



HUMAN SERVICES & WELFARE COMMITTEE INFORMATION ALERT

Recovery Act Funding for Senior Nutrition Programs Released

March 19, 2009

On March 18, Vice President Biden announced the release of nearly \$100 million in funding through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) to support senior nutrition programs. The funding released through the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging is expected to provide nearly 14 million meals nationwide, assisting tens of thousands of low-income Americans.

ARRA provides \$65 million for congregate nutrition services provided at senior centers and other community sites, \$32 million for home delivered nutrition services delivered to frail elders at home, and \$3 million for Native American nutrition programs. The funding will be awarded to 56 states and territories and 246 tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations. States will award the funds to organizations that provide nutrition services in their communities. To see state by state funding, go to www.hhs.gov/recovery.

It is important to note that there is a 15% match requirement for these funds, which is the existing match for the elderly nutrition programs. The Administration on Aging, which administers these programs, has stated that the match can be cash or in kind. For example, states could use volunteer hours as match. We are also told that the Administration on Aging may use a waiver option for states that can't get to the entire 15 percent match.

It is also important to understand that the states cannot move money between congregate and home delivered meals. The ARRA funding is split 65% for congregate meals and 35% for home-delivered meals, but according to the National Association of State Units on Aging, more individuals want the home-delivered option. A way of increasing the flexibility in administering these programs would be to allow transfers between the two programs of the FY 09 funds states received.

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