



MEDIA ALERT:

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URGENT NEEDS: SUPPORT CCFW WHILE WE SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY

Catholic Charities Fort Worth needs your help in spreading the word about how people can help us as we continue to serve our local community working through the COVID-19 crisis.

What are the needs we are seeing?

A recent uptick in calls, coupled with the expectation that there will be more calls in the days and weeks ahead, lead us to note the following most common needs expressed by clients:

- Increased job loss (layoffs and furloughs)
- Reduced wages and need for strategic financial assistance (rent and utilities)
- Childcare issues (unable to work when schools are closed)
- School/degree completion issues
- Transportation issues
- Need for laptops and computers for education and kids schooling
- Needs for WIFI access to work or complete school

The Numbers:

Currently in our case management services, we are working with 1,200 individuals and families on their journey out of poverty. Note this does not include several large branches of our services in terms of transportation, immigration services, and more.

We anticipate the need to serve 7,000 clients by way of calls, specific assistance, case management, distribution of gift cards, and more. Increased capacity to serve is dependent on community support: leveraging government relief funding, grants from foundations, and contributions for corporations and individuals.

What we are doing at-a-glance to serve this crisis:

- Serving as the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) Chair by way of Jay Semple, our Disaster Response Program Manager, which means we are actively leading the way for our city to manage this crisis.

- Reallocating staff who cannot work from home to serve in both case management and intake, and training volunteers to staff the call center
- Making referrals to key community partners and 2-1-1 as needed
- Crisis Assistance: distributing immediate financial assistance for rent and utilities, and gift cards for basic necessities and groceries
- Short Term Case Management: working with emergency clients up to six months to stabilize them- many who have never found themselves in this position
- Long Term Case Management: our signature solution to walk with families out of poverty
- Helping with SNAP Enrollment
- Partnering with Stand Together Foundation on donation matching AND their work in granting current clients who have lost wages \$500 in their bank accounts
- Working with current employer partners to help their employees when we can
- Repurposing old agency phones to serve as hotspots for children and students needing WIFI in rural areas
- Working with Tarrant County, churches, and other major nonprofits to use our transportation fleet to deliver meals to our community
- Hosting a food drive and a gift card drive
- Launching an internal research project to study how to equip our clients to be more resilient in the face of external economic forces to learn from this for the future.

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU:

1. Unrestricted funding for:
 - a. Direct Client Needs: Catholic Charities Fort Worth's talented case managers are the epicenter of stability for the families we serve, and are the nimblest and equipped to help people in the very specific ways they need to be helped during the COVID-19 pandemic.

****We cannot provide increased assistance without the resources to do so. Even though we are a large organization, more than ever we want you to know that we will have to say no to people who call in for help unless we get more funding.**

2. Electronic Gift Cards: This is counted among the tools for our case managers to use in helping our families navigate this crisis. Walmart and Target Gift cards valued at \$50 are most appreciated, we need approximately \$6,000 worth of gift cards in total.

If you know someone who needs help:

While many of our community partners may have to close their doors, we at Catholic Charities Fort Worth are open and still serving clients as usual. While most of our employees are not physically present on our respective sites in Fort Worth, Colleyville, and Arlington, we are still taking calls and organizing virtual meetings. We have employees and volunteers staffing the phone lines as we speak, and will continue to grow these efforts over the coming weeks.

For now, please send clients or constituents to our main line at 817-534-0814. Our friendly staff will be working to solve for limited financial assistance and long-term case management needs, and will be happy to direct calls to community partners if we are unable to provide assistance for any reason.

Other resources include: <https://www.catholiccharitiesfortworth.org/covid-help/>
<https://www.catholiccharitiesfortworth.org/covid-community-resources/>