

October 28, 2020

**Dear Agency Partners,**

**We will host the next call on WEDNESDAY, November 11 at 10:00 am.**

**Call in Number - (267) 930-4000**

**Passcode 789-222-531#**

**Michelle's role is changing at Feed My People**

- Michelle has accepted a new, exciting opportunity with FMP effective next week, Monday, November 2.
- She will serve in a new role as the Individual Giving Specialist on the FMP Development team.
- Michelle's Message: "Thank you for your partnership and your support. It has been my honor and my pleasure to serve with you on the front lines of ending hunger in your communities. You are being supported by a strong Field Services team with Nick, Tami, and Sarah at the helm. I know you will all continue to do great things!"

**Special Guest: Sarah Aerts**

**Sarah Aerts – Administrative Coordinator** joined us for the call. Contact Sarah at [sarah@fmpfoodbank.org](mailto:sarah@fmpfoodbank.org) or 715.835.9415, 111. She can help you with the following:

- Order Discrepancies
- Product Returns
- Statistics
- Delivery Times

**Pulse Survey**

- **Fliers are being sent now**
- Live mid-October through November

**NEW! Exciting news! Website and NEW inventory system** – which means a new order form will be implemented. More to come, including training sessions for all of you!

**The Safety of our Partners is CRITICAL**

- We have had a number of agencies reporting their volunteers or others have been exposed to people who have tested positive for COVID-19.
- Some have had to close their program for a period of time.
- We appreciate the care and concern they have for the people associated with their programs and the steps they have taken (including quarantining, sanitizing, and closing for a period of time) to ensure everyone remains safe.
- If you have someone who tests positive or is exposed to someone who tests positive, contact your local health department for further guidance.

**What are you seeing?**

- We are seeing an increase in families and first time shoppers coming to get food.
- Programs are getting creative with how they distribute food.

- One program shared they are using a track phone for people to call when they arrive and are pushing food out on a cart.
- Another shared how they are making a tarp structure so they can better serve their community as it gets colder.

### **Farmer to Families program ending in October**

- You may open and distribute items separately or provide an entire box to a household. This may help you with prepacking for drive through or contactless distribution.
- Our warehouse team is working hard to source other food for you to provide to your communities.

### **FoodShare Updates**

- The Federal Government announced new 2021 monthly income limits for FoodShare eligibility. These new limits go into effect October 1, 2020. **Income limits have gone up - those who may not have been eligible in the past may be eligible now.**
- Nick and Maureen are receiving many referrals from fliers! Please continue to encourage people to call if they may be eligible.
- If you are in Barron, Washburn, Sawyer, Rusk, Pepin, or Price Counties, please encourage people to call or text **Maureen Wilson at (715) 496-3121**. If in other counties, contact is **Nick Bursaw at (715) 450-2656**. They are both available to help people apply for benefits and to answer questions.

### **TEFAP NEWS – Guidance from the State of WI**

- **For TEFAP Programs:** Wisconsin TEFAP will temporarily suspend the annual “recertification” that requires you verify participant addresses at least annually. This has also served as an opportunity to adjust the names and numbers of persons in households. COVID-19 conditions make this difficult for you to do safely for all your households and you have the option to forego the practice for now. TEFAP will notify you in advance of required resumption.
- **What does this mean for FMP?** We do not expect our non-TEFAP partners to re-register clients or to complete a new registration for clients of your program, nor do we prohibit you from doing so. We want you to ensure the safety of your staff, volunteers, and your clients.
- **FOR TEFAP Programs:** “No Contact” food distribution continues to be necessary; Wisconsin is experiencing record numbers of reported COVID-19 cases. As a result, yesterday Governor Evers issued a new Emergency Order. The growth in cases is “nearly exponential” and more and more evidence is showing that for some patients, the disease may have lasting negative effects on the brain, heart, lungs, and circulatory system. Fatalities among seniors and people with disabilities remains constant – and food pantries are especially vulnerable for these reasons. *At the same time, this is Wisconsin, and we understand cold weather is coming and we need to recognize and adjust to that challenge.* Please plan to continue “No Contact” outdoor distribution *in to 2021*. Please reach out to your EFO if you need to discuss any related matters.
- **What does this mean for FMP?** Again, FMP wants you to ensure the safety of your staff, volunteers, and your clients. Please proceed with caution. You know your situation and your community best.

### **XCEL Energy/Utilities Update**

- The new year’s Energy Assistance program begins October 1<sup>st</sup>. New income guidelines are in place so some who have not qualified in the past may qualify this year.

- XCEL has not been disconnecting electricity or natural gas during this pandemic and the annual moratorium begins soon and lasts until next spring.
- You may contact your local utility company to find out about assistance programs in your communities.
- PLEASE encourage people to contact their local energy company (co-op, municipal, whatever they have) The companies want to work with people to help pay their bills and keep them out of danger of disconnection.

### **Feed My People Safety Protocol and Recommendations to our Partners**

**To maximize the safety of staff and volunteers, and to ensure we can provide the service you rely on, Feed My People has implemented new protocols.**

- Office staff is working in teams alternately working in the office and from home. Warehouse staff continue to work onsite 5 days a week.
- FMP staff and volunteers are all wearing **masks** while in our building and on official FMP business.
  - We have reduced the amount of people in our building, suspending parts of our volunteer program and have greatly limited the number of people in our building. This may result in some products taking longer to be available.
  - Food donations are being placed in a bin just inside our door or taken directly to the warehouse.
  - Agency pick-up goes directly to door 10 and calls to let us know they are here. Our warehouse staff then brings the food out to them.
- We have a sanitizing protocol we continue to follow throughout the building.

#### **We recommend:**

- Continue to maintain social distancing (encourage your staff and volunteers to do the same both when working with your program and when they're away)
- Wear a mask, wash your hands, and don't touch your face
- Sanitize workspaces and common areas frequently (surfaces, doorknobs, bathrooms, etc.)
- Stay home if you don't feel well.

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