MEALS on WHEELS AMERICA

END the WAIT

2026 NATIONAL SNAPSHOT

Meals on Wheels Funding Explained

For more than 50 years, Meals on Wheels has set the gold standard as an evidence-based public-private partnership that effectively addresses the issues of senior hunger and isolation.



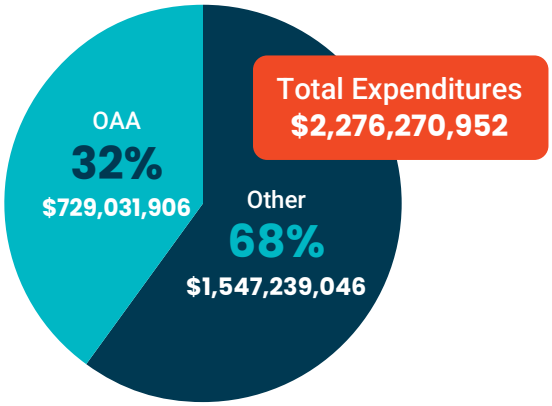
Federal funding creates the foundation.



9 in 10 local Meals on Wheels programs receive federal funding and for more than 60% of providers, federal funding represents half or more of their total budget.

Meals on Wheels America is the leadership organization supporting approximately 5,000 community-based organizations across the country through federal advocacy, private funding, programming, education, research and more. Meals on Wheels America does not receive or disperse federal funding to local providers.

The primary source for federal funding for the Meals on Wheels network is the Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Program, which covers 32% of the costs to serve over 2 million seniors annually.



Other

State and/or local sources

Private donations including corporate, foundations and individual contributions

Additional federal funding (e.g., Social Services Block Grant, Community Development Block Grant, Community Services Block Grant)

OAA Nutrition Program **funding is distributed from the federal government** to states, territories and tribal nations according to formulas based partly on the population of older adults.

State Units on Aging then allocate grants to Area Agencies on Aging based on their own funding formulas.

Finally, **contracts for services are issued to community-based providers like Meals on Wheels.** The amount of federal funding a provider receives varies by contract.

Information data sources available at mealsonwheelsamerica.org/facts. © September 2026 Meals on Wheels America

But it isn't enough, and seniors are waiting.



56%
of seniors feel lonely

Only **1%**
of philanthropy goes to aging issues

Meals on Wheels operational costs are on the rise

Gas prices increased 53%
from 2015-2025

Grocery prices increased 30%
from 2014-2024

85%

of Americans **support federal funding** for home-delivered meals through the Older Americans Act

1 in 3 Meals on Wheels providers has a waitlist with seniors waiting on average more than 4 months for meals.



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

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