

the SCOOP

Latest News from Bread for Life

Our work won't stop—we will adapt as the Coronavirus causes uncertainty

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused uncertainty across our world, with the situation changing rapidly; but Bread for Life remains dedicated to meeting our mission to ensure that no one goes hungry in Southington. We would like to share how the COVID-19 crisis is impacting Bread for Life and how we are adapting in ways that balance the critical needs of those we serve with the obligations to implement safety precautions and protocols.

What WE Are Doing

Based on recommendations from our local health department, Bread for Life halted sit down meals in the dining room. Instead, hot meals are provided in take-out containers and distributed to our clients from the front porch of Bread for Life. We consistently educate our clients on safety practices to reduce the spread of the virus and are modeling these behaviors by disinfecting surfaces and maintaining social distance.

All programs offered in the dining room for clients have stopped for the time being including visits by substance abuse counselors, behavioral health counselors, local barbers and hair stylists, and weekly therapeutic coloring. There have also been safety protocols implemented in our homebound delivery services. Meals are distributed in plastic grocery bags that are hung on the door knobs of our homebound clients and are no longer delivered inside their house or apartment.

Finally, after much deliberation, we made the difficult decision that in order to minimize contact, it would be best for us to temporarily suspend all volunteers during this time. Our volunteers are our family, and we felt it best for our volunteers to follow the Governor's "Stay Safe, Stay Home" order. Our small staff are preparing, packing, and serving the meals. This has required us to make some temporary changes in how we service our clients (hot meals three times a week and sandwiches two days a week). Also Southington CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) members are taking over the responsibility of delivering to our homebound clients.

Although our operations are shifting temporarily in response to COVID-19, our greatest priority in this time of crisis is to meet our mission—while keeping those who rely on us for their meals safe and healthy. We look forward to returning as soon as we can to our full operations. With your help, we're working hard to keep feeding hungry people in these challenging times. Thank you for all your support of Bread for Life and those we serve.

We couldn't do what we do without you, and that is true now more than ever.

Please stay well.

Donna Ayer, Executive Director

Mike Soltys, Board Chairman

How YOU Can Help

These changes in daily operations as well as changes on a community level from COVID-19 have a profound impact on our food supply and on our budget. Food donations that we regularly pick up from grocery stores have dropped substantially. Additionally, several large spring food drives have been canceled and food collections from businesses, schools, churches, and individuals have decreased. Bread for Life has incurred additional unplanned expenses for to-go containers, plastic bags, hand wipes, disposable utensils, gloves, individual drink containers and the like. We expect even more of an impact on our budget the longer the pandemic continues.

Due to all these unforeseen circumstances, we need your help now. We purchase in bulk and from Foodshare which helps us stretch our donated dollars and order what we need most. Donations may be mailed directly to Bread for Life at **PO Box 925, Southington, CT 06489**, or may be made securely online at southingtonbreadforlife.org/donate-online.

