Q&A for 4/2/20 Agency Webinar

This is a transcript of questions and comments copied from the webinar chat box with answers provided by DHS/OEO, Hunger Solutions, Second Harvest Heartland, The Food Group and agency attendees.

1 - How will that transportation fund tie to the work that Metro Mobility is doing to deliver to households on behalf of food shelves? Completely different?

A: Transportation is separate funding from food shelves grant.

2 - Will all food shelves, even if they aren’t getting TEFAP be able to get the $2000? Then the rest allocated to TEFAP food shelves only?

is that both checks? 2k plus the additional per formula?

A: Grant is associated with those getting MSFP grants. A $2000 base will go to all food shelves that are TEFAP eligible (total ~$800,000) and the rest ~$1.7 million will be allocated based on service stats on top of that for TEFAP agencies.

Non-TEFAP shelves will have the opportunity to apply for transportation funds.

3 - How are the needs of school children experiencing food insecurity being met? – Sandy

A: These needs are being met in a number of ways, including most school districts are able to provide meals for pick-up by families. There are resources that a community-specific as well, so please check-in with others.

C-19 Emergency Food Resources for MN Youth and Families

A school district guide for some districts in MN:
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1T0pvbeaT_HSMFcgqXG7vRq5mrxk2s-2NOm9yH2UB49l/edit

A number of Twin Cities restaurants are providing free meals for school children:

The Sheridan Story is providing an increased number of food bags through their school network as well as other locations, like area YMCAs.

MN Central Kitchen is providing takeout meals for anyone in need, including families, at all Loaves & Fishes dining locations.

Emerging Strategies and Tactics for Meal Service During School Closures Related to the Coronavirus

4 - How and when will the $2,000 be coming?

A: Hunger Solution estimates 10 – 14 days. If you have direct deposit with Hunger Solutions (for your MN state grants) you’ll receive it that way. Otherwise it’s a mailed check.

Hunger Solutions urges you to do direct deposit rather than paper check.
5 - What if you are a pop up food shelf that do receive TEFAP but aren't connected to a brick and mortar food shelf? – Carla Kohler

A: TEFAP food shelves will get the base and allocated. See # 2 & #7 below.

6 - Is there any possibility extending free milk grant?

A: We’ll have to look into this. This is a specific legislative funding that has limited funds each year and would likely take legislative action to adjust.

7 - Is it $2000 per organization? Or per food shelf program?

Sarah A. clarified that it is MFSP COVID 19, that is the $2000 per agency/organization and not per food shelf program or location.

8 We have a couple locations that have a Satellite Food shelf will each get the $2000?

A: See above. ($2000 per agency/organization and then the remaining funding is allocated based on number of people served by the agency.)

9 Who would be the best contact to reach out to so we can secure our MN fall grant we are waiting for from Hunger Solutions?

A: Contact Hunger Solutions Joe Walker 503-929-1650

10. We got some private messages about challenges particular to programs.

A: Please reach out to your agency relations specialist to discuss.

11 - Where are the checks mailed to? We are part of a much larger organization would we get the check mailed to us or would it go to LSS and disbursed from there?

A: Contact Hunger Solutions Joe Walker 503-929-1650

12 - If a food shelf is temporarily closed, will they still get this funding?

A: The intention of the funding is a rapid response to COVID-19 crisis and the hope is the food shelf is open to get the food out. Contact Hunger Solutions Joe Walker 503-929-1650

13 - If you have questions about MFSP funding please contact Joe Walker at iwalker@hungersolutions.org

14 - We are getting grants and donor funds, but food banks are low, limiting, or out of product that we need. Are there other places we could be sourcing food like milk, eggs, rice, etc, when the food banks are out? We are trying to get creative with what’s available, but we'd like to do more (read: we have some money to spend but no where to spend it).

A: From SHH Sourcing: Bottlenecks still exist in the supply chain, with delivery delays and product allocations occurring from all of our traditional suppliers. Our inventory list is changing daily as we get more and more product in, so keep checking. Milk is delivered 3 times a week so we are able to catch up very quickly to respond to demand, but we don’t expect disruption. We have stopped purchasing eggs because the price has almost tripled in the last month. When prices in the market settle back down
we will resume purchasing eggs. Likely the best alternative for purchasing outside of the food bank is a low cost grocer like Aldi, Costco, Sam’s Club.

**Additional food resources:**

- **CIS Wholesale** – This company provides dry goods at a reduced price. They are based in Rogers, MN [www.ciswholesale.com](http://www.ciswholesale.com), 763-488-6900
- **Matter**— Formerly Hope for the City, Matter is a non-profit that distributes food. [http://mattermore.org/](http://mattermore.org/) 952-500-8652

If you have local, independent grocers that don’t already donate close dated items, our Food Rescue team may be able to help develop those relationships. Many other programs in greater MN have worked out purchase arrangements with local stores on some items. Other options include connecting with farmers and butchers if you have any in your area.

Reach out to your AR specialist as well to talk through your options with the food bank and ideas specific to your program and area.


**16 – Hunger Solutions TIP: Free translation services are available from the Minnesota Food Helpline at 1-888-711-1151.**

**17 - Wondering if many other food shelves have also converted to splitting shifts to reduce risk? From Derek Reise**

A: Several food shelf reps mentioned that they are either considering splitting their shifts or reducing hours, so that shifts are no more than 4 hours long.

- **From attendee:** We have not split shifts. But are considering this as an option.
- **From attendee:** We have 4-4 hr shifts per week of 8-10 people. No individuals overlap between each shift.

**From food shelf:** We went from 80 volunteer shifts a week to about 10. Staff is doing the rest. We are saying no to a lot of current and new volunteers. Trying to have as few people to building as possible.

**The Food Group Tip:** Please refer to [http://www.hungersolutions.org/2020/03/13/covid-19-information-for-food-shelves/](http://www.hungersolutions.org/2020/03/13/covid-19-information-for-food-shelves/) for more pointed information on how respond with safety in regards to volunteers and food shelf staff. Community Action Center has helpful samples on guidelines for illness and approach to staffing.

**18 - Stuart - Can you provide more detail on how you pre-pack a box that has perishables (frozen meat, dairy, produce) together with shelf stable food.**
A: They are packing meat, dairy and produce into bags and handing out on top of boxes of non-perishables.

**19 SHH TIP:** They can call Metro Mobility which will pick up and deliver their food box. – per Lisa Boyd-SHH

**20 - Are you wearing gloves? masks? during client distribution**

A: **Agency TIP:** From Jan Schwanke to Everyone: We have gloves & masks available for anyone who wants to wear them. Couple do use but most don’t. We are open for 2 hour shifts and we wipe down everything after each shift.

**From Stuart:** Staff at NorthPoint Health & Wellness wear gloves and masks the entire shift regardless if we are actively distributing.

**21 - Is anyone that is still using volunteers, accepting new volunteers? I have many that want to help, but its so hard to properly train a new volunteer right now.**

A: **From Jessica**– we are still accepting new volunteers, they are helpful but untrained. New to all of us, challenging but making do as best they can.

**From Jan:** we are all volunteer run. We just had 2 new volunteers start today and will have 2 new ones starting next week. We have 2 people go through and do the shopping and then they can go alone for the next time.

**From attendee:** We talked to our current volunteers that have been coming since the beginning of this virus and asked them if they wanted the "snowbirds" and community volunteers to come in and help, they all said no. They are comfortable with the group that is working together now, we are respecting their decision. We all wear gloves every day.

**From attendee:** We are not bringing in new volunteers at this time, we are operating with staff only and a small group of core volunteers. Each week we are scheduling 2 staff at home, to reduce the likelihood of all staff being infected in the case of exposure.

**22 - Sue & Jessica - Is your wildcard Wednesday organized the same way as the produce fair?**

A: Wildcard Wednesday includes meat and food rescue, but they are using the same drive-up model that they are using for the produce distribution.

**23 Does a food shelf have to close if a volunteer worker gets sick?**

A:

**From Stuart:** NorthPoint Health & Wellness is drafting a contingency plan in the event that a staff or volunteer becomes ill with COVID-19.

Contact your local or state health department for guidance.

   MDH has set up a COVID-19 public hotline that is open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. The hotline number is 651-201-3920.
The Minnesota Department of Public Safety has a hotline to field questions about the
issues associated with community mitigation, including school and business impacts.
That line is open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, and the hotline numbers are metro 651-297-
1304, and toll-free 1-800-657-3504.

COVID-19 Hotlines:
Interpreters available

Health questions:
651-201-3920 or 1-800-657-3903
7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Schools and child care questions:
651-297-1304 or 1-800-657-3504
7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html

Helpful DCD document: Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers to Plan and Respond to
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

24 – Agency Tip: We are offering pre-packed bags and give people the choice of "regular",
Vegetarian/Halal, for those in transition or without a kitchen, low-sodium, gluten free. People really
appreciate the choice.

25 – How do you run wild card Wednesday? From Heather Kliewer
A: Can we put you in touch with Christian Cupboard to learn more?

26 – Can you confirm if the spring Hunger Solutions grant funds have been distributed?
A: Yes, money has been sent. If you have direct deposit should have gotten already, if paper check may
still be on its way.

27 - Do you have plans to address meal programs in a future session? From Sandy
A: Watch for more information to come. Please contact your food bank, local department of health, etc.
with questions.

28 - Our Food Shelf is having trouble finding gloves. Any suggestions? Will 2ndf Harvest add gloves to
the list?
A: Funding from the state grant can be used for gloves and other personal protection equipment.

Right now, glove suppliers are stoning what customers can get. We've also heard these types of
suppliers are not taking on new accounts during this time. This makes it unlikely we would be able to
supply them to agencies as things stand now. I think everyone is having difficulty sourcing personal
protection equipment. For example, if state governments cannot even source these things for healthcare workers, it’s going to be very hard for any other business or organization to get too.

On the call is was suggested that agencies provide us with information about what they need so that at least we have that information should someone find a way to get these supplies.

29 - **Who should we email/where should we send a list of our needs to?**

A: Email [agencies@2harvest.org](mailto:agencies@2harvest.org) for SHH partners, or reach out to your agency specialist at The Food Group or SHH. Please be specific about what you need and quantities.