

Grant Organization Name: Metro Meals on Wheels

MDVA Grant Type:

*SOT/competitive ___ CVSO/competitive ___ SOT/VSO ___ SOT/fast-track ___ Legislatively named (VSO) ___
Legislatively named (Other) X*

Date: 08/30/2025

Prepared by: Dave Colling, Community Partnership and Contract Manager

Grant Period: 7/1/23 – 6/3/27)

Amendment # 1, Date executed 11/01/2024:

Amendment # 2, Date executed 6/04/2025):

Purpose of grant (Ref. Section 2.2 Grant Agreement):

Provide home delivered meals to qualified veterans within the Metro meals on Wheels service area.

1. Provide a summary of the Grant Program/Activity outcomes to date as it relates to the original Work Plan (including the actual number of Veterans directly served as reported on the most recent submitted Activity Log, if applicable).

To date, Metro Meals on Wheels (MMOW) has served 457 veterans with nearly 50,000 meals. Each delivery also provides a wellness visit from a friendly volunteer, often the only personal interaction these veterans have all day.

Our most recent approved Activity Log (June 2025) shows that MMOW delivered 5,461 meals to 242 veterans across the metro area. Many of the veterans served are seniors who cannot prepare meals or obtain groceries to meet their daily nutritional needs. MMOW has worked closely with Veterans Service Officers (VSOs) in Hennepin, Ramsey, and Anoka Counties to provide nutrition services to veterans in transitional housing, as well as those facing physical or mental health challenges that make accessing food difficult.

2. Have any Grant Agreement Amendments been necessary? (Yes or No). If yes, briefly explain the purpose and justification of the Amendment(s).

Yes. Two amendments have been signed:

- Amendment 1: Allowed MMOW to continue serving veterans previously supported under Title III of the Older Americans Act who lost meals due to funding cuts. Prior to this amendment, MMOW could not transfer veterans from other funding streams until they had been off a previous source for six months. The amendment permitted immediate transfer (once approved), preventing any gap in service.
 - Amendment 2: Legislatively directed to extend the grant expiration date from June 20, 2025, to June 30, 2027, allowing unused funds to carry over into the next biennium.
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3. Describe challenges which may have impacted the grant outcomes while administering the grant and any “lessons learned” (if applicable).

The largest challenge was the time required to reach monthly program goals.

- The first delay came from the length of time it took to receive the MDVA contract. As a result, no veterans could be enrolled until late October 2023 even though the law went into effect July 1.
- MMOW then focused on meeting with and training partner staff, including MDVA, county VSOs, VA hospital case managers, and county program case managers, on eligibility and enrollment procedures.
- As this was a pilot program not previously implemented at this scale anywhere in the country, it required significant time to establish effective systems and reach our goals in terms of pace of service.

Pilot programs of this size require additional lead time for contracting, outreach, and training to ensure quicker ramp-up and fund utilization.

4. Is the grant Program/Activity on track to complete on time according to the current Grant Agreement expiration date? (Yes or No). If no, explain.

No. Due to a shortage of funds, we expect to complete the grant activity by mid-2026 and will not have funds for services beyond that date.

5. Is the grant Program/Activity on track to expend the total grant award dollars? (Yes or No). If no, explain.

Yes, as indicated in #4. Program adjustments are necessary to ensure funds last through the extended contract period.

- In the first biennium, MMOW spent an average of \$50,000 per month, consistent with legislative projections for the last several months of the biennium.
- At this pace, current funds would be depleted mid-contract.
- To remain within budget, MMOW is reducing program activity by nearly 50% moving forward.

6. Additional Comments

Over the coming months, MMOW will reduce meal delivery funded through this grant by approximately 50%. This will include:

- Ending delivery for some veterans
- Reducing the number of meals for others
- Actively pursuing new funding sources to address the projected \$500,000 gap
- Not enrolling additional veterans and/or starting a waitlist

Because this report does not fully capture the effects of these reductions on food-insecure veterans in the metro, MMOW respectfully requests the opportunity to attend an early 2026 meeting of the legislative committees overseeing veterans' funding in both chambers. We believe it is critical that legislators understand how the program is progressing and how veterans are being served, or not served, under the current grant structure.