


**STORE TO DOOR**  
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By  Deputy

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## **STORE TO DOOR: Petition to Special Master July 5, 2011**

Store To Door petitions for the ongoing funding support through fulfillment of two standing grants for a critical and core function of State government: providing food to homebound elderly.

### **Non-profit Store To Door mission, operation and clients**

Store To Door helps homebound elderly residents of the seven-county metro area remain living independently by shopping and delivering groceries into their homes. Some of the cost of providing the service is subsidized by the State of Minnesota in two grants (defined in funding sources below).

Serving the community for 26 years, Store To Door offices at 1821 University Avenue, St Paul, MN. Store To Door shops in five Cub Foods locations scattered across the seven-county Twin Cities. In 2010, Store To Door delivered over 18,000 grocery orders to over 1,300 elderly individuals: 63% of the clients are over the age of 75; 36% are over age 85.

Clients pay for the groceries using their own funds (including SNAP benefits). By partnering with Cub Foods, clients can choose from a very wide competitively-priced assortment of food and produce. Ordering and shopping for the groceries are done by hundreds of Store To Door volunteers, overseen by a small office staff. Paid delivery staff bring the groceries into the homes of the vulnerable adults, unloading the purchases in the client's kitchen and often putting the groceries away.

Women over the age of 75 comprise the majority of Store To Door clients. 70% of the clients report income within 100% of the Federal Poverty guideline. Groceries are ordered and delivered every other week, consistently and reliably. Typical order size for two weeks for an 82-year-old woman living on her own is \$75.00. All clients are requested to make a contribution toward the cost of ordering, shopping and delivery, on a sliding scale from \$3 -15.00. No client is denied service if unable to make a contribution. Not incidentally, in addition to delivering food and household goods, a key component of Store To Door's service is to provide two points of very personal human contact to a vulnerable and isolated population. The first is when a volunteer order taker calls to take the order and to check in with the client. The second is when a paid and insured delivery person brings the groceries into their home, unpacks the groceries, sits at the kitchen table to settle up payment and, again, check on the overall condition of the client.

### **Store To Door funding sources**

Store To Door receives State of MN funding that subsidizes the cost of the service under two contracts: 1) State Nutrition Support Service (NSS) fund and 2) State Nutrition Expansion fund (EXP). This funding is contingent on the availability of State funds through the Minnesota Board on Aging. These funds, intended to support aging in place with dignity and safety, are administered by the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging.

For 2011, Store To Door has budgeted NSS and EXP grant revenue from the Metro Area Agency on Aging totaling \$156,658. This funding is received quarterly; \$81,645 has been received for serving low-income homebound elderly during the first six months of 2011. The balance, \$75,013 is due to be paid during the last two quarters of 2011; typically the third payment for the year-long grant (\$37,506) would be paid in July. This funding is vulnerable to being cut partially or completely as an outcome of the State of Minnesota shutdown.

Store To Door's total revenue for 2010-11 is \$1,064,249. This amount exactly matches planned expenses. There is no reserve fund. In addition to revenue from the State of Minnesota, revenue is generated by foundation and corporate grants, individual donor contributions, events and earned income. Earned income is comprised of Alternative Care (AC) and Elderly Waiver reimbursements, administered through the counties. Elderly Waiver (EW) reimbursement is the only federal funding received.

### **Potential impact of State shutdown on Store To Door and its clients**

In section 24 of the *Findings of Fact, Conclusion of Law, and Order Granting Motion for Temporary Funding*, it states that federal reimbursement is for "a variety of other programs designed to ensure the health, safety and welfare of Minnesota citizens." Store To Door clients eligible for EW will not be impacted by the loss of State funding. Ironically however, Store To Door's client base prides itself on using a minimum of community services. For almost half of the clients, Store To Door is the only service used. These clients are most at risk for being cut from service if State of Minnesota funding is not secured.

To lose \$75,013 in funding over the next six months, or to lose \$37,506 over the next three months, or to lose even one week of this grant (\$2,885) forces Store To Door to plan measures to avoid a budget deficit. These measures are 1) reduce the number of clients served to 2) accommodate the reduction in staff necessitated by the reduced revenue projection.

Serving a single homebound elderly client with about 15 bi-weekly deliveries costs \$650 a year. Each delivery costs \$43.06. To begin to accommodate the reduced revenue as a result of not being able to plan on receiving the full amount of the balance of the two state grants, we will begin discussing how to eliminate deliveries to 67 clients this week. Pending that conversation, we

will have to tell 67 women and men, predominantly over the age of 75, that Store To Door cannot afford to continue providing them with groceries in their homes.

In 2009, the Minnesota Board on Aging released a report highlighting the need for grocery shopping and delivery assistance for homebound elderly. In the seven-county metro area, 25,300 adults age 65+ say they need help with grocery shopping. While 18,215 have caregivers assisting them with this chore, 7,085 report having no one to help them. Currently, Store To Door serves 1,300 clients. To begin reducing the support now is counter to the growing community need within the State of Minnesota.

Attached are two reports, listing names of clients served using State Nutrition Services and State Expansion funds disbursed in the first half of 2011, under the terms of the grant. There are 399 unduplicated clients listed on the State Expansion grant; 198 people are noted on the State Nutrition Services grant report. Of the total, 225 of the people served are over the age of 85 years. These people are living independently, with community support from Store To Door allowing them to remain at home.

We seek support from the Special Master to secure ongoing and complete funding of the existing NSS and EXP grants totaling \$75,013 throughout 2011.