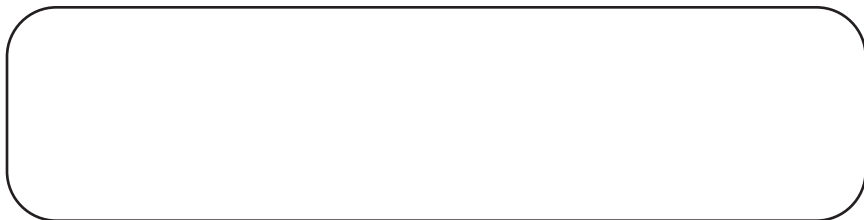


Phil Sullivan

**Meals on Wheels Program**  
**Senior Services of Snohomish County**  
**8225 44th Ave. W., Ste O**  
**Mukilteo, WA 98275**

Urgent: Critical Funds Needed





Phil Sullivan  
Executive Director

Although you won't hear about it on the news tonight or read about it in tomorrow's newspaper, there is a crisis in our community. Some of our elderly neighbors -- the oldest and frailest among us -- are literally starving to death.

Dear Supporter,

It is hard to imagine in this country . . . the land of prosperity . . . that thousands of elderly people are literally starving to death. We'd like to believe that only happens in other places, but it's happening right here in Snohomish County.

Often blind, confined to wheelchairs, or simply too weak to leave their homes, you might never know these seniors exist.

Yet behind closed doors and drawn shades they are silently wasting away, often so isolated there's no one to ask for help.

As a loyal supporter of the Senior Services Meals on Wheels program, I know you understand the difficulties so many of our seniors face. Can I count on you to extend a hand of kindness to the elderly neighbors in our community once again? Your gift to our Meals on Wheels program can help us reach out to more of our elderly neighbors with home-delivered meals . . . meals that save lives.

It doesn't cost much. You can use the enclosed meal tickets to help us provide an entire week of nutritious meals for just \$35, or \$70 will provide two weeks of meals. It may be the difference between life and death to someone like 76-year-old Ruth.

When I first met Ruth, she had lost nearly 25% of her body weight and was a fragile 94 pounds. She was barely more than skin and bones.

Earlier in the year, Ruth suffered a stroke and lost the ability to use one side of her body. Then, she had to have her left leg amputated.

Unable to stand and with only the use of one arm, Ruth could no longer cook for herself. And because of medical bills from her surgery, she simply could not afford to eat. We discovered she'd been drinking coffee for two meals a day!

Like many of the elderly people we serve, Ruth is very poor. Her husband is gone, and she's outlived her resources.

So she struggled by herself for months until a friendly neighbor noticed her extreme weight loss and called us at Meals on Wheels.

Thanks to the ongoing support of our generous friends like you, we were able to rush an emergency food supply to Ruth within 24 hours of hearing about her dire situation.

Then, we immediately began a delivery of nutritious meals, as well as supplemental nutrition drinks to help her gain back the weight she had lost after surgery. We also referred Ruth to a partner agency for help with her bills so that medical expenses would no longer stand in the way of her ability to eat.

Your ongoing support enables us to act quickly in a crisis situation like Ruth's.

Yet as tragic as Ruth's story is -- and as close to starving to death as she came -- she is not unlike thousands of other homebound elderly people in our community who are in desperate need of our services.

In fact, half of all hospitalized seniors are suffering from malnutrition so severe that it either caused their illness or it prevents them from getting better.

Our Meals on Wheels program was founded on the very principle that the oldest and frailest among us should not live out their final days in poverty and despair. As a loyal supporter, I believe you agree it's our responsibility as a community to make sure our seniors are cared for after they can no longer care for themselves.

Will you continue to help?

While the government does provide some money for meals through the Older Americans Act, it's not nearly enough to meet the needs of all the seniors in our community. In fact, for the last decade senior nutrition programs have been severely underfunded.

Yet at the same time, people are living longer and the need for home-delivered meals has increased 250% in the last ten years. And it's expected to triple in the next ten. So you can see why I urgently need your help again today.

Meals on Wheels, with the support of caring people like you, helps to fill the gap in funding -- getting meals to people who would otherwise go hungry. But with so many seniors in need in Snohomish County, we sometimes worry about having to start a waiting list.

I'm so thankful we were able to help Ruth immediately. Having to say "no" would have been unthinkable. We need your ongoing support to make sure we are there to help every senior who needs us.

And the seniors we help are so grateful. Ruth recently wrote:

*No one else would be ringing my doorbell if it weren't for you all. I eat lunch now because you bring it. And it is so nice to hear someone's voice - when they say, "Hi, how are you?"*

*I am so happy when they ring that doorbell.*

*Ruth*

So many of the older seniors we serve have lived through the Depression and rationing during the wars, and because of that they are the segment of population most unlikely to seek out help when they are hungry. They grew up during the worst economy our nation has ever faced. They worked hard to survive . . . and rose to the challenges of life with strength and dignity.

They may be too proud to ask for your help. So I will ask for them.

Will you help us reach out to someone in our community who worked hard all her life . . . only to find herself spending her final years poor and hungry?

Can I count on you once again to sponsor nutritious meals for our homebound elderly neighbors? We get referrals every day from hospitals, churches and social workers, and we urgently need your help to reach all the seniors in need. Please send a generous contribution today.

Thank you, in advance, for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Phil Sullivan".

Phil Sullivan  
Executive Director

P.S. I have some good news to share -- Ruth is gaining weight! When I last talked to her, she was 105 pounds and she's still gaining. But there are others like Ruth who are at the brink of starvation and need our help. So please return the enclosed meal tickets along with your gift today.

# MEALS ON WHEELS CONTRIBUTION FORM

**Yes!** I will help provide life-saving, nutritious food to our homebound elderly neighbors in Snohomish County. I have checked off one of the meal tickets below and enclosed a contribution of:


\$35     \$50     \$70     \$105     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_




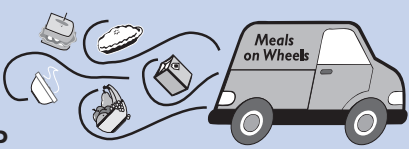
*Please make checks payable to:*  
Senior Services of Snohomish County  
Attn: Meals on Wheels Program  
P.O. Box 86  
Mukilteo, WA 98275-9909  
ABC 1234567890 XYZ

Please check one of the boxes below and return this entire form with your contribution. Your donation is 100% tax-deductible.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>\$35 MEAL TICKET</b> THIS TICKET WILL PROVIDE ONE WEEK OF NUTRITIOUS MEALS		0307120
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>\$70 MEAL TICKET</b> THIS TICKET WILL PROVIDE TWO WEEKS OF NUTRITIOUS MEALS		0307121
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>\$105 MEAL TICKET</b> THIS TICKET WILL PROVIDE THREE WEEKS OF NUTRITIOUS MEALS		0307122
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>\$ _____ MEAL TICKET</b> GIFTS OF ANY AMOUNT WILL HELP		0307123
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Vivian, age 88

## DID YOU KNOW?

Over 50% of all hospitalized seniors are suffering from malnutrition so severe that it either caused their illness or it prevents them from getting better. **Your contribution today will make a real difference to someone like Vivian.**

*When I was a patient recently the doctor said my main problem was malnutrition. As you can see, I am still very "shaky" and unable to cook. I am so grateful for your meals. Thank you.*

Please send me information on volunteering.

Please send me information on how to remember Senior Services in my will.

A copy of our most recent annual report may be obtained by writing:  
Senior Services of Snohomish County,  
P.O. Box 86, Mukilteo, WA 98275-9909.