



Vermont
Association of
Area Agencies
on Aging

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Vermont Association of Area Agencies on Aging's FY24 BAA Request for Meals on Wheel and Choices for Care Moderate Needs Group

Meals on Wheels

The Area Agencies on Aging are requesting \$2 million in base funding in the SFY 2024 Budget Adjustment Act due to the increased demand for Meals on Wheels to meet the nutritional needs of the growing demographic of Older Vermonters. The Vermont Association of Senior Centers and Meal Providers, HungerFreeVT, and the VTFoodbank also support our request.

- Last year, **Older Vermonter Nutrition Programs** provided 1,185,564 **nutritious meals** to 16,257 older Vermonters, a 5% increase over the prior year; YTD, FFY24 has a higher number of enrollees over last year.
- Providing emergency meals and delivery to older Vermonters stranded due to this year's catastrophic flood and power outage events caused more budget shortfalls.
- Funding for senior nutrition has not kept pace with the aging population. ARPA funding ends this year.
- Last year, the legislature added \$1 million to the base budget for home-delivered and congregate meals for seniors. This welcome increase did not provide enough meals for our growing demographic of older Vermonters.

Meals on Wheels targets vulnerable older Vermonters who cannot afford food or can't access or prepare it and helps them remain at home. It provides prepared meals meeting USDA guidelines delivered by community volunteers. It also offers therapeutic meals for chronic disease management.

Funding for the Older Vermonters Nutrition Program does not meet the current and future needs of older Vermonters. Vermont must increase its investment in Nutrition for Older Vermonters to create a sustainable plan for the future.

Vermont Foodbank

V4A also supports the Vermont Foodbank's request for \$2 million in additional base funding in the Budget Adjustment process to shore up the state's food shelves, community meal sites, and direct distribution sites stretched to capacity.

CHOICES FOR CARE MODERATE NEEDS GROUP

V4A wants the state to restore the \$2mm cut to the Moderate Needs Program. The Moderate Needs Group program is part of the Choices for Care (CFC). CFC provides long-term care services and supports to older or physically disabled individuals, enabling many older people to remain in their homes and maintain their

quality of life, providing case management, homemaker, and adult day services. This program saves the state from more costly healthcare interventions.

This is one of the most critical issues for our clients. AAAs have 606 people on waiting lists for MNG services, some for 2-5 years. AAAs historically spend down this funding and could remove many older and disabled individuals off these waiting lists if the state restores the \$ 2 million.

