



Nevada Council on Food Security

COVID-19 Response Efforts Update

07/24/2020

Helping Hands of Vegas Valley Report

Response Summary

COVID-19 has been found to affect the senior citizen population the most. COVID-19 has forced most of our clients to stay at home and not access food in their usual ways. Sometimes when they do venture out to the stores many of the items that they need are not available. Many seniors who used to attend congregate meals and access food from food pantries now do not have access to those free resources. In the month of March, Helping Hands of Vegas Valley provided 859 emergency food deliveries on top of the 1200 assessed clients that we service monthly. And those numbers continued through June of 2020. The clients currently receive a prepacked bag with non-perishable items that total approximately 20 pounds along with any additional perishable items we have and a bag paper goods. While we remain open, we have put into place policies to protect our clients, volunteers and staff. We have changed our walk-in pantry to a drive through pantry and our home delivered groceries are left on the porch while the clients are contacted to get it off the doorstep. These policies limit close contact with our clients as much as possible.

Resolutions/Successes

During the pandemic we have moved some employees around to help with the increased need in our Pantry. We have re-assigned the two In-take coordinators from our Transportation program to help with the huge influx of emergency calls coming into the Pantry. We have also requested emergency funds from Aging and Disability Service Division to hire a temporary employee to help with this process as well. We have also re-assigned our Respite Care assistant to help our Volunteer Coordinator to handle the extra volunteer requests we have received. We have used our Transportation drivers who are usually transporting clients, to transport food to the clients when a volunteer is unavailable. We showed during the hardest part of the quarantine that we have the staff and capability to handle the extras 1,000 clients and look forward to helping the clients throughout the next couple of months.



As a large food pantry, we wanted to be a part of the solution for the senior citizens in Las Vegas. As we watched what other non-profits were doing to help, we were very impressed with Delivering with Dignity, a new program put together by The Moonridge Foundation, Elaine P. Wynn & Family Foundation, United Way of Southern Nevada, COPIA, and BLAU + Associates. This model takes food made by restaurants who are unable to serve at their same capacity and have them make meals. These meals are routed to clients using the new GOCOPIA platform and delivered by United Way volunteers. Parts of this model are things that we are already doing with our home-delivered groceries. The City of North Las Vegas (NLV) reached out to us about a partnership to provide the same service, except we would deliver 7 meals per week every week from 12 weeks.

The City of NLV has been a great partner in this project and together we have created Meals for Humanity Food Security for Seniors. This goal of this program is to ensure our most vulnerable are safe and have access to healthy food. In order to activate this opportunity, we are partnering with Diamond Events and US Foods to create 7 healthy meals each week that would then be delivered to homebound senior citizens. Meals would be delivered every Monday and Thursday, three meals delivered on Monday and four meals delivered on Thursday.

After assessing the need with the City, HHOVV connected with Delivering with Dignity and discussed the opportunity to work together to make Meals for Humanity a success for those senior citizens in NLV. One key element for the success of this program is the routing of the food. Currently we have one employee who is routing our emergency food deliveries and it is very time consuming. Using the new GOCOPIA routing software program to do the most time-consuming part of the job allows the employee to speak with more clients and schedule more volunteer drivers to deliver the food. There is also a mobile application the volunteer driver will download to obtain their individual route information with turn-by-turn directions in real time. Delivering with Dignity will also refer clients to us that could use meals on a more consistent basis. We will also collaborate with Nevada Senior Services to assist them with delivering food to clients who may have been recently discharged from the hospital and live in NLV. We are now serving 160 clients each week with 7 meals. We have also expanded to serving limited Las Vegas Zip Codes. We continue to work with other non-profits to provide emergency food through our walk-in pantry and home delivered groceries program.

We have also started a new program where we drop shipped prepared Frozen and Self stable meals to senior citizens living in Rural Nevada. They will receive 30 meals per month to help replace the congregate meals or other pantry services that they can no longer access.



Barriers/Needs/Gaps in services

When COVID -19 started our biggest barrier was the ability to purchase non-perishable food. In the past we have been able to purchase food through Three Square food bank, Costco and Smith's. The supply chain was damaged with the pandemic, making it hard for all of us to keep purchasing. We were able to work with some additional wholesalers to purchase food directly through them and to also place bulk orders of shelf stable meals with a company called Tivity.