



Volume 8, No. 5 February 3, 2026
608-243-5670 | info@gwaar.org | gwaar.org



Advocacy

[Janet Zander](#), Advocacy and Public Policy Coordinator

Nice to Know

Speaker's Task Force on Elder Services

The Wisconsin State Legislature's Speaker's Task Force on Elder Services, created last September to identify ways to improve the quality of life for older Wisconsinites, released their final report on Mon., January 22, 2026 - <https://bit.ly/4qDyZCz>

On January 30, 2026, all six bills in the Task Force's legislative package were introduced in the legislature:

- **[AB-968](#)** Crypto Kiosks (Snyder, Patrick) Virtual currency kiosks. *Referred to Assembly Committee on Financial Institutions*
2025 Assembly Bill 968: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab968>
- **[AB-969](#)** Drug Repository Program (Snyder, Patrick) The drug repository program. *Referred to Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care*
2025 Assembly Bill 969: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab969>
- **[AB-970](#)** Grants for Fall Prevention Awareness (Snyder, Patrick) Grants for community emergency medical services, grants for falls prevention awareness and initiatives, and making an appropriation. *Referred to Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care*
2025 Assembly Bill 970: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab970>
- **[AB-971](#)** Community EMTs (Snyder, Patrick) Tuition and materials reimbursement for community paramedics and community emergency medical services practitioners. *Referred to Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care*
2025 Assembly Bill 971: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab971>
- **[AB-972](#)** Financial Exploitation (Snyder, Patrick) Financial exploitation of vulnerable adults. *Referred to Assembly Committee on Financial Institutions*
2025 Assembly Bill 972: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab972>
- **[AB-973](#)** Economic Support Specialists (Novak, Todd) Grants for economic support specialists and making an appropriation. *Referred to Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care*
2025 Assembly Bill 973: <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab973>

All bills referred to the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care are scheduled for a public hearing (<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/raw/cid/1968692>) on Feb. 4, 2026. Both bills referred to the Assembly Committee on Financial Institutions are scheduled for a public hearing (<https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/raw/cid/1969689>) on Feb. 5, 2026.

Take Action: Contact your State Senator and State Representative TODAY to share with them how these bills would impact you, others you care about, and/or people in your community. To find out who represents you in the state legislature, enter your home address in the "Who Are My Legislators?" box found on this page - <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/>.

-continued-

Caregiver Designation Legislation Update ([AB 798/SB 795](#))

In late December 2025, the Caregiver Designation legislation (AB 798/SB 795) was formally introduced.

[Assembly Bill 798](#): <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab798>

[Senate Bill 795](#): <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/sb795>

In the 2023-2025 legislative session, Wisconsin created a process that offers people the option to have emergency contact information included in their electronic record when applying for or renewing their driver's license, learner's permit, or state identification ([Wisconsin Department of Transportation Emergency contact](#): <https://bit.ly/3O44yqG>). The Caregiver Designation legislation builds upon the emergency contact information process by also providing for an option for people to designate themselves as the primary caregiver for up to three people in their electronic record.

On Tues., Jan. 20, 2026, the Senate Committee on Transportation and Local Government held a hearing on SB 795. GWAAR provided [testimony in support of the bill](https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008886): <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008886>. This common-sense legislation linking care-recipient contact information to a driver's license or state ID, helps to prevent crisis situations where a person with complex needs might go for hours or even days without care. **The Assembly Transportation Committee scheduled a public hearing on Tues., Feb. 3.** The next step is getting the Assembly and Senate Committee to vote on this important constituent-informed legislation soon so it can be moved to the full Senate and Assembly. Let's get this legislation signed into law this session!

Memory Care Designation Legislation Introduced!

[AB-984](#) Memory Care legislation creating requirements for the use of a memory care designation by community-based residential facilities was introduced on Jan. 30, 2026 and referred to the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging and Long-Term Care. Stay tuned for upcoming advocacy opportunities.

[Assembly Bill 984](#): <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2025/proposals/ab984>

Ask Your State Senator and Representative to Support Funding Request for FoodShare

Action is needed now to ensure that Wisconsinites continue to have access to food assistance.

The [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP), known in Wisconsin as [FoodShare](#), is jointly run by federal, state, and local governments with the goal of stopping hunger across the country.

SNAP: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program>

FoodShare: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/foodshare/index.htm>

In Wisconsin, the Department of Health Services (DHS) administers this program in partnership with county governments. SNAP provides nearly 700,000 Wisconsinites, including older people, people living with disabilities, children, and families, with basic food necessities.



On July 4, 2025, the President signed the 'One Big Beautiful Bill Act' (OBBBA) into law. This Act included several significant changes to SNAP, including:

- **Cuts to the federal administrative cost share** from 50% to 25%. Starting October 1, 2026, the Wisconsin DHS and counties will have to cover 75% of the program's administrative costs (previously set at 50%). **\$32.4 million in additional state funding is needed to cover the increase in the state administrative cost share to 75%.**

-continued-

- **Expanding work requirements** to include adults through age 64 (previously work requirements applied to adults ages 54 and under who didn't have a child under age 18 living in their home). Approximately 43,700 Wisconsinites will be subject to these new requirements with about half at immediate, high risk of losing benefits. **\$20.7 million in state funding is needed for the potential FoodShare Employment and Training (FSET) program participation increase due to more members subject to federal work requirements.**
- **Potential Benefits Cost Share for States.** Beginning in October 2025, the state faces increased costs to Wisconsin taxpayers to either (1) **achieve a very low error rate (\$16.1 million in state funding is needed for 56 new DHS staff and county quality control positions to achieve and maintain an error rate below 6%)** OR, (2) for the first time in SNAP's 80-year history, **cover 5-15% of SNAP benefit costs** depending on the state's error rate (this requirement could cost Wisconsin taxpayers up to \$205.5 million in penalty fees every year).

State and county budgets are insufficient to cover the increased costs and reduction in federal funding.

Wis. DHS asked the Legislature for \$69.2 million in state funding to help Wisconsin comply with new federal requirements. We are nearing the end of the current legislative session, so time is of the essence for the legislature to move forward with this request to protect critical food assistance and save Wisconsin taxpayers up to 205.5 million dollars in penalty fees annually.

Take Action: It is important for state lawmakers to know what it would mean if FoodShare benefits were delayed, reduced, or went away. Share the importance of this program for you, your family, community members you serve, and others. Contact your **State Senator and State Assembly Representative** (enter your home address in the 'Who Are My Legislators?' box on this page: <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/>) and let them know how important food assistance is to you and your community!

Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2026 Funding Delay

Update as of 2 p.m., Feb. 3: The House approved the appropriations package and it is headed to the president's desk.

On Jan. 30, the Senate voted overwhelmingly to pass a major funding package consisting of five regular appropriations bills (including the departments of Defense, State, Treasury, Health and Human Services [HHS], Housing and Urban Development and Labor) for FFY 2026 and a two-week stopgap measure for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The Labor/HHS portion of the funding package includes funding for the Older Americans Act (OAA) and other aging services. The Senate's funding package is not identical to the package passed earlier by the House. House members are not scheduled to return until Mon., Feb. 2, so it was impossible to avoid a partial government shutdown (the current continuing resolution (CR) expired at midnight on 1/30).

Initially, it was hoped that the House could end the partial government shutdown on its first day back in session; however, Democrats are opposing attempts to fast-track the funding package (a process that requires a two-thirds vote in the House), so the shutdown is now poised to last until at least Tuesday, Feb. 3. Once the package is passed in the House and signed into law by the President, all parts of the government except the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will be funded through the rest of the fiscal year which runs through Sept. 30. To view [\(USAgging\) appropriations chart](#) go to: <https://bit.ly/4qB4Kw4>

Reminder: Federal Funding Fallout2025: Updates and Q&A

Friday, February 6 | 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

English Registration: <https://bit.ly/FedFunds26>

Spanish Registration: <https://bit.ly/FedFundSpan26>



Family Caregiver Support

[Bryn Ceman](#), Caregiver Programs Specialist

Need to Know

🔔 PeerPlace Reference Sheets Updated! 🌈

The AFCSP and NFCSP PeerPlace Reference Sheets are now available on SharePoint and the GWAAR website.

📁 Family Caregiver Support

- ➡ AFCSP or NFCSP
- ➡ Data Management
- ➡ PeerPlace Reference Sheets

👉 **AFCSP:** <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008888>

👉 **NFCSP:** <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008887>

Use these updated guides for consistent data entry and smoother PeerPlace reporting. The NFCSP and AFCSP reference sheets have officially been updated to include the new PeerPlace service types, units, and definitions!

Nice to Know

☀️ We Bring Light: Supporting Families Facing Younger-Onset Dementia

Thursday, March 5 | The Edgewater Hotel, Madison

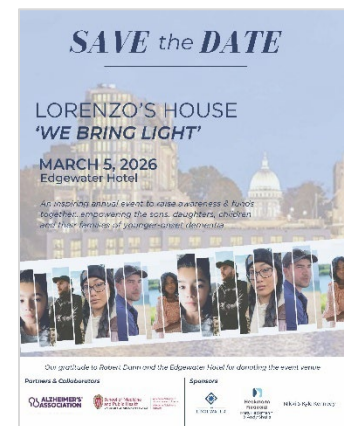
Lorenzo's House and NextGen WI are bringing together families, advocates, partners, and community leaders for a powerful evening of storytelling, connection, and hope — shining light on a younger-onset dementia community that is often unseen.

This gathering celebrates lived experience, raises awareness, and supports families navigating younger-onset dementia. If you or someone you know may benefit from community, understanding, and support, you are warmly invited to learn more and attend.

Event details and registration: <https://bit.ly/4taYQUm>

Membership Form: <https://bit.ly/49K4o0i>

View the flyer: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2008896>



Reminder: CARE U Train-the-Trainer

February 25 and 26, 2026

💡 Become a CARE U Trainer and help deliver meaningful education and support to family caregivers in Wisconsin. This is a great way to build local capacity and strengthen caregiver wellbeing statewide. 💡 Brought to you by the Center for Aging Research and Education, UW-Madison School of Nursing

Registration: <https://bit.ly/49MUw4s>

View the flyer: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2008891>



Reminder: Wisconsin caregivers: You're invited!

Thursday, February 26 | 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

The CARE U Workshop offers supportive, practical education to help caregivers navigate challenges like stress, communication, and day-to-day caregiving needs. 🧡 Brought to you by the Center for Aging Research and Education, UW-Madison School of Nursing ✨ A great opportunity to learn, connect, and feel more supported. Please see the picture attached or click below to learn more:

More info and registration: <https://bit.ly/3LVvDM7>

View the flyer: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008879>



Fiscal Resources and Data Management

Carrie Kroetz, Data Management and Technology Coordinator

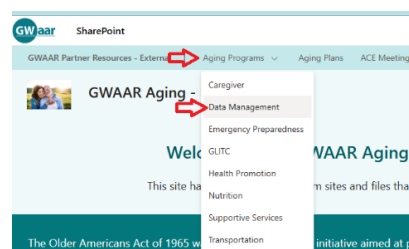
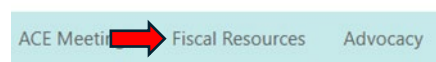
Need to Know

Reminders

All webinars are recorded and posted on the GWAAR Partners Resources site and accessed by registered users.

<https://gwaar.sharepoint.com/sites/PartnerResources> | Aging Programs | [Data Management](#)

<https://gwaar.sharepoint.com/sites/PartnerResources> | [Fiscal Resources](#)



Final Claim Form

GWAAR Fiscal has received the remaining transfer contract, and an amendment will be sent out to Aging Units shortly. The updated allocations will be included in the Final Claim form which will be posted this week in the Fiscal Resources Library. This will not include your NSIP contact and those funds, once the contract is received by GWAAR, will be included on your 2026 claim.

2025 Re-obligation Request Form Posted

We have posted the 2025 Re-obligation Request Form. This form is to be completed if you are submitting a Re-Obligation request for any of the following contracts held with GWAAR: Title III B, C1, C2, D, E, SSCS, EBS, Elder Abuse and/or AFCSP. Please complete it by February 20, 2026.

All requests will be reviewed and distributed after all Final Claim forms have been submitted. By completing this form, you also understand that any requests are not guaranteed and must be claimed by the Final Claim form, due March 5, 2026.

Please review the questions carefully as some questions have changed and specific information may be required. Additionally, only the most recent submission will be considered so please collaborate between program and fiscal to ensure a most accurate request is submitted.

-continued-

****2026 Draft Budget****

Due to upcoming changes taking effect in 2026 we have yet to post the 2026 Draft Budget. Once we have solidified the changes, we will update the form and inform Aging Directors and Fiscal staff of the posting. GWAAR Fiscal will also hold a webinar to inform Aging Unit staff of these changes and a review of instructions to complete the budget, waiver, and transfer requests. In the meantime, we have received the estimated allocations and have posted them in the Fiscal Resources library under Budget.

****2026 Claim Form****

GWAAR Fiscal will be updating the 2026 Claim Form with the 2026 allocations and changes to reporting requirements. We plan to have the form posted by late February. We will be hosting a webinar, date/time TBD, to review the updates and respond to questions.

****Updated Registration and Intake Forms****

The 2026 Client Registration and Intake forms have been updated and posted in the Data Management library. The following changes were made: Gender - open option, Poverty Level - updated, Race – Asian American added and some minor language changes were made in the privacy statement.

****Upcoming Training****

Regional Trainings – GWAAR Staff is working on scheduling Fiscal and Data Spring trainings again this year – once arrangements are finalized, we will send out the registration information.

PeerPlace New Year's Training Series: These trainings will be held by individual programs and review how to enter participants and service data, how to run error reports to review basic (NAPIS) information and determined data entry inconsistencies, discuss errors found during the current NAPIS report, and address 1st FFY quarter (Oct-Dec) corrections.

Nutrition Services (IIIC) PeerPlace Training: Tuesday, February 3 | 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Registration: <https://bit.ly/4jD5aPT>

Caregiver Services (IIIE & AFCSP) PeerPlace Training: Thursday, February 5 | 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Registration: <https://bit.ly/4ggVDAat>

Guardianship Support Center

Polly Shoemaker, WI Guardianship Support Center Attorney

Nice to Know

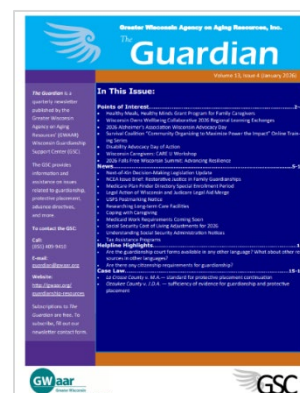
Latest issue of The Guardian available

The Guardian is a quarterly newsletter published by the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources' (GWAAR) Wisconsin Guardianship Support Center (GSC). The GSC provides information and assistance on issues related to guardianship, protective placement, advance directives, and more.

Read the January 2026 issue: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008885>

It can also be found on the Guardianship Support Center page:

<https://gwaar.org/guardianship-resources> | 2025 - Volume 13, Issue 4



Health Promotion

[Angie Sullivan](#), Health Promotion Program Specialist

Need to Know

Plan to Attend the First Quarterly Health Promotion Webinar of 2026

Tuesday, February 10 | 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

(Optional 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Networking and Sharing)

Virtual – TEAMS: <https://bit.ly/4siQkSw>

If you play a role in your county's OAA Title III-D Health Promotion Programming, then you won't want to miss this important webinar. GWAAR will provide updates on OAA on III-D programming across the state and discuss some common errors that are occurring. Two Diabetes management programs will be discussed as well. The last 30 minutes will not be recorded, and is an opportunity to network with other counties on challenges, successes, etc.



Nice to Know

Reminder: Grant Opportunity: AARP Community Challenge

AARP is now accepting applications for the 2026 Community Challenge funding cycle that:

- Deliver tangible improvements to communities, such as new crosswalks, benches, bike lanes, housing designs, and public space enhancements.
- Leverage additional support from public, private, and philanthropic sources.
- Help overcome policy barriers and implement lasting change.
- Foster new collaborations and increase community engagement.

Applications are due by 5 p.m. ET on March 4, 2026.

Click here to learn more: <https://bit.ly/3ZDSWND>



Reminder: Wisconsin Coalition for Social Connection (WCSC) Social Media Toolkit Available

Each month, WCSC is sharing ready-to-use social media posts to help spread messages of connection. Post these directly on your own social media pages.

<https://connectwi.org/for-professionals/awareness-resources/>



Medicare Outreach and Assistance

[Stephanie Haas](#), Medicare Outreach Coordinator

Nice to Know

Medicare Outreach Training

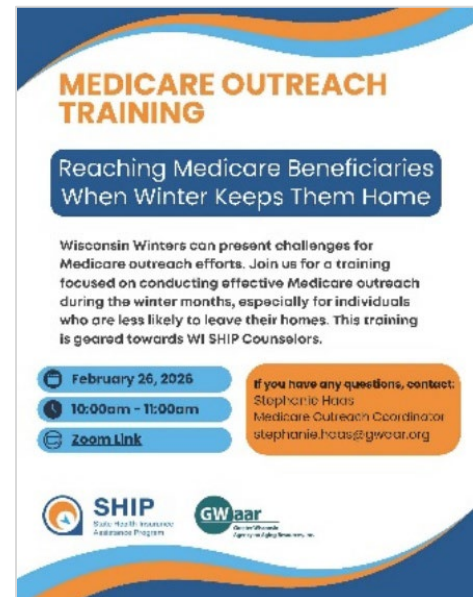
"Reaching Medicare Beneficiaries When Winter Keeps Them Home"

Thursday, February 26 | 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. via [Zoom](#)

Meeting link: <https://bit.ly/4rsr8b5>

Wisconsin winters can present challenges for Medicare outreach efforts. Join us for a training focused on conducting effective Medicare outreach during the winter months, especially for individuals who are less likely to leave their homes. This training is geared towards WI SHIP Counselors.

View the flyer: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008904>



Medicare Mingle 2026 dates announced

Are you a SHIP counselor in search of support, advice, or a chance to connect with other counselors? Discover Medicare Mingle, a gathering designed to encourage collaboration, share experiences, and boost your Medicare outreach initiatives. Medicare Mingle is set in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and offers the ideal opportunity to learn and share your knowledge.

Medicare Mingle is a casual and informative meeting aimed at supporting Wisconsin SHIP counselors in their role of guiding individuals through the Medicare process. Medicare Mingle provides a chance for SHIP Counselors to:

- Discuss different topics
- Offer support to other counselors
- Ask advice on challenging cases
- Explore outreach strategies

View the flyer: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewFile/id/2008905>

Join via Zoom: <https://bit.ly/4qXtAqn>



Nutrition

[Kristi Cooley](#), Nutrition Program Specialist

[Jean Lynch](#), Program Specialist Manager

[Pam VanKampen](#), Nutrition Program & Senior Center Specialist

Need to Know

Major Gift Funding – Meeting Materials Now Available

Thank you to everyone who participated in last week's Major Gift Funding meeting. We appreciate the thoughtful questions, discussion, and feedback shared during the call. The materials from the meeting are now available on SharePoint for reference and follow-up, including the meeting recording and application materials. These resources are intended to support counties as they review eligibility, funding priorities, and application requirements. **Available materials include:**

- Application Overview and Instructions
- Application
- Review and Award Process overview
- Meeting recording (video). Volume starts at 1:39

Access the Meeting Materials on SharePoint: **MAJOR GIFT:** <https://bit.ly/4tgMYzS>

We are taking applications for the month of February starting now until 2/10/26. If you have questions after reviewing the materials, please reach out to your program specialist. Thank you.

GWAAR Nutrition Team Information Call: Thursday, February 5 | 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

We hope you to plan to attend for important updates and discussion. The meeting will also be recorded for those unable to join live.

View the agenda: <https://gwaar.org/api/cms/viewfile/id/2008911>

Click here to join the meeting: <https://bit.ly/3L5nuEv>

Meeting ID: 253 444 690 524 1 | Passcode: 55eV6SX6 | Or call in (audio only) | +1 608-338-1382,, 726289041#

Home-Delivered Meal Assessor Call: Tuesday, February 10 | 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

We have increased the meetings to a quarterly basis based on your feedback. Please let your GWAAR Nutrition Team Representative know what topics or discussion questions you have for your peers.

Meetings will be held quarterly from 2 to 3 p.m., are held on Teams and will be recorded. We will use this same login for each meeting.

Click here to join the meeting: <https://bit.ly/3AsrSbz> |

Meeting ID: 214 394 008 477 | Passcode: dgk4rb | Or call in (audio only) | +1 608-338-1382,,685336459# |

Dietitian/Diet Techs Call: Thursday, February 12 | 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Agendas will be out closer to the date. Please let us know if you have any topics you would like featured. Meetings will be held quarterly from 2 to 3 pm, are held on Teams and will be recorded. We will use this same login for each meeting. We look forward to an exciting year!

Click here to join the meeting now: <https://bit.ly/4qQ4Ols>

Meeting ID: 234 136 223 685 | Passcode: Jd3WY9LN | Or call in (audio only) | +1 608-338-1382,,195045346#

-continued-

Stepping Up Your Nutrition Leader Call

Tuesday, February 24 | 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. (Date/Time Change)

This call is for all the current and interested leaders of this fun, informative Nutrition Ed Class. Please join us and your peers. The call is held on Teams and will be recorded. Please let Pam VanKampen know if you have any questions about the class or how to become a leader. Pam.vankampen@gwaar.org

Click here to join the meeting: <https://bit.ly/4kbRsUg>

Meeting ID: 214 340 884 640 | Passcode: 9wS7VD

Or call in (audio only) | +1 608-338-1382,,83218773# | Phone Conference ID: 832 187 73#

Tribal Technical Center

Kassy Heard, TTAC Program Director

Nice to Know

Introducing Carri Chapman and Jenise Swartley

Greetings from the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council TTAC Team!

We are Carri Chapman and Jenise Swartley, and we're honored to have joined the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council (GLITC) as the new Program Specialists for the Tribal Technical Assistance Center.

In our roles, we provide technical assistance to the 11 Tribal Aging Units of Wisconsin and serve as representatives for the Senior Medicare Patrol program.

Beginning this work during the quieter winter months has given us valuable time to learn the many responsibilities of the position. We are grateful for the opportunity to grow into these roles and look forward to building strong relationships while supporting the important work taking place across each Tribal community.

Thank you to everyone at GWAAR for the many trainings and insights you have shared as we prepare to work together. Please feel welcome to reach out to us at any point.

Carri can be reached at cchapman@glitc.org or 715-588-1050 and works from GLITC's headquarters in Lac du Flambeau, WI.

Jenise can be reached at jswartley@glitc.org or 715-890-0292 and is located at the Ashland Area Enterprise Center in Ashland, WI.

