FACT SHEET SOURCES & METHODS

THE ESCALATING ISSUE
OF SENIOR HUNGER AND ISOLATION:
2025 NATIONAL SNAPSHOT

Note:
- This fact sheet presents the most recent data available on the topic at the time of publication.
- To provide the most accurate and current information, some data may come from different sources than prior iterations of this fact sheet. Because sources, data collection methods, and reporting vary across sources and years, caution should be used when comparing figures from prior fact sheets.
- The data are estimates and have a margin of error. For some data sources, small changes in estimates are common and should not be overemphasized, as they may reflect differences in samples or methodology rather than a meaningful trend. These fact sheets provide a snapshot of the topic, but changes over time should be interpreted with care.

A. **"The Meals on Wheels network is comprised of around 5,000 community-based providers across the country…"** is from the Administration on Community Living (ACL), "Nutrition Services." Last modified on 02/02/2024. Figure includes programs that provide home-delivered meals and/or congregate meals and receive Older Americans Act funding. https://acl.gov/programs/health-wellness/nutrition-services

> **Our nation's senior population is growing and changing rapidly.**

B. **"1 in 4 Americans is 60+…" was calculated by Meals on Wheels America using data** from Projected Population by Five-Year Age Group and Sex for the United States, Main Series: 2022-2100. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Release Date: November 2023. available at https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2023/demo/popproj/2023-summary-tables.html

C. **"…with 12,000 more turning 60 every day"** was calculated by Meals on Wheels America using the data and sources below. We started with the total estimated population of adults age 59 living in the United States (a), then subtracted from that the number of annual estimated deaths among the age group (b) and then divided the result by 365 days. Annual estimated deaths were calculated by applying an age-specific mortality rate (b) to the estimated population of adults age 59 in 2023 (a).
  - Population estimate is for the total U.S. resident population age 59 in the 50 states, D.C. and Puerto Rico in 2023. Data available in *Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Single Year of Age and Sex for the United States: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2023 (NC-EST2023-AGESEX-RES)*.

https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2020s-national-detail.html

- Age-specific mortality rate reflects the number of deaths per 100,000 people among individuals age 55-64 years in the United States in 2023. Data available in the CDC National Vital Statistics System December 2024 data brief, *Mortality in the United States, 2023*. Estimate is from information collected by National Center Health Statistics for death certificates filed in 50 states and D.C. Full data brief available at: https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db521.htm#:~:text=Data%20from%20the%20National%20Vital,2022%20to%20750.5%20in%202023

D. **"Among Americans 60 and older: "29% have a disability" and "11% are veterans"** are from U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. Data available in Table S0102 "Population 60 Years and over in the United States." Available at https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2024.S0102?q=s0102

E. **"Among Americans 60 and older: 25% live alone"** is from Meals on Wheels America calculations of 2023 American Community Survey data. Figure calculated by aggregating counts of persons 60+ living alone and not living alone, and dividing by the population age 60+, then multiplying by 100. Retrieved 11/18/2025. (Filters: Row: age; column: hhtype; weight: person weight). Available through the IPUMS USA website at https://usa.ipums.org/usa/sda/

F. **"This population is set to reach 91M by 2030, with 112M expected by 2060"** was calculated by Meals on Wheels America using data from *Projected Population by Five-Year Age Group and Sex for the United States, Main Series: 2023-2100*. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division. Revised release date: November 2023. Estimate base is for the resident population age 60 and above on July 1, 2022 in 50 states and D.C. and is used for projecting the U.S. population from 2023 to 2100. Data available in the Census Bureau National Population Projections Tables (Table 3). https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2023/demo/popproj/2023-summary-tables.html

G. **Chart of population 60+ people of color and 60+ White alone, not Hispanic, 2022-2060** is from Meals on Wheels America analysis of data from U.S. Census Bureau (Nov 2023), Dataset NP2023_D1: 1. *Projected Population by Single Year of Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: 2022-2100 main series*. "People of color" includes people age 60 and older who identify as any of the following: Hispanic of any race, Black (not Hispanic), American Indian or Alaska Native (not Hispanic), Asian (not Hispanic), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (not Hispanic) or two or more races (not Hispanic). Data available at: https://www.census.gov/data/datasets/2023/demo/popproj/2023-popproj.html

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Older Americans are living longer with less money.

H. **"12 million older adults face financial challenges that impact their ability to age at home"** is from a 2022 report by J. Mutchler, Y. Su, and N. Velasco Roldan published by the Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging Publications at the University of Massachusetts Boston and titled Living Below the Line: Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Economic Security among Older Americans, 2022. Data for U.S. adults

age 65 and older in one and two person households. Full report available at: https://scholarworks.umb.edu/demographyofaging/68/

I. **"1 in 2 seniors living alone lacks the income to pay for basic needs"** is from a 2023 report by J. Mutchler, Y. Su, and N. Velasco Roldan published by the Center for Social and Demographic Research on Aging Publications at the University of Massachusetts Boston and titled Living Below the Line: Economic Insecurity and Older Americans, Insecurity in the States 2022. "Singles" data includes individuals living alone and "Couples" includes two-senior households with incomes below the Elder Index, which is reflective of the costs of housing, health care, transportation, food and miscellaneous essentials for adults age 65 and older living independently in the United States, excluding territories, in 2022. Full report available at (see Tables 3a and 3b): https://scholarworks.umb.edu/demographyofaging/66/

Seniors are at greater risk of hunger and malnutrition.

J. **"Nearly 13 million seniors are threatened by or experience hunger"** is from Meals on Wheels America analysis of data from the December 2023 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement. Data include adults age 60 and older who were categorized as having experienced "marginal food security," "Low food security" and/or "Very low food security." Custom data table available at: https://data.census.gov/app/mdat/CPSFOODSECURITY202312/table?vv=PRTAGE(0:60:90)&cv=HRFS12MD&wt=PWSUPWGT

K. **"Food insecurity disproportionately affects older adults of color"** is from Meals on Wheels America Analysis of the December 2023 Current Population Food Security Supplement. Data are for adults age 60 and older in 2023. Hispanic persons included in people of any race. Custom tables available at: https://data.census.gov/app/mdat/CPSFOODSECURITY202312/table?vv=PRTAGE(0:60:90)&cv=PEHSPNON,HRFS12MD&rv=PTDTRACE&wt=PWSUPWGT

The Meals on Wheels solution starts with the meal….

L. **"Older adults are already at higher risk of malnutrition due to decreased appetite, mobility issues, prescription medications and more"** is from National Academy on an Aging Society, "Profiles of an Aging Society: What We Know and Can Do About Malnutrition," The Gerontological Society of America, Fall 2015. Article available at: https://www.geron.org/images/gsa/malnutrition/malnutritionprofile.pdf

M. **"244 million meals served annually"** and **"2.6 million seniors served annually (OAA)"** are from Administration for Community Living Aging, Independence, and Disability (AGID) Data Portal Data Explorer. Filters: Data Set: State Performance Reports (SPR) (Title III); Years: 2024; Geography: all U.S. Totals, 50 States + DC & Territories; Data Elements: Older Adults Persons and Units --> Total Persons by Service --> Congregate Meals and Home Delivered Meals, Older Adults Persons and Units -->Total Service Units and Total Persons Served by Service --> Congregate Meals and Home Delivered Meals. Data available at: https://agid.acl.gov/data-explorer Accessed

10/14/2025.

and delivers on so much more.

N. **"Of home-delivered meal participants"** statistics are from the 2023 Administration for Community Living (ACL) National Survey of Older Americans Act (OAA) Participants. Figures are from the responses of a nationally representative sample of clients receiving Home-delivered meals funded through Title III of the OAA. Data obtained through special ACL request.

HELP US END THE WAIT. FUND AND SUPPORT MEALS ON WHEELS.