

Call to Action

Meals for older adults are seriously underfunded in Minnesota and, as a result, the health of older Minnesotans is at risk.

Save meals for seniors!

We implore you to add \$10 million to the Minnesota Department of Human Services appropriation to meet minimum nutritional needs for older adults.

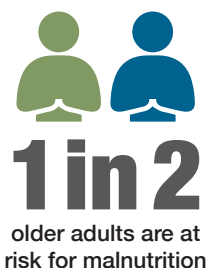
Food insecurity disproportionately affects older Minnesotans from lower-income, minority communities who often live in food deserts, have limited English proficiency and lack access to transportation. Lack of nutrition impacts health, erodes quality of life and contributes to rising healthcare costs.



Background

Programs that provide meals to older adults are severely underfunded and ARE NOT meeting the needs of Minnesota's oldest citizens. Funding for the Minnesota Senior Nutrition Program has not increased in the past 20 years, while the need and costs for meals have grown exponentially.

According to [Defeat Malnutrition Today](#), as many as one in two older Americans are at risk for malnutrition. Lack of nutrition puts people at higher risk for illness, longer lengths of hospital stays and higher level of readmissions. Malnutrition is complex and driven by multiple factors, but the lack of access to nutritious meals is a key component.



MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF
AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

We need your help to:

**Add \$10 million
to the Senior
Nutrition Program**

**Under Minnesota Statutes,
section 256.9752**

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Community-based nutrition programs are also a key weapon for fighting social isolation in older adults. Congregate meals offer opportunities for human connection and socialization. Home-delivered meals provide older adults with a critical, and often the only, in-person connection with a friendly contact.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Minnesota has seen a dramatic increase in demand for meals along with federal dollars to help meet the demand. As the federal relief comes to an end, the need for nutritious meals remains.

Current Funding

Senior nutrition programs are funded in two ways:

- The State Senior Nutrition Program currently provides \$2.695 million per year and has not increased for more than 20 years.
- The federal “Older Americans Act” provides approximately \$12 to \$12.5 million per year in senior nutrition funding.

An influx of emergency and stimulus federal funds fueled an increase in spending on senior meals to \$38 million in 2020. As these funds recede, there is a critical need to replace those dollars.

State and federal funds are allocated to the Minnesota Board on Aging and then distributed to Minnesota’s six area agencies on aging based on a federally approved intrastate funding formula. The AAAs allocate the funding to community-based organizations that provide meals to older adults and their caregivers.

Dramatic Increase in Costs

Food costs are up 38%, gasoline is up 20% to 30%, utilities and supplies are up 25% to 50% and cost of personnel is up 15%. Meals providers are responding to higher costs by serving fewer people or fewer meals per person with devastating impact on older adults.

We need your help!

We are working with key legislators to introduce a bill to meet this urgent and growing need.

Will you join us in the fight to save senior meals?

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