

Hunger Relief Update – Week of June 15, 2020

General

1. **Hunger Relief Annual Report 2020** is final and available in printed form and on the United Way of Palm Beach County website, Hunger Relief page.
2. **Palm Beach County Food Finder Map**
An interactive tool 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 Thursday, June 18, 2020, there were 21,538 visits to the map.

The Food Finder Map is located on United Way of Palm Beach County's website.

- **Description for Layers and Titles:**
- **Meals for Children 18 and Under** – These sites offer meals for children ages 18 and under.
- **Food Pantries** – These sites offer groceries such as canned goods, produce, and protein products.
- **Soup Kitchens** – These sites offer hot meals to individuals to go.
- **Family Take Out Meals** – These sites offer drive through hot meals to-go for everyone impacted by the Corona virus pandemic in the car. Donations or tips accepted.
- **Affordable Produce** – Farms offering affordable produce in boxes.
- **Meals for Seniors** – Congregate meal sites offering food in to go.

Coronavirus 2020

- Hunger Relief is 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 85 food pantries that are still operating throughout the county.
- Hunger Relief is working with United Farmers Alliance (UFA), 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 also 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 Feeding the Hungry to help get food into our community.
- 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 is one of three companies that have created a hot meals program in the Glades, providing hot meals to seniors. By end of this May 2020, about 20,000 hot meals were distributed. The partnership was between a Belle Glade-based nonprofit and local restaurants.
- Florida Crystals is ramping up to do another donation of rice and sugar to local organizations.
- Palm Beach County Food Bank, Feeding South Florida, City of West Palm Beach, and FarmShare are working with MarJon Specialty Foods and other partners to secure 17 to 20 pound food boxes consisting of fresh fruits and vegetables that are being distributed through food pantries and other channels in Palm Beach County. This is part of the USDA reimbursable food box program for nonprofit organizations. For profit organizations can purchase the food boxes. The program has been extended through July and August. https://thefern.org/ag_insider/usda-adds-vendors-extends-others-as-food-box-program-enters-second-round/

Children and Families

- **USDA has extended flexibilities for meals for kids to continue through the summer.** FNS is extending the following waivers nationwide through August 31, 2020:
 - **Non-Congregate Feeding:** FNS is allowing meals to be served to children outside of the normally-required group setting to support social distancing.
 - **Parent Pickup:** FNS is allowing parents and/or guardians to pick up meals and bring them home to their children.
 - **Meal Times:** FNS is waiving requirements that meals be served at certain standard times to allow for grab-n-go options. This also allows for multiple days-worth of meals to be provided at once.
- Children and families can access free meals for kids 18 and under at more than 80 BreakSpot Grab 'n Go sites around the County.
- Hunger Relief is working with the School District of Palm Beach County, FLIPANY, Feeding South Florida, and Boys and Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County and Palm Beach County Youth Services sites. Links to the site schedules can be found on 2-1-1's website: 211palmbeach.org.
- **For more information about site locations:** <https://summerbreakspot.freshfromflorida.com/>. Meals are FREE to anyone under 18 years of age (under 22 for ESE students), regardless of financial need. To find a Grab 'n Go site near you, please visit the website, Text FLKIDSMEALS to [211-211](tel:211211) or call 2-1-1.
- **School District of Palm Beach County**
 - The number of meals distributed by the School District of Palm Beach County School Food Service has surpassed the **three million** mark since food distribution began March 16, and food distribution will continue on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 52 school locations throughout the summer. Distribution is from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
 - **149,968** Family Meal Boxes of non-perishable food or produce from community partners.

- **School District of Palm Beach County feeding sites are open as follows. Please visit the School District of Palm Beach County website for more information:**

Week of June 15, 2020 - Food distribution will continue on Tuesdays and Thursdays at [52 school locations](#) throughout the summer. Distribution is from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Each day, parents and guardians who pick up food will receive a kit with three days' worth of meals for each child. Meals are FREE to anyone 18 years of age and younger (22 years of age and younger for ESE students), regardless of financial need.

Tuesday, June 16, Feeding South Florida will also be distributing food for families [at the following locations](#).

Thursday, June 18, Feeding South Florida will also be distributing food for families [at the following locations](#).

Meals are FREE to anyone 18 years of age and younger (22 years of age and younger for ESE students), regardless of financial need.

Family Weekend Backpack meals are being distributed through the Grab 'n Go program due to the Coronavirus Epidemic.

Please Note: Starting April 6, 2020, Child No Longer Required to Be Present:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has provided a waiver to allow parents/guardians to pick up meals without the child being present. The parent needs to provide confirmation of the number of children for which they are picking up meals, by one of the following methods: student ID, student passport, student library card, student birth certificate, or a photo of adult picking up the meals with the students for who they are picking up meals.

The parent will show the identification to staff providing the meals, and meals will be provided for the number of children identified. The District follows food distribution rules as outlined by the USDA.

Grab 'n Go Meals served by the School District of Palm Beach County each week since the schools closed due to the Coronavirus Pandemic:

Feeding South Florida Grab 'n Go Sites

- Total meals served is TBD.

FLIPANY Grab 'n Go Sites

- Serving more than 7,800 meals day at 20 sites in The Glades and Eastern Palm Beach County sites, serving one breakfast and one lunch. **This represents a 122.86% increase in the average number of meals served daily since the program began in March 2020.**
- **Boys and Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County Grab 'n Go Sites**
 - Serving 1,000 Grab 'n Go lunch and snack daily, seven days a week, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

- This 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 – partnering with a network of local farmers and Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County. 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.
 - Locations:
 - Boca Raton Club
 - Delray Club
 - Marjorie S. Fisher Club (Westgate)
 - Max M. Fisher Club (Riviera Beach)
 - Florence De George Club (Northwood/Pinewood)
 - Neil S. Hirsch Club (Wellington)
 - The Teen Center Club site in Belle Glade also serves Club members of the six elementary Club sites in The Glades area that are closed due to the School District of Palm Beach County Schools closure
- **Palm Beach County Youth Services Department BreakSpot Grab ‘n Go Sites.**
 - Serving meal kits with seven days' worth of meals to each eligible child. Week of June 7 – 13, 2020, 53 sites served 11,668 meals. Please see the Youth Services page on the Palm Beach County website for a complete list of site locations, dates and times of distribution.
 - Parents picking up kits without their child present must bring identification for the child. Acceptable forms of identification include student ID, child’s passport or other government-issued ID, birth certificate, adoption decree, immunization records, and school demographics. Meal kits will not be provided to parents who do not bring their child or do not provide proper identification.
 - Families without transportation may walk up to collect meal kits. Proper COVID-19 safety measures must be practiced by all families, including but not limited to social distancing and wearing facial coverings.
- All other individuals who need of food should contact 211. 211 receives frequent updates of pantries that remain open and have food. 211 also has information on how to find Grab ‘n Go sites around the County that are open for families with children 18 and under. (Please note: Meals are FREE to anyone under 18 years of age (under 22 for ESE students), regardless of financial need. Children do not need to be school age – the program is for those 18 and under.

Seniors

- 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.

- Helpline managed increased call volume – many of which were for food assistance
 - Helpline released 1200 clients from the home-delivered meals waitlist
 - Adapted to changes to service delivery requirements
 - Assessments
 - Nutrition requirements
 - Meal packaging
 - Recordkeeping
 - New Nutrition Services
 - Shopping Assistance
 - Telephone Reassurance
 - Ruth and Norman Rales Jewish Family Services Expanding Kosher Home-Delivered Meals

- The partnership between Area Agency on Aging, The Volen Center, Palm Beach County Division of Senior Services, TooJay’s, and Jack Scalisi Wholesale Food and Produce delivered 41,655 meals this week in Palm Beach County through the Department of Senior Services and The Volen Center and served 50,744 meals in the five county region the week of May 31, 2020 – June 6, 2020. In Palm Beach County the drop-and-go meals from TooJays are being served at three locations twice weekly.

- 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.*

- AAA is in the process of securing additional funding for their Agency Pandemic Response Plan.

- 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.

- 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.
 - Place your prescription or groceries order online or over the phone like you regularly do. **Make sure to leave your name on the order. All orders must be PREPAID. PBSO officers will not handle money.**
 - Once you place your order contact either Krysti Nast (561) 688.3918 or Nephateri Burrell (561) 681-7241 to coordinate a volunteer who will pick up your order and deliver it to you.
 - You must be home to receive your delivery, please let your gate security know that a PBSO officer is delivering for you and advise that the Volunteer will be in uniform and driving a PBSO Volunteer vehicle.
 - **This program is AVAILABLE ONLY IN AREAS WHERE PBSO HAS JURISDICTION.** If PBSO doesn't have a presence in your area they WILL NOT DELIVER.

| North Region | South Region | Western Region |
|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| West Palm Beach | Delray Beach | Western Palm Beach County |
| Mangonia Park | West Boynton Beach | Wellington |
| North County | Boca Raton | Royal Palm Beach |
| Lake Park | Lake Worth | South Bay |
| Greenacres | South Palm Beach | Pahokee |
| Palm Beach Shores | | Belle Glade |
| | | Loxahatchee-Acreage |
| | | Town of Loxahatchee Groves |
| | | City of Westlake |

SNAP Outreach/Advocacy

- **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.
 - Families who are eligible for the free and reduced-price school meals program under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are eligible to receive P-EBT. P-EBT benefits will be issued automatically during the month of June.
 - For existing SNAP customers with a child receiving free and reduced-price school meals, the P-EBT benefit will be added to your current EBT card automatically. For Medicaid and/or TANF recipients with a child receiving free and reduced-price school meals, the P-EBT benefit will be automatically mailed to the address on your Medicaid and/or TANF file. No further action is required on your part to receive your P-EBT benefits.

- For all other P-EBT customers, a new P-EBT card will be mailed to the address on file with your child's school district. No further action is required on your part to receive your P-EBT benefits.
- If your child was receiving free and reduced-price school meals prior to the school closures on March 16, 2020, you will receive a one-time benefit of \$5.70 per day (55 days) and per child. If your child was eligible for the free and reduced-price school meals program after March 16, 2020, you will receive a pro-rated amount based on the month of eligibility.
- Please allow the state to fully issue all P-EBT benefits by June 30, 2020, before inquiring about your benefit status.
- Please use the updated P-EBT Frequently Asked Questions document at this link:
- <https://www.myflfamilies.com/covid19/docs/PEBT%20FAQ.pdf>.
- Florida's implementation is specific to our state and our schools. There are additional questions on the updated FAQs to clarify the process.
- The FAQ document notes there is a special number to call with P-EBT questions: *Please allow the state to fully issue all P-EBT benefits before inquiring about your benefit status. If you have not received your benefit by June 30, 2020, please call 1- 833-311-0321.*
- The update above and other updates regarding public benefits can be found on DCF's COVID-19 web pages:
- <https://www.myflfamilies.com/covid19/access.shtml>.
- The information is updated frequently. The FAQ document is as of June 5, 2020, 9:00 a.m.

- **SNAP - SNAP Participants to get June Supplement**

- Florida Policy Institute wants to make sure you heard the good news that Florida has decided to [repeat emergency supplements for current SNAP participants for June](#). The extra allotment supplements a family's SNAP to the maximum benefits for a household of the family's size. The Department says that, for June, households who normally receive their monthly allotment between the 1st and 10th will receive the monthly maximum allotment on June 10th. All other families can expect additional benefits to be included as a part of their regularly scheduled benefit allotment. New recipients will receive additional benefits within a week of being approved. This supplement is on top of what the state already provided in March, April and May.
- **SNAP and TANF Work Requirements Still Suspended**
- Florida's work (E&T) requirements for both SNAP and TANF continue to be [suspended for June](#). Floridians who have been sanctioned in the past because the state thinks that they are non-compliant with work rules should be able to reapply and be re enrolled during the suspension.

- [Nearly 2,500 Organizations Urge Senate to Boost SNAP Benefits](#) - Nearly 2,500 organizations from across the country signed on to a **letter** urging the Senate to boost SNAP benefits in the next coronavirus relief package. The letter asks for a 15 percent boost in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) maximum benefit, an increase in the SNAP minimum monthly benefit from \$16 to \$30, and a suspension of SNAP time limits and rules changes that would cut SNAP eligibility and benefits. **United Way of Palm Beach County** and **United Way of Florida** were among the organizations that signed the letter.

- Apply for 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.

Call center volume and wait times before and after COVID-19 office closures:

For the month of May average call center wait time has been well below 10 minutes.

| Date Range (22 work days before and after 3/19/2020) | Interactive Voice Response (IVR) Call Volume |
|--|--|
| 2/18/2020 -3/18/2020 | 1,363,346 |
| 3/19/2020 - 4/17/2020 | 2,810,045 |

- Online Grocery Purchase Pilot Program:** Florida’s Online Purchasing Pilot program successfully launched initially on April 16 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>.
- Unlimited SNAP Benefits Match at Florida’s Fresh Access Bucks Markets extended to August 2020:** 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 August 31, 2020. For a complete list of participating markets, please visit feedingflorida.org/promotional-materials/Covid19
- COVID-19 School Food Services losses:** An email was drafted and sent to Congressional Representatives about COVID-19 help for school food service to address the losses of our school district food service/nutrition departments to recoup losses, continue programs for summer meals and be ready to feed children when they return to school. The Palm Beach County Commission is drafting a formal letter to submit as well.