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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CITY OF CHICAGO PARTNERS WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS TO ENSURE ALL RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO FOOD AND BASIC SERVICES DURING COVID-19**

*In light of food supply concerns, dozens of City partners stepping up to provide aid for seniors, youth, and other vulnerable populations*

**CHICAGO** — Following Governor JB Pritzker's statewide order for Illinois residents to stay at home or in place of residence to prevent the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today joined The Salvation Army, Greater Chicago Food Depository, Illinois Retail Merchants Association (IRMA) and the United Way as part of a new partnership to further ensure access to food and services while operations are limited and more residents are at home.

To combat the impact of COVID-19 on Chicagoans, Mayor Lightfoot and her administration have worked with dozens of private and philanthropic partners to coordinate a menu of options to ensure that residents maintain access to food and basic services. The City today is reminding its residents about where they can go to access these resources, including food, which remains a top concern for Chicago's most vulnerable populations, especially seniors.

"As difficult as things are now, we are seeing the resiliency that is in Chicago's DNA. I want to personally thank each of these organizations for stepping up and doing their part to support our countless families who find themselves in need," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Ensuring our residents – particularly those most vulnerable – have vital resources and supports during these times of uncertainty starts by working together in collaboration with our local organizations, non-profits and private partners to lend a helping hand to our communities."

During the [stay-at-home order](#), grocery stores, pharmacies, and convenience stores will remain open as they are essential services for residents. To ensure residents have access to goods they need from groceries, pharmacies and convenience stores, the City joins IRMA in urging all residents to maintain normal shopping routines and avoid stockpiling food and other necessities.



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IRMA has also directed retailers to help support access to groceries and shopping, with more local grocery store chains stepping up and providing special hours for seniors to shop. A full list of those locations can be found [here](#).

“One of the hallmarks of the retail industry is to manage the supply and demand chain on a constant basis to meet customer demands and we are doing that during these extraordinary times. In fact, the supply chain is working from the farm to your local grocer and while demand is high your needs will be met. We are working around the clock to ensure customers throughout Chicago will have the products it needs for you, your families and businesses,” said Rob Karr, president & CEO, IRMA. “However, it’s imperative that consumers maintain their normal shopping patterns for the health and safety for both the employees who work at our stores and fellow consumers. Many grocery stores throughout Chicago have established early morning hours to accommodate seniors and our most vulnerable citizens and this list can be found at [www.irma.org](http://www.irma.org). We urge both families and loved ones to review this site, which is being updated constantly. I would be remiss to not thank the leadership demonstrated by Mayor Lori Lightfoot and her team in working with our industry every step of the way.”

As part of the City’s efforts to ensure residents have access to basic services, the United Way of Metro Chicago and the Chicago Community Trust, in partnership with the City of Chicago, launched the [Chicago Community COVID-19 Response Fund](#) to support communities affected by COVID-19. This fund will direct emergency food and basic supplies, rent and mortgage assistance, and utility assistance to areas with the greatest need. As of today, the fund has raised \$13.5 million to support those most in need during this time.

“The events of the past few weeks have significantly impacted all of our lives, while also encouraging us to come together to make a difference,” said Sean Garrett, President and CEO of United Way of Metro Chicago. “The Chicago Community COVID-19 Response Fund was created to increase access to emergency food and basic supplies, ensuring that our friends, families and neighbors have the essential resources they need during this unprecedented time.”

As COVID-19 escalates, the Lightfoot administration will continue to call on external partners to work in tandem with the City to ensure all of Chicago’s communities are supported during this time. Last week, Citadel and Citadel Securities mobilized [\\$2.5 million](#) in aid to help Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and the Greater Chicago Food Depository combat food insecurity amid the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, including sustaining the food distribution locations at more than 500 CPS schools.



“We know this is an uncertain time for many people in Chicago,” said Kate Maehr, executive director and CEO of the Greater Chicago Food Depository. “But in collaboration with the City of Chicago and other strong partners, we are working hard to make sure those who are most affected by this pandemic will have the food that they need. If we work together, we can help ensure that no one goes hungry in this great city.”

A strong partner in the City’s targeted outreach to vulnerable populations, the Salvation Army’s food pantries at their individual corps community centers remain open to ensure Chicago’s neighborhoods have the food and essentials they need.

“The Salvation Army is dedicated and uniquely positioned to meet the needs of people affected by COVID-19, whether they need food and emergency assistance, or hope and support,” said Major David Dalberg, Emergency Disaster Services Director at The Salvation Army Metropolitan Division. “We’re prepared to provide that help today and into the future.”

For residents seeking assistance with meals or other necessities, the administration encourages residents to visit its website, call 311 or contact directly any of these designated partners:

### **Greater Chicago Food Depository**

- Anyone in need of food assistance can turn to the Food Depository’s network of agencies and programs. Find a nearby food program [here](#).
- With some exceptions, their network of 700 partner agencies and programs remains open. These sites are modifying their distributions to promote social distancing, including offering pre-packaged boxes of groceries.
- The Food Depository’s benefits outreach team is available by phone to help Chicagoans apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medicaid benefits. SNAP benefits can be used to purchase groceries from local stores.
- For benefits outreach assistance, call 773-843-5416 on Mondays-Fridays between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. or apply directly with the Illinois Department of Human Services at [abe.illinois.gov](http://abe.illinois.gov).

### **The Salvation Army**

- The Salvation Army’s Metropolitan Division Emergency Disaster Services (EDS) will be providing mobile feeding services. The Salvation Army can prepare 50,000 meals in 24 hours, 75,000 meals in 48 hours, and 100,000 meals in 72 hours.
- The Salvation Army is prepared to serve identified individuals who are in quarantine or isolation. The Salvation Army will deliver meals to City-



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designated sites for distribution. The Salvation Army is also prepared to feed first responders and individuals in shelters across the City of Chicago.

- The Salvation Army's 19 Chicagoland food pantries remain open to provide curbside service and will continue to serve as a resource for anyone who needs assistance. The Salvation Army is already helping those families affected by income interruption caused by COVID-19. For more information on emergency assistance, please call (773) 725-1100 or visit [salarmychicago.org/coronavirus](http://salarmychicago.org/coronavirus).

### **Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS)**

- Until March 27, DFSS will provide daily quantities of take-away boxed meals to senior citizens in need at six senior centers, 15 satellite centers and 30 community sites.
- Meals will be home-delivered instead of provided onsite. Seniors who find themselves in need of such supports can call 312-744-4016 any time between 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday-Friday.
- In addition, Meals on Wheels will continue to operate, and will provide meals to homebound seniors ages 60+.
- For more information, visit: <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/fss/provdrs/serv/alerts/2020/march/dfss-response-to-covid-19.html>

### **Chicago Public Schools (CPS)**

- All schools – representing around 600 district schools and 27 charter schools – are open Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., to provide grab-and-go meals (breakfast and lunch). Families will receive three days a meal for each young person in the household.
- If families have trouble getting to a site, they can call 773-553-KIDS or email at [familyservices@cps.edu](mailto:familyservices@cps.edu) to make a request for food delivery. For more information, visit [cps.edu/coronavirus](http://cps.edu/coronavirus).

### **Archdiocese of Chicago/Catholic Charities**

- The Archdiocese of Chicago offers 120 sites to support residents, which includes schools open for drive-by meal pick up Monday-Friday.
- Catholic Charities will continue to serve residents at their Food Pantries and Evening Meal Programs. Locations and phone numbers can be found here: <http://www.catholiccharities.net/Home/Search.aspx?search=emergency+services>. To access other services please call 312-655-7700.

Over the past several weeks, Mayor Lightfoot has worked tirelessly to build public-private partnerships to scale resources and provide economic relief during COVID-19. Recognizing the burden of COVID-19 on individuals, particularly low-income



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households, the Mayor temporarily halted debt collection practices, including ticketing, towing, booting and impounds. The Mayor also announced a small business relief package, headlined by a \$100 million loan fund to be deployed to provide much-needed local cash flow and stopgap relief for small businesses. These measures are necessary as Chicago, like other municipalities, awaits federal support.

More information and updates on COVID-19 can be found on CDPH's "The Doctor Is In" Livestream Monday-Friday at 11am, by texting "COVID19" to 78015 or by visiting [Chicago.gov/coronavirus](https://www.chicago.gov/coronavirus).

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