



Pennsylvania
Department of Labor & Industry

Pennsylvania
Department of Human Services

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Shapiro Administration Delivers Donated Stuffed Toys Collected from L&I's Annual Safety Inspections and Joy this Holiday Season

Every year, L&I collects samples of stuffed toys that will be sold in Pennsylvania for routine inspections for contents, choking hazards and general safety.



Harrisburg, PA – The **Pennsylvania Departments of Labor & Industry (L&I)** and **Human Services (DHS)** started the 2024 holiday season Tuesday with the annual donation of stuffed toys collected throughout the year by L&I during routine safety inspections. These toys will be distributed to Pennsylvania families through DHS' Holiday Wish program.

"This annual tradition of donating inspected toys to the Holiday Wish program represents the best of public service – ensuring safety while bringing joy to Pennsylvania's children during the holiday season," **said L&I Secretary Nancy A. Walker**. "We encourage all Pennsylvanians who are able to consider giving to holiday charities this year. These simple acts of kindness can create lasting memories for children across our Commonwealth."

Under state law, L&I's [Bureau of Occupational and Industrial Safety](#) must inspect all new stuffed toy samples for contents, choking hazards, and general safety. Toys that pass inspection get a registration number, which is on every stuffed toy sold in the

Commonwealth. Through this process, L&I accumulates hundreds of toy samples each year.

On Tuesday, L&I delivered 749 stuffed toys to DHS for its Holiday Wish program, started in 1989 by DHS employees – an increase from the 650 donated last year. Over the years, Holiday Wish has grown to include hundreds of employees in various state agencies, allowing the program to reach thousands of individuals in need around Pennsylvania during the holiday season.

The [Stuffed Toy Manufacturing Act](#) was recently updated when Governor Shapiro signed [Act 30 of 2024](#) into law. Act 30 eliminated a long-standing ban on using recycled materials in stuffed toys sold in the Commonwealth. The updated law requires all stuffed toys offered for sale in PA to have a law label securely attached, including a statement that the toy is made from all new materials, all recycled materials, or a blend of new and recycled materials and the manufacturer's or importer's registration number from Pennsylvania, starting with "REG. NO. PA." The law aims to protect children by ensuring stuffed toys are safe, properly labeled, and free from harmful substances.

“The Department of Human Services works every day to make it possible for people to achieve a better life, whether that's through assistance in accessing essential basic needs like food and health care, or by giving back to families who may be in difficult circumstances through our Holiday Wish program. This work is fundamental to our mission, and I am extremely proud to work with so many state employees with compassion for our fellow Pennsylvanians who help make the holidays better and brighter for the families we serve,” said **DHS Secretary Dr. Val Arkoosh**. “Every Pennsylvanian should know that DHS’ programs are here to help. If you are having trouble financially in any way, I encourage you to reach out to DHS to apply for assistance and see if we are able to help you ease your situation.”

As families or individuals visit local DHS [County Assistance Offices](#) (CAO) to apply for benefits, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Medical Assistance (Medicaid), CAO caseworkers identify families and older adults in need to take part in the Holiday Wish program. Holiday Wish participants then select a few gifts they need or would like to receive, and state employees sponsor a family or individual to ensure they receive special gifts during the holiday season. Commonwealth agencies and the Pennsylvania National Guard meet in December to distribute these gifts to hundreds of families across Pennsylvania.

Applications for public assistance programs can be submitted online through the [COMPASS](#) website. On-site CAO services are available if clients cannot access online services or need assistance that cannot be accessed through the COMPASS website, the myCOMPASS PA mobile app, or by calling the Customer Service Centers at 215-560-7226 for Philadelphia clients or 1-877-395-8930 for clients in all other counties.

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