

San Martin de Porres Soup Kitchen: Addressing Hunger Needs During Covid-19 Pandemic

In March of 2020, our State was affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Our way of living and the way we operate business from day to day changed drastically. Amid this crisis, the San Martin de Porres (SMDP) Soup Kitchen has continued to address the hunger needs of our clients in the low-income community of Apple Valley, along with working with other agencies and non-profits to assist with their food distribution as well. We have all come together as a community to continue filling the needs of the poor and hungry despite the new social distancing and safety measures we all have to now take.

Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, the SMDP Soup Kitchen's Volunteer Force decreased by about 50%. Several SMDP Soup Kitchen volunteers are elderly and some have compromised immune systems, so to abide by the new Public Health & Social Distancing Orders, many volunteers are staying home. Although there has been a decrease in the volunteer force, the Client demand has greatly increased, as the Soup Kitchen is now assisting other agencies with their food distributions. SMDP Soup Kitchen is currently distributing about fifty (50) sack lunches to our clients Monday thru Friday at the door and twenty-five (25) sack lunches to the in-ambulatory citizens of Apple Valley community, where we are located. We also give out 40 to 50 prepared meals on Mondays and Fridays to the Espanola Pathways Homeless Shelter and provide perishable and non-perishable goods for 50 to 80 food boxes weekly to other agencies so they can distribute as needed. These agencies distribute food to Pueblos and other poor rural areas.

San Martin de Porres Soup Kitchen has also collaborated with ten (10) other local Non-profits, local government and tribal leadership, as we all seek to answer the growing emergency need for food and health safety items caused by COVID-19 Crisis Pandemic. If at any time SMDP Soup Kitchen cannot help someone's specific needs, we point them in the right direction or refer them to other agencies. We are all working together and doing all that we can to assist those in need, especially during this difficult time.

As we continue to meet the need of our clients and have added additional support, SMDP Soup Kitchen has been seeking funding support to assist with purchasing disposable containers for the sack lunches (as they are expensive and hard to come by now), cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) for our volunteers and staff. In order to keep our clients and our volunteers as safe and healthy as possible, we go in daily and disinfect all door knobs, light switches, and all surfaces with Clorox solution. We provide gloves and have made facemasks for the volunteers, as these items are difficult to find. SMDP Soup Kitchen will continue to feed all who are hungry and will continue serving our Apple Valley clients as well as giving perishable and non-perishable food to agencies and the Homeless Shelter during this Covid-19 Crisis. Taking all necessary precautions and working together, we can all get through this Pandemic.



SMDP Soup Kitchen's Executive Director preparing lunch to be distributed at the Soup Kitchen.



SMDP Soup Kitchen's Executive Director and Volunteers getting ready to distribute Sack Lunches at the Soup Kitchen.



New Covid-19 precautionary measures for food distribution at the Soup Kitchen.