

Handy News & Notes

October

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month

#NDEAM
10.gov/odep



Access to Good Jobs for All

National Disability Employment Awareness Month



OFFICE OF DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

OFFICE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (OPD)

Marcia P. Coggs Human Services Center • 1220 W Vliet • Room 302 • Milwaukee, WI 53205
(414) 278-3932 • 711 (TRS) • fax: (414) 278-3939

[Office for Persons with Disabilities Website](#)



If you are in immediate need of the Department of Health and Human Services resources please see our list of services linked below.

[DHHS Services List](#)

MILWAUKEE COUNTY ZOO EVENTS

[@MilwaukeeCoZoo](#)

ZOO BREW

October 3

Zoo Brew is a fun way to sample new brews, try new foods, and meet new people while visiting various locations inside the Milwaukee County Zoo. From the micro to the macro, guests can sample beers from a wide variety of brewers, as well as sample foods from local area vendors.

Get your tickets here: GoZooBrew.com

<http://www.zoosociety.org>



FAMILY FREE DAY

October 5

Sponsored by Tri City National Bank & FOX6

The Zoo is a harvest of beautiful fall colors in October. And on October 5, all guests are admitted FREE! (Parking and regular attraction fees still apply.) To enjoy the vibrant colors of the trees, along with the animals, stroll through the outdoor areas to see elk, giraffes, and camels, just to mention a few!

<http://www.zoosociety.org>

BOO AT THE ZOO

October 17-20

The Zoo has become a must-see destination during the Halloween season. Enjoy more treats than tricks and join in family-friendly activities like a Trick-or-Treat Trail to gather goodies, live pumpkin-carving demonstrations, "Creatures of the Night" talks, and...the ANIMALS! All witches and warlocks (and their parents) are encouraged to wear costumes!

Boo at the Zoo pre-purchased tickets are required for this event and are now on sale. Zoo Pass members save 15% with code halloween15 and their membership number.

WI FACETS IEP & SPECIAL EDUCATION ONLINE TRAINING

[@wifacets](#)

WI FACETS IEP & SPECIAL EDUCATION TRAINING



WI FACETS offers FREE workshops for families of children with disabilities and those who support them.

10/1 | 12:00-12:30 pm

[IEP 5: Writing the IEP \(Part 1\) \(Pre-recorded\)](#)

10/2 | 12:00 – 1:00 pm

[Making Sense of Your Senses](#)

10/10 | 12:00-1:00 pm

[Serving on Groups: Tools & Tips \(Parts 4 & 5\)](#)

10/10 | 12:00-1:00 pm

[IEP 6: Writing the IEP \(Part 2\) \(Spanish\)](#)

10/15 | 12:00-12:30 pm

[IEP 6: Writing the IEP \(Part 2\) \(Pre-recorded\)](#)

10/16 | 12:00-1:00 pm

[Post-Secondary Transition and Avoiding the Cliff Edge of No Supports](#)

10/23 | 12:00-1:00 pm

[School Discipline and Students with IEPs](#)

10/24 | 12:00-1:00 pm

[Serving on Groups: Understanding & Using Data \(Part 6\)](#)

10/24 | 12:00-1:00 pm

[IEP 7: Writing the IEP \(Part 3\) \(Spanish\)](#)

10/29 | 12:00-12:30 pm

[IEP 7: Writing the IEP \(Part 3\) \(Pre-recorded\)](#)

Upcoming Events

[Training Calendar](#)

[Like us on Facebook](#)

[Follow us on Twitter](#)

[Follow us on Instagram](#)

To receive our monthly email highlighting our webinars, please [click here](#)

ACCESS MINI GOLF & PUTT18

[@AccessMiniGolf](#)



It may be fall, but you can still play mini golf. There are many courses that are indoors. Visit the "Courses" page on our website for the list.

Access Mini Golf is dedicated to highlighting wheelchair accessible mini golf courses (all around the country), and expanding the opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in the great game of mini golf.

Mini Golf is for EveryBODY!

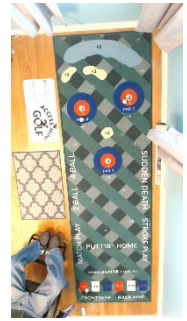
Visit the website for more information: <https://www.accessminigolf.com/>

PUTT18

Putt18 is a perfect putting game for the fall and winter seasons.



Putt18 is an all-inclusive, interactive and popular Putting Mat Game that is played worldwide. It's wheelchair accessible, and you can play at home, the office or anywhere.



You can compete individually, worldwide, or just play for fun.

Whether you're a regular golfer, mini golfer or a complete novice, this putting game brings new life to indoor games.

Purchase a Putt18 mat from the Access Mini Golf website and receive a 10% Discount: <https://www.accessminigolf.com/products>

Visit the website for more information: <https://www.putt18.com.au/pages/play-golf-at-home>

Wehr Nature Center
Connect with nature! From the all-terrain wheelchair, Wetland boardwalk, pier on Mallard Lake, and amphitheater, to the visitor center with its spacious family restroom and a wide variety of inclusive educational programs, Wehr is a place for everybody!



[More About Wehr](#)

Reserve the all-terrain wheelchair! Make your reservation, through Access Ability Wisconsin, to use the chair at Wehr or to use the chair and enclosed trailer for towing to another site – all for free. [Get details and reserve the chair!](#)

GET MOVING AT MILWAUKEE'S LAKEFRONT!



Free Hand Cycles

Visit Wheel Fun Rentals at Veterans Park on Milwaukee's Lakefront. Check out cycles during regular business hours and enjoy the ride!!

<https://wheelfunrentals.com/wi/milwaukee/veterans-park-south/>

TRANSPORTATION – YOUR CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY



Transportation connects us to our community and helps us to live healthy, active, and fulfilling lives. Without transportation, it is difficult to stay connected to friends and loved ones, remain involved with hobbies and wellness activities, and meet our daily needs, like getting groceries and getting to medical appointments. While we may be accustomed to driving ourselves to all of our daily destinations, it is important to know that other transportation options exist.

In Milwaukee County, there are a variety of transportation options that get older adults and people with disabilities to the places that they need to go. Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) operates one of America's best and most reliable bus transit systems. MCTS also operates Transit Plus, a county-wide paratransit service for those who are unable to ride the buses. Additionally, Milwaukee County offers a volunteer driver program provided through Eras Senior Network.

Lastly, Milwaukee County Aging and Disabilities Services (ADS) provides Older Adult Transportation Service (OATS) to connect eligible older adults to healthcare appointments, grocery shopping, senior centers, voting, and more. To learn more about and enroll in OATS, call the Milwaukee County Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) at (414) 289-6874 or [click here](#).

EMPLOYMENT STATS!

@BLS_gov



The July 2024 Bureau of Labor Statistics report:

Labor Force Participation Rate

Persons w/ disabilities = 24.2% (24.6%, '23)

Persons w/ no disabilities = 68.7% (68.6%, '23)

Employment – Population Ratio

Persons w/ disabilities = 22.2% (22.9%, '23)

Persons w/ no disabilities = 68.7% (68.6%, '23)

See the current report here:

<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t06.htm>

MILWAUKEE COUNTY TRANSIT SYSTEM CONNECTION

Same Day Pilot

MCTS and Milwaukee County have launched a paratransit Same Day Pilot. This program gives Transit Plus clients an option for urgent same day medical or work rides that could not be scheduled the day before. Rides are provided by Via.

What is the Same Day Pilot?

Same Day means a ride to an unplanned work or health event that you weren't aware of yesterday. Pilot means it's a test – please expect some changes as we work on perfecting this service.

- Expect either a shared ride or a private ride, depending upon demand.
- Use the service regardless of your qualified disability – clients with mobility devices will be accommodated.
- Rides are available throughout Milwaukee County.
- Request a trip between 7:00 am and 5:59 pm – 7 days a week.
- Get picked up within an hour of booking your ride.
- Pay a one-way fare of \$10. Companions also pay \$10. (If you have a PCA designation on your Transit Plus card, your PCA can join you for free).
- Remember your Transit Plus ID card is required when boarding.
- This is a pilot. That means we're testing how the service will work best. We'll notify registered riders if any future changes are needed.

How to Sign up

All participants must be enrolled in Transit Plus and must sign a Service Agreement. The agreement can be found online at: RideMCTS.com/TransitPlusSameDayPilot or by calling the Transit Plus office.

There are 3 ways to submit the Service Agreement:

- In person or by mail to:
1942 N 17th Street, Milwaukee WI 53205 Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.
- Email it to:
TPlusApplications@mcts.org
- Online at:
RideMCTS.com/TransitPlusSameDayPilot.

Once your agreement has been processed, you will receive an email with instructions on how to book your rides.

Get Started Today

Don't wait until the last minute to think about unexpected needs! Be prepared by registering in advance for our pilot program. This way, you'll have peace of mind knowing that you have another option for unplanned same day travel.

Contact Transit Plus at 414-343-1700 with any questions about the Same Day Pilot.



TRANSITPLUS
SAME DAY PILOT

JACKSON PARK FARMERS MARKET

August 1st- October 3rd | Time: 3:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Jackson Park, 3500 W. Forest Home Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53215

Get fresh-from-the-farm produce, flowers, baked goods, and other products from local vendors at the Jackson Park Farmers Market. Thursdays, through Oct. 3. This market participates in Milwaukee Market Match, a Milwaukee County initiative that provides matching dollars to participants in the FoodShare program or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

<http://jacksonpark.us/farmers-market>

A WALK IN THE PARK, AT A PARK NEAR YOU

Sept. 6: Doctors Park

Oct. 4: McGovern Park

Nov. 1: Walker Square Park

Dec. 6: Kohl Park

Gather with us for an hour-long walk through a park, the first Friday of every month, rain or shine! Connect and reconnect with friends and nature, enjoying the company of whoever attends, while appreciating parks and communities throughout the county. No need to register for this FREE event.

<https://mkeparksfoundation.org/news-and-events/>

BOERNER BOTANICAL GARDENS - FREE LAST THURSDAY 2024

Friends of Boerner Botanical Gardens
May 30th - October 31st | Time: 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Boerner Botanical Gardens, 9400 Boerner Drive, Hales Corners, WI 53130

Thanks to the generosity of Friends of Boerner Botanical Gardens, admission to Boerner Botanical Gardens is FREE on the

last Thursday of every month, through Oct. 31, 2024. Bring the kiddos to explore the new children's garden, Margie's Garden, and enjoy all the garden spaces Boerner has to offer!

PRIVATE PARTY RENTALS

@MKECoOPD

Wil-O-Way Grant (South Milwaukee)



Wil-O-Way Underwood (Wauwatosa)



Looking to book your next family gathering or community-group event? Weddings, family reunions, birthday parties, graduations, showers, organizational meetings, are among the many events held here each year. Both Wil-O-Way facilities are in beautiful Milwaukee County parks. The buildings are accessible and have a large hall and kitchen. The spacious grounds have picnic tables, walking trails, wading pools, and accessible playgrounds.

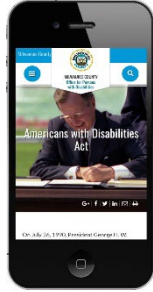
[BOOK AN EVENT NOW!](#)

Current Capacity 180 people

Check out the [Facility Guidelines](#) & [Facility Rentals Calendar](#).

ADA INFORMATION ON YOUR SMARTPHONE!

Would you like easy access to the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines, or ADA Resources, or ADA Checklists, or ADA Enforcement Agencies? If you said yes, you could get all that & more by bookmarking our website on your smartphone.



<https://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/Office-for-Persons-with-Disabilities/ADA>

JOB OPENINGS

@MKECountyDHR

The County is always looking for good people for the open positions. Click on the link below to see the list of current openings.

[Current Openings](#) | [DECA Program](#)



ILLEGALLY PARKS CARDS

You are **ILLEGALLY** PARKED!

@MKECoOPD

The Milwaukee County Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD) has a supply of these cards. Please contact Jay at 414-278-3930 or [email Jay](#) with your complete name and mailing address.



WIL-O-WAY KEY CARD

The Office for Persons with Disabilities is now accepting 2024 Wil-O-Way Key Card Applications. Members receive discounted ticket opportunities from our local sports teams such as the Milwaukee Admirals, Bucks, and Brewers. To apply, fill out a [Wil](#)

[O-Way Key Card Application](#) today!

SHARE HANDY NEWS & NOTES!

Do you work with someone or know someone who would be interested in or would benefit from the information in Handy News & Notes? If so, please refer them to the link below to sign up for this FREE information source.

<https://county.milwaukee.gov/EN/Sign-Up-for-E--Notify>

ADMIRALS & BUCKS TICKETS

@mkeadmirals @Bucks

The Milwaukee Admirals & Milwaukee Bucks are again participating with the Wil-O-Way Key Card Program



to distribute free and/or discounted tickets to people with disabilities for the upcoming 2024/2025 season. Membership in the Wil-O-Way Key Card program is required to gain access to these tickets. For an individual or organization annual membership, Wil-O-Way Key Card holders will receive the following benefits.

Membership applications for the 2025 Wil-O-Way Key Card will begin being accepted soon. Your 2024 membership is good through the end of the year.

We do not have the tickets in our office; however, we will reserve the seats. The tickets must be picked up in person at the **WILL CALL WINDOW** at the southeast corner of the Fiserv Forum (Bucks) or the main entrance (4th & Kilbourn) of the Milwaukee Panther Arena (Admirals) no later than 15 minutes after the game starts or your reservations will not be honored. The maximum number of tickets allowed per game and per month for individuals and organizations appears on the registration form each month.

Membership in the Wil-O-Way Key Card program does not guarantee that you will receive all or any tickets requested each month. All tickets are subject to availability.

For more information reach out to [Jacqueline Formanek](#) if you are interested in joining the Wil-O-Way Key Card Program at 414-278-3938. Membership in the Wil-O-Way Key Card program is required to gain access to these tickets.



Open Gym[®] Adaptive Programs



The Ability Center: Open Gym

Open Gym provides an opportunity for people of all abilities to play together in an inclusive, non-competitive, friendly environment where your friends, family, peers can join you to play in a "Different Pair of Shoes." All ages and abilities are welcome to join.

Friday, October 4 • 6:00-9:00pm • Whitman Middle School

Sunday, October 13 • 1:00-3:00pm • Harry & Rose Samson Family Jewish Community Center

Friday, October 25 • 6:00-8:00pm • Hales Corners Lutheran

Visit tacwi.org to see the full schedule of events and Open Gym location details.

Proud Partner: PNC Bank

PASSION FAIR

PRESENTED BY: BSC'S OTA PROGRAM
Bryant & Stratton College



WHAT IS A PASSION FAIR?

Occupational Therapy Assistant Students host this event to show our community the mental health benefits of having a passion!

- Learn - Why passions can improve our mental health
- Do - Try new leisure interests and activities



Details

- Saturday, November 16th, 2024
- Wil-O-Way Underwood 10602 Underwood Pkwy Milwaukee WI 53226
- 9 AM - 11 AM
- Breakfast items will be catered by Davian's!

Medicare 101

Join us a of free and objective presentation on the basics of Medicare.

- Understand the A,B,C, and D of Medicare
- No Sales
- No Insurance
- Learn How to Enroll
- Free Enrollment Assistance

Wednesday, November 6 |
11:00am - 12:30pm

United Community Center
730 W Washington Street, Milwaukee



Learn more at:
county.milwaukee.gov/aging/Medicare101



These presentations are supported through a State Health Insurance Program grant provided by the WI Department of Health Services from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Administration for Community Living.

Medicare 101

Acompáñanos a un presentación gratis y objetiva
sobre los básicos de Medicare.

- * El entendimiento de los partes A, B, C y D de Medicare
- * Aprende como a inscribirte
- * Ayuda gratis para inscribirse
- * Sin ventas
- * Sin seguro

Miércoles 6 de Noviembre de 11:00am - 12:30pm

United Community Center
730 W Washington Street, Milwaukee



Obtenga más información en:
county.milwaukee.gov/aging/Medicare101



These presentations are supported through a State Health Insurance Program grant provided by the WI Department of Health Services from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Administration for Community Living.

Medicare 101

Join us this fall for a series of free and objective presentations on the basics of Medicare!
 - Understand the A,B,C, and D of Medicare - No Sales - No Insurance - Learn How to Enroll
 - Free Enrollment Assistance

Drop in Dates for Medicare 101 Presentation

Tuesday, Oct. 1, 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.
 Shorewood Senior Resource Center
 3920 N Murray Ave., Shorewood

Wednesday, Oct. 23, 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.
 St. Francis Public Library
 4234 S Nicholson Ave., St. Francis

Tuesday, Oct 29, 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.
 Virtual Presentation
county.milwaukee.gov/aging/medicare101

Wednesday, Nov. 20, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.
 Grobschmidt Senior Center
 2424 15 Ave., South Milwaukee

Drop in Dates for One-on-One Medicare Counseling

Reservations are preferred. Call (414) 289-6436 to make a reservation.

Thursday, Nov. 7, 9:00 - 1:00 p.m.
 West Allis Senior Center
 7001 W National Ave., Milwaukee

Thursday, Nov. 14, 12:00 - 3:00 p.m.
 Hadley Terrace Senior Apartments
 3515 W Hadley St., Milwaukee

Thursday, Dec. 5, 9:00 - 12:00 p.m.
 Kelly Senior Center
 6100 S Lake Dr., Cudahy

Drop in Dates for Medicare Advantage and Part D Update Presentation

Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.
 Greendale Public Library
 5647 Broad St., Greendale

Tuesday, Oct. 29, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
 Milwaukee Central Library
 814 W Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee

Thursday, Nov. 14, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
 Hadley Terrace Senior Apartments
 3515 W Hadley St., Milwaukee

For more information call (414) 289-6436 or email nina.yang@milwaukeecountywi.gov



These presentations are supported through a State Health Insurance Program grant provided by the WI Department of Health Services from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - Administration for Community Living.

MILWAUKEE COUNTY DHHS AGING & DISABILITIES SERVICES

We Want to Hear From You!

The Milwaukee County Commission on Aging represents all older adults in our county. Right now, the Commission is developing goals for programs and services that serve you for 2025-2027. We need to hear your voice! The goals address socialization, transportation, senior centers, advocacy, long-term care, and more, that allow all of us to live better lives. Help us make this plan the best for all Milwaukee County seniors by joining us at an upcoming public hearing.



Help shape the future for older adults in Milwaukee County!

Public Hearings on the 2025-2027 Milwaukee County Aging Area Plan

Mon., October 7
 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.
 Virtual on Zoom
 Register [here](#) or scan the QR code below.

Tue., October 8
 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.
 Washington Park Senior Center
 4420 W. Vliet St.

Wed., October 9
 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.
 Franklin Public Library
 9151 W. Loomis Rd.

*no registration required

*no registration required

To learn more about the 2025-2027 Milwaukee County Aging Area Plan, or register for the virtual public hearing, please go [here](#) or scan the QR code. For more information or to request accommodations please call (414) 289-6010. Language interpreters are available with 72 hours advance notice.



1220 West Vliet Street, Suite 300 | Milwaukee, WI 53205 | (414) 289-6874 | county.milwaukee.gov/dhhs

RESERVE A RIDE TODAY!

Older Adults Transportation Service (OATS) Voter Transportation



What is OATS?

Provides voter transportation to polling places on Election Day, and transportation to Wisconsin DOT Division of Motor Vehicles locations for obtaining photo ID, voter registration sites, early voting sites, and ballot drop boxes.

Requirements:

- Eligible riders must live in Milwaukee County and be age 60 years or older.
- Rides must be reserved 7 to 14 days in advance.

Hours of Voter Transportation Service:

Weekdays: 7:30 am – 5:30 pm
 Saturdays: 8:00 am – 12:00 pm
 Election Day: 7:00 am – 7:00 pm

DMV & Voter Registration
 Ride Dates: Sept. 30 – Nov. 2
 Early Voting Dates: Oct. 22 – Nov. 2
 Election Day: Nov. 5



Current OATS Enrollees:
 (414) 847-2744

To enroll:
 (414) 289-6874



SAVE THE DATE

OCTOBER 17, 2024 | 12 PM - 1 PM

JOIN THE MILWAUKEE COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING FOR A LUNCH AND LEARN PANEL WITH STATE LEGISLATORS

Who: Milwaukee County-area older adult residents and aging advocates.

Where: McGovern Park Senior Center (4500 W Custer Ave., Milwaukee, 53218).

When: October 17 at 12 PM.

What: A lunch and learn panel with state legislators discussing aging policy priorities, the upcoming State biennial budget, with time for questions from the public.

Lunch will be provided!

To register, please click [here](#) or scan the QR code.



Questions? Please contact:

emily.petersen@milwaukeecountywi.gov
 or call 414-639-6532





Voting News from the Disability Vote Coalition

The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition is a non-partisan effort to help ensure full participation in the electoral process of voters with disabilities. Check out our resources at disabilityvote.org/ and follow us on [Facebook](#)

Voting Questions? Contact the DRW Voter Hotline at 844-347-8683 or email us at info@disabilityvote.org

Please share the information in this newsletter!

November 5 Fall General Election Important Deadlines

REGISTRATION

Deadline to register online or by mail: October 16
Deadline to register in person: November 1
Register at your polling place: November 5

ABSENTEE VOTING

In Person Absent Voting: Early voting may begin October 22
Absentee Ballot Request: October 31
Return Absentee Ballot: Must be received by 8pm on November 5

Need a Ride to the Polls?

Need a ride? Make a Plan! Check the list to see if there is a transportation provider in your area and contact them early. Most providers require advance notice.

Rides to the Polls is a list of transportation providers around the state who may provide transportation for voting for people with disabilities and older adults.

<https://disabilityvote.org/2024/rides-to-the-polls-2024/>

Voting Rights Toolkit

Know your voting rights! There are federal and state laws that protect the rights of voters with disabilities. Our new Disability Vote Coalition Voting Rights Toolkit brings together resources about voting rights for Wisconsinites with disabilities.

[Click here](#) to check out the Voting Rights Toolkit.

Voter Registration Resources

The Disability Vote Coalition has all the information and resources you need to get registered to vote!

- **My Vote Wisconsin:** Register and check your voter status at myvote.wi.gov.
- **Voter Registration Application Forms, Wisconsin Election Commission:** [View application forms here.](#)

Note: This page has links to voter registration forms in English, Spanish and Hmong.

- **Disability Vote Coalition Voter Registration Fact Sheet:** [View fact sheet here \(accessible pdf\).](#)
- **Guides for Acceptable Proof of Residence:**
 1. [Pictures of Possible Proof of Residence Documents \(pdf\).](#)
 2. [Proof of Residence for Voter Registration Information \(pdf\).](#)
- **How to Register Online – Disability Vote Coalition Video:**
 1. [How to Register Online \(Voiceover\)](#)
 2. [How to Register \(No Voiceover\)](#)

VOTING QUESTIONS?

Help is available! Contact these resources:

- **Your municipal clerk:** myvote.wi.gov/en-US/MyMunicipalClerk
- **Disability Rights Wisconsin Voter Hotline:** 1-844-347-8683 / 1-844-DIS-VOTE
Email us at info@disabilityvote.org
- **Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition:** disabilityvote.org/
- **Wisconsin Elections Commission:**
1-866-VOTE-WIS [elections.wi.gov/](https://elections.wi.gov)
- **DMV Voter ID Hotline: (844) 588-1069.** Apply for a free Photo ID for voting at the [Wisconsin Division of Motor Vehicles](#) (DMV).

- **Bring It to the Ballot:** <https://bringit.wi.gov/> Information about Wisconsin's photo ID law and other voting information.
- [Vote411.org](https://vote411.org) and ballotpedia.org: nonpartisan information about the candidates



- Find your polling place
- See what's on your ballot
- Register to vote
- Nonpartisan resource

The [Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition](#) is a project of [Disability Rights Wisconsin](#) and the [Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities](#).



disabilityrights | WISCONSIN



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: September 5, 2024

Milwaukee County Announces Transition in Energy Assistance Program Administration

Milwaukee, WI— The Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) announces a significant change in the administration of its Energy Assistance Program. Currently, the program is managed by DHHS-Housing Services in collaboration with two contracted provider agencies: United Migrant Opportunity Services (UMOS) and Community Advocates.

Effective September 1, 2024, the Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA), Division of Energy, Housing and Community Resources (DEHCR) will assume oversight of the contracts with UMOS and Community Advocates for the upcoming 2025 energy season. This decision marks a departure from Milwaukee County's current subcontracting model, as the State of Wisconsin will contract directly with provider agencies as they do in counties across the state. The transition to State oversight follows DEHCR's goal to streamline fiscal and programmatic accountability.

"We remain committed to ensuring all residents in need of Energy Assistance are able to easily access the program. We are working closely with our partners UMOS and Community Advocates to ensure a seamless transition to their agencies," said Maricela Gaona, DHHS Housing Services Program Manager. "With the No Wrong Door model of customer service to connect people to services across the health and human services system of care, we are committed to connecting residents to the Energy Assistance Program."

In light of its reduced role and the substantial budgetary impact, DHHS has decided not to contract with DEHCR for the upcoming 2025 season beginning October 1, 2024. DHHS is committed to working with the State and local partners on a transition plan to ensure there is no disruption in service for customers.

Effective September 1, 2024, members of the community and local partners may apply via phone, mail or online. You may schedule your own phone appointment at www.KeepWarmMke.org or by calling (414) 270-4-MKE.

If you a completed an application interview and need to return verification documents to expedite your Energy Assistance application:



- If you had an interview with UMOS send documents to milwaukee.energy@umos.org
- If you had an interview with Community Advocates, send documents to cadocuments@communityadvocates.net
- If you have a complaint in regard to your experience with the Energy Assistance Program, please call (414) 270-2960 or email Energyconcerns@communityadvocates.net and a representative will follow up with you within 48 hours.
- Milwaukee County residents who are in need of additional information, have questions or are requesting an update of their online application status and/or payment of benefits, please contact ESI at 414-800-4240, 1-800-506-5596 or mke-support@esiwi.com.

###

As we age, many of us find that we could use extra help to remain independent. For those needing long-term care, the IRIS program is an option that can help you get the supports and services you need to remain living confidently in your own home. IRIS (Include, Respect, I Self-Direct) is Wisconsin's fully self-directed long-term care program for older adults and people with disabilities who are eligible for Medicaid. IRIS is designed to help you live life on your terms, while having trusted partners that you choose by your side to help reach your goals.

How it works

In IRIS, you have many choices in deciding how you want things done. When you join IRIS, a budget is established for you based on your long-term care needs and goals. However, you choose:

- What goods, supports and services you need;
- When and where you want your supports provided;
- Who will provide them; and
- How you use your IRIS monthly budget effectively and wisely.

All IRIS participants have a support and service plan. Your plan is based on your long-term care goals and how you want to achieve them, using your IRIS budget. When you build your plan, you'll think about the things that will maintain or improve the quality of your life. IRIS has a broad set of services available to you, including home-delivered meals, home modifications such as ramps, and transportation services.

Support from others

You will be responsible for managing your IRIS budget, acting as an employer to workers you choose to hire – which can include eligible

WHAT IS THE IRIS PROGRAM?

family or friends – and following IRIS program rules and policies. However, joining IRIS doesn't mean doing things all by yourself. Every IRIS participant chooses an IRIS Consultant Agency (ICA) and Fiscal Employer Agent (FEA) to help support them in self-direction.

IRIS Consultant Agencies

Your IRIS Consultant Agency can help you self-direct and handle the requirements of the IRIS program. You will choose an IRIS Consultant that works with you one-on-one. They'll take time to get to know you and learn what is important to you.

IRIS Fiscal Employer Agents

Your IRIS fiscal employer agent can

help do background checks on workers you hire, process payroll, and help with other employer tasks. Your fiscal employer agent also processes payments to other supports on your plan, like agency supports and other items you purchase to meet your goals.

Where can I learn more about IRIS, and how do I enroll?

If you're interested in learning more about IRIS or your other long-term care options, contact your local Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). ADRC representatives offer free, unbiased information about long-term care options and resources in Wisconsin for older adults, people with disabilities, and their families.

To locate the ADRC in your county, visit: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/adrc

Source: WI Department of Health Services website and IRIS Participant handbook

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Ask your Aging and Disability Resource Center about your long-term care options.

St. Ann Center

St. Ann Center to Host Homecoming Gala Oct. 5



There's still time for you to be part of St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care's gala event, "Homecoming: A 25th Anniversary Celebration," held Oct. 5 at our fully accessible Stein Campus in St. Francis. This very special event will honor the 25th anniversary of "The Stein," plus a quarter-century of intergenerational care, growth and progress.

Register [online](#) now or at the event itself.

This evening of fun, food, fundraising and plans for the future, held at the Stein Campus at 2801 E. Morgan Ave., features:

- Our very special emcee [Portia Young](#), Emmy award-winning "10ThirtySix" host, and public relations executive for Sargento Foods Inc.
- Auctioneer [Steve "The Homer" True](#), sports announcer at ESPN radio, helming our live auction
- Fabulous live and silent auction items, including excursions to tropical locales, Packer tickets and a tailgate experience, autographed Packer merchandise, a one-night stay at [Saint Kate – The Arts Hotel](#) plus a restaurant voucher, 4 tickets to Milwaukee Ballet's performance of [Casanova](#), an exclusive chef-curated dinner with wine/cocktail pairings at [The Bridgewater Modern Grill](#) and more.
- Bountiful hors d'oeuvres and [scrumptious desserts](#) catered by [Tall Guy and a Grill](#)
- Cocktails, beer, wine and a host of alcohol-free options served by [The Crafted Tavern](#)
- Dancing in the gorgeous atrium to the South Shore Band

Plus, it's a [sneaker ball](#), so pair your gala finery with some spangled, sparkly sneakers and know you'll be comfortable all night long!

Most of all, you'll experience firsthand this beautiful, daytime "home away from home" for so many of our community's children, adults with disabilities and vulnerable elders, allowing them to remain out



Browse a roomful of sparkling vintage, heirloom and costume jewelry at bargain prices— rings, bracelets, necklace, pins, earrings, cufflinks, watches and more. Jewelry is regularly donated to St. Ann Center for this sale; volunteers clean and repair it, and price it to sell! If you have unwanted jewelry and/or watches of your own, we'd love to have them! You can either drop them off at the Stein Campus, or call 414-977-5032 and we'll come and pick them up for you!

Also in the spotlight: [unique and beautiful creations](#) designed and handcrafted by Sr. Edna Lonergan, St. Ann Center founder. Sr. Edna began making jewelry years ago as a hobby and to supplement funding for health and wellness services the nonprofit organization provides. In the spacious atrium, over two dozen local vendors will offer quality crafts, home décor, original artwork and photography, gourmet goodies and other exceptional items. And upstairs in the veranda, you can enjoy live music from [Rohn Larson](#) while you dine or take a break from shopping!

Proceeds from jewelry, perfume bottle and chili sales support the care of children and adults of all ages and abilities at St. Ann Center's two campuses [in St. Francis](#) and [on the near north side](#). For more information, call 414-977-5032 or visit [stanncenter.org/chili-jewelry-sale](#).

We'll see you there!

New K3 Program Planned for Bucyrus Campus

of institutionalized care for as long as possible. The stories will touch your heart, and the celebration will bring a smile and make you doubly glad you came out to support this community gem.

For more information, to donate, or to get your tickets now to this "fun meets fancy" event, [visit stanncenter.org/gala/](#).

Fall Chili & Jewelry Sale is almost here!



Let St. Ann Center add some sparkle and spice to your holiday season at our beloved Fall Chili & Jewelry Sale at St. Ann Center's fully accessible Stein Campus, 2801 E. Morgan Ave.

This popular fundraiser, which happens Saturday, Nov. 23, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., will feature more than a dozen kinds of traditional, unique and vegetarian chili, fabulous vintage jewelry, and quality local vendors selling good things for your body, taste buds, home decor and more. **NEW to the jewelry sale this year is a collection of stunning vintage perfume bottles and decanters collected from around the world and donated to St. Ann Center by LaVerne Decker.**

This sale is perfect for the gift-giving season!



In response to the [recent closure](#) of multiple nearby K3 locations, [St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care](#) is planning to open a **new K3 program at its Bucyrus Campus**, 2450 W. North Ave.

Focused on learning through play — and embracing the same kind, compassionate care parents have relied on as part of St. Ann Center childcare programs for years — **the new preschool will prepare children for success in K4 and beyond by:**

- Empowering students to guide their own learning experience
- Creating a culture of collaborative learning and working together
- Encouraging safe risk-taking and experimentation
- Promoting imaginative thinking

- Recognizing and accepting the different emotions play can create

"I know a lot about this community and what this area needs," says **St. Ann Center Bucyrus Campus Director of Childcare and Education, Bao Xiong**, who spearheads the new K3 program. Xiong is a veteran of day care and preschool education communities in both Milwaukee and Waukesha counties, and has successfully launched several child care centers of her own. "A lot of our children and families don't have access to transportation [to get to other early childhood programs]. This neighborhood *needs* a quality K-3 program."

Xiong also notes the high ratio of special needs learners in the Bucyrus Campus neighborhood — students she is eager to accommodate in her sunny, toy-filled classroom with large windows, plenty of room for imaginative play and two private, accessible bathrooms.

Xiong's family immigrated to America when she was just 3, and she still recalls her parents' insistence on a good education for each of their children. And the kindness and patience of her own early childhood teachers. "That's what drives me, because my parents always said education will get you everywhere," Xiong says. "*Education*. And that's what I want to give to these kids, because they won't get anywhere without education."

St. Ann Center also offers parents the [opportunity to build a childcare schedule that works best for their family](#), adding wraparound childcare to morning or afternoon K3 programming. The Bucyrus Center is open from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. St. Ann Center **accepts the [Wisconsin Shares childcare subsidy](#)**.

Learn more about the program or arrange a visit by contacting Bao Xiong at BXiong@stanncenter.org or (414) 210-2465.

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