

10 REASONS TO SUPPORT

Issue 1 Butler County's Senior Services Levy



1 It helps seniors remain independent in their homes.

As we age, most of us want to stay at home, even if we need help. Home means independence, privacy, dignity and connection to our loved ones. While care at home is much cheaper than nursing home care, it's still beyond the means of many. That's where Issue 1, Butler County's senior services levy, helps. It supports the Elderly Services Program (ESP). Through services such as home-delivered meals, homemaking, personal care and transportation, ESP helps more than 4,000 seniors remain in their homes with independence and dignity.

2 It benefits EVERYONE in Butler County.

Issue 1 and ESP make a big difference for thousands of families caring for older loved ones. It helps working families keep mom and dad at home, while also helping businesses whose employees are struggling to balance work and caregiving responsibilities. It helps long-married spouses care for each other and stay together. And for seniors who have no family nearby, it makes a difference in quality of life.

3 It's for your friends, neighbors and family.

Today, more than one-third of Butler County households include someone age 60+, accounting for more than 20% of the county's population. Chances are, you know someone who has benefited from ESP and the levy. ESP clients helped shape the communities we live in today. The typical client is an 80-year-old woman, living alone on a modest income. She has health problems, doesn't drive, and needs help with housework and meals. But she doesn't need a nursing home.

4 Butler County cares about seniors – and voters appreciate a good value.

Voters have supported the levy for nearly 30 years. They understand the importance of ESP for the older adults of today, and for those who will need it in the future. The levy was created to serve seniors "in the middle" – those who are not poor enough to qualify for Medicaid in-home care, but who also cannot afford to pay out-of-pocket for care. Voters appreciate that tax dollars are being put to good use. For about \$425 per month, ESP can help a senior stay in their home. If that same senior were in a nursing home on Medicaid, it would cost taxpayers about \$8,000 a month. Butler County ESP is compassionate AND cost-effective.

5 Butler County ESP delivers the right services at the right time.

Care managers tailor flexible services like meals, personal care and transportation to each client's needs. ESP supports, rather than replaces, care that is already provided by family caregivers. Temporary services are also available for older adults who need support as they leave a hospital or nursing home.

To be eligible, clients must live in Butler County, be age 60 or older, and have specific care needs or health conditions. Some clients are required to help pay for their care via cost sharing.

[Learn more at helpouelderly.org](http://helpouelderly.org)

6 Butler County ESP is well managed and mission-driven.

Council on Aging (COA) manages the program via a contract with Butler County Commissioners. A non-profit, COA is the Area Agency on Aging for southwestern Ohio, including Butler County, with a mission focused on helping older adults remain independent in their homes and communities. COA brings in federal funds that help support ESP and other services for county residents. A volunteer community board advises on ESP needs and policies. LifeSpan-Community First Solutions provides enrollment and care management for ESP clients. Providers deliver ESP services via competitive contracts with COA.

7 The need is real – and growing.

Butler County's older adult population (60+) has grown 79% since the levy's last increase in 2005. The 85+ age group (those most likely to need care) has increased 52% and will grow another 36% by 2040. According to the Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University, more than 12,000 Butler County older adults have at least one disability or form of dementia which could make them eligible for ESP services.

8 The current levy cannot keep up with the demand for services.

Despite 20 years without an increase, demand for levy services has surged. ESP is serving 50% more people than it did 20 years ago, but COA has effectively managed expenses, with care costs rising just 18% (\$66) over the same period, even as inflation soared 62%.

But demand is outpacing resources. For the past year, ESP has had to manage enrollment, turning away hundreds of seniors who qualify for help. Family caregivers are stretched thin, and ESP is often the lifeline that keeps loved ones at home and out of nursing facilities.

In November, voters will be asked to approve Issue 1, which includes a renewal of the existing 1.3 mil levy and a .7 mil increase. Issue 1 will generate \$20.2 million per year and cost homeowners \$50 per \$100,000 of property value annually (the levy accounts for less than 2% of the average property tax bill). That's about \$4 per month to ensure these critical services continue and allow vulnerable seniors to remain in their homes.

9 If voters reject Issue 1, ESP will end.

There is no other local program to take its place. The levy provides 84% of the funding for Butler County ESP. Other funding comes from federal and state sources (via Council on Aging), client donations and co-payments.

If Issue 1 passes, enrollment restrictions in place since 2024 will be lifted and ESP can begin closing the gap between the needs of the community and program capacity. By 2030, ESP will be serving nearly 20% more people than it does today.

10 You may need it someday.

We all want to age with dignity and with choices for our care. For most of us, home is the first choice. In reality, 70 percent of us will need care during our lifetimes. And if we don't, we'll likely be called on to help someone who does. The cost of care can take a serious financial toll on individuals and families, and in-home care is out of reach for many. Issue 1, Butler County's senior services levy, helps people get the care they need and deserve.