

UNITED WAY OF PALM BEACH COUNTY

- **Hunger Relief Annual Report 2020**

Report is final and available in printed form and on the United Way of Palm Beach County website, Hunger Relief webpage.

- **Food Finder Map**

An interactive tool developed by United Way of Palm Beach County using Google Maps to help people easily locate free food and hot meals in Palm Beach County. This online tool was created to connect individuals seeking food resources to sites near them. Information is English, Spanish, and Creole. United Way updates the information listed on this map weekly. However, locations and hours of distribution may change. Please consider calling the site prior to visiting to verify information listed. Please note that sites may have specific requirements such as ID. Please visit <https://unitedwaypbc.org/hunger/> to view the map. As of the end of October, there were more than 79,000 visits to the Food Finder Map.

- **Hunger Relief Department**

Hunger Relief staff are partnering with community partners within and outside our network to address short term, midterm, and long-term needs of the Palm Beach County communities. We are staying nimble so we can proactively identify needs, address needs as they arise, prepare for expected and unexpected needs and find and/or create solutions. We are also tracking information available through our networks, data, and WebEOC. Hunger Relief for United Way of Palm Beach County continues to coordinate food distribution with PBC Food Bank, Feeding South Florida, Area Agency on Aging and approximately 91 food pantries that are still operating throughout the county.

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

- **COVID-19 PSAs**

United Way of Palm Beach County, in partnership with Palm Beach County, Florida Department of Health, and 2-1-1, developed a Public Service Announcement (PSA) tool to educate the community about key information regarding COVID-19 and connect them with resources offered in the County. The PSA is available in English, Spanish, and Creole and can be used widely by organizations such as businesses, food distribution sites, and social service agencies.

- Beginning on December 29, the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners, through its Community Services Department (CSD), will add \$500 to all approved CARES Act food applications to help those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. No action is needed from approved clients.

Under the CARES Act, Palm Beach County issued pre-paid debit cards to approved residents to purchase food for households that were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to apply, clients had to present evidence their household was adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic including supporting documentation to prove income eligibility. Only one card was issued per household.

Food assistance was based on household size. The new amounts including the additional funds are listed below:

- 1-2 household members: \$900
- 3-4 household members: \$1,300
- 5 or more household members: \$1,500

For clients who have pre-paid card balances of \$100 and higher, their cards will automatically be reloaded with the additional \$500, and new cards will not be issued. Clients who have card balances at or below \$100 will receive new cards in the mail.

Pre-paid debit cards approved on and after December 21 will include the \$500 additional benefit.

For more information, call the CSD's Contact Center at (561) 355-4792.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- **Food for Kids Survey**

Developed a short, online survey for parents to help us identify the best ways to improve food resources delivery in PBC based upon parent input. We want to ensure that children and families have access to food as the pandemic continues and schools are not open and beyond. Link to survey: <http://survey.pbcgov.com/s3/PBC-FOOD-FOR-KIDS>

Information will not be used for any other purpose and is strictly confidential. There are drop downs in the survey questions that provide the opportunity for the responder to share additional information. After the survey is completed there is a landing page that provides additional information for food resources. Survey is included with the Food Finder Map. Survey is online.

- **Grab 'n Go Meals**

Children and families can access free meals for kids 18 and under at more than 100 BreakSpot Grab 'n Go sites around the County. Meals are FREE to anyone under 18 years of age (under 22 for ESE students), regardless of financial need. Hunger Relief is working with the School District of Palm Beach County, FLIPANY, and Boys and Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County sites.

To find more information about Grab 'n Go sites:

- Links to the sites and schedules can be found on 2-1-1's website at www.211palmbeach.org
- For more information about site locations visit <https://summerbreakspot.freshfromflorida.com/>
- Text FLKIDSMEALS to 211-211 or call 2-1-1

All other individuals who are in need of food should contact 211. 211 receives frequent updates of pantries that remain open and have food.

- **FLIPANY Grab 'n Go Sites – Free 7-Day Meal Boxes for All Youth**

Families can visit any of the following locations in Palm Beach County to receive a free meal box for their children. Meal boxes contain seven days of breakfast and lunch for a combination of fresh and shelf-stable items; milk included. All items are prepackaged and combined in one box for ease in distribution via a drive-thru or walk-up pick-up line at the associated site:

New Disciples Worship Center
239 NE 12th Avenue
Boynton Beach, FL 33235
Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

New Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church
2221 8th Avenue
Boynton Beach, FL 33435
Thursdays, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

- **Boys and Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County Grab 'n Go Sites**

The Grab 'n Go program serves as a substitute for the snack and dinner program that is normally available to our Club children in the afterschool program. For Club families with transportation challenges delivery is available.

- **Farm to Family Program**

Developed by the Boys and Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County in partnership with a network of local farmers to enhance Grab 'n Go meals. Partners include: Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County, Lox Farms, Fresh RX, Living Hungry, Farm to Share, Aioli, Gratitude Gardens, Kai Kai Farms, Holman's Harvest, Florida Crystals, GL Homes, Old School Bakery, Farm Share, TKM, Tropical Shipping, Gekks, V and B Farms, All American Citrus, Lake Meadow, Brown Distributing, Sysco, GFA International, Dynatech International.

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- **School Meals**

The following are school year 2020-2021 numbers:

- Pre COVID meals = 24.6 million
- Grab 'n Go Meals due to COVID = 4.5 million
- Food boxes from Feeding South Florida = 131,684 boxes of food
- Food box partnership with Palm Beach County = 14,700 boxes of food
- Food box partnership with Pan Florida Challenge = 9,485
- Food box partnership with other organizations = 3,454

School District of Palm Beach County feeding sites are open as follows:

- Free school grab-and-go food distribution at 97 schools in the District.
- Students, parents or guardians picking up curbside meals, offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week, will receive at least three breakfasts, three lunches, three suppers and three snacks per kit. On Thursdays, a free box of 10-12 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables is also available.
- All children 18 years of age and younger (22 and younger for ESE) are eligible for the free meals.
- The [list of locations](#) specifies the food distribution sites and the times of meal pick up. Parents do not need to visit their child's school for food distribution, they can visit any location of their choice. Distribution times and locations are subject to change.
- A child does not have to be present to pick up meals. However, one of the following forms of identification is required to receive meals at the food distribution sites: Student ID Badge, Student Barcode Letter (that can be found in your [child's student portal](#)), Passport, Birth Certificate, or Library Card. The adult picking up the meals can also bring a picture that has themselves and the children for whom they are picking up food, in the photo.
- Meals may contain allergens. Adults picking up the food are asked to be vigilant and ensure they do not take food if allergies may be a concern. Food should be refrigerated or discarded if not consumed upon receipt.
- For everyone's health and safety, a **facial covering or mask is required** when picking up meals at any school food distribution site.

SENIORS

- **Area Agency on Aging**

The Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and their providers at The Volen Center and Palm Beach County Division of Senior Services routinely provide a full complement of services such as senior centers, adult day care, congregate food sites, social support, transportation, telephone reassurance, counseling and in-home services. During COVID-19, the Aging Network Providers throughout Palm Beach and Treasure Coast are solving many challenges being experienced by seniors including food. The full wait list has been fully released and existing clients as well as new clients for emergency meals at this difficult time.

Area Agency on Aging's Elder Helpline managed increased call volume – many of which were for food assistance. The Helpline released 1,200 clients from the home-delivered meals waitlist.

AAA adapted to changes to service delivery requirements including assessments, nutrition requirements, meal packaging and recordkeeping

New nutrition services were offered by AAA and their partners including shopping assistance, telephone reassurance, and Ruth and Norman Rales Jewish Family Services expanding their kosher home-delivered meals.

- **Drop and Go Meals**

The partnership between Area Agency on Aging, The Volen Center, and Palm Beach County Division of Senior Services, and Norman Rales Jewish Family Services delivered 23,685 between January 3, 2021 and January 9, 2021 in Palm Beach County.

Seniors who need food should contact the Elder Helpline at 866-684-5885. The PBC Senior Centers are still being used as distribution sites and Palm Tran continues to deliver food to the homes of seniors. For seniors who are confused or don't remember that number, they can call 2-1-1 who will direct them.

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Hunger Relief community partners are working with AAA to identify any needs and gaps related to COVID-19, developed programs to address the needs and gaps, as well as strategies to secure funding to continue these programs post COVID-19.

- **Meals on Wheels of the Palm Beaches, Inc. (MOWPB)**

During COVID-19, MOWPB has temporarily adjusted their meal operations to provide seven frozen dinner meals along with three breakfast meals each week with deliveries once a week. In addition, seniors who are normally mobile but are unable to shop due to COVID-19 are being served on a short-term basis with the 10 meals delivered weekly at no cost. To setup service please call (561) 802-6979 extension 6.

MOWPB serves those individuals age 65 and over who are home bound due to age, infirmity or debilitating illness and are unable or struggling to food shop and prepare nutritious meals. Their clients are either living alone, or with their spouse/partner who may also be home bound or who may be the fulltime caregiver.

MOWPB has been serving 2,500 meals a week to 300 people.

- **Palm Beach Sheriff's Office (PBSO)**

PBSO has established a new program to assist our Palm Beach County elderly residents who are unable to leave their homes to go to the grocery store or the pharmacy. Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office Volunteers are ready to deliver orders directly to their doors.

This program is AVAILABLE ONLY IN AREAS WHERE PBSO HAS JURISDICTION. If PBSO does not have a presence in your area they WILL NOT DELIVER.

BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE

- **Cold Storage Capacity Building Grant**

This opportunity was made possible by a three-year grant from the Farris Foundation.

In year two 27,959 individuals served monthly. The delayed delivery of the units, due to Hurricane Dorian and COVID-19, resulted in the delay of the post-survey. We are unable to estimate the percentage increase of individuals served for year two of the grant at this time.

Hurricane Dorian created a high demand for cold-storage units in the Bahamas, creating a backlog of cold storage units in the area. In addition to the high demand, COVID-19 left producers with limited staff capacity, thereby shifting the units' availability further into the summer. United Way of Palm Beach County has researched distinct suppliers. Most suppliers are experiencing a backlog or have units that are out of our price range. Units have been delivered.

The third-year cold-storage applications were reviewed in late December 2020. Awards will be announced no later than February 1, 2021.

Many food pantries closed due to COVID-19. United Way of Palm Beach County is keeping abreast of their needs and connecting them with food, PPE, and other needed resources to help them reopen or prevent them from closing. We are fortunate to be part of a vast network of partners that make this possible.

- **Healthy Corner Stores Initiative**

The initiative continues to work with two corner stores in The Glades to increase their capacity. One corner store, Sam's Food Store, Canal Point, is offering fresh produce to its customers. The implementation at the second store, South Bay Food Store, was able to move forward in October with equipment, shelving and refrigeration units ordered.

- **Farmers Helping Families**

Hunger Relief is working with United Farmers Alliance (UFA) Farmers Helping Families, a group of Palm Beach County farmers, working on solutions to get product from the farms to the at-risk communities in Palm Beach County. UFA is working with Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and helping farmers register on myflorida.com so their products can be sold to FDACS and other entities. UFA is also partnering with Feed the Hungry, Boca Helping Hands, Feeding Palm Beach County (Feeding South Florida) and Palm Beach Harvest, and others to help get food into our community. To date, UFA has distributed more than 100,000 pounds of healthy local

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produce. UFA/Farmers Helping Families is now approved to accept SNAP/EBT and is working on approval to accept Fresh Access Bucks.

There is much information on what the farmers in the Glades have been contributing to the County, School District of Palm Beach County, and food banks (Feeding South Florida, Palm Beach County Food Bank, etc.) for distribution. Their information is available on their social media and EAA Farmers information.

Palm Beach Harvest and Boys and Girls Clubs have been doing weekly produce distributions in The Glades.

Florida Crystals continues to donate rice and sugar to local organizations.

- **Farm to Families Food Box Program**

Washington, D.C., January 4, 2021 – U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will purchase an additional \$1.5 billion worth of food for nationwide distribution through the Farmers to Families Food Box Program. In total, USDA has [distributed more than 132 million food boxes](#) in support of American farmers and families affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The additional funding for the program was included in the COVID-19 relief package as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act passed December 21, 2020. In this fifth round of purchases, USDA will again purchase combination boxes to ensure all involved recipient organizations have access to fresh produce, dairy products, fluid milk and meat products, and seafood products will also be included in this round.

SNAP OUTREACH AND HUNGER RELIEF ADVOCACY

- **Increase in Maximum Monthly SNAP Allotment**

Maximum Monthly Allotment

DCF worked with our federal partners to temporarily increase all Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients' benefit amounts to the maximum monthly allotment based on household size for the months of March through November and December.

For December, households who normally receive their monthly allotment between the 1st and 4th, will receive the monthly maximum allotment on or around December 4th. All other clients can expect additional benefits to be included as a part of their regularly scheduled benefit allotment. Additionally, any new households approved for food assistance will receive additional benefits within two weeks of being approved for benefits. Please note, customers who are already receiving the maximum allotment will not receive an increase. A chart illustrating maximum benefit for household size is provided below for your reference effective October 1st.

People in Household	Maximum Benefit Amount
1	\$204
2	\$374
3	\$535
4	\$680
5	\$807
6	\$969
7	\$1,071
8	\$1,224
For Each Additional Person	+\$153

Please contact DCF's Customer Call Center at 850-300-4323 or visit www.myflfamilies.com/covid19/access.shtml for more information.

- **Recertifications**

DCF waived recertifications from April through August 2020, but they were reinstated in September 2020. All clients required to recertify in September and subsequent months will receive notification and a timeline to comply. DCF

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stands ready to assist Florida's benefit clients if needed through the recertification process, which can be done virtually and through the self-service portal.

Medicaid recipients will remain eligible for the duration of the public health emergency as declared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

- **Work Requirements Waiver**

Under the leadership of Governor DeSantis, the Department of Children and Families applied good cause and suspended work requirements for the months of March, April, May, June, August, September, October, November and December, allowing Floridians to focus on caring for themselves and their loved ones during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

In Florida, Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDs) are individuals who received SNAP, or food assistance, and are subject to the work requirements. ABAWDs must meet monthly work requirements.

Recipients of TANF, or cash assistance, must participate in work activities.

- **Maintain Medicaid Eligibility**

Medicaid coverage will not be reduced or eliminated during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

- **Extension to Complete Medicaid Application**

During this state of emergency, individuals applying for Medicaid may be unable to submit all the documentation required to process their application. Beginning with applications received in February 2020, we are extending the timeframe for individuals to submit any necessary paperwork to 120 days from the date the application was received. If the Medicaid application is approved, the individual's Medicaid eligibility effective date will still be the first day of the month that the initial application was received.

- **Pandemic EBT or P-EBT**

Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) is a supplemental benefit for households with children who have temporarily lost access to free or reduced-price school meals due to pandemic-related school closures.

As of September 1, 2020, Florida has issued P-EBT benefits to more than 2.2 million children in the amount of \$687,738,431.

For more information on the P-EBT program, please refer to the [P-EBT FAQs](#).

- **How to Apply for SNAP Benefits**

The Department of Children and Families has worked diligently to ensure our clients have easy access to apply for benefits during this public health emergency. DCF's Statewide Customer Call Center is available for customer questions and application assistance with agents available for extended hours, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. to noon; and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The fastest way to get information and apply for benefits is online at <https://www.myflorida.com/accessflorida>. Customers can report changes, upload documents, and check the status of their application and benefits through their [MyACCESS Self-Service Portal](#). DCF continues to work quickly to process the growing number of applications as a result of COVID-19.

- **Expanded Locations to Sign-up for SNAP Benefits**

Location	Days/Times
Hagen Ranch Road Branch Library	Mondays & Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Jupiter Branch Library	Mondays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Main Library	Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Glades Road Branch Library	Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
PBPBC Okeechobee Boulevard Branch Library	Thursdays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Royal Palm Beach Branch Library	Thursdays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Lantana Road Branch Library	Fridays, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

- **Online Grocery Purchase Pilot Program**

Florida's Online Purchasing Pilot program successfully launched initially on April 16th and expanded statewide on April 21 with Amazon and Walmart. Between April 17 and May 12, 2020, more than 132,000 online SNAP transactions occurred through Florida's new Online Purchasing Program. DCF continues to coordinate with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Florida Retail Federation and other state and local partners to expand the network of retailers participating in the pilot program and encourages all interested retailers to visit USDA's Food and Nutrition Service website (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/online-purchasing-pilot>) and its online resource site for retailers to learn more about becoming a SNAP internet retailer at <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/online-SNAP-for-retailers-requirements.pdf>.

- **Florida's Fresh Access Bucks**

Fresh Access Bucks (FAB) is extending unlimited dollar-for-dollar matches for all SNAP purchased on Florida grown fruits and vegetables at participating markets through December 31, 2020. For a complete list of participating markets, please visit www.feedingflorida.org/promotional-materials/Covid19.