

# Call to Action

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

## Support meals for seniors!

We implore you to add \$20 million (\$10 million per year) to the Minnesota Board on Aging appropriation to meet minimum nutritional needs for older adults.

Food insecurity disproportionately affects older Minnesotans from lower-income and rural communities who may live in food deserts, have limited English proficiency or lack access to transportation. Inadequate 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 residents. Funding for the Minnesota Senior Nutrition Program has not increased in the past 20 years, while the need for meals has grown and their cost has skyrocketed.

According to [Defeat Malnutrition Today](#), as many as one in two older Americans is 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.



## Senior Meals & Services Coalition

We need your help to pass:

**SF 2244/HF 2523**

**Add \$20 million  
for the Senior  
Nutrition Program**

for each biennial appropriation

Amending  
Minnesota Statutes,  
section 256.9752

**supporting senior meals  
and related services**

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With severe workforce shortages in care settings, nutrition programs help make it possible for older adults to stay safely in their homes. Meals programs also reduce social isolation for older adults. Congregate meals create opportunities for gathering with others. Home-delivered meals provide older adults with a regular, in-person connection with a friendly face.

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 and will grow as the population ages in large numbers.

### Current Funding

- The State Senior Nutrition Program provides \$2.695 million in funding per year, a level that 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 federal COVID-19 funds temporarily increased available resources for meals. Even with this increase, some older adults went without meals. It is critical to replace one-time funds to meet a basic need for food among our older adult population.

Updated 2-3-23

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 an intrastate funding formula. The AAAs allocate the funding to community-based organizations that provide meals to older adults.

### Increasing Costs

The cost of meals has increased 26% from 2020 to 2022, and we expect it will continue to increase. Meal providers are responding by serving fewer people or fewer meals per person, with devastating impacts on older adults.

### We need your help!

Will you join us in the fight to save senior meals? Pass legislation to meet this urgent and growing need.

Join us in the fight for  
senior meals



MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF  
AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

This advocacy effort is supported by the Minnesota Association of Area Agencies on Aging. A voice for older adults in Minnesota.