



March 15, 2020

Good Sunday Morning Mission Partners,

I am so proud of our Southside Neighborhood Leaders! Your thoughtful responses to social distancing while maintaining a pragmatic approach are inspiring. I applaud how many of you are finding ways for neighbors to stay connected, even if only through their digital device or with mindful and safe physical proximity.

UCOM's Food Pantry will be open for all client appointments this next week Monday through Thursday 9:30am-12:30pm with a few safe distancing modifications. All clients will need to make appointments by phone 904-396-2401. No walk-in appointments will be permitted for the next two weeks. No new client intake or crisis / case management will be taken in person.

I appreciate the many of you who have reached out to help or ask 'how best to help our at-risk neighbors in need':

- Please offer direct aid to your next-door neighbors and ask your congregants, family members, and subdivision friends to do the same. The more we limit people venturing out of their immediate neighborhood, the better the city will be able to identify where to focus resources.
- Please don't be a marauder. If you are not feeling well, or are nervous about exposure, follow your instincts. No one will be offended, and no cause is more important than you.
- Hold a 'virtual' food and cleaning products drive for UCOM. Use social media to connect and let your neighbors and friends leave the donations in a box on your door step for you to then transfer to UCOM. Over this next month, we anticipate increased families visiting the center - specifically hourly workers not being scheduled for work. UCOM is staying open to address emergency and immediate needs. There is no need for anyone to panic, working together, we got this.
- Families that we know rely on school meals for their kids: this is such a fluid topic right now, but the latest news I have is that the schools are still receiving food orders to distribute to student/families. I have no information on the logistics of this effort. I am sure the information is going to be unique and specific for each school. Therefore, anyone working in the schools or with their food services that has this information, please share as plans become solidified. UCOM can fill in the gap as we identify them.
- For the next two weeks, UCOM will not be accepting any teenage or child with their parent as volunteers until we know more about identifying exposure.
- We still need donations, please! All donations will still be accepted and the pantry, but you will not have to enter the building or be in close contact with anyone. We will have a table set up in the parking area for donations to be placed. Volunteers will bring them into building to weigh and shelf/pack.
- We are seeking additional volunteers over next two weeks, but ask that you email me for a quick pre-screening to make sure we keep each other safe. (no fevers no recent travel)
saramitchell@ucomjax.org



- No volunteer will have client contact except on the phone.
- Cash/online donations are super appreciated so I can order more food through FNEF where we can get the food much cheaper than through our grocer partners. We can avoid any grocery shelves being cleared by us or friends trying to help our mission. That would not be responsible for any of us to do at this time.
- UCOM will not be distributing hand sanitizer (we don't have any) or toilet paper, but we will be sharing travel sized bar soap with every client. Soap and water is the best method for hand hygiene. Sing your alphabet twice. Alexa, or google will help you sing. Anyone who was blessed with savvy to coupon or stock pile toilet paper and are willing to share some of their stock with neighbors at risk, please contact me. No judgment, only applauding your savvy and help!
- As one-time volunteer opportunities for food distribution or packing groceries arise, I will email the dates, times and specific volunteer need. I know many of you have teams and people interested in helping. I am so thankful for you! We can't serve as many as we do together without connecting those who can lift and labor. At this time UCOM is looking for a few additional volunteers who have pick-up trucks, and someone who's pick-up has a hitch and is comfortable hauling a trailer. Please email me if you are this unicorn volunteer! saramitchell@ucomjax.org
- At this time, and as far as I know, Meals on Wheels will be running normally this next week. All drivers are asked to not linger in doorways and to please have best hand hygiene possible. No giving additional items to clients at this time, and we will continue to communicate to our drivers so we are all on same page and being the amazing team, we are. Any questions regarding meals on wheels operations can be directed to me.

Cheers for being on our amazing Southside Team of Awesome! We truly are Southside Strong!

Sara Mitchell

Executive Director

UCOM UrbanServ Inc.

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