

GET READY TO ADVOCATE

Home-delivered Meals

AGENDA

- About WAAN
- Home-delivered meals
issue brief
- Advocate Story
- Keep the Knocks Coming
- Advocacy Tools
- Call to Action
- Next Steps
- Questions?

About WAAN

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN) is a collaboration of organizations and individuals working to shape public policy and improve the quality of life for older people.

We advocate for all older adults by educating the community and policy makers on particular issues impacting older adults; mobilizing people on priority issues; and advocating for change.



The Issue Brief



Safeguard Home-Delivered Meals STATE ISSUE BRIEF

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Home-Delivered Meal Services, a solution to help older Wisconsinites age at home

Wisconsin is home to over 1.5 million older adults (ages 60+).¹ This equates to more than one of every four Wisconsin residents! The Older Americans Act (OAA) home-delivered meal

(HDM) program is a proven, effective way to support Wisconsinites as we age, as well as offer support to our family caregivers.

HDMs, often referred to as Meals on Wheels, are more than food – they are a vital service that sustains lives and independence by providing nutritious food, safety checks, socialization, and connections to services. A 2023 survey revealed

WAAN's Position:

Older Americans Act Home-Delivered Meals (HDMs) are a cost-effective investment providing eligible Wisconsinites a meal, socialization, and wellness check. **An increase of \$7.7 million GPR in each year of the budget is needed to meet the need across the state.**

Home-Delivered Meal Services provide solutions³:

- ❖ Reduce social isolation and loneliness,
- ❖ Reduce health care costs and nursing home admission,
- ❖ Reduce fall risk.

1

Our position: An increase of \$7.7 million in each year of the biennium in state GPR to support home-delivered meals.

2

Additional funding would meet unprecedented need across the state, cover increased expenses driven by inflation and lack of resources, and address revenue shortfalls.

3

More than half of counties report they maintain a waitlist, cannot serve the entire county, prioritize who receives meals, and/or reduce the number of meals provided each week.

4

Home-delivered meals are a cost-effective solution providing nutrition, socialization, and a wellness check. Our ask will meet the need across the state.

MEET OUR ADVOCATE

Welcome Jim, an advocate from Waukesha County! Jim was a caregiver to his wife and he coordinated her home-delivered meal service. Jim will share more of his story and the importance of this program.

KEEP THE KNOCKS COMING

- Home-delivered meals provide nutrition meals, wellness checks, and and meaningful connections to recipients.
- Volunteers are the backbone of the program by providing social connection, referral to other programs and services, and a friendly smile.
- Our “Keep the Knocks Coming” campaign advocates for continued funding and volunteer recruitment.

 **Keep the Knocks Coming**
GWAAR staff

To learn more, visit:
<https://gwaar.org/keep-the-knocks-coming>



Keep the Knocks Coming

Produced by  **GWaar**
Greater Wisconsin
Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.



Watch on  YouTube



ADVOCACY TOOLS

Together, our issue brief and your story create a powerful story to share with legislators. Here is how you can deliver the most impact when advocating:

- Before your meeting, spend time refining and clarifying your story and why this issue is important to you.
 - Highlight the ask/position from the issue brief, but otherwise keep it short and sweet! Bring a paper copy to hand off.
 - Spend the majority of your time sharing your personal story.
 - Clearly make the connection between your story and the ask: “Receiving home-delivered meals allowed me to regain my health so I could get back in the community. Increased funding can ensure everyone has access to meals.”
 - Always send a follow-up! That’s where you can highlight facts and data that you didn’t get to in your meeting.
- 

DO'S AND DON'TS

Do:

- Introduce yourself and where you live.
- Explain your background with the issue and if you've met to discuss it before.
- Ask for what you want! What is your desired outcome or policy solution?
- Share your personal story. Why does this matter to you?
- Pick 2-3 facts from the issue brief to highlight that are most compelling.

Don't:

- Read directly from the issue brief or read the whole issue brief. Leave a copy behind for the office to read later.
- Focus on explaining all details or history of a topic. If they want more information, they will ask.
- Leave without providing your contact information.

Call to **ACTION**

Our position: \$7.7 million/year in state funds to support home-delivered meals.

Home-delivered meals provide:

- nutrition
- wellness check
- socialization
- welcome knock on the door everyday!

"The Meals on Wheels mean everything to us. It has removed the burden for my 87-year-old wife to have to prepare a meal. It is much appreciated and healthy food. It's nice to visit with other people, the volunteers are so kind, their companionship makes my day."

-Door County meal participant



Next Steps

- Vote on or by November 3!
- Advocacy 101 trainings coming November & December 2026
- Join us for Aging Advocacy Day–Tuesday, May 11, 2027
- Schedule an introductory meeting with your new legislators after the election



QUESTIONS?

Contact us

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Online Resources

Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network (WAAN)

Keep the Knocks Coming