



NEWS

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For Immediate Release

San Mateo County Board of Supervisors Steps in After Federal Support of Great Plates Program Ends

Millions allocated to provide home delivered groceries, meals for participants still in need

Redwood City — With federal support for the Great Plates Delivered program ending on July 9, 2021, the County of San Mateo will use federal COVID-19 stimulus funds to continue addressing the food insecurity needs of homebound older adults who have no alternative options.

“Great Plates has been like a rescue plan for older frail adults during the pandemic, and we cannot let 5,000 of them go hungry because of COVID,” said Board of Supervisors President David J. Canepa. “As the federal program is set to expire, however, we must transition to providing this service ourselves. We have a moral obligation to protect and serve the needs of our most vulnerable, and feeding them is a great starting point.”

At its regular meeting on June 29, 2021, the Board approved approximately \$4 million to continue serving Great Plates participants. The allocation replaces funds received through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, which is part of the federal COVID-19 stimulus package.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Great Plates Delivered has provided nearly 2.7 million restaurant-prepared meals to San Mateo County’s low-income seniors and those most at-risk from the coronavirus. The program served 4,689 total clients, with 84 restaurants participating. Upwards of \$59 million was put back into the local economy by the program.

The Board’s action today will provide up to \$2.55 million in support to Second Harvest of Silicon Valley, one of the largest food banks in the country. Part of this funding will provide home-delivered groceries to Great Plates participants who continue to need food assistance and are able to prepare meals at home.

In addition, the Board also voted to provide almost \$2 million per year for the next two fiscal years to expand the Older Americans’ Act-funded Home Delivered Meals program. This money will go toward current County-contracted senior nutrition providers to be able

to ensure a seamless transition of home delivered meals for Great Plates participants who are homebound and are unable to prepare meals.

“The County is stepping up to fill a real need,” said Lisa Mancini, director of County Health’s Aging and Adult Services division, which manages the Great Plates Delivered program. “It’s critical that we address food insecurity among our older adult community, which has been hit hard by COVID-19 and needs help to recover.”

Current Great Plates Delivered clients will be contacted directly by County staff and/or Second Harvest Food Bank with information about post-Great Plates Delivered options for food support. Older adults in need who are not enrolled in Great Plates Delivered should call the Aging and Adult Services helpline at 1-800-675-8437 for information on other nutrition assistance.

“Great Plates Delivered was a real lifeline during a very difficult time,” said Mancini, “and now we are looking to the next phase of local, targeted relief to people continue to be in need.”

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