Many older adults struggled with hunger and isolation before the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic exacerbated these issues and increased the need for services like Meals on Wheels.

- **55%** of older adults aged 60 and older reported at least one unmet need.*
  - *Help with housing costs, access to quality healthcare, picking up groceries, etc. as of late 2020.

- **40%** of older adults needed help with having enough activities to keep busy at home and/or with staying socially connected while physically distancing.

- **18%** of adults aged 60 and older reported needing help with affordable food to meet their dietary needs.

Senior hunger, social isolation, anxiety and depression rose dramatically at times during the pandemic.

- The proportion of seniors aged 60 and older who sometimes or often didn’t have enough to eat rose from:
  - 2.8% (2019)
  - 4.9% (2020)
- **A 75% increase**

- **1 in 4 adults** aged 65 and older reported anxiety or depression during the pandemic.*
  - *This was substantially higher than the 1 in 10 (11%) older adults with Medicare who reported depression or anxiety in 2018.

Even pre-pandemic, many seniors faced challenges of paying for housing and other necessities, in addition to food.

- In 2018, **53% of renters** aged 62 and up were cost burdened, meaning they paid more than 30% of their income for rent and utilities.

- In late 2020, **18% of adults** aged 60 and older reported needing help with being able to afford prescription medications.

Meals on Wheels programs require sustained and expanded funding to continue providing existing services to meet the unmet need and to address senior hunger and isolation in their communities.

Information data sources available at [www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/facts](http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/facts). © September 2021 Meals on Wheels America