

Guidance for Congregations and Community Organizations

Supporting Families Experiencing Hardships Related to SNAP and Other Daily Emergencies



Key Messages

- Families are facing hardships not only in accessing food but also for rent, utilities, medical bills, and other essentials. Many must choose between food, housing, and healthcare.
- Identify and support partners who already provide these services daily. **CASH DONATIONS ARE BEST!**
- Check partner websites and social media for current needs—including volunteer opportunities.
- Be patient—organizations are receiving a high number of assistance requests and offers of help.
- Leverage relationships your group already has to strengthen community support.

A Step-By-Step Guide on How to Help Your Local Community

Identify Partners

Reflect on your existing ministries and partnerships to identify how your congregation or organization can deepen support.

1. What community needs does your group already focus on? List all:

- _____

2. What helping organizations does your house of worship/group support throughout the year? List all:

- _____

3. Follow the organizations you listed above on social media and check their websites to see their current needs.

4. If you don't have connections to area helping organizations, you can call 211, text your zip code to 898-211, or go to pa211.org to find resources in your area.

Collaborate

Who are members or volunteers who could represent your house of worship or group at collaborative forums? List them below:

Encourage these folks to participate, share updates, and bring information back to your house of worship or group.

Consider Special Focus Areas

- Does your school district have an education foundation?
- Is the local senior center or food pantry providing updates?
- Does your municipality's website share information on community needs?
- Is there a community bulletin board—physical or electronic—kept up to date (library, recreation center, etc.)?

Stay Connected

Local communities play a crucial role in keeping people connected to food assistance. Congregations, nonprofits, and caring neighbors can help by sharing updates, resources, and the key documents needed to apply for support through PA DHS.

Find more information from Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in PA by scanning this QR code:

