



For economic and racial justice

New \$53.1 billion Illinois state budget a win for working families



The Illinois House [passed the state budget](#), and we're celebrating wins for individuals and families. The Shriver Center on Poverty Law, with our partners,

successfully advocated for a permanent child tax credit, a medical debt relief program, and removal of the state grocery tax, to name only a few. We're thankful to our lawmakers and Gov. J. B. Pritzker for enacting real change through these policies for people living in poverty.

Stay tuned for a more in-depth look at our legislative session highlights!

Ending cash bail keeps families strong, communities safe



Since Illinois became the first state in the nation to outlaw cash bail, data shows early signs of success in building a more equitable system. Advocates report decreased jail populations in several counties, along with judges spending more time assessing individuals based on risk to public safety. That means more people are able to maintain their jobs and stay with their families.

[Read more](#)

**The landmark case that brought homelessness to the
Supreme Court**



Recently, three unhoused individuals filed a complaint against the city, calling its anti-homeless laws unconstitutional. *Johnson v. Grants Pass* will determine if the city is violating the Constitution's Eighth Amendment protection against cruel and unusual punishment when it arrests, fines, and even jails people without homes for sleeping outside. The Shriver Center, in coalition with our partners, filed an [amicus brief](#) in support of the unhoused community.

[Read more](#)

Fund Our Futures releases recommendations for the 2025 state budget



Illinois' tax system, characterized by regressive tax structures that burden families with low income, perpetuates economic disparities. The report, [Funding Our Futures: The Equitable Revenue Policies Illinois Families Need to Thrive](#), highlights the consequences of underfunded public services, particularly for marginalized communities, while emphasizing the need for a fairer distribution of wealth. By centering equity and directly involving those with lived experience, the coalition aims to pave the way for meaningful change.

[Read more](#)

Staff About Town



“We need to make workplaces work for women,” declared Audra Wilson, president and CEO of the Shriver Center, in Chicago on May 23. Wilson joined panelists who spoke about the interconnected systems affecting women in the workplace at [Women Employed](#)’s annual fundraiser, The Working Lunch. The event, themed ALL IN, [attracted over 650 activists](#), community partners, and

leaders across various sectors, emphasizing collective efforts to support working women in Illinois.



Jeremy Rosen (second from right), in Springfield for the Illinois Dignity in Pay Act press conference on May 2, 2024.

The Shriver Center supports increases to the minimum wage. This includes the law to raise the minimum wage to \$15 for all Illinoisians. The Dignity in Pay Act would ensure workers with disabilities, who have historically earned less due to negative stereotypes, receive the same pay guarantees. In a show of his continued support for the measure, Jeremy Rosen, the Shriver Center's director of economic justice, was invited onstage at the Illinois Dignity in Pay Act press conference last month.



Stephanie Altman, Shriver Center's director of health care justice and senior director of policy, sat on the Insights in the Illinois Legislature panel at the 2024 Illinois State of Reform Health Policy Conference. The panel happened during the Illinois legislative session and Altman talked about the most important conversations surrounding health policy, key bills, and long-term legislative goals.



Our associate director of health care justice, Stephani Becker, spoke on the Challenges and Trends in Healthcare Affordability panel, where she discussed rising health costs and data-driven predictions for Illinoisans ability to afford medical care.

[State of Reform](#) hosts multi-state conferences to foster productive, collaborative conversations about the complex issues facing the health sector, now and in the future.

Upcoming trainings



We build the capacity and skills of advocates and activists to champion economic and racial justice in their fields. See some upcoming opportunities.

[Supervising for Quality & Impact](#)

Most advocacy organizations aim to nurture leadership; support diversity, equity, and inclusion; and reward innovation and hard work. With Supervising for Quality & Impact (SQI), a leadership course offered online by the Shriver Center, you can turn those aspirations into reality. Build your skills at giving constructive feedback, handling difficult conversations, addressing motivation and burnout, and navigating a hybrid work environment. The Shriver Center is offering two additional sessions of SQI in 2024! Sign up now to reserve your spot!

[SQI, fall course](#)

September 10 – October 8 (virtual)

Live sessions on Tuesdays

[SQI, late fall/early winter course](#)

November 19 – December 17 (virtual)

Live sessions on Tuesdays

[**Register now**](#)

Shriver Center in the news

[Labor, human rights leaders applaud passage of Illinois Worker Freedom of Speech Act](#)

Illinois Business Journal

The Illinois General Assembly passed legislation to protect workers from mandatory workplace meetings focused on political or religious opinions. The bill had the support of a diverse group of stakeholders, including the Illinois AFL-CIO, Chicago Federation of Labor, Equality Illinois, Planned Parenthood, Citizen Action, Women Employed, Shriver Center, and Raise the Floor Alliance.

[The child welfare system is hurting the kids it was designed to protect.](#)

[Why?](#)Crain's Chicago Business

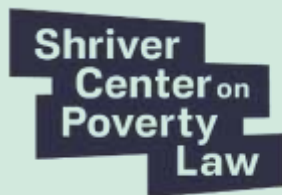
"The government becomes the caretaker, ignoring the fact that harm takes place when you remove a child from their parents," says LaTanya Jackson Wilson, vice president of advocacy at the Shriver Center.

[\\$1 billion in medical debt could be wiped for Illinoisans under proposed statewide program](#)

WCIA, Illinois Capitol News

“Households with health insurance, and even middle-income [families] struggle underneath the weight of medical debt,” said Audra Wilson, the president and CEO of the Shriver Center. “It is crushing, it is massive, and that is why this initiative is so significant.”

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