



# MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## GRADD Senior Nutrition Program Serves Thousands of Meals to Older Adults Across the Green River Region

**OWENSBORO, Ky.** — In recognition of **Senior Nutrition Month in March**, the Green River Area Development District (GRADD), in partnership with Five Star Catering, is highlighting the impact of its Senior Nutrition Program, which provides critical meal services to older adults across the seven-county Green River region.

From January until now, the program has delivered **56,836 home-delivered meals to 368 seniors** across the region and served **75,915 meals to 1,041 seniors at congregate meal sites**, helping ensure older adults have reliable access to nutritious meals and opportunities for social engagement.

“During Senior Nutrition Month, we are proud to highlight the dedication and care that goes into every meal served through our Senior Nutrition Program,” says **GRADD Director of Aging and Social Services Leslie Wilson**. “Our team works diligently to ensure older adults across the seven-county region receive nutritious, balanced meals.”

GRADD works with **Five Star Catering** to prepare and distribute meals through local senior centers and home-delivery routes. The program supports seniors who may face challenges preparing meals due to mobility limitations, health conditions, or financial hardship.

Across Kentucky, the Nutrition Program for the Elderly currently serves **16,851 seniors and provides more than 3.1 million meals annually**, demonstrating the essential role the program plays in supporting older adults throughout the Commonwealth.

“Each meal is thoughtfully planned to meet both state and federal regulations and must be approved by the state’s registered dietitian, ensuring the highest standards of nutrition and quality for the seniors we serve,” says Wilson.

Beyond addressing hunger, the program provides a vital connection point for many older adults. Congregate meal sites create opportunities for social engagement, while

home-delivered meals often serve as an important wellness check for seniors who live alone.

The program is also considered a cost-effective investment for the state. By helping seniors remain healthy, nourished, and connected to services, the program can delay or prevent costly hospitalizations, emergency medical care, and long-term nursing home placements.

However, maintaining current funding levels may not be enough to sustain services in the years ahead.

Statewide projections indicate that if the current **\$10 million annual state appropriation remains unchanged**, as many as **4,860 seniors across Kentucky could lose access to meals beginning July 1, 2026**, the first day of Fiscal Year 2027.

Without additional funding, waitlists for the program could grow significantly, reaching an estimated **7,344 seniors by June 2027** and **nearly 10,000 seniors by June 2028** who could be unable to receive nutrition services.

To maintain current participation levels across Kentucky, the program will require more than **\$19.6 million annually in state general funds**, in addition to federal support already dedicated to senior nutrition services.

GRADD officials say continued investment in senior nutrition programs will be essential as the population of older adults continues to grow across Kentucky, particularly in rural regions where access to food and services can be more limited.

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*The Green River Area Development District (GRADD) is a regional planning agency and council of governments serving the communities of Daviess, Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio, Union, and Webster counties. GRADD offers assistance in the fields of aging, health, and social services; community and economic development; transportation planning; and workforce development. Our mission is to afford local governments and citizens a regional forum to identify issues and opportunities, and to provide leadership in planning and implementing programs to improve the quality of life in our district.*

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