Pennsylvania
Department of Labor & Industry

Pennsylvania
Department of Human Services

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Shapiro Administration Inspects More Than 1,000 Stuffed Toys for Safety in 2026, Donates Approved Toys to Kick Off Holiday Season

Each year, L&I inspects thousands of stuffed toys before they can be sold in Pennsylvania, testing them for flammability, materials, and design safety.

This year's donation includes 100 stuffed toys made with recycled materials that are now allowed under a 2024 law signed by Governor Shapiro that lifted an antiquated ban while maintaining strict toy safety requirements.

Harrisburg, PA – The **Pennsylvania departments of Labor & Industry (L&I)** and **Human Services (PA DHS)** today announced that L&I approved **1,052 stuffed toys** for sale in Pennsylvania this year following routine safety inspections to ensure the toys are safe for children. In what has become an annual tradition, L&I donated the approved toy samples to PA DHS' Holiday Wish program, and they will be distributed to Pennsylvania families during the holiday season.

This year's donation is just shy of last year's record of 1,085 toys, and includes 100 stuffed toys made with recycled materials. Pennsylvania previously prohibited recycled materials in stuffed toys sold in the Commonwealth until **Governor Josh Shapiro** signed Act 30 of 2024 into law, updating the Stuffed Toy Manufacturing Act to allow their use. Toys made with recycled materials must still meet Pennsylvania's safety and labeling requirements before they can be sold.

"Our team works year-round to make sure the toys children play with meet Pennsylvania's safety standards, and this annual tradition of then donating the samples we approve is a wonderful reminder of the impact this work can have beyond the inspection process," said **L&I Secretary Nancy A. Walker**. "This year, we've reached an exciting milestone: 100 of the stuffed toys we're donating were made with recycled materials, up from more than 50 last year. But what makes today especially meaningful is knowing these toys will soon bring smiles, comfort, and a little extra holiday magic to children and families across Pennsylvania. We're proud to continue this tradition with our partners at PA DHS to help make the season a little brighter for those who need it most."

L&I's **Bureau of Occupational and Industrial Safety (BOIS)** inspects stuffed toy samples submitted by manufacturers, examining their contents, flammability, and design for potential safety hazards. Manufacturers must register with L&I before their stuffed toys can be sold or distributed in Pennsylvania. Through this process, the Department collects hundreds of toy samples each year that, after passing inspection, can be donated through Holiday Wish.

The updated law allows manufacturers to use new materials, recycled materials, or a combination of both. Stuffed toys must carry a label identifying the type of materials used and the manufacturer's or importer's Pennsylvania registration number, helping consumers identify products that have been reviewed and approved by L&I.

BOIS reports that approximately 10 to 15 stuffed toy samples fail inspection each year. When a toy does not meet Pennsylvania's requirements, the manufacturer is notified of the deficiencies and what must be corrected before the toy can be approved for sale.

Since 2016, more than 7,000 inspected stuffed toys have found new homes through L&I's partnership with PA DHS, including this year's donation. That represents thousands of children and families whose holidays have been made a little brighter through the work of L&I and PA DHS employees.

Started in 1989 by PA DHS employees, the Holiday Wish program has grown to include hundreds of employees across Commonwealth agencies, helping provide gifts to thousands of Pennsylvanians in need during the holiday season.

"Throughout the year, PA DHS caseworkers see thousands of people who just need some extra help to put food on their tables, fill their prescriptions, or heat their homes. And sometimes people let us know that they need a little extra help during the holidays, which is why I'm extremely proud of the Holiday Wish program and the extra hand it provides during the holiday season and beyond," said **PA DHS Executive Deputy Secretary Andrew Barnes**. "We can all do our part to be generous and make this holiday season better for everyone. Every Pennsylvanian should know that PA DHS' programs are here to help – reach out and see if we are able to help you ease your situation."

As families and individuals visit local PA DHS County Assistance Offices (CAOs) to apply for benefits, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Medical Assistance (Medicaid), caseworkers identify families and older adults in need to take part in Holiday Wish. Participants select a few gifts they need or would like to receive, and Commonwealth employees sponsor a family or individual to help fulfill those wishes. Commonwealth agencies and the Pennsylvania National Guard work together in December to distribute gifts to hundreds of families across Pennsylvania.

Applications for public assistance programs can be submitted online through COMPASS. Pennsylvanians can also visit a local County Assistance Office or call the Customer Service Centers at **215-560-7226** in Philadelphia or **1-877-395-8930** in all other counties for assistance.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry, please visit the website or follow L&I on Instagram, Facebook, X, and LinkedIn.

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Editor's Note: Video downloads and photos of today's announcement are available on PAcast.