



Home Office:
219 Franklin Street
Hightstown, NJ 08520

Phone:
(609)-443-4464

Email:
getintouch@njrise.org



Funding Request for Senior Choice Feeding Initiative

Date: 3/7/2025

Organization: Rise – A Community Service Partnership

**TIN & Formal Organization Name: Community Action Service Center, Inc.
(EIN: 22-2405087)**

**Contact Name, Phone, Email: Leslie Koppel, 908-415-5988,
lkoppel@njrise.org**

Amount Requested: \$10,000

Project Title: Senior Choice Feeding Initiative

Summary Description:

The Senior Choice Feeding Initiative enhances senior access to healthy food by offering public health expert support, dedicated senior shopping hours, and home delivery options at the Choice Pantry.

Funding Proposal Responses

1. What is the problem you have identified?

Many seniors in our community face food insecurity, limited mobility, and lack of access to **nutritionally appropriate foods**. Fixed incomes, transportation barriers, and health-related dietary restrictions make it difficult for older adults to obtain fresh, healthy food options consistently. Additionally, social isolation further impacts their overall well-being. Traditional food pantries often provide pre-packed food bags, which do not always meet seniors' dietary needs or personal preferences.

Currently, there are **476 senior visits to the Rise Pantry each month**, highlighting both the demand for food assistance and the need for a **senior-focused approach** that offers **healthier choices, more accessibility, and additional support services**.

2. What is the solution you propose to address the problem?

We propose a **Senior Choice Feeding Initiative** that will provide:



- **Dedicated senior shopping hours** for a less crowded, more accessible pantry experience.
- **A designated senior section within the Choice Pantry**, stocked with foods tailored to meet seniors' dietary needs, including low-sodium, high-fiber, and protein-rich options.
- **Public health expert guidance** to help seniors select healthy foods and make informed nutritional choices.
- **Home delivery options** for seniors with mobility limitations.
- **Volunteer wellness check-ins** to ensure ongoing support beyond food distribution.

This initiative will be **coordinated with the Rise Pantry renovation**, ensuring that the redesigned space and services incorporate **a strong senior focus throughout the process**. However, **no funds from this request will be allocated toward construction**—this funding is solely for programmatic support to serve seniors effectively.

3. What actions will you take?

- Hire **nutritionists/public health counselors** to work directly with seniors, guiding healthy food choices.
- Establish a **senior shopping night** with tailored food selections.
- Develop a **senior-specific section within the Choice Pantry**, offering foods that meet the unique needs of older adults.
- Launch a **home delivery option** for those unable to travel to the pantry.
- Train volunteers to **check in with seniors** during shopping or deliveries to connect them with additional resources.
- Ensure that **senior-friendly features** are integrated into the pantry renovation plan.

4. Describe the population to be served.

This program will serve **low-income seniors (ages 60+)** in Mercer County who rely on food assistance but face significant challenges such as limited mobility, fixed incomes, or chronic health conditions requiring specialized diets. Many of these seniors lack family support and need additional community-based resources.

5. Are there partners/collaborators for implementation or funding? Who? Has the solution been tried by other organizations?

We are collaborating with **Mercer Street Friends (MSF)** as part of the Choice Pantry partner cohort. MSF has extensive experience in food security programs. Currently, **HomeFront operates the only other Choice Pantry in Mercer County**, meaning that most food pantries in the area still rely on pre-packed

distributions, which limit seniors' ability to select foods that meet their dietary and cultural needs.

Similar senior-focused food access models have been successfully implemented in other communities, demonstrating that **dedicated senior shopping, public health expert support, and delivery services improve food access and health outcomes.**

6. How will you know your actions are having an impact? How will you measure outputs and outcomes?

We will measure success through:

- **Tracking senior participation** in special pantry hours and delivery services.
- **Collecting pre- and post-program data** on food choices and dietary improvements.
- **Surveying seniors** on their satisfaction, accessibility, and impact on their overall well-being.
- **Monitoring health indicators** where possible, such as increased selection of fresh produce and balanced meal options.

Choice Pantry Benefits & Senior Section

The **Choice Pantry model** allows seniors to select their food rather than receiving pre-packed bags, which ensures **dignity, autonomy, and better nutrition alignment** with personal and medical needs. The proposed **Senior Section** within the Choice Pantry will provide:

- Foods specifically curated for **senior nutrition**, including fresh produce, whole grains, and lower-sodium options.
- A **simplified, accessible layout** for ease of shopping.
- Additional **resources on nutrition and wellness**, with public health experts available to guide selections.

By incorporating a **senior-specific section**, we will further tailor food assistance to **meet the evolving needs of older adults**, ensuring they have a welcoming and supportive experience at the pantry.

Program Budget

Expected Income:

- **Grant request:** \$10,000
- **In-kind support (volunteer time, partner contributions):** TBD

Expected Expenses:

- **Public health/nutritionist staffing and planning:** \$6,000
- **Senior shopping night logistics and food coordination:** \$2,000
- **Home delivery program (transportation, packaging):** \$2,000

Attachments: IRS determination letter,