

News

November 6, 2020

Free Older Adult Meal Delivery Serves Over 3,000 Older Adults, 850,000 Meals in First Six Months

This week, the County of San Mateo marks the sixth month of the Great Plates Delivered program, a free older adult meal delivery program that was created in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The program, a local implementation of California's Great Plates Delivered program, provides three meals a day, six days a week, to older adults unable to obtain or make their own meals.

Since its creation, the County's Great Plates Delivered program has served over 3,000 older adults and partnered with over 65 local restaurants to make and deliver over 850,000 meals.

The County of San Mateo continues to welcome new older adults to join its Great Plates Delivered program as funding has just been extended an additional month, through December 8, 2020.

"Since its inception, the program has injected over \$19 million into the local economy with 93% of the County's cost being reimbursed by the state and federal governments. Thanks to the quick action and visionary response of our Board of Supervisors in April, we've provided critically-needed business to local restaurants, preserved nearly 900 jobs and avoided numerous restaurant closures," Deputy County Manager Peggy Jensen said.

"The Great Plates Delivered program has proven to be one of the brightest shining lights that has emerged during the darkness of this pandemic," It's Italia restaurant founder Betsy Del Fierro said. "The Great Plates program is a win-win for all involved – helping the restaurants continue to function vibrantly while filling a critical need for our homebound senior community."

"This is more than just about food. It's about taking care of one another when we need it the most," Red Rooster Catering owner Hugo Santa said. "I can echo how grateful we are to the Great Plates Delivered program for helping us keep our lights on and employees paid so we can take care of our families, all while we feel great about doing something amazing for the seniors in our community."

"The program has been nothing short of a godsend for me," Great Plates Delivered recipient Matt Slavik said. "For a senior who lives alone and is supposed to shelter at

home except for medical appointments, having these meals delivered is nothing short of a huge and wonderful benefit.”

Older adults are eligible to join the program if they are aged 65 or older, or if they are 60-64 and are in a high-risk category. Applicants must be unable to obtain or make their own meals and must either live alone or with another older adult who fits the eligibility criteria. To participate, older adults living alone must earn less than \$74,940, and couples participating in the program must earn less than \$101,460. Older adults already receiving state or federal food assistance are not eligible for this program. To learn more or apply, older adults and their families are encouraged to call the San Mateo County Health’s Aging and Adult Services division at 1-800-675-8437. Translation is available to assist in enrollment.

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