

June 2020 Resident Services Special COVID-19 Newsletter

June 1, 2020

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY RESPONDS TO COVID-19

By: Sanford E. Riggs, Director of Operations

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The Housing Authority prepares for all kinds of emergencies, large and small. When we think of emergencies, we often think of maintenance types of emergencies, and on occasion, law enforcement types of emergencies in Housing Authority properties. In the worst case, we think of a major earthquake affecting our region. Of course, a pandemic has not hit our region or our country since 1918. It is almost unimaginable.

The staff of the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Barbara have a strong commitment to the safety of our residents and as the COVID-19 emergency escalated so did the efforts to keep our residents safe in their homes.

Safe does not always mean easy or convenient. To ensure that residents and staff are kept as safe as possible, very rapid changes had to be made to the way business is done. We had to limit the amount of people in elevators, computer labs, and laundry rooms. We had to extend hours in many of the laundry rooms to accommodate less users at one time. We also had to close playgrounds and remove basketball hoops. We hired a cleaning service to disinfect surfaces that people commonly touch. Emergency work orders were given top priority and non-emergencies had to be delayed.

In addition to the physical changes to our sites and the way we do business there, we had to close our offices to the public. We had to make it easier for residents to do business through our Website, on the phone and by mail. We had to quickly expand this technology and added a professional answering service to answer telephones. We strongly encourage residents to do as much business with us as possible electronically via the Website or e-mail.

Keeping our residents safe is not only a priority but we recognize the economic crisis has affected the jobs of many residents and we have adopted many HUD measures to make the process easier to report income decreases to the Housing Authority. It is important that residents stay in communication with Housing Authority staff to report changes in income so we can serve you better.

In addition to the services the Housing Authority provides directly to our residents, we also partner with a number of amazing organizations and agencies throughout the Santa Barbara County community. Many of these partnering agencies have redesigned their operations and services to better serve the needs of our community during this time, and we are pleased to share their programs with each of you.

Above all, we appreciate your patience as we all adapt to the changes brought on by this crisis.

Stay safe and stay healthy. Together, we will get through this.

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF MID CENTRAL COAST

By: Jessica Byrne, Area Director, Boys & Girls Clubs of Mid Central Coast, Santa Maria

Hello Friends & Community!

I hope you and your families are all doing well and keeping safe. If you or someone you know is struggling, there are resources out there for food and other essential needs. Boys & Girls Clubs of Mid Central Coast, at 901 N. Railroad Ave. Santa Maria, continues to distribute grocery bags full of great items, including fresh produce and veggies! Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 11:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. or until the bags run out (usually by 12:00) It is preferred that you use our drive-thru system, as to help with COVID-19 precautions such as social distancing. We do have a walk-up station for those who do not have transportation. We will continue this program until further notice.

From our CEO, Jeremy Deming:

"Boys & Girls Clubs of Mid Central Coast is committed to doing whatever it takes to serve our community members in their time of need, for however long this health crisis lasts, or until we are able to open our doors once more to our youth & teens. Prompted by growing demand for supplemental food assistance within the northern Santa Barbara County community of Santa Maria, the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County partnered with Boys & Girls Clubs of Mid Central Coast to ensure Santa Maria residents most at need have enough food to nourish their families. This partnership has been established to serve the vulnerable population groups of the community (senior citizens, children, and low-income residents, folks who have lost their jobs due to lay-offs and furlough) who have been most negatively impacted by the recent COVID-19 health crisis. In addition, we are partnering with Children's Resource Network to ensure that children and teens most in need receive free clothing and

other basic necessities through their Traveling Children's Closet program." (Children's Resource Network only present when donations are available for distribution).

For more information about Boys & Girls Clubs of Mid Central Coast, contact [Jeremy Deming](#) at: [805-354-7422](tel:805-354-7422). To learn more about the Food Bank of Santa Barbara County, contact [Anthony Rodriguez](#) at: [805-967-5741](tel:805-967-5741). To learn more about Children's Resource Network, contact [Lisa Ray](#) at: [805-709-8673](tel:805-709-8673).

We are in need of volunteers as relief for our hard-working staff who have been at this for 6 weeks. The more folks we have helping to bag groceries from 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m., the swifter the day goes! We do provide masks and gloves.

Thank you all, and we will get through this together!

GOODWILL INDUSTRIES:

By: Ingrid Monzon, Santa Barbara County Workforce Manager

Goodwill of Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties continue to assist young adults ages 14-24 with employment and career guidance, educational workshops, trainings and skills advancements. Services are provided in the following locations and available via phone and email:

Lompoc - [805-736-6700](tel:805-736-6700) - [H. Rideout](#)

Santa Maria - [805-928-5282](tel:805-928-5282) - [T. Jennings](#)

Santa Barbara - [805-845-3926](tel:805-845-3926) - [V. Lua](#)

UNITED WAY HOME FOR GOOD

By: Lilly Ortiz, Outreach Coordinator

United Way Home for Good is in the business of helping individuals who are experiencing homelessness. We provide resource to those who are most in need and who need help along the way of their journey to becoming self-sufficient. Home for Good collaborates with different agencies to help our clients receive all the resources they need. We have helped multiple individuals and families gain income and housing, along with connecting them to agencies who can really help them in the long run such as behavioral wellness to gain help with their mental disabilities or IHSS workers to help the individuals who are not able to care for themselves.

This Pandemic our world is going through is scary, overwhelming and completely challenges the work Home for Good does, but it has not stopped the work that we do. During this Pandemic we are trying our hardest to help our clients gain housing and all-around services, we have collaborated with The Rescue Mission and Salvation Army to feed those who are on the streets. The Salvation Army provides the food and the men at the Rescue Mission go to different parts of town and distribute. We are also providing our clients with masks, hygiene and solar chargers to help them get through this tough time. The collaboration with different partner agencies around Santa Barbara County has been such a help in helping our homeless individuals and families, we are completely thankful. Our clients can get a hold of us through our Hotline at [805-450-3558](tel:805-450-3558) to get connected to services and speak to someone about their needs. United Way Home for Good will continue to do our best in helping the most vulnerable in our community and get them the help they need.

FAMILY SERVICE AGENCY:

By: Marianne McCarthy, Communications & Marketing Manager

Family Service Agency (FSA), Santa Maria Valley Youth & Family Center (SMVYFC), and Guadalupe's Little House by The Park (LHP) are continuing to provide basic needs support and mental health counseling by phone and other teleconferencing tools. If you need support services or mental health counseling, contact the FSA office in your community. Many staff are working remotely, but we will promptly return your call.

- Santa Barbara [805-965-1001](tel:805-965-1001)
- Santa Maria [805-928-1707](tel:805-928-1707)
- Lompoc [805-735-4376](tel:805-735-4376)
- Guadalupe [805-343-1194](tel:805-343-1194)

We are also offering free parent and relationship support via our Parent Coaching Call-in Line. Visit fsacares.org or call the office in your area for more information. Seniors and their caregivers needing supportive services or mental health counseling can call: [805-965-1001](tel:805-965-1001) ext. 408 to make an appointment in Santa Barbara or [805-735-4376](tel:805-735-4376) ext. 221 in Santa Maria or Lompoc.

CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT TRAINING (CET):

YOU MAY QUALIFY FOR \$650 IN HOUSING ASSISTANCE!

By: Edwin Morales, Outreach Specialist

Are you a farm worker? You may be eligible to receive up to \$650 in supportive services to assist with household rent/utilities*! In order to apply for these services, call us at [805-928-1737](tel:805-928-1737) and speak to our Admissions Advisor at CET.

This funding is not limited to students; it is open to the public! If you have friends/family who are farm workers, or dependents of farm workers, encourage them to contact CET Admissions to obtain information regarding the documentation needed to establish eligibility.

Please let Admissions staff know if you have any questions or concerns.

* Assistance is for renters only; Homeowners need not apply.

FOODBANK OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTY:

SERVICES FROM THE FOODBANK

By: Genesis Gutierrez, Community Programs Supervisor

The Foodbank of Santa Barbara County has been working diligently to make sure no one in our community goes hungry. The Foodbank has collaborated with 2-1-1 to give out information such as the nearest food distribution site and to enroll anyone 55+ that needs to shelter-in-place into our Home Delivery Program, which provides supplemental groceries twice a month. Call 2-1-1, (or [800-400-1572](tel:800-400-1572)) for more information.

PANDEMIC EBT (P-EBT)

By: Daisy Basulto, CalFresh & Programs Coordinator

Hello everyone,

I wanted to provide you all with information on Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) as Gov. Gavin Newsom announced a series of initiatives to combat barriers to nutritious meals for millions of Californians amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Due to Coronavirus (COVID-19), children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals at school will get extra food benefits. These food benefits are called Pandemic EBT or P-EBT benefits. P-EBT benefits help families in California buy food when schools are closed because of the coronavirus emergency.

Families will get up to \$365 per eligible child on their P-EBT card to use on food and groceries.

Families with children who get CalFresh, Medi-Cal or Foster Care benefits do not need to apply. Most will get their P-EBT card in the mail during the month of May. P-EBT cards will begin arriving on May 12, 2020.

Families with children who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals and who do not get their P-EBT card in the mail, must apply online before June 30, 2020. The online application will launch in late May.

All families are eligible. Immigration status is not a factor as schools do not take this into consideration for families with children when they apply for free or reduced-price meals.

Families will be receiving a P-EBT card (looks like a debit/credit card), please advise families to not throw this away as this contains the money, they will need to purchase food. P-EBT will only allow the purchase of foods (same as Calfresh/food stamps). Materials on P-EBT will be made available soon in Spanish.

LOMPAC VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER

S.B. COUNTY NONPROFITS COLLABORATE TO MEET CRITICAL NEEDS OF ISOLATED SENIORS DURING COVID-19

By: Karen Ortiz, Outreach Coordinator

Many of our older community members, particularly those living alone, are not receiving the support they need during the coronavirus pandemic.

To address this gap, Lompoc Valley Medical Center has joined several nonprofits in Santa Barbara County such as, Central Coast Commission for Senior Citizens, Center for Successful Aging, Community Action Commission, Carpinteria Children's Project, Community Partners in Caring, Cuyama Valley Family Resource Center, Little House by the Park, Lompoc Valley Community Healthcare Organization, and Santa Ynez Valley People Helping People, to identify isolated seniors and connect them to essential services or critical needs, such as food and medical supplies.

The consortium, led by Family Service Agency (FSA) of Santa Barbara County, also includes "During California's stay at home order, older Californians rely on friends and neighbors to help them obtain basic necessities like groceries and prescriptions," said FSA's Executive Director, Lisa Brabo. "We are here to help those who might otherwise not have a consistent safety net of support."

The provision of culturally competent outreach and assistance is a grass-roots effort, community by community. To obtain assistance in Lompoc, call Lompoc Valley Medical Center at [805-875-8868](tel:805-875-8868), North County, Area Agency on Aging [805-925-2554](tel:805-925-2554), Santa Ynez, People Helping People [805-588-2575](tel:805-588-2575).

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA:

By: Jenny K. Grimsley, Resident Services Manager

A special note to Housing Authority Residents, Partners, Staff, and Friends:

We hope that this special newsletter regarding local responses to the Covid-19 pandemic, has been of use and benefit to you during this extraordinary time in our nation's history. Please remember, our doors may be temporarily closed, but partners and staff are working diligently to ensure we are doing all we can to assist in our community, and we remain available by phone, email, and online. If you have a need that is not being addressed, please feel free to reach out to us, and we will continue to do our best to provide services directly or link you to the service providers in our area. Until we meet again, stay safe, maintain social distancing, and together we will create a healthier and more vibrant community for tomorrow.

Our very best wishes to each and every one of you!