

State of Illinois
Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor
Department of Human Services
Carol L. Adams, Ph.D., Secretary



ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

UPDATE 2007



SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

Dear Legislators,

We're pleased to present the *Illinois Department of Human Services 2007 Legislative Update*. Now in this fifth year of our administration, earlier promises of new and innovative initiatives and programs to advance self-sufficiency and economic stability for all Illinoisans have come into fruition. These successful efforts have been bolstered by on-going commitments to best practices, applied knowledge ingenuity and plan old hard work and the dedication of our employees, advocates and supporters.

Our services are expanding to meet the ever-emerging needs of the people of Illinois. Outreach, new programs and referrals for immigrants and refugees underscore our commitment toward inclusivity. A proactive approach to managing Information Technology and communications navigates us toward appropriate business decisions.

We champion the demand for fiscal accountability ever so fundamental to the sound management of publicly accountable programs and services. The pursuit of new resources and viable partnerships, both reliable DHS cornerstones, continues to help soothe interminable budget woes. While these considerations remain challenging we step up and do good. Among the achievements and accomplishments that bear mention are:

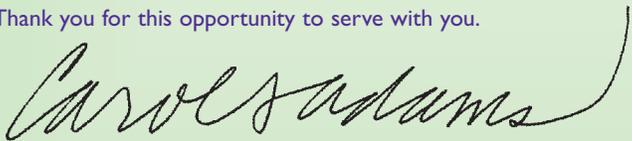
- The **Redeploy Illinois** initiative, entering its third successful year and located in Peoria, and Jefferson, Macon and St. Clair counties, has yielded a 44 percent reduction in the commitment of delinquent youth into the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice.
- The **Rehabilitation Services Disability Determination Unit**, entrusted to evaluate applicants for Social Security disability benefits, exceeded the national average of 83.5 days, for reducing processing time, to 74.7 days, and reduced pending claims from 19,477 in early 2007 to 17,661 by the end of the fiscal year.
- With funds extended by the Social Services Block Grant program in the amount of \$1.3 million through FY 2009, the **Illinois Katrina Assistance Relief Effort** has served more than 300 families who are survivors of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, making referrals for supportive services like job training, medical services, drug rehabilitation, mental health services, tutoring, and awarding stipends for car repairs, furniture purchases in its comprehensive effort to prevent homelessness.
- **Grants Administration** secured more than \$47.4 million in new competitive federal grants for fiscal year 2007, reflecting an increase in funding of more than \$16.3 million in four years.
- DHS is the pace setter for **improving food stamp participation** with a 75 percent rate that bests the national rate of 65 percent. This fine performance was awarded with a \$2.3 million bonus from the USDA.
- **The Safety Net Works** couples existing community services and new and innovative community strategies to help prevent violence among elementary and high school students, and dropouts. With funds made available by the Governor's Office to support local coalitions committed to preventing violence and promoting positive youth development, this program focuses on making targeted communities safer places for youth to be positively engaged so that they can grow and thrive
- **Assets\$Illinois**, a new DHS initiative with the Illinois Housing Development Authority, will provide 300 Illinois families with a \$2,000 savings match for assistance toward first time homeownership this year. It is anticipated that after three-years, 800-families will have benefited from this program.

■ The opening of **Illinois Welcoming Centers**, a component of the Governor's Office of New Americans Policy and Advocacy for refugees and immigrants, signals DHS' commitment to provide support services to 29,392 legal permanent residents and 148,526 immigrants in 2007.

■ Proclaimed the "**Miracle on Roosevelt Road**," DHS' partnership with the Chicago Lighthouse For The Blind employs five people who are blind, one person who is deaf and one person with an amputation to produce a Recipient Identification Number for each DHS customer. With this new collaboration, CLFB workers processed 21,000 RIN into the system in December, the first month after transition. Since 2004, 690,052 RIN have been created.

This is but a snapshot of DHS service delivery. Thanks to your informed counsel and support we forge ahead, eager to surpass our current benchmarks, resolved to create new programs and determined to set new goals with a renewed commitment toward helping all Illinoisans thrive toward self-assurance and independence.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve with you.

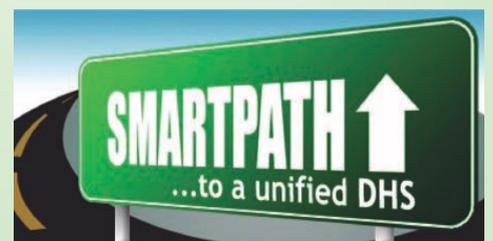


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Smart Path Update

In Region I, which encompasses the Metropolitan Chicago Area, Smart Path Liaisons developed a project called the Open Door Office, designed to seamlessly connect customers entering the DHS Division of Rehabilitation Services at 743 North Pulaski, in Chicago, to community-based services provided by any DHS offices or DHS-contracted community provider. Funded by the Michael Reese Health Trust (MRHT), DHS and health and disability advocates will partner to implement this three-year project. The primary goal is to improve the lives of people eligible for DHS benefits by streamlining service delivery. It is anticipated that lessons learned from the project will be replicated throughout DHS.



Fiscal Responsibility

DHS remains committed to maximizing resources and using taxpayer dollars wisely:

Increases in Federal Grant Funding

In FY2007, DHS secured over \$47.4 million in new competitive federal grant funds, to be realized over the life of the grants.

Maximizing Medicaid Matching Funds through Fee-for-Service Conversions

DHS successfully converted formerly grant-funded Community Integrated Living Arrangements and developmental training programs to a fee-for-service payment mechanism to increase Medicaid Waiver matching funds. DHS exceeded its goal for the first year, obtaining at least \$16.7 million in additional revenues. A portion of the matching funds that continue to be generated is being re-invested to expand the program.

Reducing Juvenile Commitments to the Department of Juvenile Justice

In the first two years of implementation, the four Redeploy Illinois pilot sites, on average, reduced commitments to IDJJ by 44 percent, or 226 fewer youth, thereby saving the State of Illinois millions of dollars.

Increase In Average Social Security Reimbursement Funds

When Vocational Rehabilitation customers who receive Social Security disability benefits successfully maintain their employment and earnings for at least a year, DHS receives reimbursement from the Social Security Administration for the cost of services provided and an administrative fee. In FY2007 DHS received an average of \$9,971 for 300 customers who met these criteria, a 14.7 percent increase from FY2006.

Approval of the TANF Work Verification Plan

Illinois' Work Verification Plan was approved by the US Department of Health and Human Services prior to the September 30, 2007 federal deadline, which relieved Illinois of a potential \$30 million penalty had the requirement not been met. Work verification will track the attendance of customers in their work activity and reinforce their participation.

Reducing Infant Mortality

Nine consecutive annual evaluations have shown that participation in WIC and Family Case Management during pregnancy substantially improves infant health. In particular, the rate of premature birth is more than 60 percent lower among participants in both programs: low birth weight is more than 35 percent lower; infant mortality is more than 55 percent lower; and health care expenditures during the first year of life are more than 30 percent lower. This improvement contributes an estimated annual savings of at least \$200 million in Medicaid expenditures for care required during the first year of life. Additional savings from avoided special education, disability and rehabilitation costs potentially accrue over a lifetime.

Illinois Katrina Assistance Response Effort (I-KARE)

Now in the final phase of the program, I-KARE continues to assist victims of Hurricane Katrina who remain in Illinois with homelessness prevention and self-sufficiency stabilization services. I-KARE has provided 224 households, (274 adults and 172 children), with assistance for rental, utility, medical, transportation, furniture, tutoring and car repairs. I-KARE referred 129 households for supportive services, including job training, drug rehabilitation and mental health services. The I-KARE toll-free hotline for people who are eligible for these services is: (800) 768-9146.



Illinois Welcoming Center



The Illinois Welcoming Center opened in July 2007 to increase the number of immigrants and refugees that have access to state services. In this short period of time it has served over 450 people. About 50 percent of the customers live in the immediate Melrose Park community, 25 percent are from suburban communities throughout the state, and the remaining 25 percent are from Chicago.



The Welcoming Center is located at 1708 Main Street, Melrose Park, Illinois 60160. The phone number is 708-338-6500, TTY: 708-450-0562. In order to accommodate the schedules of working immigrants, the Welcoming Center is open during nontraditional hours: Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm and Tuesday and Thursday from 10:30 am to 7:00 pm. The Center has bilingual staff (English-Spanish) and can access 29 other languages.

Technology Enhancement



DHS has redesigned its website. Visitors to the site, including those who need assistive technology or experience other barriers to language or reading skills, will find it accessible, dynamic and it will be continuously updated. Check it out: www.dhs.state.il.us.

In FY2007 DHS completed installation of 40 **videophones**, which enable DHS staff to communicate with deaf and hearing-impaired customers by using sign language. Staff uses high-speed connections in all DHS field offices that employ a counselor specializing in serving the deaf community.

Now in the second year of a three-year grant, a statewide **Telehealth Network** has been instituted which includes 16 operational sites. This new capability is a valuable tool in enabling DHS to provide clinical expertise in developmental disabilities in underserved areas throughout Illinois.

The Office of Inspector General implemented a new database program that enables **investigators to record case actions** while investigating in the field. Case actions automatically upload to the main database. This process makes case actions more timely, uses investigator time more efficiently, and allows supervisors to review case progress more quickly.

Implementation continues with the **PUNS** database, a component of the DHS cross-disability database, designed for people seeking services from the DHS Division of Developmental Disabilities. Currently there are more than 16,000 children and adults registered. Information regarding PUNS may be obtained at: www.dd.illinois.gov or toll-free numbers, 1-888-DDPLANS (Voice) or 1-866-376-8446 (TTY).

Customers can access Food Stamp benefits without having to continuously visit the Family Community Resource Center:

- **Six food pantries** in DuPage, Kane, Lake and Will counties offer **Express Stamps**. People visiting local food pantries can apply for food stamps, and if eligible, leave the pantry with their emergency food supply and a Link card. More than 800 applicants have been approved for Express Stamps.

- **Phone Stamps** allows working households to complete re-certification interviews via a scripted automated phone system. Approximately 65,000 households have been offered the phone system option and more than 14,000 (22 percent) have completed a Phone System Interview.

- Customers will soon be able to apply for Food Stamps and benefits via **on line application**. Finalization of the web application and process is underway.



Outstanding DHS Offices and Employees



The percentage of **people placed into employment** by Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) staff increased to 35 percent in FY2007 compared to 32 percent in FY2006 and 27 percent in FY2005. Direct placements by DHS staff represent a more efficient use of Vocational Rehabilitation funds.



The DRS **Disability Determination Services Unit, (DDS)** which evaluates applicants for Social Security disability benefits, continues to perform at a high level of quality, as demonstrated by key performance measures. DDS had an average initial claim

processing time of 74.7 days, compared to the national average of 83.5 days. DDS reduced the overall number of pending claims from 19,477 at the beginning of FY2007 to 17,661 at the end of the fiscal year. DDS had an initial accuracy rating of 98.2 percent, exceeding the national average of 96.5 percent.

DDS Administrator **Ann Robert** received the Leonor Carlson Disability Program Leadership Award, which honors one DDS employee, nationally, each year.

During FY2007, the **Office of the Inspector General** streamlined its case management, especially investigations concerning unfounded allegations. This yielded 10 percent more allegations, which resulted in 8 percent more investigations completed 12 percent faster, and closed 14 percent more cases than last year.



The USDA has recognized Illinois as a leader among the states in improving **Food Stamp Participation**. In 2006, Illinois was awarded a \$2.3 million bonus for the most improved participation access index. In the past three-years, while the food stamp participation rate has increased from 56 percent to 65 percent nationwide, the Illinois rate has improved from 61 percent to 75 percent.



Secretary Carol L. Adams and members of the DHS Executive Staff completed 18 **Employee Appreciation Tours** of state-operated facilities. Certificates for perfect attendance were presented to 306 DHS employees, and 350 employees received certificates for 30+ years of service.

Services for Families



DHS leads the charge for Rescue and Restore efforts in Illinois. The agency partners with the Chicago Foundation for Women on their statewide initiative to end Human Trafficking. The campaign: “What Will It Take? Building the Safest State for All Women and Girls,” has been launched to raise awareness and help end all forms of violence against women and girls.

DHS is collaborating with external partners to implement a three-year Ending Violence Against Women with Disabilities grant funded through the US Department of Justice. **Illinois Imagine** is designed to strengthen the service delivery system infrastructure and develop a statewide model for integrated community response to sexual violence against women with disabilities. This project will assess the system’s strengths and challenges, identifying opportunities for enhancement,



such as training and dissemination of informational materials.

Effective July 1, 2007 all **child care providers** participating in the subsidy program received a rate increase. In September 2007 the income eligibility guidelines for low-income families applying for childcare subsidy was increased to 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

DHS is moving families toward financial independence through the **Asset\$Illinois Homeownership Initiative**, a partnership between DHS and the Illinois Housing Development Authority. Asset\$Illinois will provide 350 Illinois families with Individual Development Accounts (IDA) that provide a 1:1 match on savings up to \$2,000 to assist with first time home purchases. The Illinois Housing Development Authority has committed \$850,000 over



the next three years to fund this initiative. During its first two months, the program accepted applications from 62 Illinois families and enrolled 47 participants into the program. The average monthly savings of program participants is more than \$80 per month, which is more than triple the national average for savings in IDA programs.

The **Quality Counts: Quality Rating System** was implemented to help provide quality childcare to children and families. This voluntary system is available to family childcare providers and licensed centers that serve children eligible for the Child Care Assistance Program. QRS offers progressive levels which providers can achieve by meeting specific quality criteria. When a provider has met criteria for a level, a certificate is awarded and the provider receives a quality add-on to the standard daily reimbursement rate.

Youth Services



Illinois Steps AHEAD is helping over 1,900 low-income, high school students improve academic performance and obtain financial aid for college.

Students at the **Illinois Center for Rehabilitation and Education - Roosevelt** participated in the Oh Sew Personal Program, which provides valuable real-world business experience and technical training as students learn to operate a sewing business and program sewing machines. Several customer organizations, including the Illinois Medical District Guest House Foundation, World Wings P.A.A., Easter Seals of Chicago, and Chicago Technology Park have utilized the program successfully.



DHS has added \$2 million to the **Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership (ICMHP)** and works collaboratively to support additional, innovative statewide services for children and adolescents. Included in this initiative are a significant Public Awareness/Anti-Stigma Campaign, an Early Intervention Initiative and a Transitional Youth Services Initiative.

DHS' programs to **prevent teen pregnancy** have contributed to the lowest proportion of infants born to teen mothers in Illinois history: 9.7 percent in 2003 and 2005.



Illinois continues its effort to implement recommendations from the 2005 **Autism Task Force** report. This year resulted in the successful application for two waivers:

- Effective July 1, 2007, the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approved a new, three-year waiver for 24-hour residential supports in DCFS-licensed Child Group Homes for children and young adults, ages three through 21, with developmental disabilities.
- Effective July 1, 2007, the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approved a new, three-year waiver for Home-Based Support Services for children and young adults, ages three to 21 with developmental disabilities.

Within the approved capacity, starting in January, an additional 182 people will receive waiver services using federal matching funds. The state continues to work on other high-priority recommendations, including the hiring of a Transition Coordinator to assist people transitioning from Early Intervention to school and from school to Adult Services.

Health



DHS has worked with system partners to increase the number of established **Mental Health Courts** throughout the state and to expand its Jail Data Link Program, which provides treatment for consumers between the County Jails and the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.

DHS and community partners have conducted the **Closing the Gap** campaign to reduce the infant mortality rate in four of Chicago's most troubled neighborhoods: Austin, Englewood, West Englewood and Auburn Gresham. Closing the Gap includes an awareness and media campaign, peer health education and a service provider collaboration to reduce the rates of premature birth and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Of all people who entered competitive employment in FY2007 after participation in the Vocational Rehabilitation program, 31 percent received **health insurance benefits** paid by employers. This is an increase of 30 percent for FY2006 and 29 percent in FY2005. These are small increases, they take

place in an environment where the percentage of workers in the United States with health insurance provided by their employer continues to decline, dropping from 60.2 percent to 59.7 percent between 2005 and 2006 (U.S. Census Bureau, report P60-233).

DHS was awarded a federal Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration Grant (SAMSHA) for the development of **Coercion-Free Environments** in its state-operated hospitals. The agency has dramatically reduced the utilization of restraints and seclusion, and has developed programs to enhance hospital quality and training efforts.

DHS' Recovery Support Services (RSS), working with the Illinois Certification Board, has been instrumental in developing a professional **Certified Recovery Support Specialist Credential** to allow people who have life experiences with mental illnesses and recovery to be credentialed for potential work/employment in the field of Behavioral Health. The RSS has also led the continued Wellness

Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) Facilitators' Training, now with over 200 facilitators trained statewide. Statewide Consumer Education also Support Call-Ins, reaching hundreds of consumers, were convened during the year.

Governor Rod R. Blagojevich has launched the new **Safety Net Works** initiative designed to create programs to prevent violence among grammar school and high school students. For high school dropout ages 16 - 24 an educational development track will be implemented. Through a process that examined both community and youth risk factors, 17 Chicago communities and 12 communities outside of the city have been targeted. Agencies committed to preventing violence and promoting positive youth development are eligible to apply for funds to support local coalitions that represent a broad network of community groups and organizations. In a competitive application process, grants will be awarded to 10 to 15 of the targeted communities in amounts ranging from \$250,000 - \$400,000 per year.

Alcoholism and Substance Abuse

- DHS has awarded grants to 18 communities with high rates of underage drinking and other problems related to alcohol abuse, to design and implement community-specific solutions.
- Access to Recovery served 4,000 people at the close of Year Two; serving 8,633 over the three-year life of the project. There were statistically significant decreases among clients, in average numbers of days, for use of any alcohol, alcohol to intoxication (both five or fewer drinks), any illegal drugs, cocaine/crack, marijuana, and heroin and statistically significant increases in the percentages of clients who reported being enrolled in school or training and being employed.
- DHS expanded the use of specialized evidenced-based technologies in treatment by an estimated 50 percent.
- Chicago Collaborative To End Chronic Homelessness provided permanent housing and intensive case management services for 59 chronically homeless men and women with mental health, substance misuse/abuse, or co-occurring disorders.
- Completing needs assessment to assess current treatment interventions resulted in an improvement in the adolescent treatment infrastructure, in challenges to engagement, and in barriers to service implementation.
- DHS developed, with the statewide youth committee, the Illinois Treatment Works.Org website. It includes directories, information for providers and families, meeting notes from IL-SAC workgroups and the youth sub-committee, and workforce development links.

Disability Services Advisory Committee (DSAC)

In the fall of 2006, the Disability Services Advisory Committee submitted a series of recommendations to the Governor and the Illinois General Assembly to enhance the state's ability to serve people with disabilities. With support from the Governor's Office, DHS has begun implementation of many of these recommendations, including:

- A partnership with the Illinois Housing Development Authority that will allow DHS to double the number of people transitioning from nursing facilities to Centers for Independent Living
- The creation of community crisis management teams to help people with developmental disabilities live successfully in the community
- An increase in the Division of Developmental Disabilities behavioral intervention rate
- An increase in funding for supportive housing for people with mental illness
- Expanding options for supported community-based housing for persons with mental illness.

Illinois was approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for a Money Follows the Person Demonstration Grant. Healthcare and Family Services will lead this effort in partnership with DHS to develop systems to help people with disabilities increase the flexibility in healthcare services and lifestyle choices.

Services for Persons with Disabilities

The number of people placed into competitive employment through the **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)** program increased 5.5 percent to 5,230 persons, compared to the previous fiscal year. This represents the first positive increase since FY 2004, when DHS modified its emphasis to serve individuals with the most significant disabilities. The increase demonstrates the effectiveness of DHS' efforts to work with this population. Individuals placed into competitive employment in FY2007 resulted in an average increase in earnings of \$11,220 per year compared to earnings before participation in the VR program. This represents a combined increase in annual earnings of \$58.7 million for these successful customers.

DHS has worked closely with the Corporation for Public Housing and the Illinois Housing

Development Authority to expand the statewide development of **Permanent Supported Housing** units for persons with mental illness.

Effective July 1, 2007, the federal government approved a five-year renewal of the **waiver for adults with developmental disabilities**. With an approved capacity of 14,000 participants, the waiver provides for residential services, home-based support services, developmental and vocational training, adaptive equipment, numerous therapies, and Individual Service and Support Advocacy. Required background checks for domestic employees hired on or after July 1, 2007, is also provided.

Since FY2003, the census of the State-Operated Developmental Centers has been reduced by 477 people, (from 3,026 to 2,549, more than 15 percent). DHS continues

to work to offer alternative supports and services to individuals who wish to leave the centers, while maintaining and improving staff-to-resident ratios for those who choose to remain at the centers.



In FY2007 DHS opened 8,759 new **Home Services Program (HSP)** cases, an increase of 7 percent over the previous fiscal year. These individuals had been determined by a physician to be at significant risk of nursing home placement. Providing in-home services to these individuals through HSP represents a substantial savings to the state compared to the cost of nursing facility care.

Immigrants and Refugees

DHS works closely with the Governor's Office of New Americans Policy and Advocacy to implement the state's commitment to serve immigrants and refugees. In 2007, 29,394 legal, permanent residents from Illinois applied for citizenship and 148,526 immigrants benefited through agency classes, workshops, and miscellaneous assistance.

A total of 2,251 Hispanic/Latino people were served by the Home Services Program in FY2007, an increase of 7.8 percent over FY2006. This demonstrates the effectiveness of HSP outreach efforts to this population, part of a continuing trend that has yielded a 35 percent increase in service to this community since FY2002.

DHS and the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights have partnered together to provide case management services for 19,05 Limited English Proficient customers. Interpretation services were provided 18,035 times, either by telephone or in-person, for individuals from 46 countries of origin. Applications were successfully received for 3,099 Medicaid, 1,759 Kid Care, 1,071 All Kids, and 4,026 food stamp cases.

Team Illinois helped the Latino Community in East Aurora by providing free clinics and recruiting more bilingual teachers. Plans to build an early childhood center are underway.

Legislative Update

In 2007, members of the Illinois General Assembly passed and Governor Rod R. Blagojevich signed into law a number of bills that positively impact the human services delivery system. These include:

HB 0226 mandates that gasoline and service stations must provide refueling services to persons with disabilities without additional charge and provide signage about the availability of that service.

HB 1009 provides that beginning in FY2008, the specified childcare threshold must be no less than 185 percent of the then-current federal poverty level for each family size.

HB 1330 creates the Ensuring Success in School Task Force to develop policies, procedures and protocols to be adopted by school districts for addressing educational and related needs of children and youth who are parents, expectant parents or victims of domestic or sexual violence to ensure their ability to stay in school, stay safe while in school and successfully complete their education

HB 2808 allows for the issuance of Autism Awareness license plates. Proceeds shall be paid to DHS for grants for research, education and awareness of autism and autism spectrum disorders.

SB 0015 requires the development of policies, procedures, information and educational materials related to the prevention, treatment and diagnosis of perinatal mental health disorders in women.

SB 0021 provides that insurance coverage shall not exclude emergency or other medical, hospital or surgical expenses solely on the basis of the insured being intoxicated or under the influence of a narcotic.

SB 0030 directs DHS to provide for a Schedule III, IV, & V controlled substance prescription monitoring program and the development of a prescriber and dispenser inquiry system.

SB 0259 regulates interpreters for the deaf through licensure by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission.

SB 0654 directs DHS to develop a strategic plan to help slow the rate of diabetes as a result of obesity and

other environmental factors.

SB 0765 provides that the State will endeavor to increase the percentage of community-based long-term care spending over the next 5 years. The allocation of funds shall not diminish the quality of services available or force residents to involuntarily accept home and community-based long-term care services.

SB 0776 establishes the Task Force on the Condition of African American Men in Illinois to determine the factors for and inventory programs to improve the condition of African American men, identify gaps in services and develop strategies to reduce duplication of services and maximize coordination between State agencies, providers and educational institutions.

SB 1368 grants the DHS Inspector General the authority to investigate alleged or suspected cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation of adults with disabilities living in domestic settings in the community.

SB 1746 creates the Illinois Latino Family Commission to improve and expand existing policies, services, programs and opportunities for Latino families.

Visit our web site at www.dhs.state.il.us to learn about the latest news at IDHS.

401 S. Clinton, Chicago, Illinois 60607
100 South Grand Avenue East, Springfield, Illinois 62762

Carol L. Adams, Ph.D., Secretary
312-793-1547 217-557-1601
Randy Wells, Director of Legislative Affairs
217-557-1551 (Voice) 312-793-0663 (TTY)
Aurelio Huertas Fabrizio, Director of Community Relations
312-793-2342 217-557-1554

