



Pat Quinn, Governor
Charles D. Johnson, Director

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Dept. on Aging urges Seniors and People with Disabilities to Apply Online for Circuit Breaker and Illinois Cares Rx Beginning January 13

A new state law has raised income eligibility, so more people qualify for benefits; Apply online at www.cbrx.il.gov for faster processing or call Circuit Breaker at 1-800-624-2459 for more information

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) Director Charles D. Johnson announced this year’s online application is available starting January 13 for older adults and people with disabilities to apply for Circuit Breaker and Illinois Cares Rx. A new state law that became effective on January 1 raised the annual income limits — making it possible for more people to qualify for the state benefits.

“We are encouraging individuals to use the online application at **www.cbrx.il.gov** because it is the fastest way to get approved for these benefits to help seniors and people with disabilities,” said Director Johnson. “Starting January 13, apply online for the state’s prescription drug assistance program Illinois Cares Rx, Circuit Breaker property tax grants and a license plate discount.”

As of January 1, a new law makes it easier for some to get into the program. The new law raised the income eligibility. By allowing higher incomes, more seniors and persons with disabilities will be eligible to receive the state’s prescription drug assistance, the property tax grant, license plate discount and People with Disabilities Ride Free transit card. To qualify, your total income in 2009 must be less than:

- \$27,610 for a household size of one
- \$36,635 for a household size of two
- \$45,657 for a household size of three or more

More medications are also available for Illinois Cares Rx enrollees.

In 2009, 255,640 applied online compared to 2008 when 235,000 applied online. In 2007, there were 190,976 online applications and 75,288 applied online in 2006, which was the first year the Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA) had made the Illinois Cares Rx application available online.

The state’s pharmaceutical assistance program, Illinois Cares Rx, provides wrap-around prescription drug coverage to fill in the gaps created by Medicare Part D and offers drug coverage for people who do not have Medicare. Individuals eligible for the Illinois Cares Rx program may also be eligible for additional benefits from the state’s Circuit Breaker program.

The Circuit Breaker program provides a property tax relief grant for individuals who pay property tax on their residence or rent or nursing home charges on a residence that is subject to property tax. In addition, the program provides a discount on the license plate fee for one vehicle. These benefits, including Illinois Cares Rx, can be accessed by applying on one application.

To assist those who may need extra help to apply, the Department on Aging staff is holding training sessions in coordination with the Illinois Department of Insurance's (DOI) Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP). Training is to explain the application to providers in the Aging Network. SHIP, which provides free individual counseling services at more than 150 local sites throughout Illinois, is dedicated to educating Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers about Medicare insurance options. Seniors who don't have access to a computer are encouraged to visit a local senior center, public library, community center, Area Agency on Aging or Senior Health Assistance Program site to access the Web-based application, or call SHIP at 1-800- 548-9034.

For more information visit www.cbrx.il.gov. For assistance, call Circuit Breaker at 1-800-624-2459 or call the Senior HelpLine at 1-800-252-8966 (888-206-1327 TTY.)

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