A close up of a building

Description automatically generated

**102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY:**

The Illinois General Assembly will convene in the Fall Veto Session November 15 – 17 and November 29 – December 1.

**GOVERNOR’S HIGHLIGHTS:**

**New Laws:** Governor Pritzker signed the following key bills this week:

**Medicaid Omnibus**: HB4343 represents the omnibus Medicaid package for 2022, including providing continuous eligibility for adults, increasing reimbursement for prenatal and postpartum care, and expanding coverage for immigrant adults.

Other bill provisions include:

* Medi-Car rate increase to incentivize provider participation and address the current shortage of transportation options, an issue that is especially affecting Medicaid customers who need pickup from residential settings.
* Coverage for acupuncture.
* Increases the Medicaid Community Spouse Resource Allowance.
* Mental health wellness checks in schools.
* Certified Nursing Assistance (CNA) Internship Program to build staff for all care options.
* $10 million dental rate increase targeting preventative services.
* Seeking federal approval to cover new Peer Support Recovery specialists as a part of substance use disorder treatment.
* Rate increase for external cephalic version rates (ECVs) to discourage the use of unnecessary Cesarean sections.

Read more [here.](https://www2.illinois.gov/Pages/news-item.aspx?ReleaseID=24972)

**Nursing Home Assessment and Rate Reform** [HB 246](https://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=246&GAID=16&GA=102&DocTypeID=HB&LegID=128124&SessionID=110) (Moeller/Gillespie) represents the nursing home assessment and rate payment methodology reform package that is designed to increase staffing levels and improve quality of care. The new law transitions to a new rate methodology – the Patient Driven Payment Model – which more accurately accounts for clinically relevant factors and increases by $7 the base per diem rate (to a total of $92.25). The package also addresses employee shortages at long-term care facilities and rewards certified nursing assistants who struggled during the pandemic by providing additional funding to facilities that incentivize the retention and promotion of CNAs. The legislation addresses understaffing of nursing facilities by requiring that – in order to qualify for additional funding – facilities meet at least 70% of the staffing levels outlined by the federal STRIVE study. The bill also provides $70 million in add-on payments that are specifically tied to quality of care and requires full transparency of ownership.  HB 246 passed both houses and now heads to the Governor’s desk. Read more [here.](https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.24981.html)

**Opioid Legislation**: Governor Pritzker signed a package of bills aimed at addressing the opioid crisis. Under [SB2535](https://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=2535&GAID=16&GA=102&DocTypeID=SB&LegID=135189&SessionID=110), pharmacists and those who prescribe opioids are required to inform patients of the addictive nature of the drugs and that the patient has the option to receive an opioid antagonist if they wish.

[HB4408](https://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=4408&GAID=16&GA=102&DocTypeID=HB&LegID=137744&SessionID=110) prohibits insurers and Medicaid from charging a copay for Naloxone.

[SB2565](https://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=2565&GAID=16&GA=102&DocTypeID=SB&LegID=135219&SessionID=110) allows circuit courts to implement drug-court treatment programs. The courts will also include additional harm-reduction services and allow a state’s attorney to file motions to vacate and expunge convictions and records to people who successfully complete these programs.

[HB4556](https://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=4556&GAID=16&GA=102&DocTypeID=HB&LegID=138040&SessionID=110) expands access for pharmacists and other health care professionals to distribute fentanyl testing strips to help reduce opioid overdoses and ensures the supplies can be stored without fear of prosecution in a licensed pharmacy, hospital, or other health care facility.

Other notable signings include:

* [HB1571](https://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=1571&GAID=16&GA=102&DocTypeID=HB&LegID=130248&SessionID=110) Creates a grant program for childcare centers to provide after hours and nightly child care for the children of first responders and other workers working late shifts.
* [HB4666](https://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=4666&GAID=16&GA=102&DocTypeID=HB&LegID=138827&SessionID=110) Amends the Nurse Agency Licensing Act regarding regulation and oversight of nurse staffing agencies.
* [SB1099](https://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=1099&GAID=16&GA=102&DocTypeID=SB&LegID=133731&SessionID=110) Creates the Consumer Legal Funding Act, an act for the licensing and regulation of Consumer Legal Funding companies by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.
* [SB1233](https://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=1233&GAID=16&GA=102&DocTypeID=SB&LegID=133865&SessionID=110) Creates a Blue-Ribbon Commission on Transportation Infrastructure and Policy.
* [SB3096](https://ilga.gov/legislation/billstatus.asp?DocNum=3096&GAID=16&GA=102&DocTypeID=SB&LegID=137756&SessionID=110) Requires the Secretary of State to deliver a report to the General Assembly by December 31, 2022, detailing the advancement of digital licenses.

More information on other bills signed (and not highlighted in this report) is [here.](https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.24975.html)

**Adult Use Cannabis:** The Circuit Court of Cook County lifted the stays that enjoined 185 Conditional Adult Use Cannabis Dispensing Organization Licenses to applicants selected in three lotteries in 2021.

In anticipation of receiving further guidance in a related federal case, IDFPR anticipates releasing detailed information on next steps for applicants as soon as that guidance is issued. The federal case concerns objections to the state’s residency requirements for dispensary owners.

IDFPR is also working on finalizing plans for three corrective lotteries to be held in June (one for each of the cannabis dispensary license lotteries held in 2021). Details on those lotteries will be announced by the Department when finalized. Those updates will be available on [IDFPR’s Adult Use Cannabis Program webpage](https://idfpr.illinois.gov/profs/adultusecan.asp).

In addition, the Illinois Department of Agriculture awarded 48 Craft Grow licenses, successfully completing the licensing round that began in December of 2021. The list of today's awardees is available on the Department's Adult Use Cannabis [webpage](https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/agr/Plants/Pages/Adult-Use-Cannabis.aspx). As of June 1, 2022, the Department of Agriculture has awarded a total of 341 adult use cannabis licenses for craft growers, infusers, and transporters under the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act. Read more [here.](https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.24986.html)

**Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits:** The Illinois Housing Development Authority Board announced conditional awards totaling nearly $34 million in federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) that will fund 25 affordable housing developments in 15 counties across Illinois. Once sold to investors, the tax credits are expected to generate an estimated $296 million in private capital to finance the creation and/or preservation of 1,343 affordable units for low- to moderate-income families, seniors, veterans and persons with special needs. Read more [here](https://www2.illinois.gov/Pages/news-item.aspx?ReleaseID=24971).

**Future of Work Task Force:** The Future of Work Task Force issued its final report this week. The 36-member task force was created under PA 102-407. More about the purpose of the Task Force and its membership is [here.](https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/bac/SitePages/AppointmentsDetail.aspx?BCID=1244) The final report is [here.](https://www2.illinois.gov/dceo/events/Furture%20of%20Work%20Force/FutureOfWorkTaskForceReport_FINAL.pdf)

**Infrastructure Grants**: The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity awarded $50.7 million in new infrastructure grants awarded to 34 communities, counties, and localities across Illinois for critical infrastructure projects including bridge replacement, water treatment upgrades, road construction projects and more. State funds will be met with $72.1 million in matching commitments for capital projects, which brings the total investment to nearly $123 million. A listing of grant recipients and more information is [here.](https://www2.illinois.gov/Pages/news-item.aspx?ReleaseID=24982)

**Coal- to- Solar Program:** The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity announced the participants of the Coal-to-Solar Energy Storage Grant Program. As part of the Coal-to-Solar Program, five coal plant sites – which are already closed or in the process of closing - have been selected to participate. The program provides incentives for companies to install energy storage facilities at the sites of former coal plants, providing benefits to the electric grid and the ability for more renewable resources to be built and used. Read more [here.](https://www.illinois.gov/news/press-release.24987.html)

**Pre-Trial Interest Law Declared Unconstitutional:** Judge Marcia Maras in the Circuit Court of Cook County issued a [memorandum](https://www.smithamundsen.com/assets/htmldocuments/Hyland%20Memorandum%20Order%205-27-22.pdf), holding Illinois’s recently enacted prejudgment interest statute unconstitutional, and holding that the legislation violated both the right of trial by jury and the prohibition against special legislation. As Judge Maras’s ruling is a trial-level decision, it does not apply statewide. The plaintiff has the right to a direct appeal to the Illinois Supreme Court under Rule 302. More information is [here.](https://cookcountyrecord.com/stories/626665590-judge-illinois-prejudgment-lawsuit-interest-law-unconstitutional)

**Gubernatorial Appointments**: The Governor made the following appointments:

* **Sameer Doshi will serve as a Member of the Energy Transition Workforce Commission.**
* **Angela Morrison will serve as a Member of the Energy Transition Workforce Commission.** **Paul Noble will serve as a Member of the Energy Transition Workforce Commission.**
* **Patricia Pulido Sanchez will continue to serve as a Member of the Illinois Liquor Control Commission.**
* **Erica Salem will serve as a Member of the State Board of Health.**

**ATTORNEY GENERAL UPDATE:**

Attorney General Kwame Raoul released new guidance to inform the public and members of law enforcement understand Illinois' law regarding abortions. Attorney General Raoul’s office released [“Know Your Reproductive Rights,”](https://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/women/Know%20Your%20Reproductive%20Rights%20060122.pdf) a free online resource to ensure that the members of the public understand their rights. The guidance explains that Illinois law protects the right to have an abortion and treats abortion like other kinds of health care. The Attorney General also issued a [letter to law enforcement](https://illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/women/Guidance%20to%20law%20enforcement%20on%20abortion%20060122.pdf) to clarify that Illinois law does not criminalize abortion. More information is [here.](https://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2022_06/20220601b.html)