Commonwealth of Kentucky
Cabinet for Health and Family Services

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living Receives $999,999 grant

Innovations in Nutrition Programs and Services grant will help position senior centers in planning for next emergency

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept.14, 2020) – The Administration for Community Living has awarded the Department for Aging and Independent Living (DAIL), an agency of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), a $999,999 Innovations in Nutrition Programs and Services grant. The funding will help senior centers plan for emergencies that would otherwise stand in the way of connecting seniors with nutritious meals and integral services.

“The global pandemic has impacted senior centers’ ability to provide meals to those who depend on them,” said CHFS secretary Eric Friedlander. “However, interruptions are more likely to be caused by emergencies of other types, including weather. Seniors who receive what can sometimes be the only meal of the day are greatly impacted if they can’t get food for any reason, whether it’s snow, ice, floods, or tornadoes.”

More broadly, the grant seeks to reduce hunger and food insecurity, promote socialization, and delay the onset of adverse health conditions by providing meals and associated nutrition services to vulnerable older Kentuckians in greatest social

and economic need. This includes older adults who are low-income, minority, rural, those with limited English proficiency and those at risk for institutionalization.

Victoria Elridge, commissioner for DAIL, noted that disaster-planning is a critical first step to mitigating the possibility of an eligible Kentuckian not receiving food. Senior centers will be tapped to inform a plan for continuity of services. Scenario-planning will include simulated emergency response tests, and procedures and processes will be developed. A guidebook for emergency preparedness will also developed and distributed to senior centers.

DAIL will collaborate with the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger and the Georgia Division of Aging Services to develop and test strategies to prepare rural senior centers to respond rapidly, efficiently, and effectively to local, statewide and national catastrophic events, Elridge said. Over the three-year period of the award, DAIL will measure the risk of social isolation and access to regular, reliable nutritious food sources through the development of survey tools and will develop resources to address these needs efficiently and effectively.

This cooperative agreement awards Kentucky the grant over a three-year project period, from Sept. 1, 2020, through Aug. 31, 2023.

About the Administration for Community Living

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) bills itself as “Advancing independence, integration, and inclusion throughout live.” The organization was created around the fundamental principle that older adults and people of all ages with disabilities should be able to live where they choose, with the people they choose, and with the ability to participate fully in their communities. By funding services and supports provided by networks and community-based organizations, and with investments in research, education, and innovation, ALC helps make this principle a reality for millions of Americans.

About the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger

The National Foundation to End Senior Hunger (NFESH) is committed to finding tangible, replicable solutions to the problem of senior hunger. NFESH commissions research on the causes and consequences of food insecurity among seniors, works with communities to design and implement projects to necessary to

reverse the escalating number of seniors in the lifecycle of hunger, and raises awareness about senior hunger.

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The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and health care programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health, the Department for Aging and Independent Living and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.