

December 2025

Inside Aging

The Official Newsletter
of the Pennsylvania Department of Aging



*Snowman ornaments contributed by New Florence Center for Active Adults,
Westmoreland County.*



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[Website: pa.gov/Aging](https://pa.gov/Aging)

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Focus On ***Aging News***



2025-26 State Budget Delivers Major Wins for the Department of Aging

The Department of Aging is celebrating major wins for the 52 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and the Department in the 2025-26 budget that Governor Josh Shapiro signed into law in late November. The budget allocated more than \$10 million in funding to help the AAAs address critical needs for older adults, helping them to stay safe, healthy and engaged in their communities.



Secretary of Aging Jason Kavulich recently visited the Luzerne-Wyoming Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and hosted a community conversation roundtable with AAA staff, legislators and community members about the funding, which service areas it may benefit at the AAA, and challenges the agency is seeing as service needs rise in the community.

“This investment marks a continuation of the Shapiro Administration’s strong commitment to strengthening services for older adults, resulting in a multi-year increase to the 52 Area Agencies on Aging like they have not seen before,” said Secretary Kavulich. “Under the leadership of Governor Shapiro, we have seen steady, continued investment in senior centers, in Aging Our Way, PA, our 10-year plan for healthy aging; and a new Alzheimer’s, Dementia and Related Disorders office. These investments are making history and helping to build a brighter future for all of us to age in Pennsylvania.”



The discussion included Mary Roselle, Executive Director, Luzerne/Wyoming County AAA; Mary Schell, Deputy Director, Luzerne/Wyoming County AAA; State Representative Eddie Day Pashinski and Noah Davis, northeast regional chairperson, PA Council on Aging, elder abuse task force members and other community leaders.

“Our agency is proud to have developed a variety of meaningful programs to keep older adults connected, healthy and active,” said Luzerne-Wyoming AAA executive director Mary Roselle. “Older adults love our senior community centers and rely on the meals we provide. Our protective services and care management teams work hard every day to keep older adults safe and address an array of complex situations. We are part of the fabric of this community and demand for our services continues to grow — so we need and welcome the additional resources contained in this new state budget.”

“As a member of our General Assembly representing Luzerne County communities, I am proud that our new state budget includes strong support for our Area Agencies on Aging,” said Rep. Pashinski. “Our social services workers approach our older neighbors’ needs with love and respect, and we need to support them with resources adequate to the tremendous work they’re doing touching individual lives every day.”

The \$10 million increase in funding included in the new budget can be used for any aging program. Services that could benefit from the funding infusion include protective services, senior community centers, reimbursements for caregivers enrolled in the Caregiver

Support Program; and the OPTIONS program, which provides assistance to residents aged 60 and older who want to stay in their own homes.

Governor Shapiro's budget also invests another \$3 million for [Aging Our Way, PA](#) – Pennsylvania's 10-year strategic, multi-sector plan to meet the needs and preferences of older adults – to continue building community supports so we can all keep thriving as we age.

The budget also delivered \$5 million to the Department of Health for research on neurodegenerative disease like Alzheimer's, ALS, and Parkinson's. This research investment follows the creation of the Commonwealth's first-ever Alzheimer's, Dementia and Related Disorders office at the Department of Aging last year.

Pennsylvania Attorney General Launches Elder Exploitation Section to Expand Protections for Older Adults



Attorney General Dave Sunday was joined by Secretary Kavulich, legislators and advocates for older adults to announce the launch of the AG's Elder Exploitation Section – an expansion of protections and services for older Pennsylvanians with the focus on deterring financial theft and holding offenders criminally responsible.

The Elder Exploitation Section will primarily concentrate on cases involving financial exploitation, deception, and theft from older adults – typically committed by relatives, caregivers, and/or appointed conservators and powers of attorney.

Calling the announcement “a win for everyone here today and especially for older adults,” Secretary Kavulich celebrated the Attorney General’s new team as pivotal in filling gaps of expertise and time at local levels. Pennsylvania’s 52 Area Agencies on Aging investigate more than 41,000 cases of suspected abuse each year.

The Office of the Attorney General collaborated with PDA to discuss scams impacting older adults and how to protect themselves as part of an initiative called *Aging Together in PA*. Produced in partnership with public broadcasting stations WVIA (northeastern PA) and WITF (southcentral PA), the project is aimed at presenting programming and driving discussion about resources for Pennsylvania’s rapidly growing older population. *Aging Together in PA* is designed to educate and inform audiences about the challenges and opportunities impacting older Pennsylvanians.

[Check Out Aging Together in PA Videos](#)

New PA Law Maintains PACE/PACENET Enrollee Benefits Through 2027

More than 250,000 older adults depend on Pennsylvania’s prescription assistance programs, PACE and PACENET, to be able to afford life-saving medications. However, due to Social Security cost-of-living adjustments (COLA), about 20,000 of those enrollees were facing disqualifying increases in their overall income.

Governor Josh Shapiro recently signed legislation into law to protect these older Pennsylvanians by maintaining their PACE prescription medication benefits. House Bill 923, now Act 49 of 2025, renews the cost-of-living moratorium for PACE/PACENET through December 31, 2027. The original moratorium was set to expire December 31, 2025.

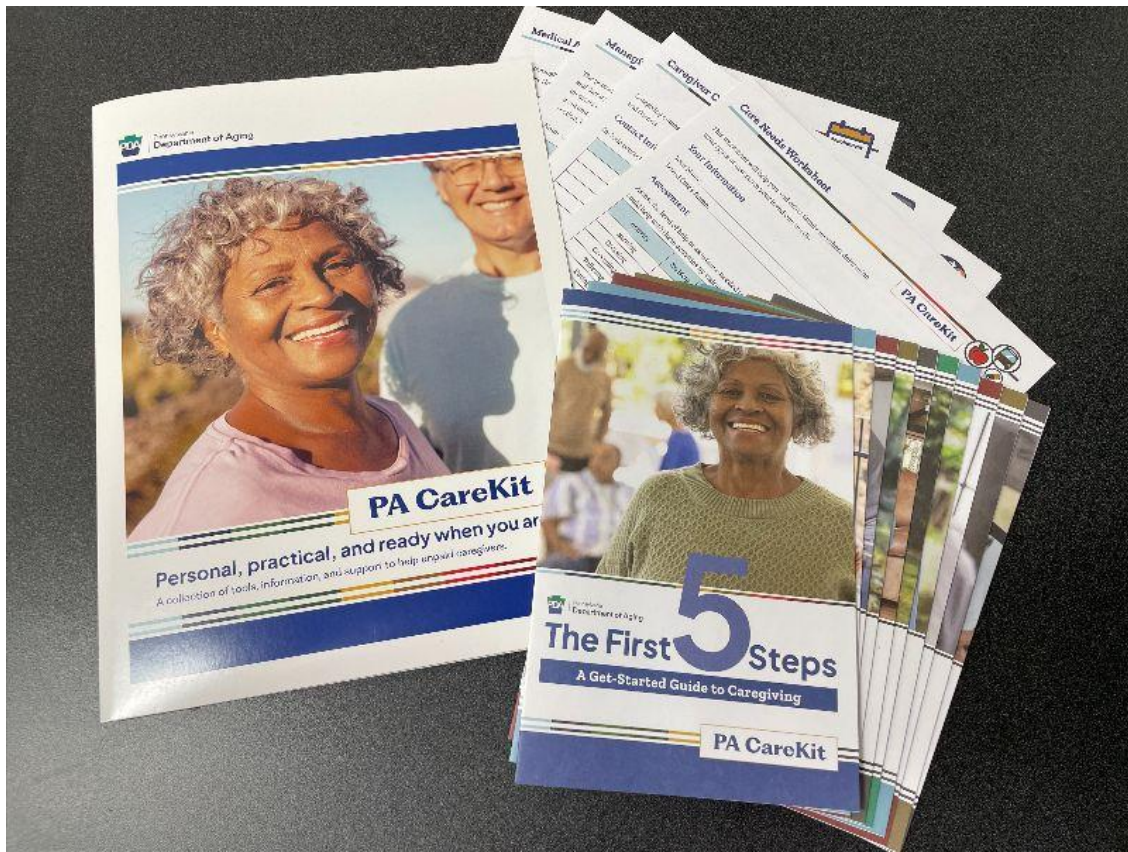
[Learn more about PACE and PACENET by visiting the Department of Aging’s website.](#)

PDA Helps Honor Direct Care Workers Across PA



More than 400,000 Pennsylvanians depend on our paid caregiving workforce for assistance in their home. PDA was proud to sponsor and support the Pennsylvania Homecare Association's 2025 Direct Care Worker of the Year Awards and recognize 172 direct care workers across the Commonwealth with certificates from the Department of Aging. Deputy Secretary Jonathan Bowman spoke at this annual event, which honors the dedication and compassion of home-based care professionals and the vital role that direct care workers play in home-based care.

PA CareKit is a Hit! More Than 150,000 Pennsylvanians Have Visited PDA's Website for Resources for Unpaid Caregivers



Since PDA's launch of the PA CareKit in May – a resource to support the Commonwealth's nearly 2.4 million unpaid caregivers – more than 150,000 people have taken advantage of the tailored services available on [the Department's website](#).

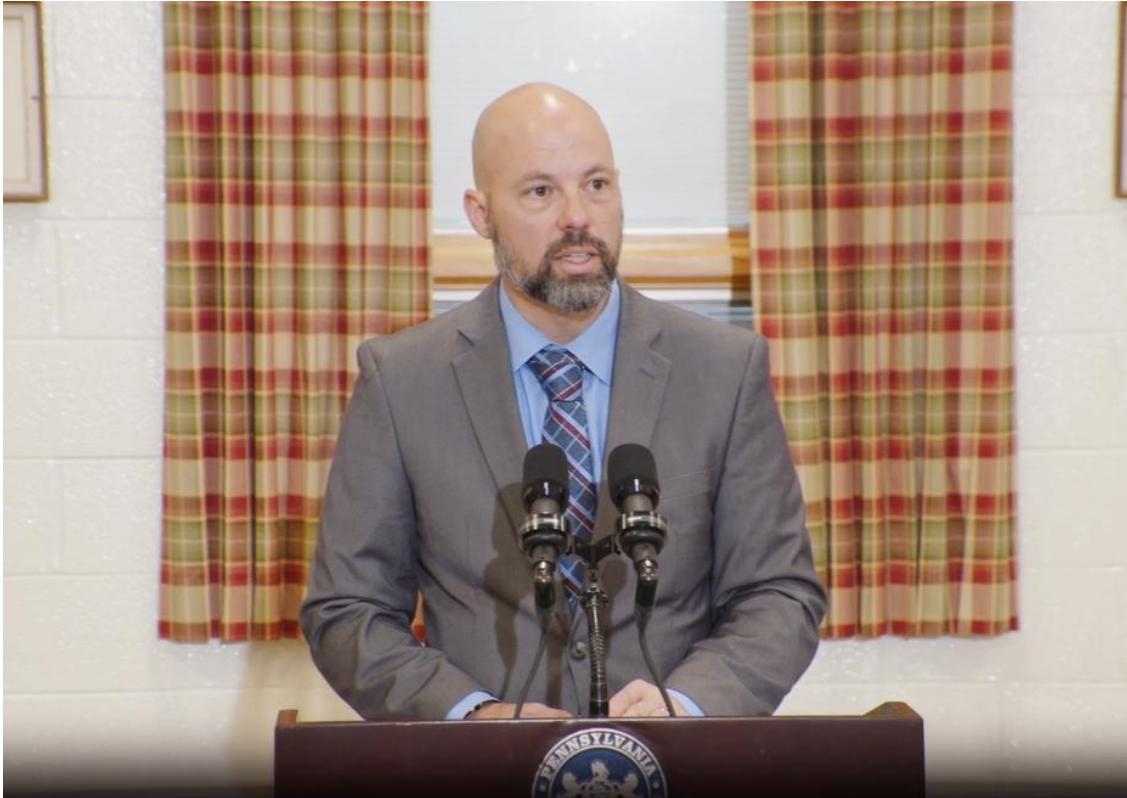
The PA CareKit can help caregivers with training, connections to respite services, and personalized tools to help caregivers like spouses, adult children, and grandparents raising grandchildren address their unique situations.

Nearly 6,600 Pennsylvanians have visited the [PA CareKit Caregiver Quiz](#), a tool that helps them understand their needs and receive tailored support and resources based on their caregiving situation.

The Department has been spreading the word about the PA CareKit through a digital marketing campaign and by unveiling the PA CareKit in person to caregivers and advocates in communities across the Commonwealth. Television ads will launch in early 2026.

Printed materials from the PA CareKit are available for free at community libraries, the 52 Area Agencies on Aging, and Senior Community Centers across the Commonwealth – and [an electronic version is available on the Department's website](#).

Shapiro Administration Highlights Safety for Older Drivers



Deputy Secretary Bowman joined representatives from PennDOT, the PA State Police, the PA Insurance Department and the PA American Automobile Association to share advice on safe driving and resources available to older Pennsylvanians during older driver safety awareness week, which is annually the first week of December.

More than 26 percent of Pennsylvania's 9.1 million licensed drivers are 65 and older. In 2024, there were 21,986 crashes involving at least one driver over the age of 65 that resulted in 308 total fatalities. This represents 19.8 percent of all crashes and 27.3 percent of all fatalities. Older drivers generally have fewer crashes per driver than the national average – but they have more crashes per mile of driving.

Older Driver Safety News Release

Older Pennsylvanians Create Hundreds of Handmade Ornaments for the State Capitol Christmas Tree



2025 Capitol Christmas tree is a 25-foot Douglas Fir, grown by Crystal Spring Tree Farm in East Lehigh, Carbon County.



*Alle-Kiski Center for Active Adults,
Westmoreland County*



*The Brockwayville Depot, Jefferson
County*



*Eastern Upper Bucks Senior Center,
Bucks County*



*Panther Valley Senior Center, Carbon
County*

PDA sent out its annual call for Senior Community Centers (SCCs) to create and send in holiday ornaments, and older adults answered!

Handmade ornaments from 93 SCCs in 36 counties across the Commonwealth are hanging on the Christmas tree in the Main Rotunda of the State Capitol Building through January 8, 2026.

You can see more of the ornaments submitted by visiting the [Department of Aging's Facebook page](#).

What's New ***in the Commonwealth***



Department of Human Services Unveils Plan to Improve Rural Health Care Services



At the PA Mountains Rural Health Conference held at Indiana University of PA, Secretary Kavulich joined (from left) PA Insurance Commissioner Michael Humphreys, Department of Human Services Secretary Dr. Val Arkoosh and Department of Health Secretary Dr. Debra Bogen for a panel discussion of the human services program implications of the HR 1 “One Big Beautiful Bill” federal spending act, and opportunities under the new Rural Health Transformation Plan.

The Department of Human Services recently released its Rural Health Transformation Plan, which serves as Pennsylvania’s application for support from the federal Rural Health Transformation Fund and comprehensive plan to support innovation and improve access to essential health services in rural communities.

If the federal government approves the plan, it will provide up to \$200 million per year for five years to improve health care access, quality and outcomes in rural communities across the Commonwealth.

[Read more about the plan on the Department of Human Services website.](#)

Home Heating Assistance Program Now Open



Enrollment is now open for the 2025-2026 Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The program helps low-income older adults and families pay their heating bills through a cash grant sent directly to the utility company/fuel provider. Households in immediate danger of being without heat can also qualify for crisis grants. These grants do not have to be repaid.

For more information about LIHEAP, including how to qualify and sign up, visit the [Department](#)

[of Human Services' website.](#)

Deadline is December 31 to Apply for Your Property Tax or Rent Rebate



Learn more:
revenue.pa.gov/PTRR



Older and disabled Pennsylvanians have until December 31, 2025, to file for their 2024 Property Tax/Rent Rebate. The Department of Revenue began issuing rebates on July 1 to those who have already applied.

The rebate program benefits eligible Pennsylvanians aged 65 and older; widows and widowers aged 50 and older; and people with disabilities age 18 and older. The maximum standard rebate is \$1,000, and the income limit is \$46,520 a year for both homeowners and

renters.

Older adults can submit their application for free through myPATH in [English](#) or [Spanish](#). Free assistance is available across the state at [Department of Revenue district offices](#), [local Area Agencies on Aging](#), or state legislators' offices.

Older adults must reapply for a rebate every year as they are based on annual income and property taxes or rent paid during the prior year.

Learn more about the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program on the [Department of Revenue's website](#).

Get Some ***Good Feels***



Show PDA Your 'Good Feels' Moments

Whether it's volunteers giving of their time and talent, a PEER graduation, or a fun exercise program, PDA wants to see your 'good feels' moments. Send photos and some details to agingcomms@pa.gov, and you could see your moment in a future edition of Inside Aging and on [PDA's Facebook page](#).

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging Commemorates Older Adults and Community during Fall Fundraiser



The Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) recently hosted its “Enriching Lives, Preserving Dignity” Fall Fundraiser. Many old and new friends of PCA gathered for an evening of celebration of serving older Philadelphians. All proceeds from the event benefit the Rodney D. Williams Philadelphia Fund for Seniors, which supports the vital, basic services that PCA provides to help older adults maintain their maximum levels of health and productivity, and age in place in the community.

Left to Right: Becky Lorah, PACE Outreach and Enrollment Manager; Najja Orr, PCA President and CEO; Tom Snedden, Director of PACE

Secretary Kavulich Helps Bring Thanksgiving Meals, Social Connection to Older Adults in Lackawanna County



Secretary Kavulich joined state and local leaders and volunteers from Meals on Wheels of NEPA, United Way of Lackawanna, Wayne & Pike, and the Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging to prepare and deliver Thanksgiving meals to older adults who are homebound.

The group put together nearly 2,000 meals not only to provide older adults with some holiday cheer, but to also prevent social isolation and help older adults feel connected to their community during the holidays.

Affordable Housing Community Now Welcoming LGBTQ+ Older Adults Home in Allegheny County



Presbyterian SeniorCare Network and its partners recently celebrated the grand opening of Mosaic Apartments – a new affordable housing community in Pittsburgh for LGBTQ+ older adults and their allies.

The building offers 48 one- and two-bedroom apartments, community gathering spaces, a variety of amenities and easy access to public transit. A partnership with the Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh provided both capital and housing vouchers, making 35 of the apartments even more affordable.

Mosaic is the first LGBTQ+ older adult-friendly affordable housing in western Pennsylvania and only the second in the Commonwealth. The first is the John C. Anderson Apartments in Philadelphia, which opened in 2014 and became the nation's first LGBTQ+ older adult housing complex.

In-Person and Virtual ***Events***



Join Dementia Friendly Pennsylvania for a Free Webinar – The Alignment of Age-Friendly and Dementia Friendly Initiatives

Dementia Friendly Pennsylvania will present a free webinar at 11:30 AM on Wednesday, February 11 on put together Age-Friendly and Dementia Friendly initiatives.

[Register for the Webinar](#)



REIMAGINE Alzheimer's, Dementia & Related Disorders *Symposium*

Register Today

**Navigating a New Era
of Dementia Care:**
Treatment Breakthroughs,
Brain Health, and
Caregiver Support



**January 13, 2026
10 AM to 2 PM**



Update on *Legislation*



Looking Back

Legislation

- [H.B. 923](#) (Rivera) – PACE Cost of Living Adjustment
 - Signed into law as Act 49 of 2025 on November 24.
- [H.B. 1528](#) (Madden) – Grandfamily Assistance Program
 - Amended and received final passage in the House on November 19.
 - Referred to the Senate Aging and Youth Committee on November 24.
- [S.B. 1100](#) (Collett) – Authorizing the Development of AAA Fatality Review Teams
 - Introduced and referred to the Senate Aging and Youth Committee on November 24.

Committee Hearings

- The Senate Aging and Youth Committee [held a public hearing](#) on November 18, focusing on PDA's oversight of local Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). The committee heard from local AAAs to gain insight into the Department's monitoring practices and their effectiveness in ensuring consistent, high-quality services statewide. Testifiers included:
 - Secretary Kavulich
 - Rebecca May-Cole, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging
 - JR Reed, Executive Director, Lehigh County Office of Aging and Adult Services
 - Jessica Jones, Director, Berks County Area Agency on Aging

Looking Ahead

2026 Session Schedule

House

- January: 6 (NV), 26, 27, 28
- February: 2, 3, 4
- March: 23, 24, 25
- April: 13, 14, 15, 27, 28, 29
- May: 4, 5, 6
- June: 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30
- September: 28, 29, 30
- October: 5, 6, 7, 19, 20, 21
- November: 9, 10

Senate

- January: 6, 26, 27, 28
- February: 2, 3, 4
- March: 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25
- April: 20, 21, 22
- May: 4, 5, 6
- June: 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30



Pennsylvania
Department of Aging



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