

No Senior Hungry

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As of the latest Feeding America national report,

**DC has the third
highest rate of senior
hunger in the nation.**

~13,000

Food Insecure Seniors

Roughly 15% of all DC seniors are food insecure!

Seniors in DC

- There are nearly 90,000 seniors (65 or older) in DC.
- Nearly 55% of DC seniors are Black, 34% white, and 6% Latinx.
- Population is majority female, 26% have one or more disabilities, and there is significant income inequality between the lowest and highest earning senior households.



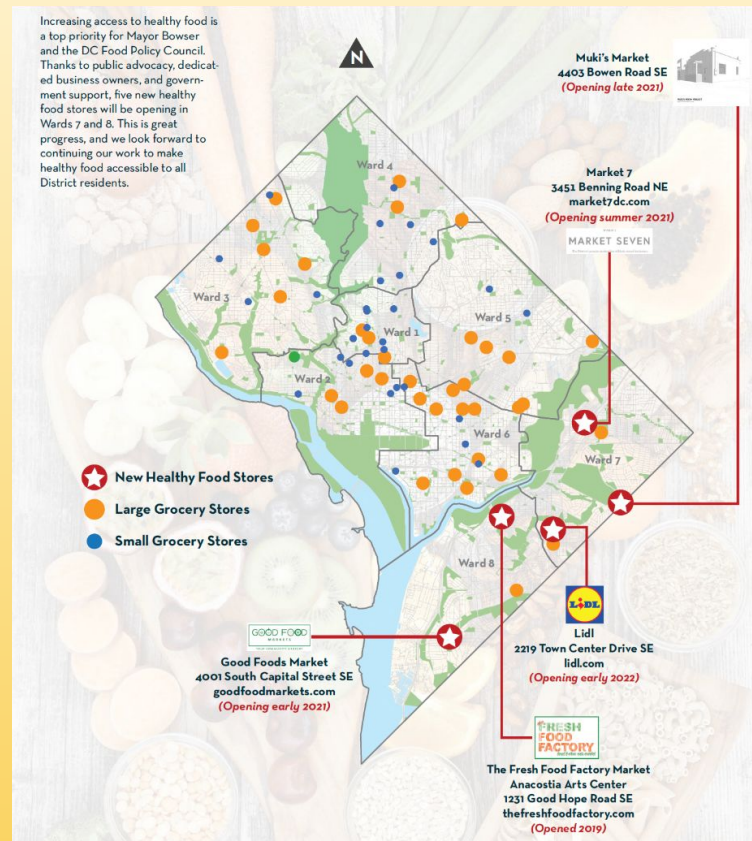
Senior hunger persists, despite numerous **DACL** programs

Programs and strategies that the Department on Aging and Community Living (DACL) has launched or is planning to launch around food insecurity:

- Eat Well, Live Better! program (launched 2021, connects seniors to medical care and nutrition through bi-weekly grocery deliveries and nutrition education)
- Home-Delivery Meal program, Nutrition Services team (launched 2022)
- Mobile food pantries (planned)
- Shuttles to grocery stores (planned)
- Pop-up community events (planned)
- Senior farmers markets (planned)
- Redesign of the community dining experience (planned)

Barriers to Access

- Transportation
- Poor inter-agency information sharing and coordination.
- Poor information sharing and communication amongst senior populations.
- Lack of full-service grocery stores and/or corner stores with fresh, healthy produce regularly available.



No Senior Hungry: Timeline

FEBRUARY 2021

Councilmember Cheh convenes a working group of Council and government agency staff, community leaders, public health officials, and nutrition providers. Those discussions inform the creation of the No Senior Hungry bill.

OCTOBER 2021

B24-0419, “No Senior Hungry” introduced by Councilmembers Cheh, T. White, Gray, Lewis George, Bonds, Allen, Henderson, and Pinto

FEBRUARY 2022

Public hearing. 26 public witnesses gave live testimony, 37 submitted written.

NOV/DEC 2022

First and second readings of No Senior Hungry before the DC Council. Bill passed and transmitted to the Mayor for signature on December 28, 2022.

MARCH 2023

B24-0419, “No Senior Hungry,” passed into law, but cannot be implemented without budget appropriation.

Findings, Senior Hunger Working Group



- No comprehensive strategy to increase senior participation in food access programs.
- No one agency with the responsibility to address senior food insecurity.
- Little or no coordination between agencies providing nutrition services.
- Limited or no outreach about available nutrition services.
- No community-level data on how many seniors are food insecure, accessing nutrition services, or if the services are meeting their needs.
- No plan to reach seniors who are not already connected to services.

No Senior Hungry Action Plan

1. Create a Senior Interagency Taskforce
2. Create a Senior Food Security Plan
3. Create a Senior Communications Plan
4. Expand the Elderly and Persons with Physical Disabilities (EPD) waiver program
5. Update the application process for SNAP benefits
6. Identify more adult day care centers to provide meals to seniors

Senior Interagency Task Force

NUMBER OF MEMBERS	MEMBER CRITERIA
AT LEAST 7	<p>Representatives from DC Government agencies working on programs that provide nutrition and transportation services to seniors. At minimum, the taskforce must include one representative from the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Department of Aging and Community Living- Department of Human Services- Department of Healthcare Finance- Department of Health- Office of the State Superintendent of Education- Office of the Food Policy Director within the Office of Planning- Department of For-Hire Vehicles
7	<p>Representatives from organizations serving seniors. At minimum, must include one:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- registered Dietitian Nutritionist or licensed Certified Nutrition Specialist with expertise in the nutritional needs of seniors- representative from the Senior Villages <p>Representatives from “minority and other marginalized communities” are encouraged.</p>
1	<p>Representative from the Food Policy Council (selected by the Food Policy Director)</p>
4	<p>Senior residents receiving or participating in nutrition services (who will receive a stipend for their work on the taskforce)</p>
ROUGHLY 19 TOTAL	

Senior Food Security Plan

- Detail the state of senior food security, including root causes and risks.
- Identify all nutrition services for seniors (including transportation) and needs, overlap, and redundancies of existing nutrition services.
- Recommend ways to improve access to nutrition services and the nutritional quality of food provided to seniors.
- Identify promotion and referral opportunities across all nutrition programs.
- Recommend ways to expand access to nutrition services through more delivery and transportation services.
- Identify opportunities to improve the social welfare program application process (includes both increasing enrollment and making the application process more user friendly).

Senior Communications Plan

- Describes how to reach seniors in the District who are food insecure.
- Requires DACL to send seniors an annual mailer with a complete list of the government's senior nutrition services and how to enroll.
- Details how agencies will promote their own senior nutrition services, as well as those run by other agencies.
- Requires DACL to provide annual training for DC Government employees and community-based organizations who provide nutrition services to senior residents.
- Requires DACL to reach out to physicians and clinicians so they can refer senior patients to nutrition services.
- Details how DACL will update its website and program applications to increase accessibility among senior users.

Expand the EPD Waiver Program

The bill requires DACL refer program participants to additional nutrition services based on screenings for food insecurity and malnutrition by expanding the services eligible under the Elderly and Person with Disabilities (EPD) waiver program. **The EPD waiver program allows seniors, who would otherwise require nursing home care, to receive the following services and support in their home:**

- Home-delivered meals
- Vitamins, minerals, and nutritional supplements and substitutes
- Medical nutrition therapy.

Update the Application Process for SNAP

The bill requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to do the following within one year (unless otherwise noted):

- Certify community-based organizations to enroll eligible residents on SNAP.
- Adopt the USDA's Elderly Simplified Application Project guidance (180 days).
- Create a standard medical deduction and simplify the collection of medical expense information for SNAP participants.
- Streamline the information needed to increase SNAP benefits.
- Develop and implement outreach to help seniors with online SNAP, including online ordering (180 days).
- Make the DHS website more user friendly.

Identify More Adult Day Care Centers to Provide Meals to Seniors

The bill requires the Office of the State Superintendent of Education to:

- Identify DC adult day care centers that are eligible for the Child and Adult Care Food (CACF) Program.
- Encourage non-participating but eligible adult day care centers to enroll in CACF.



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Next Steps, Advocacy + Action

- **Funding!** No Senior Hungry was not funded in the FY 2024 DC budget, if it is not funded in FY 2025, the bill will die and have to be reintroduced.
- **Collaboration!** DC lags behind the region in terms of data sharing and collaborative policy-making. Please continue to reach out, nudge, and encourage regional partnership.
- **Education!** Talk about No Senior Hungry with your DC friends and policy makers, we need to build a strong base of support for next year's budget push!

