COVID-19 Hot Meal Program Recommendations

What about changes to Hot Meal programs?

Second Harvest strongly suggests that you begin to plan for adjustments for your meal program. The more you can limit large community interactions and promote social distancing, the better prepared your community will be to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Think about ways you can adjust your transition your hot meal program to a "**No Touch Model**" of meal service. Following are some suggestions/ideas.

Employ new models of meal service

- **Consider "to go boxes" / meals-to-go with disposable service-ware if possible.** Second Harvest is securing containers and plasticware available on our shopping list on 3/12 at no cost.
- Use a few "runners" to serve meals to guests if possible, rather than having guests stand in lines for food service

Incorporate social distancing and "no touch" practices into current service model

- Reinforce social and physical distancing by encouraging participants to remain six feet apart if possible.
- Set out fewer chairs at each table

Ramp up your existing hygiene and cleaning practices

- Establish hand washing / hand sanitizer stations and provide boxes of tissues.
- Be vigilant about ensuring volunteers/staff who are sick stay home.
- Have appropriate protective gear on hand. Disposable gloves should be kept on-site and worn by volunteers at all times.
- Increase the intensity and frequency of your cleaning schedule and use disinfectants on surfaces including door handles, railings, and counters on a DAILY basis. Note: **some cleaning solutions are not effective against pathogens associated with COVID-19**. Check the resource listed on our website to make sure your cleaning supplies will kill COVID-19.
- Post signage for clients and volunteers about proper hygiene and actions to take when coughing / sneezing.

How can partner charities mitigate risk to aging volunteers?

Volunteers who are 60+ may not want to take the risk to help at your meal. This is a personal choice that should be respected, however, we understand this may impact your service. Contact Second Harvest immediately if you have any anticipated changes to your regular schedule (i.e., change in day/time of event or cancellation).

The best preventative measure for aging volunteers is to require excellent personal hygiene, especially handwashing. These are the groups who are at the highest risk: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html

- All volunteers should wash their hands frequently – before, during, and after distributions.
- Require sick volunteers to stay home.
- Follow the "No Touch Model" as much as possible.

What is our role in the event of school closures?

With schools in impacted areas closing, we will continue to communicate and coordinate with school systems in our service area. **Please help us by letting us know of any school closings in your community.**