



# NEWS

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May 15, 2020

**For Immediate Release**

## **Early Surge in Enrollment for County’s Great Plates Delivered Program**

*More than 500 older adults at high risk from COVID-19 enrolled for meal delivery service shows significant demand for food assistance across San Mateo County*

**Redwood City** — More than 500 older residents have been matched with restaurants and other food providers across San Mateo County to receive three nutritious meals per day delivered to their home, helping them stay home and stay healthy. The local program, launched in early May, is modeled after and primarily funded by the state’s version.

“The early groundswell of demand to participate in the Great Plates Delivered SMC program demonstrates the need for the basic necessities such as meals by residents not eligible for state and federal safety net services”, stated County Supervisor and Board President Warren Slocum. “Thanks to this program, these vulnerable residents can remain healthy and nourished at home and minimize risks to their health during the Covid-19 pandemic.”

The program also provides an avenue for local food services and providers to continue operations and maintain their employees, softening the losses felt by the COVID crisis.

“It’s been hugely helpful to have a much-needed additional income stream to the restaurant, which helps us keep people working and pay the bills so that we can keep the train on the track and move into a brighter future!”, stated participating restaurant founder Betsy DelFierro. “I hadn’t anticipated how joyful it would be for all of us, especially our delivery drivers, to drop off the delicious meals to these elderly neighbors and see and feel the gratitude and excitement they have when we arrive.”

The program, administered by County Health, remains open for enrollment, and eligible residents are encouraged to call (800) 675-8437, and speak to multi-lingual county staff to apply for the meal delivery services.

Eligible residents include adults 65 and older, as well as adults 60-64 who are COVID-19 positive or have been exposed to COVID-19 or have an underlying condition that puts them at high risk for the disease. In addition, they must live alone or with one other eligible adult, may not currently be receiving assistance from other state or federal nutrition assistance programs, and must earn less than 600% of the federal poverty limit. For a two-adult household, that income level is approximately \$101,460.

“It is very important to highlight the human impact of this program”, said Lisa Mancini, director of Aging and Adult Services –the county Health division managing and implementing the program on the ground. “Behind the numbers there are personal stories that don’t often see the light of day, like these ones: An 84-year-old resident shared that she was *overwhelmed with gratitude* and that *she hadn’t been eating well*; she now feels more hopeful, and not alone. A restaurant owner shared that this program will allow him to avoid laying off a long-term employee and father of three from his restaurant”, continued Mancini.

**Interested eligible residents are encouraged to call:  
(800) 675-8437**

Participating food providers need to be able to meet volume and nutritional standards; meet cultural needs; and prioritize local jobs, worker retention, worker health and safety, and standards of equity and fairness in employment practices, wages, hiring, and promotion. Food providers in San Mateo County interested in participating can call the following hotlines staffed by multi-lingual County workers:

(833) 261-3663 | Spanish  
(833) 600-7276 | English  
(833) 600-7275 | Mandarin

Additionally, the County debuted a webpage, available at [www.smcgov.org/food](http://www.smcgov.org/food), to connect residents with additional resources for food and grocery assistance in San Mateo County.

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