



JB Pritzker, Governor
Paula A. Basta, M.Div., Director

Respect for Yesterday
Support for Today
Plan for Tomorrow

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Location**

IDoA COVID-19 Resources

Happy Holidays



December 17, 2021

Dear Aging Network:

Happy holidays from all of us at the Department on Aging! No matter how you celebrate (or even if you don't!), I hope you are able to dedicate some time to resting and recharging before the new year begins.

As 2021 comes to a close, we can look back on a year of impressive successes, despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic. This year, our AAAs facilitated the delivery of nearly 1 million home-delivered meals each month, responding to a 50% increase in demand compared to pre-COVID levels. This is an outstanding demonstration of collaboration by community partners and volunteers to reach older adults at risk of food insecurity and help meet their nutritional needs.

Additionally, our Aging Network did a tremendous job reaching out to older adults to help them schedule COVID vaccination appointments, coordinating transportation to vaccine clinics as needed and arranging for in-home vaccinations for homebound individuals. Nearly 100,000 older adults were engaged by our CCUs alone, and 16 CCUs helped organize a total of 352 vaccine clinics so that older adults could get their shot without having to snag a rare slot at a drugstore.

I'd be remiss if I didn't also mention our work to combat social isolation, especially because the holiday season can amplify feelings of [loneliness](#) among older adults. Click [here](#) to read about how 3,307 older adults and persons with disabilities received technology bundles through the Illinois Care Connections program. Many of the recipients had never owned or used a tablet before, but they were able to follow the instructions provided to make video calls to loved ones and stay connected while staying safe at home. **To refer a CCP participant for the current round of Illinois Care Connections, please visit <https://care.iltech.org/>.**

Throughout this pandemic, we have all witnessed the resilience and adaptability of our Aging Network and of Illinois' older adult population. I continue to be blown away by the work you're doing to support older adults and family caregivers, and I am incredibly grateful for your partnership.

As we celebrate the holidays, I hope you get to unplug, step away from work, and spend

time safely connecting with loved ones. Especially if your family includes partially vaccinated kids or vulnerable older adults and babies, make sure to [get your extra shot of protection](#) before you travel!

Wishing you a happy and healthy holiday season, and I look forward to continuing our work together in 2022.

Sincerely,



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

The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with appropriate State and Federal statutes. If you feel you have been discriminated against, call the **Senior HelpLine at (800) 252-8966; (888) 206-1327 (TTY)**

