



STATE OF NEW MEXICO  
**Aging & Long-Term Services**  
**Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham**  
Katrina Hotrum-Lopez, Cabinet Secretary

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 11, 2022

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## **New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services celebrates 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Senior Nutrition Program**

*Senior Nutrition Program has been supporting services for older adults since 1972*

**SANTA FE** — This March, New Mexico’s Aging and Long-Term Services Department (ALTSD) joins the Administration for Community Living and senior nutrition service providers across the country to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the national Senior Nutrition Program.

Since 1972, the Senior Nutrition Program has supported nutrition services for older adults. Funded by the Older Americans Act, local senior nutrition programs serve as hubs for older adults (60 and older) to access nutritious meals and other vital services that strengthen social connections and promote health and well-being.

Each year in the U.S., up to half of adults age 65 and older are at risk of malnutrition, and more than 10 million face hunger. According to the US Census Bureau and Feeding America, New Mexico has the highest rate of elderly poverty and food insecurity for adults 60 and over. In communities throughout the U.S. – including New Mexico – older adults sometimes lack access to the high-quality, nutritious food they need to remain healthy and independent.

As part of the Senior Nutrition Program network, NM ALTSD and NM Grown helps older adults in our community by promoting healthy eating, decreasing social isolation, and improving health. Our program also provides connections to home and community-based services that can support independence and overall well-being.

“New Mexico’s older adults rely on the Senior Nutrition Programs, not only for the nutritional value in the food, but also the socialization that they get from attending some of the congregate meal sites,” said ALTSD’s Aging Network Director, Denise King. “Last year, over 35,000 of our seniors depended on the grab and go meals that are also part of the Senior Nutrition Program. The essential services have not stopped during the pandemic, and it is important to celebrate the incredible work continuing to be done.”

For 50 years, senior nutrition services have helped create healthy, strong communities where all members can flourish regardless of their age. ***That’s why we proudly recognize this milestone anniversary of the national Senior Nutrition Program and its tremendous impact on the health and well-being of older adults in our community.*** Join us in celebrating our

seniors, our program, and our community. Together, we look forward to another 50 years and beyond!

If you'd like to participate in an upcoming event, the New Mexico Department of Health and the Aging and Long-Term Services Department will be hosting a virtual food demo with Chef Louis Ellen Frank on March 21<sup>st</sup> for Senior Center Providers. For more information, visit ALTSD on social media or on our website [NM Aging & Long-Term Services \(state.nm.us\)](https://state.nm.us/aging)

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**About NM Grown:**

NM Grown: The NM Grown for Senior Meals was established to integrate local produce into senior meal programs and link farmers to senior centers. NM Grown vision: We envision a strong collaboration among state agencies and local providers to integrate fresh NM Grown foods into all state nutrition programs using a standard system that seamlessly supports local purchasing for schools, senior centers, and early childhood education sites.

*The State of New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department [ALTSD] serves more than 200,000 seniors, adults with disabilities, and caregivers across the state with support, services, and resources. Throughout the pandemic, ALTSD provided more than 4 million meals to seniors and adults with disabilities and continues to provide approximately 21,000 grab-n-go meals each day. With a dedicated staff and the help of 4,700 senior volunteers, the department strives to help thousands of New Mexicans achieve healthy aging, attain lifelong independence, and maintain their dignity.*

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