



October 22, 2021

Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez  
Commissioner  
New York City Department for the Aging  
2 Lafayette Street  
New York, New York 10007

Dr. Jacques Jiha  
Commissioner  
New York City Mayor's Office of Management and Budget  
255 Greenwich Street, 8th Floor  
New York, NY 10007

Dear Commissioners Cortés-Vázquez and Jiha:

Access to healthy, fresh, and religiously and culturally appropriate food for vulnerable and low-income populations is the most pressing nutritional issue New Yorkers face. We want to express our thanks to Commissioner Cortés-Vázquez, your staff, and colleagues – spread across many city agencies and Mayoral offices – for their efforts to quickly address the needs of food-insecure homebound New Yorkers with programs including the Emergency Home Food Delivery program (referred to as GetFood).

We also appreciate how responsive you and your staff were to the concerns we shared on behalf of constituents to improve this program to better serve older and homebound adults. In this vein, we ask that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Department for the Aging (DFTA) fully fund all home-delivered meal programs (HDM), including the new Recovery Meals (RM), and the supporting infrastructure that we know is essential going forward now and in the years ahead.

Even as our city continues in recovery, we know that as of September 2021 approximately 21,000 older adults plus an additional 16,000 other adults were enrolled in GetFood. With the program having ended on October 15, many are undoubtedly still in need of assistance and sustenance.

How can providers be expected to prepare AND deliver healthy and religiously and culturally appropriate meals at the current reimbursement rate of \$9.58? This rate is arbitrary and detached from the very real food, labor, and logistical costs of operating a HDM program in 2021. We

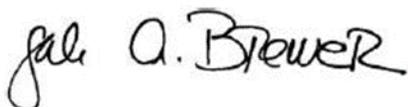
need to fully fund services at a minimum of \$11.78. Many providers also face significant capital needs, particularly related to delivery vehicles and the lack of warehouse space. Support is also needed from the City to incentivize and expedite recruitment of both staff and volunteers.

In addition, New York City's Cost Policies and Procedures Manual standardizes nonprofit Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) calculations and claims policies for the City's Health and Human Services (HHS) contracts. As payment on an HHS contract, the HDM reimbursement rate should be sufficient to compensate providers for their ICR as well as program-specific costs.

Finally, providers also shared that they have outstanding invoices from FY20 and FY21 – when can they expect payment from the City? Businesses operating as GetFood program vendors said that they were often reimbursed after two weeks of expenses. It's unacceptable that the City forces not-for-profit organizations to contend with unfair practices even as it relies on these organizations to continue providing critical services under financial liability.

One of the clearest lessons of the pandemic is that the City's ability to care for our most vulnerable and low-income residents is directly related to maintaining strong partnerships with the City's network of trusted not-for-profit organizations. This can only be done by fully funding these providers, who support those in need and make New York City a great place to age.

Sincerely,



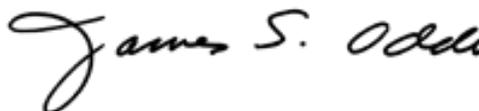
Gale A. Brewer  
Manhattan Borough President



Ruben Diaz Jr.  
Bronx Borough President



Donovan Richards  
Queens Borough President



James S. Oddo  
Staten Island Borough President