



Dear Weekend Meal Providers and Volunteers:

First of all, thank you so much for being willing to work with us as we strive to find ways to continue serving meals to our friends experiencing homelessness and food insecurity at Oak City Cares. The COVID-19 pandemic has definitely affected how each of us is able to operate and serve, but if we work together, we can ensure that our most vulnerable neighbors are taken care of.

In addition, we have heard from many of our groups that they are willing to provide the food to the Center but may not have volunteer capacity for serving. It is because of this, also, that the following plan is being shared. Please know that we want to take care of your volunteers as well.

Current Situation

The Executive Order yesterday regarding closing bars/restaurants does affect Oak City Cares and how we are able to share meals. Due to this change, we will need to quickly pivot to a takeout meal and bagged meal format to be in compliance; and we will all need to change how we normally serve to make this effective.

Meal Distribution Plan

This weekend, March 21st and 22nd, we will be serving meals at the regularly scheduled times with an adjustment in how we distribute. We are requesting the scheduled meal providers to bring meals prepared in to go containers and/or bag lunches for easy distribution. We will be using outside seating, since we are unable to gather inside the building, per the Executive Order.

Starting **Saturday, March 28th**, the plan will shift to having three meal providers each day bring a set number of meals (150 meals/each to start) at 9:00 am to be distributed at 11:00 am. This will allow our team and scheduled volunteers to organize the meals for distribution to the guests.

We still want to ensure that each of our friends has at least three meals on Saturdays and Sundays. However, to minimize the mass gathering challenges and to re-enforce the use of social distancing, we are opting to provide those meals at one time to each guest as either bagged or boxed meals.

This adjustment means that our regular mealtime slots will be halted as of March 28th and we will go to the one time slot distribution. We hope that this change will be temporary but may last at least 8 weeks.

Request for Food Providers

We understand that some of our food providers are not able to serve during this time due to a variety of challenges, such as, but not limited to, closed prep spaces (i.e. their church is closed), lack of resources, lack of volunteer support, or inability to adjust food provision time. Therefore, we are requesting those food providers that can adjust to step up, by either:

- (1) providing a meal you were scheduled to serve (but at the different time and requested format above);
- (2) fill in a gap to provide a meal where someone cannot; or
- (3) donate the financial resources to Oak City Cares that you would have used, to support those that are able to provide the food or the organization purchasing food when none is available.

If you can serve and are willing to take a meal slot, please use the below sign up genius to sign up.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0f45ada828a2fc1-adjusted>

Meal Suggestions

We all know that we would prefer to serve hot meals, however for food safety reasons, we are asking that you bring food that is more portable and able to be consumed cold during this time. Some examples are, but not limited to, the following:

- Salads, with packaged dressing
- Cold cuts
- Non-perishable cans or packages of meat, such as Vienna sausages, tuna, chicken, etc.
- Snacks, such as bagged chips, peanut butter crackers, cheese crackers, peanuts, fruit snacks, etc.
- Sandwiches
- Fresh fruit, such as bananas, oranges, apples, etc.
- Fruit cups
- Please try to avoid things like salads prepared with mayonnaise, however you could provide individual mayonnaise packs (if refrigeration not required)

Please contact Kitty Banks at weekendmeals@oakcitycares.org if you have any questions or need further clarification.

Sincerely,

Tosheria

Tosheria Brown

Director of Programs and Services