

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT:**  
[communications@elderaffairs.org](mailto:communications@elderaffairs.org)  
850-414-2142

## **Florida Department of Elder Affairs Sees Key Investments for Seniors in Governor DeSantis' Freedom First Budget**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Florida Governor Ron DeSantis' Freedom First budget continues to place seniors first through significant investments in Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) programs and services, including work to support self-sufficiency programs for seniors, assistance for older adults to prevent food insecurity through nutrition programs and home-delivered meals, and support to caregivers and those living with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD).

"Under the leadership of Governor DeSantis, Florida's 5.9 million adults over the age of 60 have the opportunity to age in place and receive access to care and support services that allow them to remain in their homes," said DOEA Secretary Richard Prudom. "This budget supports our mission to promote the well-being, safety, and independence of Florida's seniors, their families, and caregivers, and in doing so, it makes Florida a place where all people may look forward to living well and aging well."

Personal connections are central to the services provided through DOEA, and the Governor's budget for seniors reinforces programs in the areas of mental health, social isolation, and dementia.

Governor DeSantis' Freedom First Budget includes:

- **\$10 million** for over 1,000 seniors to receive services through the Alzheimer's Disease Initiative and the Community Care for the Elderly Program which will provide support for caregivers who are caring for loved ones impacted by Alzheimer's Disease and provide support for activities of daily living, and medical assistance to allow seniors to continue living in their homes.'
- More than **\$632,000** to provide additional resources to the Office of Public and Professional Guardians to ensure continued protection of Florida's vulnerable seniors.

"The Governor's strong commitment to the advancement of research for ADRD is exemplary," said Florida Alzheimer's Association Vice President of Public Policy

Michelle Branham. “The estimated 580,000 Floridians living with Alzheimer’s disease receive support through the Alzheimer’s Disease Initiative, Memory Disorder Clinics, and home and community-based care services. Plus, Florida is the only state in the nation to have Alzheimer’s as a priority area within their State Health Improvement Plan. These are all essential elements to help caregivers and families living with dementia.”

Additionally, the Governor’s budget strengthens a technology infrastructure that supports seniors through improved communication between and among DOEA and 11 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) throughout the state.

“The Governor’s budget enhancements to the state’s client information and referral system increase efficiency among AAAs, our local area providers, and DOEA,” said Elder Options Chief Executive Officer, Kristen Griffis. “This investment allows older adults to have increased access to resources and supports all Floridians seeking long-term care services.”

In addition to supporting DOEA’s mission, the Governor’s Freedom First budget also advances the vision of DOEA—to help all Floridians live well and age well—so that Floridians in all communities and life stages have opportunities to achieve healthier outcomes and meaningful societal contributions.

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### ***About the Florida Department of Elder Affairs***

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs, the State Unit on Aging, helps Florida’s elders to remain healthy, safe, and independent. The Department provides most direct services through its Division of Statewide Community-Based Services, which works through the state’s 11 Area Agencies on Aging and local service providers to deliver essential services to a vital segment of the population. For more information, please visit [www.elderaffairs.org](http://www.elderaffairs.org).