



Missouri
Association
of Area
Agencies
on Aging

URGENT ACTION NEEDED NOW TO PROTECT MISSOURI'S OLDER ADULTS

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URGENT NEED FOR AN EARLY SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET AUTHORIZATION FOR AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

Missouri's most vulnerable older adults are facing an unprecedented risk to the loss of vital services. 150,000 seniors in Missouri rely on support from the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs).

THE FUNDING EMERGENCY IS HERE!

- While funding is available to support Missouri's older adults, the state projects it will exhaust its spending authority for Older Americans Act (OAA) funds as early as March.
- The time to act is NOW!
- Missouri's Legislature must urgently pass the FY 2025 Supplemental Budget with **spending authority** for Older Americans Act for Area Agencies on Aging.
- Without this Supplemental Budget for Spending Authorization, for the months of March, April, May, and June, 2025, **150,000 older adults risk the loss of vital services such as home-delivered meals, transportation, in-home services and more.**

BACKGROUND:

Federal funding from the Older Americans Act (OAA) provides vital support such as home-delivered meals and transportation to over 150,000 older Missourians. While these federal OAA funds are available, Missouri's Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) will exhaust its spending authority for these funds by March 2025. **Without immediate legislative action, Missouri's older adults who rely on the AAAs will be in jeopardy of losing services such as home-delivered meals, transportation, in-home services, caregiver support, and other vital services beginning in March 2025.**

TIMING IS CRITICAL!

- ma4 and Missouri's ten Area Agencies on Aging urge the Legislature to pass the Governor's FY 2025 Supplemental Budget in order to prevent the disruption or elimination of services to older adults.
- **The Supplemental Budget must include authorization for DHSS to expend \$14M in federal OAA funding to the AAAs; AND**
- **Additionally, a New Decision Item (NDI) must be included in the SFY 2026 Budget to authorize an additional \$7M in federal OAA funds (in order to prevent a similar crisis next fiscal year).**
- The Supplemental Budget **must occur quickly** - by March 31 to protect services for older Missourians.
- **Without this urgent authorization, Missouri is at risk of returning \$14.7M to the federal government – and seniors in Missouri will be irreparably harmed!**

Governor Kehoe and key legislators acknowledge this need, and the Governor has included this spending authority in his proposed FY 2025 Supplemental Budget.

But we need to remind legislators of the urgency of this situation and the need for immediate action!

**** No new or additional funds are requested – simply the authority to spend existing federal funds already allocated to the AAAs.**

BACKGROUND ON THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT (OAA):

The Older Americans Act (OAA), signed into law in 1965, is the primary federal legislation supporting the well-being of older adults. The OAA supports individuals aged 60 and older to maintain their independence, dignity, and connection to their communities as they age. Funding supports critical services such as meal programs, transportation, caregiver support, in-home assistance, home modifications, legal aid, and more.

These services are essential for enabling older adults to age in place, reducing their reliance on costly institutional care, and improving their overall quality of life.

In Missouri, the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) oversees the administration of OAA funds, which are provided through federal block grants. These funds are distributed to Missouri's ten Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), which play a vital role in delivering OAA-mandated services at the local level.

MISSOURI'S OLDER ADULTS RECEIVE VITAL SERVICES PROVIDED BY AAAs:

- 214 Senior Centers and Meal Sites provide meals to 34,000 older adults each month.
- 8,500 older adults participate in fitness and recreation activities
- 31,000 older adults receive home-delivered meals each month
- 5,500 older adults benefit from transportation to and from medical appointments, grocery shopping, etc.
- 15,400 older adults benefit from AAA information and referral services
- 7,000 isolated older adults benefit from home visitation and phone reassurance
- 8,500 older adults benefit from nutrition counseling and education
- 65% of older adults served by AAAs live alone
- 45% are 75 years of age and older
- 30% are low income and 20% are medically frail

MISSOURI'S AAAs: FAITHFUL PROVIDERS OF OAA SERVICES TO MISSOURI'S OLDER ADULTS:

Missouri's AAAs act as the state's partners in implementing the OAA's mission. Through their extensive networks, AAAs provide direct services to older adults while contracting with hundreds of local nonprofit organizations to deliver additional programs. The services facilitated by AAAs include home-delivered meals, transportation, caregiver resources, and other supports that allow older adults to remain in their homes and communities with health and independence.

For over 50 years, Missouri's AAAs have provided quality services and are a trusted source of information. Despite the rapid growth in the 60+ population, stagnant funding, and recent economic challenges, AAAs in Missouri have continued to provide vital services that keep aging adults well. Funding levels have remained stagnant for more than two decades, even as costs for food, transportation, wages, and other operational needs have risen dramatically. AAAs have responded with resilience and innovation, continuously finding ways to deliver services to Missouri's vulnerable older adults. AAAs plan budgets and spending wisely to meet the growth in demand and the needs of older adults in their communities.

AAAs monitor expenditures in careful compliance with contracts and employ fiscally sound practices. AAAs deliver services and establish contracts with the good faith expectation that their contracts will be honored and that older adults can receive the support they need.

The potential loss of FOUR MONTHS of funding creates a crisis that no amount of creativity or resourcefulness can resolve. *This crisis is AVOIDABLE – if action is taken urgently by the Missouri Legislature and Governor.*

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