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Responding to the Coronavirus: A week of change, but our heart stays the same

By [Karen Pearl, President & CEO](#)

Dear Community,

Many times a day we get updated news on the coronavirus (COVID-19) and we are doing all we can to plan accordingly. I want to thank you for your interest in and support of our clients, volunteers, staff, and mission.

As the situation in NYC continues to evolve, we, too, are responding to changing landscape in front of us. Below are a number of updates that will go into effect next week.

- **New Volunteer Protocol** – Community members will not be permitted to volunteer if they do not feel well or if they are exhibiting any symptoms such as cough, runny nose, sneezing or fever. The Volunteer Department will be screening volunteers upon entry to the building to ensure that they are well and symptom-free. They will also have volunteers use hand sanitizer as they enter the building.
- **Community Member Protocol** – On-site staff, vendors, and other community members who enter and exit the building will be subject to the new Volunteer Protocol as listed as above.
- **Delivery Universal Precautions** – Going forward, our delivery drivers will institute universal precautions to keep themselves and our clients safe while delivering meals in a food safe manner.

I'm pleased to report that as of next Friday, we will have packed and delivered all 4,600 emergency meal bags of shelf-stable food to our clients. Thank you to all of you who made this enormous effort possible.

But the effort doesn't stop there. There are still bags to be packed, soups to be labeled, vegetables to be chopped, and meals to be delivered. [Please consider giving what you can.](#)

Here's how you can help:

- **Sign up for a volunteer shift.** We need extra volunteers in all departments, but especially van assistants to help with deliveries, and individuals doing meal prep in the kitchen, and packing meals for client deliveries.
- **Donate to sponsor our shelf-stable meal bags.** The bag, at \$54 each, contains enough shelf-stable food components for one week of nutrition. These components include tuna fish, applesauce, beans, peanut butter and more.

Thank you to our extraordinary volunteers who continue to put their everything in to this work. We are truly a volunteer-driven organization and we are moved by your drive and your heart. We do ask that you continue to practice the strictest of food safety measures and, **if you feel sick at all, please stay home and do not come in for your shift.**

Please understand that God's Love remains strong and committed during this crisis. Our plans continue to evolve and are constantly under revision as new information arises. Additional updates will, as always, be available on our website and through our social media channels.

The son of a client wrote us this week to share how important the bag was to his father:

"I just wanted to pass on a message of thanks from my dad for the recent extra delivery. He's naturally been very worried about coronavirus and was very happy and impressed with all the extra food.. He wanted to tell you he was very thankful for all the extra food and also how smart you guys were for thinking ahead. I can honestly say this delivery was the happiest he's been all month!"

I thank you for being the best community there is! We know that we can count on you, just like our clients can count on us.

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Responding to the Coronavirus: Delivering meals and delivering

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