difficulty managing their personal household budgets. Volunteers help with 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 FY25, there were 16 Money Management Demonstration Programs serving 488 participants in 59 counties.



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 FY25, the program responded to 23,378 reports of ANE/SN, demonstrating a 5 percent growth in annual intakes from FY24. Trained caseworkers with 35 local agencies throughout Illinois, 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.

FY25 initiatives included an emphasis on quality assurance after the completion of the pilot review process, as well as the expansion of IDoA-sponsored trainings. The APS training team expanded headcount to offer more frequent and on-demand training. These efforts are intended to support a more agile onboarding process for frontline caseworker staff to meet the needs of the older adults and adults with disabilities that the program serves. Finally, a comprehensive programmatic evaluation was completed with a final report outlining future strategic program direction. Focuses include training on cultural diversity, enhanced stakeholder engagement, and the commencement of a rate study.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

As mandated by the federal Older Americans Act and the Illinois Act on 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 LTCOP 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 program, which includes 17 Regional LTCOPs. In FY25, there were 80 full-time staff, six part-time staff, and 29 volunteers serving the program.

LTCOP closed 5,575 cases in FY25, with most of the complaints fully or partially resolved to the satisfaction of the resident involved. In addition, LTCOP handled 37,777 consultations with individuals and made 15,106 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 works to resolve

complaints made by, or on behalf of, persons enrolled in Dual-Eligible Special Needs Plans (DSNP) or select Home and Community-Based Service (HCBS) waivers when the rights of the individuals are violated. During FY25, the HCO Program responded to 128 requests for information, opened 208 cases related to HCBS and DSNP, and completed three 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 answers 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 FY25, the Senior HelpLine answered 135,995 calls and completed 6,542 APS intakes. Approximately 43 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 17 percent of the calls received; CCP services were 14 percent of the calls received; Medicare counseling, private health insurance and related health coverage plans were 12 percent of the calls received; and OAS services, such as nutrition and transportation, were three 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 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.

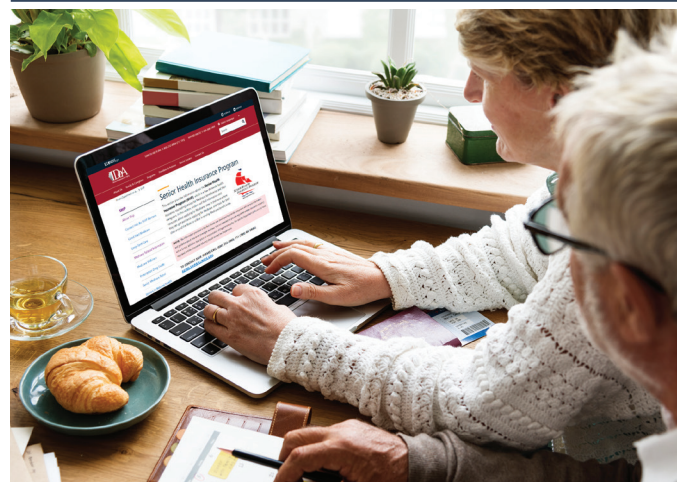
In FY25, IDoA processed 107,245 Benefit Access Applications, resulting in 78,684 license plate discounts; 38,774 Seniors Ride Free enrollments; and 15,244 Persons with Disabilities Ride Free enrollments.

The Benefit Access Program offers two benefits for seniors and persons with disabilities: A license plate fee discount and free rides on fixed-route transit systems.



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 2025 Open Enrollment Period (October 15 through December 7), counselors assisted more than 28,000 beneficiaries with plan comparisons and enrollments into Part D and Advantage plans.



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 and assisted with applications for 74,890 beneficiaries on the Medicare Savings Programs and Extra Help that subsidizes Medicare Part D.

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 FY25, SHIP counselors assisted approximately 91,981 beneficiaries with one-on-one counseling. More than 15,000 of those counseling sessions were conducted in a language other than English. SHIP also provided outreach and education to more than 75,000 individuals during community webinars, health fairs, and speaking events throughout the year.

AWARDS

IDoA recognizes individuals who 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 Arts, Sports and Entertainment, Community Service, Education, Labor Force, and Performance and/or Graphic Arts. Inductees are selected through a statewide nomination and judging process. Since its inception, nearly 160 older adults have been inducted into the Senior Illinoisans Hall of Fame.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

In FY25, IDoA certified 287 new Care Coordinators, recertified 849 existing Care Coordinators, and certified 851 new Homecare Supervisors. Training facilitated six 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

Fiscal Year 2025

The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) initiated the development of a Multi-Sector Plan for Aging (MPA). The effort follows an Executive Order issued by Governor Pritzker in August 2024. The MPA is a 10-year blueprint to support healthy aging in Illinois communities and addresses issues such as healthcare, housing, transportation, and other social determinants of health. The MPA is due to the Governor and General Assembly by December 31, 2025, and an implementation status report is due by December 31, 2026.

IDoA's Caregiver Portal was established by the 103rd General Assembly Illinois Caregiver Assistance and Resource Portal Act. The legislation calls for a centralized location on IDoA's website to assist caregivers locate information on state and federal programs, benefits, resources on caregiving, long term care and home and community-based services. In addition, the portal must contain educational materials, articles, and videos on caregiving best practices, direct contact information for relevant IL agencies, and accommodate users with different language preferences and accessibility needs. IDoA met the first milestone of the legislation to have the essential elements of the portal online by December 31, 2025.

IDoA implemented a rate increase for Community Care Program (CCP) In-Home service providers effective January 1, 2025. CCP assists older adults with maintaining their independence and provides a cost-effective alternative to nursing home placement. The reimbursement rate of \$29.63 per unit requires a minimum wage of \$18 per hour for direct service workers.

IDoA submitted the 2026-2028 State Plan on Aging to the Administration of Community Living (ACL). Under the federal Older Americans Act (OAA), each state is required to detail how it plans to serve older adults. The State Plan outlines the supports and resources that are needed to address concerns and priorities. The State Plan included input gathered from older adults, their families and caregivers at a dozen roundtables throughout Illinois.

IDoA partnered with ADvancing States and the Human Services Research Institute to participate in the National Core Indicators-Aging & Disability State of the Workforce Survey. The survey is designed to take a comprehensive look at the strengths and weaknesses of aging and disability networks regarding Direct Care Workers/Direct Service Workers (DCW/DSW). IDoA intends to use this survey to track changes in the Illinois DCW/DSW network and to provide crucial data to support initiatives focused on paid and unpaid caregivers in Illinois.

IDoA supported the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) as they advocated for services funded by the Older Americans Act (OAA). The AAAs sent the message, *Don't Blow Out the Candles on the Older Americans Act* (OAA), by hosting events across the State on May 28, 2025. The events emphasized the importance of vital OAA services such as meals, transportation, and caregiver support that help older adults live with dignity and independence.

Through the "Bridging Aging and Disability" grant funded by the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD), IDoA is partnering with the Illinois Department of Human Services (DHS) and other stakeholders to improve the experiences of and supports for aging caregivers and

individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD). The goal is to build capacity across the aging and disability networks focusing on creating systems to support individuals with ID/DD and their families address their individual needs, goals, and preferences across the lifespan.

IDoA was selected as one of a dozen states to participate in the National Academy for State Health Policy's caregiver initiative sponsored by the John A. Hartford Foundation to share and implement best practices and policies surrounding unpaid caregivers. IDoA utilized this initiative to develop the Caregiver Portal resources and inform the State Plan on Aging and MPA. The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS), Department of Human Services/Developmental Disabilities, the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois Caregiver Coalition are participating members with IDoA.

Building on successes from another initiative IDoA was selected for, the ADvancing States Peer Learning Collaborative Technical Assistance, IDoA, HFS, and DHS/DD also joined forces to coordinate with Rush University to develop a core curriculum for paid caregivers in multiple Medicaid Waivers. The agencies will continue to build on the curriculum to develop specialty areas, provide continuing education, and build career ladders for paid caregivers.

In Fiscal Year 2025 (FY 25), the Aging Network continued its commitment to supporting unpaid caregivers in Illinois. Efforts included assessing 3,658 caregivers and creating 3,350 individualized care plans to support caregivers and reduce burnout. IDoA also funded the development of a Caregiver Specialist curriculum, *Foundations in Family Caring*, and a Training Portal.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT ON AGING ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

June 30, 2025

Executive Office

Mary Killough, Director

Joslyn Washington, Administrative Assistant

Benetta Davies, Administrative Assistant–Chicago Office

Becky Dragoo, Deputy Director

Elizabeth Vogt, Chief of Staff - Operation

Rhonda Armstead, General Counsel

Ellen Jennings-Fairfield, Chief Internal Auditor

Robin Tucker, Human Resources Administrator/EEO Officer/ADA Coordinator

Bresha Brewer, Legislative Liaison

Iris Huber, Public Information Officer

Sandy Pastore, Senior Policy Advisor

Vacant, Special Assistant to the Director on Community Engagement and Equity

Jennifer Hebel, Special Assistant for Research

Divisions

Finance and Administration— Sarah Harris, Manager/CFO

- **Budget and Costing Operations**
- **Bureau of Business Services:**
 - ◊ Accounting
 - ◊ Financial Reporting and Recovery
 - ◊ Payroll and Administrative Support
 - ◊ Mail Operations
- **Office of Service Development and Procurement**

Community Relations & Outreach—Lisa Zuurbier, Manager

- **Senior HelpLine**
- **SHIP (Senior Health Insurance Program)**
- **Special Events and Fairs**
- **Marketing:**
 - ◊ Forms Management
 - ◊ Marketing and Publications
 - ◊ Print Services
- **Benefit Access Program**

Home and Community Services—Manager (Vacant)

- **Bureau of Community Operations:**
 - ◊ Community Care Field Services
 - ◊ Older Americans Act Services
 - ◊ Senior Employment
 - ◊ Caregiver Support
 - ◊ Intergenerational Programs

Planning, Research & Development—Derek Hedges, Manager

- **Office of Training and Development**
 - ◊ New Programs and Policy Development
 - ◊ Strategic Planning
 - ◊ Program Evaluation
 - ◊ Medicaid Waiver Management
 - ◊ Demonstration Projects
 - ◊ Grant Writing
 - ◊ Forecast and Analysis

Advocacy and Preventative Services—Brian Pastor, Manager

- **Programs Verification Determination**
 - ◊ Technical Assistance Advisement
 - ◊ Program Monitoring and Fraud
 - ◊ Prevention
- **Office of Adult Protective Services**

State Long-Term Care Ombudsman—Kelly Richards, Manager

- **Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program**
- **Home Care Ombudsman Program**



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.