



March 10, 2020

Dear Agency Partners of Second Harvest Food Bank,

With all the information circulating about Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), we felt it best to address the situation. We are monitoring guidance and taking our lead from Feeding America (our national affiliate), Tennessee Public Health Department and the CDC. At this time, the immediate risk remains low in East TN, and yet it is important to stay informed as these types of situations can be dynamic.

Second Harvest Food Bank is conducting business as usual. We are always prepared to send emergency food where it is needed in our service area. At this time, we are fully stocked; however, we know that there would be an increased need if a local outbreak were to occur. For many people in East Tennessee, an illness could mean a devastating loss of income for two weeks or more, and we want to remain prepared for the number of people who will need assistance with food for themselves and their families. We are suggesting you order as you regularly would, and we will keep you informed should anything change.

Continue to treat everyone who visits your pantry and agency with respect and dignity. Coronavirus does not target specific populations, socioeconomic status, ethnicities or racial backgrounds. The Coronavirus is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person, usually via droplets ejected during a cough or sneeze.

There are a few things we can do to prevent the spread of any disease:

- Practice good hand hygiene. The best method for preventing contamination is handwashing with soap for 20 seconds rinsing with hot water. Hand sanitizer stations should NOT be used in lieu of handwashing. If you do not have access to soap and water, alcohol-based hand sanitizers that contain 60%-95% alcohol can be used as an alternative, but soap and water is the first choice. It is especially important to clean hands after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- You may choose to use the gloves when handling food or serving clients. If you use gloves, please discard them after your shift. Do not save them.
- Avoid touching your nose, eyes, and mouth.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or tissue, so your mouth and nose are covered, then go wash your hands.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Greet others with a wave and avoid shaking hands.
- Wipe down and clean public spaces after each distribution. Consider adding a few new tasks to the post-distribution cleaning procedures including wiping down frequently touched items like doorknobs, handrails, toilet handles, elevator buttons, rails, etc.
- Know the facts, don't panic, and don't spread rumors.

Things that are not helpful or effective:

- Wearing a mask if you are not sick.
- Associating Coronavirus with or avoiding a specific population or nationality. It is not accurate and stigmatizing.

A few small actions can help us all stay healthy now and in the future. If you want more information, here are the resources: <https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html>, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

There is also a sign attached that you can hang at your distributions.

Thank you for your continued commitment to serving our community with dignity and respect. We'll continue to monitor and adjust strategies to keep us all safe and healthy moving forward.

Sincerely,

Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee

Clients and Guests,

We value the health of our community. Please help us stop the possible spread of contagious viruses.

As a precaution, please...

DO NOT:

- Enter the building if you aren't feeling well, especially if you have a fever or cough.
- Enter the building if you or someone close to you have been to countries on the CDC watch list:
wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices

DO:

- Wash your hands frequently in our restrooms and use hand sanitizer.
- Wave at a friend or new acquaintance rather than hug or shake hands.
- Cover your nose and mouth if you sneeze or cough (and then wash your hands).
- Follow updated best practices by going to CDC.gov.

Thank you.