

The State of Washington



Proclamation

WHEREAS, nutrition is a human right and a social determinant of health, and malnutrition, or inadequate or unbalanced nutrition, is intensified by disparities, inequities and social isolation and is further compounded by food insecurity; and

WHEREAS, screening, assessment, diagnosis, and intervention are key to reducing malnutrition; and

WHEREAS, experts agree that nutrition status is a direct measure of health and that good nutrition can keep people healthy and out of healthcare institutions; and

WHEREAS, 20-40 percent of adults are at risk or have malnutrition, which is prevalent in vulnerable populations such as hospitalized patients and minority groups, and older adults experience the highest rate of malnutrition compared to other people; and

WHEREAS, malnutrition leads to more complications, falls and readmissions, decreases functional capacity, affects quality of life, and plays a role in cognitive deterioration; and

WHEREAS, disease-related malnutrition is a highly prevalent form of malnutrition, and illness, injury and malnutrition can result in the loss of lean body mass that leads to complications that impact good patient health outcomes, including recovery from surgery, illness or disease; and

WHEREAS, over 2 million hospital stays involve malnutrition per year and approximately 15,000 hospital patients with malnutrition go undiagnosed every day; and

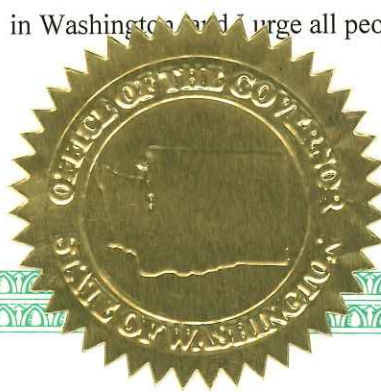
WHEREAS, when compared to patients without malnutrition, malnourished patients have hospital stays that are two times longer, 30-day hospital readmission rates that are 2.2 times higher and two times the mortality rate of all hospitalized patients, and readmitted malnourished patients are twice as likely to be diagnosed with an infection; and

WHEREAS, compared to the average cost of all hospital stays, malnourished patients have two times higher hospital costs and readmitted malnourished patients have 22 percent higher hospital costs than readmitted patients who do not experience malnutrition;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Ferguson, governor of the state of Washington, do hereby proclaim September 14-18, 2026, as

Malnutrition Awareness Week

in Washington and I urge all people in our state to join me in this special observance.



Signed this 22nd day of July, 2026

Bob Ferguson
Governor Bob Ferguson