TO: Food Distribution Staff and Volunteers  

SUBJECT: Safety Precautions for Food Distribution during the COVID-19 Pandemic  

DATE: March 25, 2020  

General Hygiene Guidelines: The Basics  

• Stay home when sick or experiencing the following COVID-19 symptoms:  
  ○ Fever  
  ○ Cough  
  ○ Shortness of Breath  

• Wash hands frequently throughout the day, including before and after eating, after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, and after being in a public place. Use proper hand washing technique:  
  ○ Wash hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with soap and water  
  ○ Wash top and bottom, wrists, in-between each finger, and under fingernails  
  ○ Dry on paper towel  
  ○ Use paper towel to turn off faucet  
  ○ Use paper towel to open door  
  ○ Discard towel  

• If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Follow up with proper handwashing procedure once a hand sink does become available for your use.  

• Avoid touching eyes, nose, mouth, or any other part of the face.  

• Sneeze or cough into a tissue (or the inside of your elbow, if tissue is not available) and discard tissue in the trash. Wash hands immediately after with soap and water; if not available, use hand sanitizer that contains 60% alcohol.  

• Put distance between yourself and other people. Maintain six feet distance (6’) in-between individuals.  

• Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces daily (such as phones, pens, keyboards, faucets, doorknobs, tables) using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.  

• Avoid close contact with people who are sick
If you start to have acute respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, and fever) while volunteering or working, you should separate yourself from other individuals, notify the supervisor, and go home immediately.

Specific Guidelines for Food Distribution Volunteers, Staff, and Drivers

AT FOOD PANTRIES

- Wear gloves for all tasks! Wash hands immediately after discarding gloves. Change gloves frequently.
- Use outside pick-up, drive-thru, or delivery options when possible.
- The number of individuals at the pantry at any one time should be maxed out at 10 people (preferably less).
- At all times individuals in the pantry should **maintain a 6’ distance between each other**.
- Set up bagging stations, intake, distribution and delivery to **allow 6 feet between workers**. Limit close interaction as much as possible.
- **Allow for 6 feet in-between clients** while in lines, at sign-in table and during food distribution (family members can remain together). (Prepare to keep the line moving.)
- Set up intake and distribution to **allow 6 feet in-between workers and clients**. Consider setting up two tables between clients and staff/volunteers at intake and distribution; this will help maintain social distancing.
- Prop doors open where safe to do so, to limit doorknob usage. Have paper towels adjacent to doors to use for opening.
- At minimum, clean and disinfect high-touch areas before and after pantry hours.
- Do not share, or require others to share, pens or other personal instruments (e.g., cell phones).
- Keep gloves, tissues/Kleenex, paper towels and disinfectant wipes on hand.
- Wipe down shared items including handles, doorknobs, handrails, and table tops multiple times a day with a bleach solution or disinfectant wipes. If something is dirty, clean with soap and water prior to disinfecting.
- If someone visiting the pantry exhibits signs of infections, provide a facemask immediately, and fast track their food distribution.
- Facemasks should only be for clients that are symptomatic. Anyone staffing/volunteering should not be present with a communicable disease. Therefore, they should not be symptomatic, and not need facemasks.

AT MEAL OR GROCERY DISTRIBUTION SITES

- Wear gloves for all tasks! Wash hands immediately after discarding gloves. Change gloves frequently.
- The number of individuals at the distribution site at any one time should be maxed out at 10 people (preferably less).
- At all times individuals at the site should **maintain a 6’ distance between each other**.
- Set up bagging stations, intake, distribution and delivery to **allow 6 feet in-between workers**. Limit close interaction as much as possible.
- **Allow for 6 feet in-between clients** while in lines, at sign-in table and during food distribution (family members can remain together). (Prepare to keep the line moving.)
- Additional administrative and engineering measures should be in place to encourage staggering of expected arrivals in order to limit lines and make crowd management easier.
- Set up intake and distribution to **allow 6 feet in-between workers and clients**. Consider setting up two tables between clients and staff/volunteers at intake and distribution; this will help maintain social distancing.
● Prop doors open where safe to do so, to limit doorknob usage. Have paper towels adjacent to doors to use for opening.

● At minimum, clean and disinfect high-touch areas before and after pantry hours.

● Do not share, or require others to share, pens or other personal instruments (e.g., cell phones).

● Keep gloves, tissues/Kleenex, paper towels and disinfectant wipes on hand.

● Wipe down shared items including handles, doorknobs, handrails, and table tops multiple times a day with a bleach solution or disinfectant wipes. If something is dirty, clean with soap and water prior to disinfecting.

● If someone visiting the distribution site exhibits signs of infections, provide a facemask immediately, and fast track their food distribution.

● Facemasks should only be for clients that are symptomatic. Anyone staffing/volunteering should not be present with a communicable disease. Therefore, they should not be symptomatic, and not need facemasks.

**AT SOUP KITCHENS**

● Wear disposable gloves at all times when handling or preparing food. Change gloves frequently.

● Clean and disinfect all surfaces and counters before preparing any meals.

● Wash, rinse, and sanitize all kitchenware and equipment between each use to prevent contamination.

● Use disposable cloths or paper towels, rather than reusable cloths, when possible.

● Cover all food items when not in use.

● Keep gloves, tissues/Kleenex, paper towels and disinfectant wipes on hand.

● Wipe down shared items including handles, doorknobs, handrails, and table tops multiple times a day with a bleach solution or disinfectant wipes. If something is dirty, clean with soap and water prior to disinfecting.

● **Allow for 6 feet in-between clients** while in lines and during food distribution. (Prepare to keep the line moving.)

● Additional administrative and engineering measures should be in place to encourage staggering of expected arrivals in order to limit lines and make crowd management easier.

● If someone visiting the soup kitchen exhibits signs of infections, provide a facemask immediately, and fast track their food distribution.

● Facemasks should only be for clients that are symptomatic. Anyone staffing/volunteering should not be present with a communicable disease. Therefore, they should not be symptomatic, and not need facemasks.

**PREPARING DELIVERIES**

● Wear gloves at all times. Change gloves frequently.

● Put all bags of food for each delivery well-marked for pick-up. Staff at the distribution site and drivers should **not need to be within 6 feet of each other**. Set-up site so little to no interaction is required.

● If bags contain dairy or meats, these must be transported in a cooler (i.e. product must be maintained at or below 41F) and delivered within 30 minutes.

● Please know that any food donated from a restaurant must be transported in a sanitary manner and must always be under temperature control (<41F or >135F). The use of Cambo, Hot Boxes or cold bags would be examples of approved methods to ensure the product stays hot or cold. Any product found to be outside of these rules must be discarded immediately.

This document reflects best practices as of 03/25/2020
WHEN DELIVERING

- Keep gloves, tissues/Kleenex, paper towels and disinfectant wipes on hand.
- Wash hands and wipe down steering wheel with sanitizing wipe prior to putting gloves on.
- Wear gloves for all tasks! Wash hands immediately after discarding gloves. Change gloves frequently.
- If possible, call ahead to inform individuals of the delivery, so items can be left outside the door for them to pick-up.
- Do not enter residences.
- Leave bags at the front door.
- Any necessary interaction should be attempted in an open space (not close or confined) with a minimum of 6’ distance.
- Once in your vehicle, call the resident to let them know their food arrived.
- The resident must be home to receive the delivery.
- If bags contain dairy or meats, these must be transported in a cooler (i.e. product must be maintained at or below 41F) and delivered within 30 minutes.

General Surface Cleaning & Disinfection Guidelines

- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- If location was exposed to the virus, wait up to 24 hours, or as long as practical, before cleaning and disinfection to minimize exposure to respiratory droplets.
- Clean and disinfect all surfaces (e.g., tables, counter tops) utilized by workers and clients for bagging, intake, distribution, pickup and delivery.
  - Clean by using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection
  - Disinfect by using diluted household bleach solutions (½ cup per gallon of water) made up daily, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol, or EPA-registered household disinfectants for COVID-19 (list available at [https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2))
    - Any use of disinfectants should adhere to the manufacturer’s intended use and directions for use (e.g. application, ventilation, etc.)
    - Check to ensure the product is not expired