

LeadingAge Illinois members help thousands of older adults every day by providing them the highest quality care and services in the places they call home. This document lists our member-driven **2021 Public Policy Priorities** and our planned advocacy work before the Illinois General Assembly, the Executive Branch and State Regulatory Agencies. The process we utilize to identify the issues and frame our association priorities begins with engaging our nearly 400 member organizations and continues with work through our cabinets, public policy committee and board of directors. Our priorities are all based on strengthening our members and protecting and enriching the lives of the older adults they serve.

Legislative Branch:

Legal Judgements:

Applicable Member Settings: All

[HB3360](#), as amended by Senate Amendment #1, passed the legislature late in the Lame Duck Session and provides for sweeping allowance for recovery of prejudgment interest (9%) in actions brought to recover for personal injury. We will urge the Governor to veto the legislation. If the legislation becomes law, we will work to introduce and pass legislation removing language from the Nursing Home Care Act requiring the payment of attorneys fees.

Medicaid Reform:

Applicable Member Settings: Nursing Homes

Work to reform the Medicaid rate system, including developing a methodology built on appropriate staffing, the patient driven-payment model, and quality measures.

Assisted Living and Shared Housing Act and Code

Applicable Member Setting: Assisted Living

Along with the Assisted Living Cabinet, we have developed amendments to the Assisted Living and Shared Housing regulations to bring them up-to-date with the current industry standards and trends. We will work to introduce this regulatory proposal for submission to the rulemaking process, amending the [Assisted Living and Shared Housing Establishment Code](#).

Biometric Information Privacy Act

Applicable Member Settings: All

Work to educate legislators on the impact this law has on providers and push for legislation to amend the Act with provisions that will protect the aging services industry.

Insurance Coverage of COVID-19 Testing in Congregate Settings

Applicable Member Settings: Assisted Living

We had a partial victory at the close of the 101st Illinois General Assembly session in the passage of [SB1510](#). The bill, signed by the Governor in March, 2021 creates the COVID-19 Medically Necessary Diagnostic Testing Act, stating that third party payers shall cover the cost of COVID-19 testing for nursing home employees. We will work to pass legislation that will include other Assisted Living and Supportive Living in the mandated coverage.

“Grocery Tax”

Applicable Member Settings: Assisted Living, Life Care Facilities

Work to re-introduce legislation amending the [Service Occupation Tax Act](#) and [Service Use Tax Act](#) to extend the 1% rate (rather than the 6.25%) of tax to food prepared for immediate consumption and transferred incident to a sale of service at a community licensed by the [Assisted Living and Shared Housing Act](#) or that holds a permit issued under the [Illinois Life Care Facilities Act](#).

Nurse Licensure Compact

Applicable Member Settings: All

With the goal of increasing the supply of nurses in Illinois, we will collaborate with other associations to pass legislation Nurse Licensure Compact legislation. This would allow for nurses in participating states to have one multistate license with the ability to practice and communicate with patients or students, both physically and electronically, across state lines.

Protect Telehealth

Applicable Member Settings: All

Work to ensure have access to safe, quality telehealth services in Illinois after the public health emergency. As a member of the [Coalition to Protect Telehealth](#), we will work to align telehealth coverage and payment with in-person care.

HCBS Funding and Licensure Program

Applicable Member Setting: Home and Community Based Services

Explore policy solutions that ensure state funding is adequate to cover the costs of Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). We will also continue to monitor any proposed changes to the home care licensure regulations to ensure member interests are represented.

Executive Branch/State Agencies:

Surge Staffing Program for Senior Living

Applicable Member Settings: All

The State of Illinois launched multiple health care staffing contracts to increase hospital staffing as a part of their new Surge Staffing Program. With staffing being a critical issue in our member communities, we will formally request that the Governor and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) include long-term care and other congregate member settings in the program.

Nursing Home Surveys

Applicable Member Setting: Nursing Homes

We will continue to address survey issued with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), including the increase in infection control surveys. The increase/frequency of surveys during the pandemic take away valuable time and resources, distracting staff from taking care of residents during a public health emergency.

Price Gouging

Applicable Member Settings: All

Work with the Illinois Attorney General's Office and alert them to take action to stop unfair pricing on items that are crucial to aging services providers in caring for and serving older adults. We will also continue to meet with legislators on a potential legislative proposal to regulate unfair business practices and prohibiting predatory price increases during states of emergency.

Federal Level:

Affordable Housing Funding and Expansion

Applicable Member Setting: Affordable Housing

Work with LeadingAge National to advocate for the surpassing of normal funding levels and regulatory frameworks to meet the challenges of COVID-19 for affordable senior housing residents and providers. Additionally, we will work to support significant expansion of affordable senior housing and Service Coordinators as well as funding for WiFi installation.

Grassroots Advocacy:

Through the Partners in Quality campaign, we will work with members to educate legislators at the state and federal levels on issues impacting member settings and continue to forge relationships between members and legislators by conducting virtual visits in 2021.

LeadingAge Illinois is one of the largest and most respected associations representing providers of older adult care and services. A trusted voice by legislators and government officials, we are committed to advancing excellence in the industry. LeadingAge Illinois advocates for quality services, promotes innovative practices and fosters collaboration. We serve the full spectrum of providers including home and community based services (HCBS), senior housing, life plan communities, assisted living, supportive living and skilled nursing/rehabilitation centers. LeadingAge Illinois is the state affiliate of LeadingAge and Argentum (previously the Assisted Living Federation of America).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to our public policy team.