



JB Pritzker, Governor

Dulce M. Quintero, Secretary

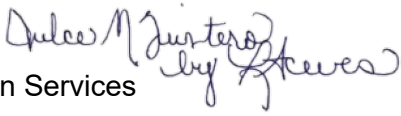
100 South Grand Avenue, East • Springfield, Illinois 62762
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DATE: September 9, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Don Harmon, Senate President
The Honorable John F. Curran, Senate Minority Leader
The Honorable Emanuel “Chris” Welch, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Tony McCombie, House Minority Leader

FROM: Dulce Quintero
Secretary
Illinois Department of Human Services



SUBJECT: **Interagency Workgroup on Poverty Elimination and Economic Insecurity Annual Report FY2025**

The Illinois Department of Human Services respectfully submits the **Interagency Workgroup on Poverty Elimination and Economic Insecurity Annual Report FY2025** on behalf of the Office of Secretary in order to fulfill the requirements set forth in Public Act 101-0636.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Priya Khatkhate, Deputy Assistant for Programs, at (312) 882-1884.

cc: The Honorable JB Pritzker, Governor
John W. Hollman, Clerk of the House
Tim Anderson, Secretary of the Illinois Senate
Legislative Research Unit
State Government Report Center

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

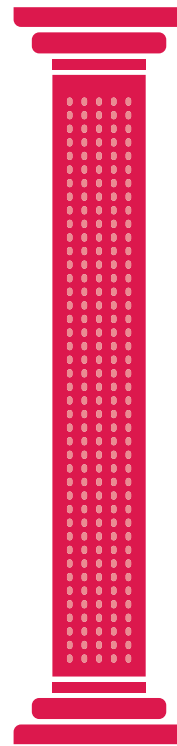
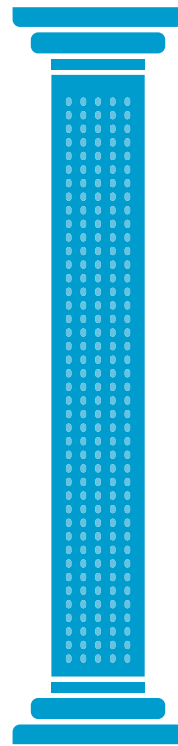
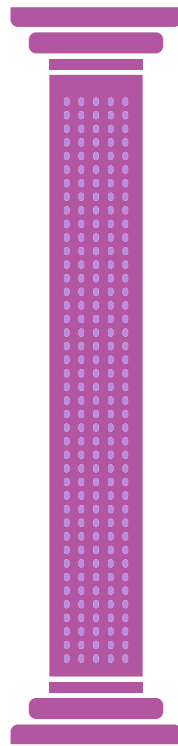
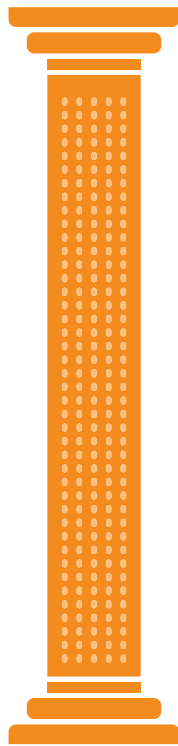
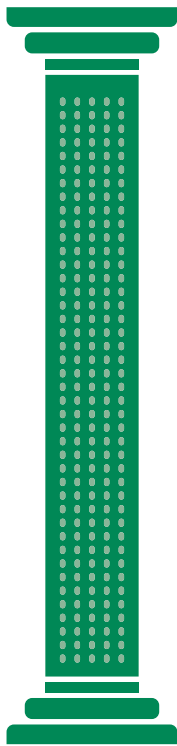


INTERAGENCY WORKGROUP
ON POVERTY AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY





Illinois Commission
on **Poverty Elimination**
and **Economic Security**



Pillar 1:

Ensure IL is Best in Nation for Raising Families

Pillar 2:

Stabilize Homes and Communities

Pillar 3:

Ensure Just and Equitable Access to Economic Security Programs

Pillar 4:

Address Barriers to Paid Work, Education, and Advancement

Pillar 5:

Support Trusted Community Based Providers to Serve the Needs of those In Deep Poverty

Introduction

The State of Illinois remains committed to supporting families and children living in poverty and to addressing the deep-rooted inequities that contribute to their challenges. Since its establishment, the Interagency Working Group on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security has worked in partnership with the Illinois Commission on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security to fulfill the mission outlined in the [Intergenerational Poverty Act](#) (IPA) to end the intergenerational transmission of poverty by tackling the root causes of economic insecurity, racial disparities, and other contributing social, economic, and cultural factors.

In the three years since the Commission released its five-year strategic plan, the Interagency Working Group has convened quarterly to strengthen cross-agency collaboration, examine systemic barriers that contribute to poverty, and advance policies and programs that break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.

The Commission's strategic plan outlines strategies to meet its statutory goals of:

- 1) Reducing deep poverty in Illinois by 50% by 2026;
- 2) Eliminating child poverty in Illinois by 2031; and
- 3) Eliminating all poverty in Illinois by 2036.

The five overarching objectives the Commission has identified to reach these goals are to:

- 1) Ensure Illinois is the best in nation for raising families;
- 2) Stabilize homes and communities;
- 3) Ensure just and equitable access to economic security programs;
- 4) Address barriers to paid work, education, and advancement; and
- 5) Support trusted community-based providers to serve the needs of those in deep poverty.

The latest data, from 2023, shows a decrease in the number of Illinois residents categorized as low income (down 0.8 percent from 2022 and 5.1 percent from 2021), experiencing poverty (down 2.9 percent from 2022 and 4.8 percent from 2021), and extreme poverty (down 4.2 percent from 2022 and 1.4 percent from 2021). This data is important because in 2021, following the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of people living in poverty increased by 5.5%, and those in extreme poverty rose by 17.7%. [\[APPENDIX A\]](#)

While the Chicago metropolitan area—including Cook, DuPage, Lake, and Will counties—holds the counties with the largest number of households living in deep poverty, the highest rates of poverty are found in other parts of Illinois, highlighting significant disparities across the state. Poverty is generally defined as having a household income below the federal poverty level (FPL), while deep poverty refers to households with income below 50% of the FPL. According to 2023 data, the top 10 counties with the highest percentages of families living in deep poverty tend to be smaller in population. For example, Vermillion County, in the eastern part of the state between the Indiana border and Champaign County, is the largest county in this group with just over 71,000 residents in 2023. The county with the highest percentage of families living in deep poverty in 2023 was Pulaski County, located along the Ohio River in southwestern Illinois. With a population of only 4,911—the seventh smallest in the state—Pulaski stands out for having the highest rates in all three key poverty measures at the county level: 15.2% of families live below the poverty line, 37.8% of residents fall below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines, and 26.1% of individuals live below poverty. This data illustrates how poverty in Illinois is deeply uneven, concentrated in populous urban centers by sheer numbers and in smaller, rural counties by percentage.

INTERAGENCY WORKGROUP ON POVERTY AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY

Poverty by County 2023 (S1701)

County	Population	Families Below Poverty (<100% FPL)	Persons Below 150% FPL	Persons Below Poverty (<100% FPL)
Pulaski	4,911	15.2%	37.8%	26.1%
Alexander	4,695	13.3%	34.2%	21.0%
Johnson	13,326	13.1%	23.6%	16.7%
White	13,401	13.1%	28.9%	16.4%
Saline	22,873	13.0%	26.2%	17.1%
Perry	20,503	12.7%	24.6%	16.9%
Union	16,667	12.4%	27.6%	19.4%
Franklin	37,138	12.3%	29.0%	16.9%
Vermillion	71,652	12.2%	27.6%	17.2%
Jackson	52,141	12.1%	35.1%	21.8%

In 2023, about 14.7% of Illinois children under age 16—approximately 389,823 individuals—were living in poverty. Similarly, around 10.6% of older adults, totaling roughly 226,825 people, were also living in poverty. Among all individuals experiencing poverty in Illinois, children made up 27.3%, working-age adults comprised the largest share at 56.8%, and older adults accounted for 15.9%. These figures highlight that while working-age adults represent the majority of those living in poverty, children remain disproportionately affected.

Poverty by Age 2023 (S1701)

Group	Number of People Living in Poverty (100% FPL)	Percentage of Each Group Living Below Poverty
TOTAL	1,426,517	11.6
Children (<16)	389,823	14.7
Working Age	809,869	10.8
Older Adults (65+)	226,825	10.6

Illinois residents with disabilities face a significantly higher risk of poverty compared to those without disabilities. Although people with disabilities make up 12.6% of the state’s population, they represent a disproportionately large share—20.4%—of those living in poverty. Furthermore, among individuals experiencing extreme poverty, nearly 19.6% have a disability. (C18131)

People of color in Illinois experience significantly higher poverty rates than White residents. In 2023, 23% of Black/African American residents and 14.1% of Hispanic/Latino residents lived below the poverty line, compared to just 8.6% of White residents. This means about one in four Black residents and one in seven Latino residents live in poverty, compared to one in 12 White residents. Although Black residents make up 13% of the state’s population, they represent 25.8% of those living in poverty. However, White residents comprise the largest share of people in poverty, accounting for 45.1%, reflecting their larger overall population size in Illinois.

Poverty by Race/Ethnicity in Illinois

	Total IL Population	Percent of IL Population	Below Poverty	Percent Below Poverty Within Each Group*	Percent of Total IL Pop in Poverty**
White	7,460,194	60.8%	643,047	8.6%	45.1%
Black/African American	1,599,146	13.0%	367,486	23.0%	25.8%
Hispanic/Latino	2,341,252	19.1%	328,954	14.1%	23.1%
Am. Indian/ Alaska Native	85,509	0.7%	12,228	14.3%	0.9%
Asian	744,160	6.1%	77,468	10.4%	5.4%
TOTAL	12,230,261		1,429,183		

In terms of families in Illinois (rather than individuals), 5.3% of families headed by a White householder live below the poverty level, compared to much higher rates among families headed by people of color: 18.5% for Black householders, 11.6% for Latino householders, 11.3% for American Indian householders, and 7.5% for Asian householders.

More than 12% of Illinois families with children under age 18 live in poverty, including about 10% of families with children under age 5. Poverty rates increase with family size: 9.8% of families with one or two children live in poverty, compared to 20.4% of families with three or four children, and 37.3% of families with five or more children. These figures show that a substantial number of Illinois youth—especially those in larger families—are growing up in economically vulnerable households. (S1702)

In 2023, poverty rates varied by citizenship status. Among American-born citizens, 5.9% experienced deep poverty and 11.4% lived in poverty overall. Foreign-born residents had slightly higher rates, with 6.3% in deep poverty and 12.7% in poverty. However, foreign-born individuals who became naturalized citizens had the lowest poverty rates of all groups: 3.9% experienced deep poverty and 9.2% lived in poverty. (S1703)

In 2023, among Illinois residents living in poverty, the majority (67%) were born in Illinois itself. Another 15% were born in other U.S. states, while 16.5% were foreign-born. The remaining 1.3% were born outside the United States to U.S. citizen parents. These figures show that poverty in Illinois is predominantly concentrated among long-term residents rather than recent arrivals, with over two-thirds of those in poverty being Illinois natives. (B06012)

The following report details some of the State’s many investments and initiatives to reduce poverty and economic insecurity in State Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, and outlines commitments for FY2026.

*Within each racial group, this number indicates the percentage in poverty, i.e. out of the White population in Illinois, 8.6% are below poverty.

** Of those who are in poverty in Illinois, this number indicates the percentage of each racial group, i.e. White people represent 45% of those who are in poverty.

Illinois Commission on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security Five-Year Strategic Plan Pillars and Associated State Actions

Infrastructural Action and Support: Governor's Office of Management and Budget

Coordinating and Ensuring Program Funding and Sustainability

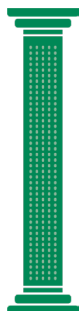
The Governor's Office of Management and Budget (GOMB) works with agencies and the General Assembly to secure sufficient and consistent funding for programs that support the Five-Year Strategic Plan Pillars. This funding helps support:

- Programs that address employment barriers that prevent consistent work at living wages, from digital access and wage protection to reentry support and program sustainability, ensuring these critical supports remain available to those who need them most.
- Workforce development initiatives, ensuring long-term sustainability of programs that help individuals learn and train while supporting their families.
- Legal access programs that provide direct financial assistance for court-related expenses and dedicated advocacy for populations facing significant barriers to accessing legal counsel and understanding their rights within the judicial system. This ensures services remain available to vulnerable populations who might otherwise be unable to afford legal representation or navigate complex court processes.
- Caregiver-support programs that provide fair wages and labor protections while also providing meaningful resources and recognition for unpaid family caregivers who provide the majority of long-term care in Illinois. Both paid and unpaid caregivers need sustained investment to continue providing essential services that keep families and communities healthy.
- Community-based service providers by ensuring that State funding mechanisms can respond to inflationary pressures and changing service delivery costs, helping maintain the stability of community-based organizations that serve vulnerable populations.

Community-based providers face ongoing challenges with rising costs for wages, utilities, supplies, and other operational expenses, and State reimbursement rates must be regularly evaluated and adjusted to ensure these essential service providers can maintain quality care while remaining financially viable.



Illinois Commission on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security Five-Year Strategic Plan Pillars and Associated State Actions



Pillar 1: Ensure IL is Best in Nation for Raising Families

Ensure Access to High Quality Early Childhood Services, Including Early Intervention, Home Visiting, and Affordable Child Care

Find a Method to Replicate the Federal Child Tax Credit for Families Raising Children

Expand Access to Free and Reduced School Meals

Increase Participation in WIC by Improving Accessibility for Those Who are Eligible

State Actions

Ensure Access to High-Quality Early Childhood Services, Including Early Intervention, Home Visiting, and Affordable Child Care

Expanding Home Visiting and Maternal Health Services

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) awarded \$4.5 million in grants to improve access to critical early childhood and maternal health services across the state. These funds support programs that connect families with essential services during pregnancy and the early years of a child’s development.

Grant recipients are establishing comprehensive support systems that include home visitation programs, culturally responsive doula services, new maternal and child health centers, and behavioral health support for substance use and mental health needs. These services provide families with direct access to professional guidance and resources during the crucial period from pregnancy through early childhood.

Winnebago County exemplifies this approach with its “Winning Start Winnebago, Welcoming Babies and Connecting Families” program, which brings trained professionals directly into homes to support new mothers and connect families with available resources and services.

This initiative addresses barriers to accessing early childhood services by bringing support directly to families and ensuring culturally appropriate care is available in communities throughout Illinois.

At the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), Maternal Health Services are being transformed in FY26 as the Office of Family Wellness, Bureau of Maternal and Child Health sunsets its 30-year-old maternal and child health legacy programs and implements new programs which use a strengths-based, equity-centered approach. These programmatic changes align the work of the Bureau with the Improving Health Care for Pregnant and Postpartum Individuals Act (20 ILCS/10-23) and were created following listening sessions with families and providers across the state in the fall of 2024. SFY25 ended with funding opportunities being launched for three programs:

- **Better Birth Outcomes-Navigation** in the City of Chicago is designed to connect families with the various resources available to them and support the Chicago Family Connects program.

- **Better Birth Outcomes-Comprehensive** will cover the majority of the State outside of Chicago and is designed to provide a nurse assessment for pregnant and postpartum persons and their new infants at the first contact followed by the specific care level needed through the baby's sixth month.
- **High-Risk Family Case Management Pilot Program** was launched late in 2024 in 3 locations offering nurse home visits monthly through pregnancy and the first 6 months of the baby's life and is being expanded to 3 additional counties.

IDHS' Smart Start Home Visiting program continued to expand by \$5 million in FY25, increasing the IDHS home visiting program to a nearly \$28 million total annual investment. Smart Start Home Visiting continued to strengthen stability of the home visiting workforce and expand families' access to home visiting, achieving a 41% growth in services since pre-pandemic levels, a 16% increase in home visitor salaries, and filling 95% of funded positions. FY25 investments supported a 7% expansion in home visiting slots over FY24. Finally, IDHS's home visiting cost model was updated to provide a more accurate estimate of the cost of delivering services, offering valuable insights for future planning and sustainability.

Ensuring Access to Early Intervention

IDHS's Early Intervention program reduced Service Coordinator caseloads by 10% and reduced service delays by 24% following a 10% increase in reimbursement rates as a result of Smart Start Early Intervention. Additionally, IDHS's Division of Early Childhood (DEC) completed comprehensive research and analysis into Early Intervention systems and costs, producing a report on national best practices, a cost model for more effective Early Intervention service provision, and a legislatively mandated plan for a demonstration project to address systemic barriers to EI and advance equitable service delivery.

Ensuring Access to Child Care

IDHS's Smart Start Child Care program included \$212M in federal and state investments in SFY25 to support expanded access to high-quality child care by investing in child care professionals' wages, professional development, and career advancement. Smart Start Workforce Grants, in their first year of operation in FY25, gave child care programs predictable, up-front funding to invest in quality staff without raising tuition or Child Care Assistance Program co-pays. Grants cover higher wages and classroom operations, and participating programs must meet a wage floor for classroom staff. These competitive wages help attract and retain educators, ensuring families have access to care they can afford.

By the numbers, Smart Start Workforce Grants are having a positive impact for child care providers and children across Illinois: more than 4,000 child care programs have received awards, impacting over 20,000 members of the child care workforce and more than 150,000 children they serve statewide. In the first year of operations, 82% of all potentially eligible child care programs in Illinois received at least one round of grant funding.



Increase participation in WIC by improving accessibility for those who are eligible

The Illinois WIC Program focused on outreach to specific groups in FY25 by providing simple “WIC 101” videos on what WIC is and how to access the program. A program matrix was created to help physicians, health professionals, and programs’ other staff and volunteers understand the basics on various federal food and nutrition programs. Staff worked with the Illinois Board of Higher Education to inform college students who are parents to young children about WIC and how to apply.

Educating Grandparents About WIC Benefits

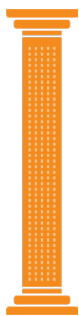
The Illinois Department on Aging (IDOA) partnered with IDHS and the Greater Chicago Food Depository to reach grandparents who are raising young children. Through virtual training sessions and educational materials, they informed providers in the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program about WIC eligibility and benefits, ensuring that grandparents caring for children under age 5 know about this nutrition assistance.

Expanding WIC Payment Options at Grocery Stores

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) ensures that all grocery stores receiving funding through the Illinois Grocery Initiative—including new stores in food deserts and existing stores receiving equipment upgrades—accept WIC payments. This requirement, mandated by the Illinois Grocery Initiative Act, helps WIC participants access their benefits at more locations throughout the state.

These coordinated efforts address two key barriers to WIC participation: lack of awareness among eligible caregivers and limited places where benefits can be used.





Pillar 2: Stabilize Homes and Communities

Reduce Homelessness by Half and Ensure Housing Affordability and Accessibility

Invest in High-Quality, Specialized Supports for Persons Experiencing Mental Health and Substance Use-Related Crises

Invest in Interventions that Address Cycles of Trauma and Violence in Our Communities

State Actions

Reduce Homelessness by Half and Ensure Housing Affordability and Accessibility

Expanding Housing Options for Middle-Income Families

DCEO participated in the Ad-Hoc Missing Middle Housing Solutions Advisory Committee, which developed comprehensive strategies to address the housing gap for middle-income Illinois residents. As the state implements these recommendations under [Executive Order 2024-03](#), DCEO will lead key initiatives to make housing more affordable and accessible for working families who struggle to find reasonably priced options.

Creating Supportive Housing for Vulnerable Populations

The Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) has significantly expanded supportive housing capacity through multiple targeted programs:

Through the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program, IHDA funded 218 new supportive housing units at the start of FY25, including three developments specifically designed for permanent supportive housing that received over \$8 million in combined federal and state tax credits. The Permanent Supportive Housing Development Program added another 129 units in May 2025, with \$50 million in funding across seven developments, including \$15 million specifically targeting individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The design model of these programs/developments is single site buildings that include a full array of wraparound services such as: case management, daily living skills, budgeting, and linkage and referral to healthcare, mental health, substance use, and other services based on individual and household needs.

Developing Emergency and Transitional Housing

In August 2024, IHDA released the funding opportunity for its Non-Congregate Shelter (NCS) program, funded by \$37.5 million of IHDA’s HOME-ARP allocation. The NCS program provides immediate housing alternatives for those experiencing homelessness. In July 2025 (FY26) IHDA’s Board approved awards to four developments under its one-time Non-Congregate Shelter Development Program. Awards totaled more than \$39.9 million in HOME-ARP funds that will create or preserve 194 Non-Congregate Shelter units, or 422 Non-Congregate Shelter beds.

Building Development Capacity and Supporting Reentry

The Supportive Housing Institute trained 22 development teams through intensive technical assistance, with IHDA extending the program for two additional years due to its success in increasing supportive housing construction. Additionally, the Housing for Justice-Involved Individuals Program awarded nearly \$11 million in December 2024 to create 190 beds supporting individuals reentering communities from the criminal justice system.

Preventing Homelessness Through Pre-Release Planning

The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) is working to prevent homelessness among individuals reentering communities by securing housing placements before release. IDOC partners with Cook County's Flexible Housing Pool to place individuals with mental health and ADA needs into long-term supportive housing, and collaborates with IDHS's Housing is Recovery program to ensure those with high mental health needs have stable supportive housing and continued care upon release. Additionally, IDOC works with the VA to screen veterans in custody and implement housing referral processes to prevent veteran homelessness.

Preventing Senior Homelessness

IDOA strategically redirected its Emergency Senior Services funds to specifically target older adults who are homeless or at risk of losing their housing.

These coordinated efforts create a comprehensive approach to housing challenges, from preventing homelessness among vulnerable seniors to providing permanent supportive housing and expanding options for middle-income families.

Unsheltered Pilot Project

This pilot enhances services and develops an understanding of those living in encampments. IDHS, in partnership with the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, has engaged the Heart of Illinois United Way, an agency that works directly with the Home for All, the Peoria Continuum of Care, the Association for Individual Development, and the City of Elgin, in developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy to house unsheltered individuals in their respective communities. This pilot project is expected to expand to include the City of Carbondale and the City of Champaign in FY26.

Invest in high quality, specialized supports for persons experiencing mental health and substance use related crises

IDHS established a new, integrated **Division of Behavioral Health & Recovery (DBHR)** that encompasses the roles and responsibilities of the former Divisions of Mental Health (DMH) and Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (SUPR)

This integration is expected to enhance outcomes for Illinoisans, expand access to treatment and recovery supports, improve substance use disorder treatment in our State-operated psychiatric hospitals, reduce administrative burdens on provider organizations, and leverage the combined expertise of our dedicated staff. The new Division began operating on July 1, 2025, with ongoing implementation activities extending over several years.

Building a Unified Crisis Continuum

IDHS is partnering with the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) to continue the development of a Unified Crisis Continuum for individuals experiencing a mental health- or substance use- related crisis. This continuum includes someone to call, including the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and the CARES hotline; someone to respond, including statewide mobile crisis response teams and other non-law-enforcement responses to behavioral health crises; and somewhere to go, including Living Room Programs and other emergency room alternatives. The goal of the crisis continuum is to minimize unnecessary hospitalizations and institutionalization, and to ensure that people experiencing a behavioral health crisis have access to the support they need, regardless of where they are in the state or who their insurance payor is. In FY25, IDHS and HFS met regularly to align systems design efforts across State agencies.

In addition, legislation passed during the Spring 2025 session that created a dedicated funding stream for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and other crisis services using a tax increase on telecommunication services.

Expanding Harm Reduction and Crisis Response Services

IDPH is implementing several targeted programs to provide specialized support for individuals experiencing substance use crises. These programs create a comprehensive crisis response system that reaches individuals where they are, from rural communities to urban neighborhoods most impacted by overdose deaths.

- **Building Community-Based Harm Reduction Capacity:** The Harm Reduction Community Linkages Program strengthens organizations statewide that serve people with opioid and substance use disorders. This initiative helps these organizations expand their reach and create better connections between harm reduction services, prevention programs, and treatment options, ensuring individuals in crisis can access comprehensive support.
- **Supporting Rural First Responders:** Two rural-focused programs address the unique challenges of substance use crises in underserved areas. The First Responder Post-Overdose Outreach program trains law enforcement and emergency personnel to connect overdose survivors with immediate support services after a crisis. Meanwhile, the Naloxone Distribution Initiative provides overdose prevention training and lifesaving Narcan to public safety agencies across 24 rural counties in southern-central Illinois.
- **Delivering Direct Crisis Intervention:** The Block by Block Initiative takes a data-driven approach to crisis intervention, using fatal overdose statistics to identify the most affected neighborhoods. Teams then conduct door-to-door outreach in these high-risk areas, providing immediate access to naloxone, fentanyl test strips, training on their use, and information about local treatment services.
- **Coordinated Mental Health Support for Justice-Involved Individuals:** IDOC ensures continuity of mental health care by partnering with IDHS's Housing is Recovery program to place individuals with high mental health or substance use disorder needs into stable supportive housing with continued treatment services. IDOC also collaborates with the IDHS Division of Developmental Disabilities to identify individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, working with IDHS to process waiver applications and enroll them in residential and community services before release.

Invest in interventions that address cycles of trauma and violence in communities

Protecting Economic Security for Violence Survivors

The Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) enforces the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA), which provides critical workplace protections for individuals breaking cycles of violence and trauma. This law recognizes that survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, and other violent crimes—as well as their family members—need time and resources to access essential services without risking their employment.

VESSA allows eligible employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to seek medical care, legal assistance, counseling, safety planning, and other support services necessary for recovery and protection. The Act also prohibits employers from discriminating against violence survivors and their family members, ensuring that those working to escape dangerous situations don't face additional economic barriers.

IDOL continues to enforce these protections while conducting ongoing education for both employers and employees about their rights and responsibilities under the law. This enforcement helps ensure that survivors have the economic stability needed to access intervention services and break free from cycles of violence.

By protecting survivors' ability to maintain employment while accessing critical services, VESSA addresses one of the key barriers that can trap individuals in violent situations—the fear of losing income needed for safety and independence.

Mental Health Response to Mass Firearm Violence

IDHS, through its Division of Behavioral Health & Recovery and Office of Firearm Violence Prevention, has launched a groundbreaking Mental Health Response to Mass Firearm Violence pilot program, which ensures that when mass

shootings occur, culturally appropriate, community-driven mental health support is available in the immediate aftermath and on an ongoing basis.

Breaking Cycles Through Comprehensive Reentry Support

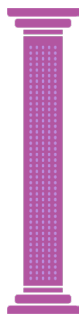
IDOC addresses cycles of trauma by providing comprehensive pre-release planning that connects individuals to community supports. This includes collaborating with the Division of Rehabilitation Services at IDHS to help high-needs individuals apply for employment and rehabilitative community services before release, identifying and supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities through waiver programs, and ensuring veterans receive appropriate housing and service referrals. These coordinated efforts help prevent the cycle of incarceration by addressing underlying trauma and providing stable foundations for successful community reentry.

Women’s Dignity of Choice

IDHS initiated this program in FY25 in partnership with the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness. The Dignity of Choice Pilot Program aims to create career and life pathways for formerly incarcerated women returning to the South and West Sides of Chicago. This pilot will serve as a proof of concept to inform the practice of providing preventative measures to women impacted by incarceration, highlighting that when provided with the right resources they are set up for success.

Returning Home Illinois

This Permanent Supportive Housing project is a collaboration of IDHS, Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, and IDOC, along with community partner TASC, Inc. Returning Home Illinois (RHI) is intended to serve individuals returning from prison to Central and Southern Illinois who have serious mental illness, sex offense registry requirements, and/or convictions for arson-related crimes.



Pillar 3: Ensure Just and Equitable Access to Economic Security Programs

Create a Single, Accessible Platform for Individuals to Enroll in All State Benefits

Increase Uptake, Access, and Value of Public Benefits for Those in Extreme Poverty

Deploy Direct Cash Assistance Programs to Lift Families Out of Deep Poverty

State Actions

Create a Single, Accessible Platform for Individuals to Enroll in Multiple State Benefits

Coordinating Multi-Agency Benefits Access

The Public Benefits Project Steering Committee, which includes several State agencies and is led by the Deputy Governor for Health and Human Services, has supported a philanthropic organization’s funding application for development of a multi-benefit screening tool. The screening tool, which has been piloted in other states, was co-designed by low-income families and community-based organizations (CBOs), with input from county and state government stakeholders. A version of the tool tailored to Illinois is being developed and would allow Illinoisans, after answering a set of basic household demographic questions, to receive a personalized report showing likely program eligibility, likely dollar

value of benefits, average time required to apply, where to go to apply, and where to get assistance applying. In doing so, it aims to eliminate the current fragmented process where individuals must navigate multiple departments and applications to access the full range of benefit programs for which they qualify.

Increase Uptake, Access, and Value of Public Benefits for Those in Extreme Poverty

Expanding Medicaid Access for Justice-Involved Individuals

IDOC is implementing the 1115 Medicaid waiver in collaboration with HFS to ensure individuals have healthcare coverage upon release. IDOC and HFS are seeking to extend the pre-release Medicaid application timeframe from 60 days to 90 days before release, providing more time to complete enrollment and avoid coverage gaps.

IDOC is also increasing education efforts to help individuals in custody understand the importance of Medicaid enrollment and their managed care organization options, ensuring they can make informed decisions about their healthcare coverage. Additionally, IDOC is partnering with community organizations to identify reentry services that can be provided before release and billed to Illinois Medicaid under the 1115 waiver, creating a seamless transition from incarceration to community-based support services.

These coordinated efforts ensure that individuals leaving the justice system—who often face extreme poverty and limited access to healthcare—can immediately access medical care and supportive services through Medicaid, preventing health crises and supporting successful reintegration into their communities.

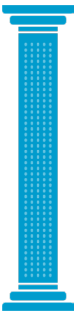
Final Year of Stability Income for Family Housing Pilot

In FY25, the State launched the final year of the Stability Investment for Family Housing (SIFH) pilot program aimed providing direct cash assistance to families experiencing homelessness. While the first two years of the pilot program focused exclusively on supporting families in shelters, year three focused on serving families who were literally homeless or living doubled-up. The University of Chicago Inclusive Economy Lab (IEL) and GiveDirectly partnered to directly recruit families through schools in Illinois. Program eligibility was confirmed through a combination of applicant-submitted documents and programmatic data from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS).

Moving forward, IEL will be evaluating all three rounds of this cash transfer program to understand its impact on families. To conduct the evaluation, researchers will link administrative data to track participants' engagement with the shelter system, educational performance, employment outcomes, and more. Participants also have the option to participate in incentivized surveys and other data collection to report on various aspects of their lives. Preliminary findings on housing situations, shelter engagement, and employment from the first and second rounds are expected to be released in winter 2025.

Challenges Ahead

The coming year, FY26, will be difficult one in public benefits administration, with federal statutory, budget, and policy changes impacting eligibility requirements and funding. As a result, particularly with the added barriers of work requirements for both SNAP and Medicaid, hundreds of thousands of individuals could lose their coverage, greatly increasing the risk of poverty and extreme poverty increasing, rather than decreasing. The State is responding to these unprecedented federal actions, but cannot backfill the enormous funding gaps that could be created.



Pillar 4: Address Barriers to Paid Work, Education, and Advancement

Address Barriers That Prevent Consistent Work at a Living Wage, by Investing in Transportation, Child Care, Paid Leave, Broadband, Legal Aid, Reentry Services, Disability and Rehabilitation Supports, and Immigrant and Refugee Services

Invest in Apprenticeship, Work Based Learning, and Barrier Reduction Programs so Individuals Can Learn and Train While Supporting Their Family

Expand Access to Legal Counsel for Illinoisans and Ensure Equitable Access to Court and Legal Processes

State Actions

Address Barriers That Prevent Consistent Work at a Living Wage, by Investing in Transportation, Child Care, Paid Leave, Broadband, Legal Aid, Reentry Services, Disability and Rehabilitation Supports, and Immigrant and Refugee Services

Dignity in Pay Act

The Dignity in Pay Act (DIPA), championed by disability-rights advocates in the State and community, requires IDHS, the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICDD), and IDoL to lead a responsible and gradual 5-year process to expand employment options for people with disabilities and to phase out 14(c) subminimum wage authorizations in Illinois. DIPA eliminates permission for employers to pay workers with disabilities less than the minimum wage starting on December 31, 2029, and establishes equitable and competitive integrated employment for Illinoisans with disabilities.

Expanding Broadband Access for Economic Opportunity

In June 2024, DCEO’s Office of Broadband received over \$1 billion through the Connect Illinois Program to build high-quality broadband infrastructure to every home, business, and community anchor institution statewide. Through these efforts, approximately 162,000 locations across the state are expected to be connected to high-speed, quality broadband. The Office of Broadband will issue grants for broadband deployment projects that will start in early 2026. Construction must be complete by the end of 2030. Project monitoring will be until 2040. This expansion, primarily funded through the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, directly increases job opportunities and workforce development access for residents in underserved areas.

To address the growing labor shortage in the broadband industry itself, Illinois launched the Broadband Workforce Development Initiative in partnership with Heartland Forward, creating the Illinois Broadband Jobs Board that connects workers with available broadband jobs and training opportunities. The State also awarded \$2 million in Digital Equity Capacity Kickstarter Grants to organizations providing digital equity programs like computer centers and digital skills classes, ensuring all Illinoisans have the broadband access, devices, and skills needed to participate in the modern economy.

Protecting Worker Rights and Wages

IDOL enforces critical wage protection laws including the Illinois Wage Payment and Collection Act and Illinois Minimum Wage Law, ensuring workers receive promised wages and maintaining a wage floor for all employees. In FY25, IDOL collected millions in unpaid back wages for low-wage workers, including a \$4 million settlement addressing labor exploitation of migrant child workers.

IDOL also enforces the Paid Leave for All Workers Act, which guarantees most employees 40 hours of annual paid leave (prorated for part-time workers), providing essential job flexibility. IDOL continues conducting education campaigns to ensure both employers and employees understand their rights and responsibilities under these laws.

Supporting Successful Reentry

IDOa participates in reentry summits and resource fairs hosted by the Department of Corrections, helping individuals preparing for release access benefits and services that support stable employment and community reintegration.

Expanding Access to Child Care Assistance

In FY25, IDHS continued its partnership with Code for America to develop the first digital Child Care Assistance Program application. The application was developed using agile and human-centered design principles, focused on iterative user testing and resulting in an application that is completed at greater rates and in shorter amounts of time than the longstanding paper application. Applicant satisfaction is over 90% in pilot areas in DeKalb and Southern Illinois. In FY26, IDHS is committed to completing this partnership with Code for America, rolling out the digital application statewide, and transitioning sustainable maintenance and operation of the application to the Department of Innovation and Technology, which has been a critical partner in this project from the beginning. .

Invest in Apprenticeship, Work Based Learning, and Barrier Reduction Programs so Individuals Can Learn and Train While Supporting Their Family

Expanding Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Opportunities

DCEO released \$5 million in funding on January 30, 2025, to support high-impact Apprenticeship Intermediaries that help individuals and businesses enter apprenticeship programs. This initiative targets community-based organizations, municipalities, educational institutions, industry associations, and nonprofits to expand apprenticeship access across Illinois.

DCEO's Office of Illinois Works administers the Illinois Works Jobs Program, which increases equity in construction workforce development through comprehensive pre-apprenticeship programs. Participants receive wraparound services including childcare and transportation assistance to ensure program completion, with the goal of transitioning graduates into registered apprenticeship programs that provide pathways to well-paying careers.

Implementing Clean Energy Workforce Development

Under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, DCEO has established five workforce programs including Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship, Clean Energy Workforce Network Hubs, Energy Transition Navigators, Returning Resident Program, and Barrier Reduction Program. With 11 of 14 statutorily required hubs now operational, these programs are enrolling participants in clean energy occupational training, serving over 1,500 individuals in various stages from outreach to program enrollment.

Providing Employer-Driven Training with Barrier Reduction

The Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) program combines education and work-based learning to connect individuals facing employment barriers with skilled job opportunities. A key feature is flexible funding for emergency basic needs, allowing participants to address immediate challenges while training. The first round served over 2,900 individuals, while the Illinois Manufacturing Association's STAMP program used JTED funding to provide manufacturing training to over 6,000 high school students across 18 school districts.

Supporting Workforce Development for Justice-Involved Individuals

The Home Illinois Workforce Pilot Project represents a \$6 million partnership between DCEO, the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, and the Interagency Task Force on Homelessness, funding four organizations for comprehensive workforce services. The Illinois Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD) initiative

serves approximately 500 individuals in minimum-security facilities and reentry centers, providing education, workforce training, and digital literacy during incarceration, with connections to high-demand industry training upon release. As of March 2025, Illinois served 342 participants in this program.

Collaborative reentry efforts resulted in 1,845 individuals enrolling in WIOA Title I Programs and over 650 in JTED programs, supported by virtual job fairs, Vocational Rehabilitation training pilots, and clean jobs programming.

IDOC is significantly expanding vocational programming to provide individuals with industry-recognized skills and certifications while incarcerated. These programs combine hands-on training with pathways to employment, ensuring participants can support their families upon release. These vocational programs include:

- **Building Construction and Manufacturing Skills:** IDOC is implementing comprehensive construction training including welding programs at Kewanee Correctional Center with both American Welding Society and Department of Labor certification, HVAC technician training at Western Correctional Center, and expanded metal fabrication programming using upgraded equipment. These programs provide participants with high-demand trade skills and recognized credentials that lead directly to apprenticeship opportunities and employment in the construction industry.
- **Developing Agricultural and Food Production Expertise:** IDOC is expanding urban agriculture programming at Hill Correctional Center to include vertical farming techniques and at Dixon Correctional Center for broader agricultural training. Lincoln Warehouse will implement a gardening program leading to general farm worker U.S. Department of Labor certification. These programs create pathways to agricultural careers and connect to post-incarceration employment opportunities, including a specialized pipeline with Freight to Plate for urban agriculture positions.
- **Advancing Transportation and Automotive Training:** IDOC is implementing diesel automotive technician programming at East Moline Correctional Center and expanding simulator training programs, with goals of 50 completions each at Robinson and Vandalia Correctional Centers and additional simulator training at Logan Correctional Center. These programs prepare participants for careers in transportation and automotive industries with hands-on, technology-enhanced learning.
- **Creating Innovative Technology and Manufacturing Programs:** IDOC is upgrading technical programs to industry-standard software, including modernizing drafting and engraving programs at Graham Correctional Center and Shawnee Correctional Center, and updating the graphic design program at Danville Correctional Center. These improvements ensure participants learn on current technology platforms used in today's workforce.

These program improvements create robust work-based learning opportunities that combine hands-on training with industry-recognized credentials, ensuring individuals develop marketable skills that can support their families and lead to apprenticeship opportunities in high-demand sectors upon community reentry.

Advancing Women in Trades

IDOL received \$1.35 million in federal funding through the Tradeswomen Build Infrastructure program, partnering with Chicago Women in Trades and other organizations to support women's entry into infrastructure and construction careers through specialized training and mentorship.

Developing Direct Care Worker Career Pathways

IDoA partnered with RUSH University to develop core training curriculum for direct care workers, creating specialized certificates and mentoring programs that establish career ladders within the direct care workforce.

Investing in Barrier-Reduction Programs

IDHS administers the Employment Barrier Reduction Fund (EBRF), a program that supports low-income individuals who are seeking work or currently working but who need assistance to enter and sustain employment. EBRF provides supportive services to help job seekers/workers pay for expenses like utilities, transportation, childcare, uniforms, tools/equipment, and other expenses that bridge the gap between unemployment and economic stability. The program has grown each year and has served more than 6,000 individuals since 2021. With a budget of \$3 million in FY25, EBRF worked through an intermediary model with IACAA (Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies) as the central hub and the statewide network of Illinois Community Action Agencies as the front-line agencies who distribute supportive services to low-income job seekers/workers in all 102 Illinois counties.

Supporting Child Care Workforce Development

Since 2023, IDHS has piloted the Smart Start Child Care Apprenticeship Program, designed to bridge scholarship opportunities with hands-on training and mentorship and tailored to the communities where apprentices work. The program integrates Child Care contracts to fund increased compensation for participating centers based on staff qualifications. This unique feature of the Smart Start Child Care apprenticeship model complements existing scholarship efforts by providing financial support to employers, incentivizing them to support staff's further education and career advancement and helping attract a new generation of early childhood professionals. In FY25, the Smart Start Apprenticeship Program supported 40 apprentices across four Child Care centers.

Expand Access to Legal Counsel for Illinoisans and Ensure Equitable Access to Court and Legal Processes

Preventing Evictions Through Emergency Legal and Financial Support

The Illinois Housing Development Authority, in partnership with IDHS, disbursed more than \$57 million in FY25 through its Court Based Rental Assistance Program (CBRAP), providing critical support to low-income households facing eviction proceedings. Goals of the CBRAP include helping ensure housing stability and preventing homelessness for tenants and helping tenants avoid an eviction judgment that could significantly limit their ability to secure housing in the future. This program offers up to \$15,000 in emergency rental assistance and \$500 for court costs, helping families remain housed while navigating the legal system. More than 6,900 households received assistance through this program in FY25, directly addressing the intersection of housing stability and court access.

In addition, CBRAP incentivizes and supports counties and courts to continue court-based eviction resolution (diversion) programs that have shown a lot of promise and impact during the pandemic.

Strengthening Legal Advocacy for Older Adults

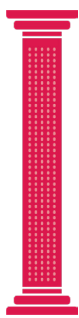
In response to updated federal Older Americans Act requirements, IDoA is establishing an enhanced Legal Assistance Developer position to provide dedicated leadership in securing and maintaining the legal rights of older individuals. This role will focus on expanding access to legal services and ensuring older adults can effectively navigate legal processes that affect their health, safety, and independence.

Illinois Access to Justice (ILA2J)

The ILA2J is a statewide initiative designed to mitigate the consequences of deportation and family separation within vulnerable immigrant communities by expanding access to holistic legal and case management services, providing emergency assistance, and cultivating local leadership through Community Navigators. The program prioritizes broad-based community education and direct legal support for immigrants navigating immigration proceedings, while also addressing the impacts of incarceration and family separation on individuals and communities affected by the criminal justice system. Through A2J, the program provides outreach, legal representation, and education to reduce the collateral consequences of incarceration and to promote community leadership.

Immigrant Legal Support Program (ILSP)

The ILSP is a statewide initiative designed to expand immigration legal services and address the growing needs of Illinois' immigrant population, while responding to the resource limitations faced by legal service providers. The program delivers comprehensive legal services at scale through five components: (i) scalable intake and screening to provide applicants with screening outcomes and referrals; (ii) workshops offering pro se or pro bono technical assistance and application support; (iii) expansion of limited-scope legal aid services and consultations; (iv) development of information resources such as help desks, fact sheets, and self-help guides; and (v) strengthened referral services through clear policies and partnerships.



Pillar 5: Support Trusted Community Based Providers to Serve the Needs of those In Deep Poverty

Support our Caregiving Workforce by Ensuring Equitable Wages and Develop Meaningful Supports for Unpaid Caregivers

Provide Community-Based Providers with Consistent and Equitable Access to State Funding that Adequately Keeps Pace with Rising Costs

State Actions

Support our Caregiving Workforce by Ensuring Equitable Wages and Develop Meaningful Supports for Unpaid Caregivers

Protecting Domestic Workers' Rights and Fair Wages

IDOL enforces the Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights Act, ensuring domestic workers receive labor protections including overtime requirements under the Minimum Wage Law. IDOL continues conducting educational campaigns to ensure both employers and domestic workers understand their rights and responsibilities, protecting a vulnerable workforce that provides essential caregiving services in homes across Illinois.

Increasing Direct Care Worker Compensation

IDoA increased reimbursement rates for Community Care Program In-Home Services providers from \$28.07 to \$29.63 per hour effective January 1, 2025, supporting a minimum wage of \$18 per hour for home care aides. This rate increase helps ensure caregivers can earn wages that better reflect the value of their essential work. The program also allows family members to serve as paid home care aides when they meet prerequisites and complete required training, providing economic support for family caregivers.

Developing Professional Training and Career Pathways

IDoA funded development of a specialized Caregiver Specialist training curriculum through RUSH University to enhance the skills of professionals employed by Area Agencies on Aging who support family caregivers. This investment in professional development helps ensure family caregivers receive high-quality guidance and support from knowledgeable specialists.

Building Statewide Caregiver Support Systems

IDoA participated in the Administration for Community Living's Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center, a technical assistance collaborative focused on recruiting and retaining direct care workers. IDoA was also selected for the Caregiving State Policy Learning Collaborative hosted by national foundations, positioning Illinois to learn from and implement best practices in caregiver support.

To directly support unpaid family caregivers, IDoA added comprehensive family and caregiver resources to its website and convened a work group to plan for launching a dedicated Caregiver Portal by July 2027, creating a centralized resource hub for those providing unpaid care to family members.

Provide Community-Based Providers with Consistent and Equitable Access to State Funding that Adequately Keeps Pace with Rising Costs

Adjusting Reimbursement Rates to Support Service Sustainability

IDoA increased reimbursement rates for Community Care Program In-Home Services providers from \$28.07 to \$29.63 per hour effective January 1, 2025. This 5.6% rate increase demonstrates the State's commitment to ensuring provider reimbursements keep pace with rising operational costs, including the need to support competitive wages for home care aides at a minimum of \$18 per hour.

Conclusion

In FY25, the State continued to support impactful programs to help Illinois residents living in poverty. The coming year presents unique challenges as federal policy changes create new burdens that will drive more people into poverty, and make it even harder for those already living in poverty to establish economic stability. With federal safety net programs like SNAP (formerly food stamps) and Medicaid facing drastic cuts, the State will require innovative approaches to minimize harm to Illinois residents. The State cannot backfill lost federal funding, and collaboration among State agencies, community-based partners, philanthropy, and the business community will become all the more essential.

INTERAGENCY WORKGROUP ON POVERTY AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY

Appendix A

Number of IL Residents at Various Income Levels

Year	Extreme Poverty 0-49% FPL	% Change	Poverty 0-99% FPL	% Change	Low Income 100-199% FPL	% Change
2023	731,469	-4.2	1,426,517	-2.9	1,743,004	-0.8
2022	763,512	+2.9	1,469,643	-1.9	1,757,880	-4.3
2021	742,192	+17.8	1,498,523	+5.5	1,836,332	-1.0
2020	[no data available]					
2019	630,012	-9.4	1,420,542	-5.9	1,854,973	-6.8
2018	695,247	-4.01	1,509,247	-3.9	1,989,265	-1.9
2017	724,307	-2.0	1,569,753	-3.2	2,027,266	-1.6
2016	738,806	-5.8	1,621,508	-4.8	2,060,534	-1.7
2015	784,584	-5.4	1,703,258	-5.6	2,095,725	-2.8
2014	829,130	-3.1	1,804,535	-2.2	2,156,083	-0.6
2013	855,537	+4.3	1,845,393	-0.3	2,169,443	-2.2
2012	820,554	-5.01	1,850,562	-1.6	2,217,821	-1.2
2011	863,868	+2.13	1,879,965	+8.6	2,245,506	+1.1
2010	764,391		1,731,711		2,220,781	

Number of People Living in Poverty by Age Group

Year	Group	Number of People Living in Poverty (<100% FPL)	Percent Below Poverty Level
2023	Children (Under 18)	389,823	14.7%
	Working Age (18-64)	809,869	10.8%
	Older Adults (65+)	226,825	10.6%
2022	Children	424,983	15.9%
	Working Age	830,755	11.0%
	Older Adults	213,905	10.2%

<https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty%20Alexander%20county%202022&g=050XX00US17003>
Poverty: 2000 to 2012 (2011, 2012, 2000- below poverty and extreme poverty).

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Year	Group	Number of People Living in Poverty (<100% FPL)	Percent Below Poverty Level
2021	Children	442,261	16%
	Working Age	851,062	11.2%
	Older Adults	205,200	10%
2020	Children	454,654	16.2%
	Working Age	864,994	11.3%
	Older Adults	169,022	8.8%
2019	Children	436,327	15.7%
	Working Age	814,173	10.7%
	Older Adults	170,042	8.6%
2018	Children	456,926	16.2%
	Working Age	881,959	11.4%
	Older Adults	170,362	8.8%
2017	Children	486,196	17.0%
	Working Age	921,313	11.9%
	Older Adults	162,244	8.6%
2016	Children	511,679	17.7%
	Working Age	943,685	12.1%
	Older Adults	166,144	9.2%
2015	Children	558,784	19.1%
	Working Age	995,263	12.6%
	Older Adults	149,211	8.5%
2014	Children	593,186	20.2%
	Working Age	1,059,126	13.4%
	Older Adults	152,223	8.8%
2013	Children	616,060	20.7%
	Working Age	1,081,022	13.6%
	Older Adults	148,311	8.8%
2012	Children	624,272	20.7%
	Working Age	1,082,219	13.7%
	Older Adults	144,071	8.8%
2011	Children	658,340	21.6%
	Working Age	1,091,542	13.8%
	Older Adults	130,083	8.2%
2010	Children	600,045	19.4%

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Year	Group	Number of People Living in Poverty (<100% FPL)	Percent Below Poverty Level
	Working Age	1,001,778	12.7%
	Older Adults	129,888	8.4%

Number of Poor and Poverty Rate in Illinois: 2000 to 2022

Year	Percent Extreme Poverty (<50% FPL)	Percent below Poverty (<100% FPL)	Percent below 125% FPL
2023	6.0%	11.6%	14.6%
2022	6.2%	11.9%	15.3%
2021	6.0%	12.1%	15.4%
2020	5.5%	12.0%	15.7%
2019	5.1%	11.5%	15.0%
2018	5.6%	12.1%	16.1%
2017	5.8%	12.6%	16.7%
2016	5.9%	13.0%	17.1%
2015	6.2%	13.6%	17.8%
2014	6.6%	14.4%	18.7%
2013	6.8%	14.7%	18.9%
2012	6.5%	14.7%	19.0%
2011	6.9%	15.0%	19.6%
2010	6.1%	13.8%	18.1%
2009	6.0%	13.3%	17.5%
2008	5.4%	12.2%	16.3%
2007	5.3%	11.9%	15.8%
2006	5.5%	12.3%	16.2%
2005	5.5%	12.0%	15.7%
2004	5.8%	11.9%	16.0%
2003	5.2%	11.3%	15.1%
2002	5.6%	11.6%	14.8%
2001	4.9%	11.2%	14.5%
2000	4.6%	11.1%	14.7%

<https://data.census.gov/table?q=S1701&g=040XX00US17&y=2022>

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Poverty by County 2023

County	Families below Poverty (<100% FPL)	Persons below 150% FPL	Persons below Poverty (<100% FPL)
Pulaski	15.2%	37.8%	26.1%
Alexander	13.3%	34.2%	21.0%
Johnson	13.1%	23.6%	16.7%
Union	12.4%	27.6%	19.4%
Saline	13.0%	26.2%	17.1%
Jackson	12.1%	35.1%	21.8%
White	13.1%	28.9%	16.4%
Franklin	12.3%	29.0%	16.9%
Perry	12.7%	24.6%	16.9%
Jefferson	11.4%	23.0%	14.2%
Marion	11.0%	25.7%	16.2%
Fayette	11.1%	25.2%	16.5%
Bond	11.1%	21.1%	12.7%
Coles	11.4%	27.6%	18.4%
Pike	11.0%	25.9%	15.3%
Vermillion	12.2%	27.6%	17.2%
Logan	11.2%	18.8%	13.7%
Hancock	11.6%	21.0%	12.7%
McDonough	11.4%	29.8%	19.9%
Rock Island	11.1%	23.0%	15.4%
Winnebago	11.6%	25.4%	16.0%
DeKalb	10.9%	23.2%	15.9%
Knox	10.5%	26.6%	15.9%
Schuyler	8.9%	26.4%	19.3%
Champaign	7.8%	25.7%	18.0%
Fayette	11.1%	25.2%	16.5%
Clay	10.9%	27.5%	16.7%
Edwards	10.5%	27.0%	17.0%

Population in thousands. Population as of March of the following year. Information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions is available at <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar23.pdf>

Note: data exists in this spreadsheet from 1980-2023

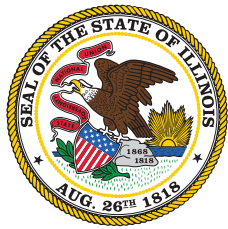
Poverty: 2000 to 2012 (2011, 2012, 2000- below poverty and extreme poverty).

Note: The percentages in each category are additive, meaning individuals are counted in multiple categories if they meet the criteria for more than one. For example, those below 50% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) are also included in the 100% and 125% below FPL categories.

Citation: [Illinois Poverty Map](#)

** definition of families

Note: Red highlight denotes absolute highest per category while yellow highlights denote the ten highest counties per column.



IDHS
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT
OF HUMAN SERVICES

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

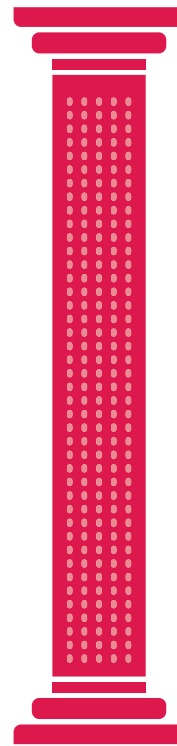
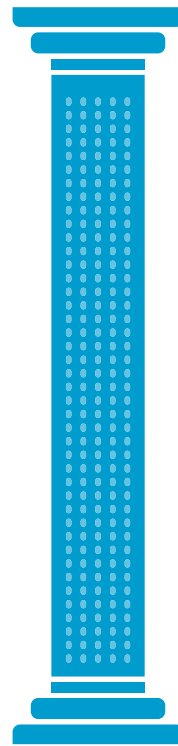
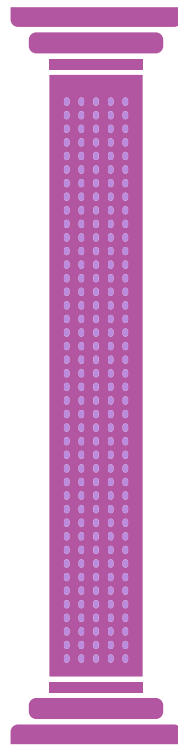
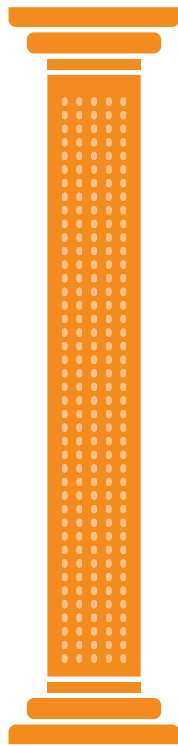
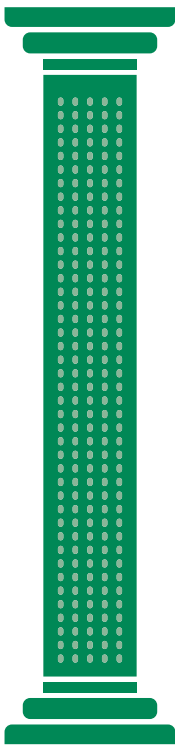


INTERAGENCY WORKGROUP
ON POVERTY AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY





Illinois Commission
on Poverty Elimination
and Economic Security



Pillar 1:

Ensure IL is Best in Nation for Raising Families

Pillar 2:

Stabilize Homes and Communities

Pillar 3:

Ensure Just and Equitable Access to Economic Security Programs

Pillar 4:

Address Barriers to Paid Work, Education, and Advancement

Pillar 5:

Support Trusted Community Based Providers to Serve the Needs of those In Deep Poverty

Introduction

The State of Illinois remains committed to supporting families and children living in poverty and to addressing the deep-rooted inequities that contribute to their challenges. Since its establishment, the Interagency Working Group on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security has worked in partnership with the Illinois Commission on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security to fulfill the mission outlined in the [Intergenerational Poverty Act](#) (IPA) to end the intergenerational transmission of poverty by tackling the root causes of economic insecurity, racial disparities, and other contributing social, economic, and cultural factors.

In the three years since the Commission released its five-year strategic plan, the Interagency Working Group has convened quarterly to strengthen cross-agency collaboration, examine systemic barriers that contribute to poverty, and advance policies and programs that break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.

The Commission's strategic plan outlines strategies to meet its statutory goals of:

- 1) Reducing deep poverty in Illinois by 50% by 2026;
- 2) Eliminating child poverty in Illinois by 2031; and
- 3) Eliminating all poverty in Illinois by 2036.

The five overarching objectives the Commission has identified to reach these goals are to:

- 1) Ensure Illinois is the best in nation for raising families;
- 2) Stabilize homes and communities;
- 3) Ensure just and equitable access to economic security programs;
- 4) Address barriers to paid work, education, and advancement; and
- 5) Support trusted community-based providers to serve the needs of those in deep poverty.

The latest data, from 2023, shows a decrease in the number of Illinois residents categorized as low income (down 0.8 percent from 2022 and 5.1 percent from 2021), experiencing poverty (down 2.9 percent from 2022 and 4.8 percent from 2021), and extreme poverty (down 4.2 percent from 2022 and 1.4 percent from 2021). This data is important because in 2021, following the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of people living in poverty increased by 5.5%, and those in extreme poverty rose by 17.7%. [\[APPENDIX A\]](#)

While the Chicago metropolitan area—including Cook, DuPage, Lake, and Will counties—holds the counties with the largest number of households living in deep poverty, the highest rates of poverty are found in other parts of Illinois, highlighting significant disparities across the state. Poverty is generally defined as having a household income below the federal poverty level (FPL), while deep poverty refers to households with income below 50% of the FPL. According to 2023 data, the top 10 counties with the highest percentages of families living in deep poverty tend to be smaller in population. For example, Vermillion County, in the eastern part of the state between the Indiana border and Champaign County, is the largest county in this group with just over 71,000 residents in 2023. The county with the highest percentage of families living in deep poverty in 2023 was Pulaski County, located along the Ohio River in southwestern Illinois. With a population of only 4,911—the seventh smallest in the state—Pulaski stands out for having the highest rates in all three key poverty measures at the county level: 15.2% of families live below the poverty line, 37.8% of residents fall below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines, and 26.1% of individuals live below poverty. This data illustrates how poverty in Illinois is deeply uneven, concentrated in populous urban centers by sheer numbers and in smaller, rural counties by percentage.

INTERAGENCY WORKGROUP ON POVERTY AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY

Poverty by County 2023 (S1701)

County	Population	Families Below Poverty (<100% FPL)	Persons Below 150% FPL	Persons Below Poverty (<100% FPL)
Pulaski	4,911	15.2%	37.8%	26.1%
Alexander	4,695	13.3%	34.2%	21.0%
Johnson	13,326	13.1%	23.6%	16.7%
White	13,401	13.1%	28.9%	16.4%
Saline	22,873	13.0%	26.2%	17.1%
Perry	20,503	12.7%	24.6%	16.9%
Union	16,667	12.4%	27.6%	19.4%
Franklin	37,138	12.3%	29.0%	16.9%
Vermillion	71,652	12.2%	27.6%	17.2%
Jackson	52,141	12.1%	35.1%	21.8%

In 2023, about 14.7% of Illinois children under age 16—approximately 389,823 individuals—were living in poverty. Similarly, around 10.6% of older adults, totaling roughly 226,825 people, were also living in poverty. Among all individuals experiencing poverty in Illinois, children made up 27.3%, working-age adults comprised the largest share at 56.8%, and older adults accounted for 15.9%. These figures highlight that while working-age adults represent the majority of those living in poverty, children remain disproportionately affected.

Poverty by Age 2023 (S1701)

Group	Number of People Living in Poverty (100% FPL)	Percentage of Each Group Living Below Poverty
TOTAL	1,426,517	11.6
Children (<16)	389,823	14.7
Working Age	809,869	10.8
Older Adults (65+)	226,825	10.6

Illinois residents with disabilities face a significantly higher risk of poverty compared to those without disabilities. Although people with disabilities make up 12.6% of the state’s population, they represent a disproportionately large share—20.4%—of those living in poverty. Furthermore, among individuals experiencing extreme poverty, nearly 19.6% have a disability. (C18131)

People of color in Illinois experience significantly higher poverty rates than White residents. In 2023, 23% of Black/African American residents and 14.1% of Hispanic/Latino residents lived below the poverty line, compared to just 8.6% of White residents. This means about one in four Black residents and one in seven Latino residents live in poverty, compared to one in 12 White residents. Although Black residents make up 13% of the state’s population, they represent 25.8% of those living in poverty. However, White residents comprise the largest share of people in poverty, accounting for 45.1%, reflecting their larger overall population size in Illinois.

Poverty by Race/Ethnicity in Illinois

	Total IL Population	Percent of IL Population	Below Poverty	Percent Below Poverty Within Each Group*	Percent of Total IL Pop in Poverty**
White	7,460,194	60.8%	643,047	8.6%	45.1%
Black/African American	1,599,146	13.0%	367,486	23.0%	25.8%
Hispanic/Latino	2,341,252	19.1%	328,954	14.1%	23.1%
Am. Indian/ Alaska Native	85,509	0.7%	12,228	14.3%	0.9%
Asian	744,160	6.1%	77,468	10.4%	5.4%
TOTAL	12,230,261		1,429,183		

In terms of families in Illinois (rather than individuals), 5.3% of families headed by a White householder live below the poverty level, compared to much higher rates among families headed by people of color: 18.5% for Black householders, 11.6% for Latino householders, 11.3% for American Indian householders, and 7.5% for Asian householders.

More than 12% of Illinois families with children under age 18 live in poverty, including about 10% of families with children under age 5. Poverty rates increase with family size: 9.8% of families with one or two children live in poverty, compared to 20.4% of families with three or four children, and 37.3% of families with five or more children. These figures show that a substantial number of Illinois youth—especially those in larger families—are growing up in economically vulnerable households. (S1702)

In 2023, poverty rates varied by citizenship status. Among American-born citizens, 5.9% experienced deep poverty and 11.4% lived in poverty overall. Foreign-born residents had slightly higher rates, with 6.3% in deep poverty and 12.7% in poverty. However, foreign-born individuals who became naturalized citizens had the lowest poverty rates of all groups: 3.9% experienced deep poverty and 9.2% lived in poverty. (S1703)

In 2023, among Illinois residents living in poverty, the majority (67%) were born in Illinois itself. Another 15% were born in other U.S. states, while 16.5% were foreign-born. The remaining 1.3% were born outside the United States to U.S. citizen parents. These figures show that poverty in Illinois is predominantly concentrated among long-term residents rather than recent arrivals, with over two-thirds of those in poverty being Illinois natives. (B06012)

The following report details some of the State’s many investments and initiatives to reduce poverty and economic insecurity in State Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, and outlines commitments for FY2026.

*Within each racial group, this number indicates the percentage in poverty, i.e. out of the White population in Illinois, 8.6% are below poverty.

** Of those who are in poverty in Illinois, this number indicates the percentage of each racial group, i.e. White people represent 45% of those who are in poverty.

Illinois Commission on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security Five-Year Strategic Plan Pillars and Associated State Actions

Infrastructural Action and Support: Governor's Office of Management and Budget

Coordinating and Ensuring Program Funding and Sustainability

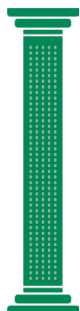
The Governor's Office of Management and Budget (GOMB) works with agencies and the General Assembly to secure sufficient and consistent funding for programs that support the Five-Year Strategic Plan Pillars. This funding helps support:

- Programs that address employment barriers that prevent consistent work at living wages, from digital access and wage protection to reentry support and program sustainability, ensuring these critical supports remain available to those who need them most.
- Workforce development initiatives, ensuring long-term sustainability of programs that help individuals learn and train while supporting their families.
- Legal access programs that provide direct financial assistance for court-related expenses and dedicated advocacy for populations facing significant barriers to accessing legal counsel and understanding their rights within the judicial system. This ensures services remain available to vulnerable populations who might otherwise be unable to afford legal representation or navigate complex court processes.
- Caregiver-support programs that provide fair wages and labor protections while also providing meaningful resources and recognition for unpaid family caregivers who provide the majority of long-term care in Illinois. Both paid and unpaid caregivers need sustained investment to continue providing essential services that keep families and communities healthy.
- Community-based service providers by ensuring that State funding mechanisms can respond to inflationary pressures and changing service delivery costs, helping maintain the stability of community-based organizations that serve vulnerable populations.

Community-based providers face ongoing challenges with rising costs for wages, utilities, supplies, and other operational expenses, and State reimbursement rates must be regularly evaluated and adjusted to ensure these essential service providers can maintain quality care while remaining financially viable.



Illinois Commission on Poverty Elimination and Economic Security Five-Year Strategic Plan Pillars and Associated State Actions



Pillar 1: Ensure IL is Best in Nation for Raising Families

Ensure Access to High Quality Early Childhood Services, Including Early Intervention, Home Visiting, and Affordable Child Care

Find a Method to Replicate the Federal Child Tax Credit for Families Raising Children

Expand Access to Free and Reduced School Meals

Increase Participation in WIC by Improving Accessibility for Those Who are Eligible

State Actions

Ensure Access to High-Quality Early Childhood Services, Including Early Intervention, Home Visiting, and Affordable Child Care

Expanding Home Visiting and Maternal Health Services

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) awarded \$4.5 million in grants to improve access to critical early childhood and maternal health services across the state. These funds support programs that connect families with essential services during pregnancy and the early years of a child’s development.

Grant recipients are establishing comprehensive support systems that include home visitation programs, culturally responsive doula services, new maternal and child health centers, and behavioral health support for substance use and mental health needs. These services provide families with direct access to professional guidance and resources during the crucial period from pregnancy through early childhood.

Winnebago County exemplifies this approach with its “Winning Start Winnebago, Welcoming Babies and Connecting Families” program, which brings trained professionals directly into homes to support new mothers and connect families with available resources and services.

This initiative addresses barriers to accessing early childhood services by bringing support directly to families and ensuring culturally appropriate care is available in communities throughout Illinois.

At the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), Maternal Health Services are being transformed in FY26 as the Office of Family Wellness, Bureau of Maternal and Child Health sunsets its 30-year-old maternal and child health legacy programs and implements new programs which use a strengths-based, equity-centered approach. These programmatic changes align the work of the Bureau with the Improving Health Care for Pregnant and Postpartum Individuals Act (20 ILCS/10-23) and were created following listening sessions with families and providers across the state in the fall of 2024. SFY25 ended with funding opportunities being launched for three programs:

- **Better Birth Outcomes-Navigation** in the City of Chicago is designed to connect families with the various resources available to them and support the Chicago Family Connects program.

- **Better Birth Outcomes-Comprehensive** will cover the majority of the State outside of Chicago and is designed to provide a nurse assessment for pregnant and postpartum persons and their new infants at the first contact followed by the specific care level needed through the baby's sixth month.
- **High-Risk Family Case Management Pilot Program** was launched late in 2024 in 3 locations offering nurse home visits monthly through pregnancy and the first 6 months of the baby's life and is being expanded to 3 additional counties.

IDHS' Smart Start Home Visiting program continued to expand by \$5 million in FY25, increasing the IDHS home visiting program to a nearly \$28 million total annual investment. Smart Start Home Visiting continued to strengthen stability of the home visiting workforce and expand families' access to home visiting, achieving a 41% growth in services since pre-pandemic levels, a 16% increase in home visitor salaries, and filling 95% of funded positions. FY25 investments supported a 7% expansion in home visiting slots over FY24. Finally, IDHS's home visiting cost model was updated to provide a more accurate estimate of the cost of delivering services, offering valuable insights for future planning and sustainability.

Ensuring Access to Early Intervention

IDHS's Early Intervention program reduced Service Coordinator caseloads by 10% and reduced service delays by 24% following a 10% increase in reimbursement rates as a result of Smart Start Early Intervention. Additionally, IDHS's Division of Early Childhood (DEC) completed comprehensive research and analysis into Early Intervention systems and costs, producing a report on national best practices, a cost model for more effective Early Intervention service provision, and a legislatively mandated plan for a demonstration project to address systemic barriers to EI and advance equitable service delivery.

Ensuring Access to Child Care

IDHS's Smart Start Child Care program included \$212M in federal and state investments in SFY25 to support expanded access to high-quality child care by investing in child care professionals' wages, professional development, and career advancement. Smart Start Workforce Grants, in their first year of operation in FY25, gave child care programs predictable, up-front funding to invest in quality staff without raising tuition or Child Care Assistance Program co-pays. Grants cover higher wages and classroom operations, and participating programs must meet a wage floor for classroom staff. These competitive wages help attract and retain educators, ensuring families have access to care they can afford.

By the numbers, Smart Start Workforce Grants are having a positive impact for child care providers and children across Illinois: more than 4,000 child care programs have received awards, impacting over 20,000 members of the child care workforce and more than 150,000 children they serve statewide. In the first year of operations, 82% of all potentially eligible child care programs in Illinois received at least one round of grant funding.



Increase participation in WIC by improving accessibility for those who are eligible

The Illinois WIC Program focused on outreach to specific groups in FY25 by providing simple “WIC 101” videos on what WIC is and how to access the program. A program matrix was created to help physicians, health professionals, and programs’ other staff and volunteers understand the basics on various federal food and nutrition programs. Staff worked with the Illinois Board of Higher Education to inform college students who are parents to young children about WIC and how to apply.

Educating Grandparents About WIC Benefits

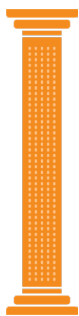
The Illinois Department on Aging (IDOA) partnered with IDHS and the Greater Chicago Food Depository to reach grandparents who are raising young children. Through virtual training sessions and educational materials, they informed providers in the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren program about WIC eligibility and benefits, ensuring that grandparents caring for children under age 5 know about this nutrition assistance.

Expanding WIC Payment Options at Grocery Stores

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) ensures that all grocery stores receiving funding through the Illinois Grocery Initiative—including new stores in food deserts and existing stores receiving equipment upgrades—accept WIC payments. This requirement, mandated by the Illinois Grocery Initiative Act, helps WIC participants access their benefits at more locations throughout the state.

These coordinated efforts address two key barriers to WIC participation: lack of awareness among eligible caregivers and limited places where benefits can be used.





Pillar 2: Stabilize Homes and Communities

Reduce Homelessness by Half and Ensure Housing Affordability and Accessibility

Invest in High-Quality, Specialized Supports for Persons Experiencing Mental Health and Substance Use-Related Crises

Invest in Interventions that Address Cycles of Trauma and Violence in Our Communities

State Actions

Reduce Homelessness by Half and Ensure Housing Affordability and Accessibility

Expanding Housing Options for Middle-Income Families

DCEO participated in the Ad-Hoc Missing Middle Housing Solutions Advisory Committee, which developed comprehensive strategies to address the housing gap for middle-income Illinois residents. As the state implements these recommendations under [Executive Order 2024-03](#), DCEO will lead key initiatives to make housing more affordable and accessible for working families who struggle to find reasonably priced options.

Creating Supportive Housing for Vulnerable Populations

The Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) has significantly expanded supportive housing capacity through multiple targeted programs:

Through the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program, IHDA funded 218 new supportive housing units at the start of FY25, including three developments specifically designed for permanent supportive housing that received over \$8 million in combined federal and state tax credits. The Permanent Supportive Housing Development Program added another 129 units in May 2025, with \$50 million in funding across seven developments, including \$15 million specifically targeting individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The design model of these programs/developments is single site buildings that include a full array of wraparound services such as: case management, daily living skills, budgeting, and linkage and referral to healthcare, mental health, substance use, and other services based on individual and household needs.

Developing Emergency and Transitional Housing

In August 2024, IHDA released the funding opportunity for its Non-Congregate Shelter (NCS) program, funded by \$37.5 million of IHDA's HOME-ARP allocation. The NCS program provides immediate housing alternatives for those experiencing homelessness. In July 2025 (FY26) IHDA's Board approved awards to four developments under its one-time Non-Congregate Shelter Development Program. Awards totaled more than \$39.9 million in HOME-ARP funds that will create or preserve 194 Non-Congregate Shelter units, or 422 Non-Congregate Shelter beds.

Building Development Capacity and Supporting Reentry

The Supportive Housing Institute trained 22 development teams through intensive technical assistance, with IHDA extending the program for two additional years due to its success in increasing supportive housing construction. Additionally, the Housing for Justice-Involved Individuals Program awarded nearly \$11 million in December 2024 to create 190 beds supporting individuals reentering communities from the criminal justice system.

Preventing Homelessness Through Pre-Release Planning

The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) is working to prevent homelessness among individuals reentering communities by securing housing placements before release. IDOC partners with Cook County's Flexible Housing Pool to place individuals with mental health and ADA needs into long-term supportive housing, and collaborates with IDHS's Housing is Recovery program to ensure those with high mental health needs have stable supportive housing and continued care upon release. Additionally, IDOC works with the VA to screen veterans in custody and implement housing referral processes to prevent veteran homelessness.

Preventing Senior Homelessness

IDOA strategically redirected its Emergency Senior Services funds to specifically target older adults who are homeless or at risk of losing their housing.

These coordinated efforts create a comprehensive approach to housing challenges, from preventing homelessness among vulnerable seniors to providing permanent supportive housing and expanding options for middle-income families.

Unsheltered Pilot Project

This pilot enhances services and develops an understanding of those living in encampments. IDHS, in partnership with the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, has engaged the Heart of Illinois United Way, an agency that works directly with the Home for All, the Peoria Continuum of Care, the Association for Individual Development, and the City of Elgin, in developing and implementing a comprehensive strategy to house unsheltered individuals in their respective communities. This pilot project is expected to expand to include the City of Carbondale and the City of Champaign in FY26.

Invest in high quality, specialized supports for persons experiencing mental health and substance use related crises

IDHS established a new, integrated **Division of Behavioral Health & Recovery (DBHR)** that encompasses the roles and responsibilities of the former Divisions of Mental Health (DMH) and Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (SUPR)

This integration is expected to enhance outcomes for Illinoisans, expand access to treatment and recovery supports, improve substance use disorder treatment in our State-operated psychiatric hospitals, reduce administrative burdens on provider organizations, and leverage the combined expertise of our dedicated staff. The new Division began operating on July 1, 2025, with ongoing implementation activities extending over several years.

Building a Unified Crisis Continuum

IDHS is partnering with the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) to continue the development of a Unified Crisis Continuum for individuals experiencing a mental health- or substance use- related crisis. This continuum includes someone to call, including the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and the CARES hotline; someone to respond, including statewide mobile crisis response teams and other non-law-enforcement responses to behavioral health crises; and somewhere to go, including Living Room Programs and other emergency room alternatives. The goal of the crisis continuum is to minimize unnecessary hospitalizations and institutionalization, and to ensure that people experiencing a behavioral health crisis have access to the support they need, regardless of where they are in the state or who their insurance payor is. In FY25, IDHS and HFS met regularly to align systems design efforts across State agencies.

In addition, legislation passed during the Spring 2025 session that created a dedicated funding stream for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and other crisis services using a tax increase on telecommunication services.

Expanding Harm Reduction and Crisis Response Services

IDPH is implementing several targeted programs to provide specialized support for individuals experiencing substance use crises. These programs create a comprehensive crisis response system that reaches individuals where they are, from rural communities to urban neighborhoods most impacted by overdose deaths.

- **Building Community-Based Harm Reduction Capacity:** The Harm Reduction Community Linkages Program strengthens organizations statewide that serve people with opioid and substance use disorders. This initiative helps these organizations expand their reach and create better connections between harm reduction services, prevention programs, and treatment options, ensuring individuals in crisis can access comprehensive support.
- **Supporting Rural First Responders:** Two rural-focused programs address the unique challenges of substance use crises in underserved areas. The First Responder Post-Overdose Outreach program trains law enforcement and emergency personnel to connect overdose survivors with immediate support services after a crisis. Meanwhile, the Naloxone Distribution Initiative provides overdose prevention training and lifesaving Narcan to public safety agencies across 24 rural counties in southern-central Illinois.
- **Delivering Direct Crisis Intervention:** The Block by Block Initiative takes a data-driven approach to crisis intervention, using fatal overdose statistics to identify the most affected neighborhoods. Teams then conduct door-to-door outreach in these high-risk areas, providing immediate access to naloxone, fentanyl test strips, training on their use, and information about local treatment services.
- **Coordinated Mental Health Support for Justice-Involved Individuals:** IDOC ensures continuity of mental health care by partnering with IDHS's Housing is Recovery program to place individuals with high mental health or substance use disorder needs into stable supportive housing with continued treatment services. IDOC also collaborates with the IDHS Division of Developmental Disabilities to identify individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, working with IDHS to process waiver applications and enroll them in residential and community services before release.

Invest in interventions that address cycles of trauma and violence in communities

Protecting Economic Security for Violence Survivors

The Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) enforces the Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA), which provides critical workplace protections for individuals breaking cycles of violence and trauma. This law recognizes that survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, and other violent crimes—as well as their family members—need time and resources to access essential services without risking their employment.

VESSA allows eligible employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to seek medical care, legal assistance, counseling, safety planning, and other support services necessary for recovery and protection. The Act also prohibits employers from discriminating against violence survivors and their family members, ensuring that those working to escape dangerous situations don't face additional economic barriers.

IDOL continues to enforce these protections while conducting ongoing education for both employers and employees about their rights and responsibilities under the law. This enforcement helps ensure that survivors have the economic stability needed to access intervention services and break free from cycles of violence.

By protecting survivors' ability to maintain employment while accessing critical services, VESSA addresses one of the key barriers that can trap individuals in violent situations—the fear of losing income needed for safety and independence.

Mental Health Response to Mass Firearm Violence

IDHS, through its Division of Behavioral Health & Recovery and Office of Firearm Violence Prevention, has launched a groundbreaking Mental Health Response to Mass Firearm Violence pilot program, which ensures that when mass

shootings occur, culturally appropriate, community-driven mental health support is available in the immediate aftermath and on an ongoing basis.

Breaking Cycles Through Comprehensive Reentry Support

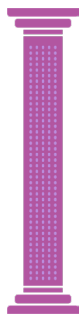
IDOC addresses cycles of trauma by providing comprehensive pre-release planning that connects individuals to community supports. This includes collaborating with the Division of Rehabilitation Services at IDHS to help high-needs individuals apply for employment and rehabilitative community services before release, identifying and supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities through waiver programs, and ensuring veterans receive appropriate housing and service referrals. These coordinated efforts help prevent the cycle of incarceration by addressing underlying trauma and providing stable foundations for successful community reentry.

Women’s Dignity of Choice

IDHS initiated this program in FY25 in partnership with the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness. The Dignity of Choice Pilot Program aims to create career and life pathways for formerly incarcerated women returning to the South and West Sides of Chicago. This pilot will serve as a proof of concept to inform the practice of providing preventative measures to women impacted by incarceration, highlighting that when provided with the right resources they are set up for success.

Returning Home Illinois

This Permanent Supportive Housing project is a collaboration of IDHS, Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, and IDOC, along with community partner TASC, Inc. Returning Home Illinois (RHI) is intended to serve individuals returning from prison to Central and Southern Illinois who have serious mental illness, sex offense registry requirements, and/or convictions for arson-related crimes.



Pillar 3: Ensure Just and Equitable Access to Economic Security Programs

Create a Single, Accessible Platform for Individuals to Enroll in All State Benefits

Increase Uptake, Access, and Value of Public Benefits for Those in Extreme Poverty

Deploy Direct Cash Assistance Programs to Lift Families Out of Deep Poverty

State Actions

Create a Single, Accessible Platform for Individuals to Enroll in Multiple State Benefits

Coordinating Multi-Agency Benefits Access

The Public Benefits Project Steering Committee, which includes several State agencies and is led by the Deputy Governor for Health and Human Services, has supported a philanthropic organization’s funding application for development of a multi-benefit screening tool. The screening tool, which has been piloted in other states, was co-designed by low-income families and community-based organizations (CBOs), with input from county and state government stakeholders. A version of the tool tailored to Illinois is being developed and would allow Illinoisans, after answering a set of basic household demographic questions, to receive a personalized report showing likely program eligibility, likely dollar

value of benefits, average time required to apply, where to go to apply, and where to get assistance applying. In doing so, it aims to eliminate the current fragmented process where individuals must navigate multiple departments and applications to access the full range of benefit programs for which they qualify.

Increase Uptake, Access, and Value of Public Benefits for Those in Extreme Poverty

Expanding Medicaid Access for Justice-Involved Individuals

IDOC is implementing the 1115 Medicaid waiver in collaboration with HFS to ensure individuals have healthcare coverage upon release. IDOC and HFS are seeking to extend the pre-release Medicaid application timeframe from 60 days to 90 days before release, providing more time to complete enrollment and avoid coverage gaps.

IDOC is also increasing education efforts to help individuals in custody understand the importance of Medicaid enrollment and their managed care organization options, ensuring they can make informed decisions about their healthcare coverage. Additionally, IDOC is partnering with community organizations to identify reentry services that can be provided before release and billed to Illinois Medicaid under the 1115 waiver, creating a seamless transition from incarceration to community-based support services.

These coordinated efforts ensure that individuals leaving the justice system—who often face extreme poverty and limited access to healthcare—can immediately access medical care and supportive services through Medicaid, preventing health crises and supporting successful reintegration into their communities.

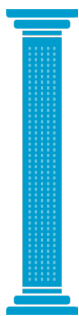
Final Year of Stability Income for Family Housing Pilot

In FY25, the State launched the final year of the Stability Investment for Family Housing (SIFH) pilot program aimed providing direct cash assistance to families experiencing homelessness. While the first two years of the pilot program focused exclusively on supporting families in shelters, year three focused on serving families who were literally homeless or living doubled-up. The University of Chicago Inclusive Economy Lab (IEL) and GiveDirectly partnered to directly recruit families through schools in Illinois. Program eligibility was confirmed through a combination of applicant-submitted documents and programmatic data from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS).

Moving forward, IEL will be evaluating all three rounds of this cash transfer program to understand its impact on families. To conduct the evaluation, researchers will link administrative data to track participants' engagement with the shelter system, educational performance, employment outcomes, and more. Participants also have the option to participate in incentivized surveys and other data collection to report on various aspects of their lives. Preliminary findings on housing situations, shelter engagement, and employment from the first and second rounds are expected to be released in winter 2025.

Challenges Ahead

The coming year, FY26, will be difficult one in public benefits administration, with federal statutory, budget, and policy changes impacting eligibility requirements and funding. As a result, particularly with the added barriers of work requirements for both SNAP and Medicaid, hundreds of thousands of individuals could lose their coverage, greatly increasing the risk of poverty and extreme poverty increasing, rather than decreasing. The State is responding to these unprecedented federal actions, but cannot backfill the enormous funding gaps that could be created.



Pillar 4: Address Barriers to Paid Work, Education, and Advancement

Address Barriers That Prevent Consistent Work at a Living Wage, by Investing in Transportation, Child Care, Paid Leave, Broadband, Legal Aid, Reentry Services, Disability and Rehabilitation Supports, and Immigrant and Refugee Services

Invest in Apprenticeship, Work Based Learning, and Barrier Reduction Programs so Individuals Can Learn and Train While Supporting Their Family

Expand Access to Legal Counsel for Illinoisans and Ensure Equitable Access to Court and Legal Processes

State Actions

Address Barriers That Prevent Consistent Work at a Living Wage, by Investing in Transportation, Child Care, Paid Leave, Broadband, Legal Aid, Reentry Services, Disability and Rehabilitation Supports, and Immigrant and Refugee Services

Dignity in Pay Act

The Dignity in Pay Act (DIPA), championed by disability-rights advocates in the State and community, requires IDHS, the Illinois Council on Developmental Disabilities (ICDD), and IDoL to lead a responsible and gradual 5-year process to expand employment options for people with disabilities and to phase out 14(c) subminimum wage authorizations in Illinois. DIPA eliminates permission for employers to pay workers with disabilities less than the minimum wage starting on December 31, 2029, and establishes equitable and competitive integrated employment for Illinoisans with disabilities.

Expanding Broadband Access for Economic Opportunity

In June 2024, DCEO’s Office of Broadband received over \$1 billion through the Connect Illinois Program to build high-quality broadband infrastructure to every home, business, and community anchor institution statewide. Through these efforts, approximately 162,000 locations across the state are expected to be connected to high-speed, quality broadband. The Office of Broadband will issue grants for broadband deployment projects that will start in early 2026. Construction must be complete by the end of 2030. Project monitoring will be until 2040. This expansion, primarily funded through the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, directly increases job opportunities and workforce development access for residents in underserved areas.

To address the growing labor shortage in the broadband industry itself, Illinois launched the Broadband Workforce Development Initiative in partnership with Heartland Forward, creating the Illinois Broadband Jobs Board that connects workers with available broadband jobs and training opportunities. The State also awarded \$2 million in Digital Equity Capacity Kickstarter Grants to organizations providing digital equity programs like computer centers and digital skills classes, ensuring all Illinoisans have the broadband access, devices, and skills needed to participate in the modern economy.

Protecting Worker Rights and Wages

IDOL enforces critical wage protection laws including the Illinois Wage Payment and Collection Act and Illinois Minimum Wage Law, ensuring workers receive promised wages and maintaining a wage floor for all employees. In FY25, IDOL collected millions in unpaid back wages for low-wage workers, including a \$4 million settlement addressing labor exploitation of migrant child workers.

IDOL also enforces the Paid Leave for All Workers Act, which guarantees most employees 40 hours of annual paid leave (prorated for part-time workers), providing essential job flexibility. IDOL continues conducting education campaigns to ensure both employers and employees understand their rights and responsibilities under these laws.

Supporting Successful Reentry

IDOa participates in reentry summits and resource fairs hosted by the Department of Corrections, helping individuals preparing for release access benefits and services that support stable employment and community reintegration.

Expanding Access to Child Care Assistance

In FY25, IDHS continued its partnership with Code for America to develop the first digital Child Care Assistance Program application. The application was developed using agile and human-centered design principles, focused on iterative user testing and resulting in an application that is completed at greater rates and in shorter amounts of time than the longstanding paper application. Applicant satisfaction is over 90% in pilot areas in DeKalb and Southern Illinois. In FY26, IDHS is committed to completing this partnership with Code for America, rolling out the digital application statewide, and transitioning sustainable maintenance and operation of the application to the Department of Innovation and Technology, which has been a critical partner in this project from the beginning. .

Invest in Apprenticeship, Work Based Learning, and Barrier Reduction Programs so Individuals Can Learn and Train While Supporting Their Family

Expanding Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship Opportunities

DCEO released \$5 million in funding on January 30, 2025, to support high-impact Apprenticeship Intermediaries that help individuals and businesses enter apprenticeship programs. This initiative targets community-based organizations, municipalities, educational institutions, industry associations, and nonprofits to expand apprenticeship access across Illinois.

DCEO's Office of Illinois Works administers the Illinois Works Jobs Program, which increases equity in construction workforce development through comprehensive pre-apprenticeship programs. Participants receive wraparound services including childcare and transportation assistance to ensure program completion, with the goal of transitioning graduates into registered apprenticeship programs that provide pathways to well-paying careers.

Implementing Clean Energy Workforce Development

Under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, DCEO has established five workforce programs including Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship, Clean Energy Workforce Network Hubs, Energy Transition Navigators, Returning Resident Program, and Barrier Reduction Program. With 11 of 14 statutorily required hubs now operational, these programs are enrolling participants in clean energy occupational training, serving over 1,500 individuals in various stages from outreach to program enrollment.

Providing Employer-Driven Training with Barrier Reduction

The Job Training and Economic Development (JTED) program combines education and work-based learning to connect individuals facing employment barriers with skilled job opportunities. A key feature is flexible funding for emergency basic needs, allowing participants to address immediate challenges while training. The first round served over 2,900 individuals, while the Illinois Manufacturing Association's STAMP program used JTED funding to provide manufacturing training to over 6,000 high school students across 18 school districts.

Supporting Workforce Development for Justice-Involved Individuals

The Home Illinois Workforce Pilot Project represents a \$6 million partnership between DCEO, the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, and the Interagency Task Force on Homelessness, funding four organizations for comprehensive workforce services. The Illinois Partners for Reentry Opportunities in Workforce Development (PROWD) initiative

serves approximately 500 individuals in minimum-security facilities and reentry centers, providing education, workforce training, and digital literacy during incarceration, with connections to high-demand industry training upon release. As of March 2025, Illinois served 342 participants in this program.

Collaborative reentry efforts resulted in 1,845 individuals enrolling in WIOA Title I Programs and over 650 in JTED programs, supported by virtual job fairs, Vocational Rehabilitation training pilots, and clean jobs programming.

IDOC is significantly expanding vocational programming to provide individuals with industry-recognized skills and certifications while incarcerated. These programs combine hands-on training with pathways to employment, ensuring participants can support their families upon release. These vocational programs include:

- **Building Construction and Manufacturing Skills:** IDOC is implementing comprehensive construction training including welding programs at Kewanee Correctional Center with both American Welding Society and Department of Labor certification, HVAC technician training at Western Correctional Center, and expanded metal fabrication programming using upgraded equipment. These programs provide participants with high-demand trade skills and recognized credentials that lead directly to apprenticeship opportunities and employment in the construction industry.
- **Developing Agricultural and Food Production Expertise:** IDOC is expanding urban agriculture programming at Hill Correctional Center to include vertical farming techniques and at Dixon Correctional Center for broader agricultural training. Lincoln Warehouse will implement a gardening program leading to general farm worker U.S. Department of Labor certification. These programs create pathways to agricultural careers and connect to post-incarceration employment opportunities, including a specialized pipeline with Freight to Plate for urban agriculture positions.
- **Advancing Transportation and Automotive Training:** IDOC is implementing diesel automotive technician programming at East Moline Correctional Center and expanding simulator training programs, with goals of 50 completions each at Robinson and Vandalia Correctional Centers and additional simulator training at Logan Correctional Center. These programs prepare participants for careers in transportation and automotive industries with hands-on, technology-enhanced learning.
- **Creating Innovative Technology and Manufacturing Programs:** IDOC is upgrading technical programs to industry-standard software, including modernizing drafting and engraving programs at Graham Correctional Center and Shawnee Correctional Center, and updating the graphic design program at Danville Correctional Center. These improvements ensure participants learn on current technology platforms used in today's workforce.

These program improvements create robust work-based learning opportunities that combine hands-on training with industry-recognized credentials, ensuring individuals develop marketable skills that can support their families and lead to apprenticeship opportunities in high-demand sectors upon community reentry.

Advancing Women in Trades

IDOL received \$1.35 million in federal funding through the Tradeswomen Build Infrastructure program, partnering with Chicago Women in Trades and other organizations to support women's entry into infrastructure and construction careers through specialized training and mentorship.

Developing Direct Care Worker Career Pathways

IDoA partnered with RUSH University to develop core training curriculum for direct care workers, creating specialized certificates and mentoring programs that establish career ladders within the direct care workforce.

Investing in Barrier-Reduction Programs

IDHS administers the Employment Barrier Reduction Fund (EBRF), a program that supports low-income individuals who are seeking work or currently working but who need assistance to enter and sustain employment. EBRF provides supportive services to help job seekers/workers pay for expenses like utilities, transportation, childcare, uniforms, tools/equipment, and other expenses that bridge the gap between unemployment and economic stability. The program has grown each year and has served more than 6,000 individuals since 2021. With a budget of \$3 million in FY25, EBRF worked through an intermediary model with IACAA (Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies) as the central hub and the statewide network of Illinois Community Action Agencies as the front-line agencies who distribute supportive services to low-income job seekers/workers in all 102 Illinois counties.

Supporting Child Care Workforce Development

Since 2023, IDHS has piloted the Smart Start Child Care Apprenticeship Program, designed to bridge scholarship opportunities with hands-on training and mentorship and tailored to the communities where apprentices work. The program integrates Child Care contracts to fund increased compensation for participating centers based on staff qualifications. This unique feature of the Smart Start Child Care apprenticeship model complements existing scholarship efforts by providing financial support to employers, incentivizing them to support staff's further education and career advancement and helping attract a new generation of early childhood professionals. In FY25, the Smart Start Apprenticeship Program supported 40 apprentices across four Child Care centers.

Expand Access to Legal Counsel for Illinoisans and Ensure Equitable Access to Court and Legal Processes

Preventing Evictions Through Emergency Legal and Financial Support

The Illinois Housing Development Authority, in partnership with IDHS, disbursed more than \$57 million in FY25 through its Court Based Rental Assistance Program (CBRAP), providing critical support to low-income households facing eviction proceedings. Goals of the CBRAP include helping ensure housing stability and preventing homelessness for tenants and helping tenants avoid an eviction judgment that could significantly limit their ability to secure housing in the future. This program offers up to \$15,000 in emergency rental assistance and \$500 for court costs, helping families remain housed while navigating the legal system. More than 6,900 households received assistance through this program in FY25, directly addressing the intersection of housing stability and court access.

In addition, CBRAP incentivizes and supports counties and courts to continue court-based eviction resolution (diversion) programs that have shown a lot of promise and impact during the pandemic.

Strengthening Legal Advocacy for Older Adults

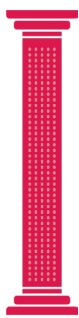
In response to updated federal Older Americans Act requirements, IDoA is establishing an enhanced Legal Assistance Developer position to provide dedicated leadership in securing and maintaining the legal rights of older individuals. This role will focus on expanding access to legal services and ensuring older adults can effectively navigate legal processes that affect their health, safety, and independence.

Illinois Access to Justice (ILA2J)

The ILA2J is a statewide initiative designed to mitigate the consequences of deportation and family separation within vulnerable immigrant communities by expanding access to holistic legal and case management services, providing emergency assistance, and cultivating local leadership through Community Navigators. The program prioritizes broad-based community education and direct legal support for immigrants navigating immigration proceedings, while also addressing the impacts of incarceration and family separation on individuals and communities affected by the criminal justice system. Through A2J, the program provides outreach, legal representation, and education to reduce the collateral consequences of incarceration and to promote community leadership.

Immigrant Legal Support Program (ILSP)

The ILSP is a statewide initiative designed to expand immigration legal services and address the growing needs of Illinois' immigrant population, while responding to the resource limitations faced by legal service providers. The program delivers comprehensive legal services at scale through five components: (i) scalable intake and screening to provide applicants with screening outcomes and referrals; (ii) workshops offering pro se or pro bono technical assistance and application support; (iii) expansion of limited-scope legal aid services and consultations; (iv) development of information resources such as help desks, fact sheets, and self-help guides; and (v) strengthened referral services through clear policies and partnerships.



Pillar 5: Support Trusted Community Based Providers to Serve the Needs of those In Deep Poverty

Support our Caregiving Workforce by Ensuring Equitable Wages and Develop Meaningful Supports for Unpaid Caregivers

Provide Community-Based Providers with Consistent and Equitable Access to State Funding that Adequately Keeps Pace with Rising Costs

State Actions

Support our Caregiving Workforce by Ensuring Equitable Wages and Develop Meaningful Supports for Unpaid Caregivers

Protecting Domestic Workers' Rights and Fair Wages

IDOL enforces the Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights Act, ensuring domestic workers receive labor protections including overtime requirements under the Minimum Wage Law. IDOL continues conducting educational campaigns to ensure both employers and domestic workers understand their rights and responsibilities, protecting a vulnerable workforce that provides essential caregiving services in homes across Illinois.

Increasing Direct Care Worker Compensation

IDoA increased reimbursement rates for Community Care Program In-Home Services providers from \$28.07 to \$29.63 per hour effective January 1, 2025, supporting a minimum wage of \$18 per hour for home care aides. This rate increase helps ensure caregivers can earn wages that better reflect the value of their essential work. The program also allows family members to serve as paid home care aides when they meet prerequisites and complete required training, providing economic support for family caregivers.

Developing Professional Training and Career Pathways

IDoA funded development of a specialized Caregiver Specialist training curriculum through RUSH University to enhance the skills of professionals employed by Area Agencies on Aging who support family caregivers. This investment in professional development helps ensure family caregivers receive high-quality guidance and support from knowledgeable specialists.

Building Statewide Caregiver Support Systems

IDoA participated in the Administration for Community Living's Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center, a technical assistance collaborative focused on recruiting and retaining direct care workers. IDoA was also selected for the Caregiving State Policy Learning Collaborative hosted by national foundations, positioning Illinois to learn from and implement best practices in caregiver support.

To directly support unpaid family caregivers, IDoA added comprehensive family and caregiver resources to its website and convened a work group to plan for launching a dedicated Caregiver Portal by July 2027, creating a centralized resource hub for those providing unpaid care to family members.

Provide Community-Based Providers with Consistent and Equitable Access to State Funding that Adequately Keeps Pace with Rising Costs

Adjusting Reimbursement Rates to Support Service Sustainability

IDoA increased reimbursement rates for Community Care Program In-Home Services providers from \$28.07 to \$29.63 per hour effective January 1, 2025. This 5.6% rate increase demonstrates the State's commitment to ensuring provider reimbursements keep pace with rising operational costs, including the need to support competitive wages for home care aides at a minimum of \$18 per hour.

Conclusion

In FY25, the State continued to support impactful programs to help Illinois residents living in poverty. The coming year presents unique challenges as federal policy changes create new burdens that will drive more people into poverty, and make it even harder for those already living in poverty to establish economic stability. With federal safety net programs like SNAP (formerly food stamps) and Medicaid facing drastic cuts, the State will require innovative approaches to minimize harm to Illinois residents. The State cannot backfill lost federal funding, and collaboration among State agencies, community-based partners, philanthropy, and the business community will become all the more essential.

INTERAGENCY WORKGROUP ON POVERTY AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY

Appendix A

Number of IL Residents at Various Income Levels

Year	Extreme Poverty 0-49% FPL	% Change	Poverty 0-99% FPL	% Change	Low Income 100-199% FPL	% Change
2023	731,469	-4.2	1,426,517	-2.9	1,743,004	-0.8
2022	763,512	+2.9	1,469,643	-1.9	1,757,880	-4.3
2021	742,192	+17.8	1,498,523	+5.5	1,836,332	-1.0
2020	[no data available]					
2019	630,012	-9.4	1,420,542	-5.9	1,854,973	-6.8
2018	695,247	-4.01	1,509,247	-3.9	1,989,265	-1.9
2017	724,307	-2.0	1,569,753	-3.2	2,027,266	-1.6
2016	738,806	-5.8	1,621,508	-4.8	2,060,534	-1.7
2015	784,584	-5.4	1,703,258	-5.6	2,095,725	-2.8
2014	829,130	-3.1	1,804,535	-2.2	2,156,083	-0.6
2013	855,537	+4.3	1,845,393	-0.3	2,169,443	-2.2
2012	820,554	-5.01	1,850,562	-1.6	2,217,821	-1.2
2011	863,868	+2.13	1,879,965	+8.6	2,245,506	+1.1
2010	764,391		1,731,711		2,220,781	

Number of People Living in Poverty by Age Group

Year	Group	Number of People Living in Poverty (<100% FPL)	Percent Below Poverty Level
2023	Children (Under 18)	389,823	14.7%
	Working Age (18-64)	809,869	10.8%
	Older Adults (65+)	226,825	10.6%
2022	Children	424,983	15.9%
	Working Age	830,755	11.0%
	Older Adults	213,905	10.2%

<https://data.census.gov/table?q=poverty%20Alexander%20county%202022&g=050XX00US17003>
Poverty: 2000 to 2012 (2011, 2012, 2000- below poverty and extreme poverty).

INTERAGENCY WORKGROUP ON POVERTY AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY

Year	Group	Number of People Living in Poverty (<100% FPL)	Percent Below Poverty Level
2021	Children	442,261	16%
	Working Age	851,062	11.2%
	Older Adults	205,200	10%
2020	Children	454,654	16.2%
	Working Age	864,994	11.3%
	Older Adults	169,022	8.8%
2019	Children	436,327	15.7%
	Working Age	814,173	10.7%
	Older Adults	170,042	8.6%
2018	Children	456,926	16.2%
	Working Age	881,959	11.4%
	Older Adults	170,362	8.8%
2017	Children	486,196	17.0%
	Working Age	921,313	11.9%
	Older Adults	162,244	8.6%
2016	Children	511,679	17.7%
	Working Age	943,685	12.1%
	Older Adults	166,144	9.2%
2015	Children	558,784	19.1%
	Working Age	995,263	12.6%
	Older Adults	149,211	8.5%
2014	Children	593,186	20.2%
	Working Age	1,059,126	13.4%
	Older Adults	152,223	8.8%
2013	Children	616,060	20.7%
	Working Age	1,081,022	13.6%
	Older Adults	148,311	8.8%
2012	Children	624,272	20.7%
	Working Age	1,082,219	13.7%
	Older Adults	144,071	8.8%
2011	Children	658,340	21.6%
	Working Age	1,091,542	13.8%
	Older Adults	130,083	8.2%
2010	Children	600,045	19.4%

INTERAGENCY WORKGROUP ON POVERTY AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY

Year	Group	Number of People Living in Poverty (<100% FPL)	Percent Below Poverty Level
	Working Age	1,001,778	12.7%
	Older Adults	129,888	8.4%

Number of Poor and Poverty Rate in Illinois: 2000 to 2022

Year	Percent Extreme Poverty (<50% FPL)	Percent below Poverty (<100% FPL)	Percent below 125% FPL
2023	6.0%	11.6%	14.6%
2022	6.2%	11.9%	15.3%
2021	6.0%	12.1%	15.4%
2020	5.5%	12.0%	15.7%
2019	5.1%	11.5%	15.0%
2018	5.6%	12.1%	16.1%
2017	5.8%	12.6%	16.7%
2016	5.9%	13.0%	17.1%
2015	6.2%	13.6%	17.8%
2014	6.6%	14.4%	18.7%
2013	6.8%	14.7%	18.9%
2012	6.5%	14.7%	19.0%
2011	6.9%	15.0%	19.6%
2010	6.1%	13.8%	18.1%
2009	6.0%	13.3%	17.5%
2008	5.4%	12.2%	16.3%
2007	5.3%	11.9%	15.8%
2006	5.5%	12.3%	16.2%
2005	5.5%	12.0%	15.7%
2004	5.8%	11.9%	16.0%
2003	5.2%	11.3%	15.1%
2002	5.6%	11.6%	14.8%
2001	4.9%	11.2%	14.5%
2000	4.6%	11.1%	14.7%

<https://data.census.gov/table?q=S1701&g=040XX00US17&y=2022>

INTERAGENCY WORKGROUP ON POVERTY AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY

Poverty by County 2023

County	Families below Poverty (<100% FPL)	Persons below 150% FPL	Persons below Poverty (<100% FPL)
Pulaski	15.2%	37.8%	26.1%
Alexander	13.3%	34.2%	21.0%
Johnson	13.1%	23.6%	16.7%
Union	12.4%	27.6%	19.4%
Saline	13.0%	26.2%	17.1%
Jackson	12.1%	35.1%	21.8%
White	13.1%	28.9%	16.4%
Franklin	12.3%	29.0%	16.9%
Perry	12.7%	24.6%	16.9%
Jefferson	11.4%	23.0%	14.2%
Marion	11.0%	25.7%	16.2%
Fayette	11.1%	25.2%	16.5%
Bond	11.1%	21.1%	12.7%
Coles	11.4%	27.6%	18.4%
Pike	11.0%	25.9%	15.3%
Vermillion	12.2%	27.6%	17.2%
Logan	11.2%	18.8%	13.7%
Hancock	11.6%	21.0%	12.7%
McDonough	11.4%	29.8%	19.9%
Rock Island	11.1%	23.0%	15.4%
Winnebago	11.6%	25.4%	16.0%
DeKalb	10.9%	23.2%	15.9%
Knox	10.5%	26.6%	15.9%
Schuyler	8.9%	26.4%	19.3%
Champaign	7.8%	25.7%	18.0%
Fayette	11.1%	25.2%	16.5%
Clay	10.9%	27.5%	16.7%
Edwards	10.5%	27.0%	17.0%

Population in thousands. Population as of March of the following year. Information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions is available at <https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar23.pdf>

Note: data exists in this spreadsheet from 1980-2023

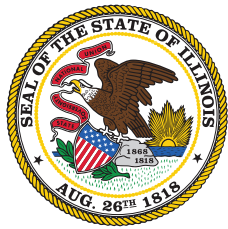
Poverty: 2000 to 2012 (2011, 2012, 2000- below poverty and extreme poverty).

Note: The percentages in each category are additive, meaning individuals are counted in multiple categories if they meet the criteria for more than one. For example, those below 50% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) are also included in the 100% and 125% below FPL categories.

Citation: [Illinois Poverty Map](#)

** definition of families

Note: Red highlight denotes absolute highest per category while yellow highlights denote the ten highest counties per column.



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