

HELLO THIS IS BEVERLY RIVERA, WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE.

I WOULD LIKE TO ANNOUNCE SOME NEWS REGARDING OUR OFFICE'S RESPONSE TO THE REDUCTION OR DELAY IN SNAP BENEFITS FOR RESIDENTS OF DECATUR COUNTY, AND SPECIFICALLY OUR TOWNSHIP. IT IS OUR DESIRE THAT NO ONE IN OUR COUNTY GOES HUNGRY. THIS IS A WONDERFUL GIVING COMMUNITY AND MANY AGENCIES ARE WORKING TOGETHER TO FEED THOSE IN NEED.

FIRST LET ME EXPLAIN THAT DECATUR COUNTY IS DIVIDED INTO 9 TOWNSHIPS AND EACH HAS IT'S OWN TRUSTEE. I AM THE TRUSTEE FOR WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP ONLY, WHICH INCLUDES THE CITY OF GREENSBURG.

EACH TRUSTEE MAY HAVE THEIR OWN RESPONSE TO THIS SITUATION. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOMETHINGS THAT ARE THE SAME FOR EVERYONE IN THE COUNTY. LET ME ADDRESS THOSE FIRST.

FOR MANY YEARS WE HAVE HAD AN INCREDIBLE NETWORK OF FOOD PANTRIES IN OUR COUNTY. THESE PANTRIES ARE ALL PREPPED AND READY TO WORK WITH THOSE IN NEED OF FOOD RESOURCES.

THE FIRST PLACE FAMILIES SHOULD GO FOR FOOD IS THE GREENSBURG COMMUNITY BREAD OF LIFE. THEY SERVE FRESH HOT MEALS EVERY MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY FROM 3 TO 5 PM. THERE IS ALSO THE OPPORTUNITY TO SELECT FROM ADDITIONAL GROCERIES EACH DAY. ON THURSDAYS, THEY DISTRIBUTE A BLESSING BOX TO EACH FAMILY THAT INCLUDES FOOD AND HOUSEHOLD GOODS.

WE SURE HOPE EVERYONE IS UTILITIZING THE BREAD OF LIFE KITCHEN – IT IS A WONDERFULLY CONSISTENT PLACE TO STOP AND GET FOOD.

A SECOND PLACE FOR FOOD IS THE DECATUR COUNTY AGAPE CENTER. YOU MUST CALL 812-222-4273 FOR AN APPOINTMENT. WE, ALONG WITH MANY COMMUNITY EFFORTS, HAVE HELPED SUPPLY FOOD TO COVER REQUESTS OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS BEFORE OUR PROGRAM BEGINS NEXT WEEK. THE VOLUNTEERS ARE SO WILLING TO BE AVAILABLE EACH WEEK AT THE AGAPE CENTER TO HELP OUR RESIDENTS WITH FOOD.

ANOTHER LARGE PANTRY IS THE HANDS OF HOPE AT LIFELINE WESLEYAN CHURCH. THEY JUST HAD A WELL-ATTENDED PANTRY THIS PAST SATURDAY. THEIR NEXT ONE IS NOVEMBER 19 FROM 1 TO 3 PM. THEY ARE AVAILABLE BY APPOINTMENT DURING OTHER TIMES AS NEEDED IF YOU CALL.

OUR TOWNSHIP OFFICE HAS A LIST OF OTHER CHURCHES AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE PANTRIES AS WELL. YOU CAN CONTACT US AT 812-663-5501 TO GET THE COMPLETE LIST. IT IS ALSO BEING POSTED ON SEVERAL COMMUNITY FACEBOOK PAGES.

PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH THOSE IN NEED. WE HAVE GENEROUS DONORS IN OUR COUNTY WHO HELP MAKE FOOD AVAILABLE TO ANYONE IN NEED. WE SIMPLY REQUEST THOSE IN NEED TO SHOW UP AT THE PANTRIES.

**I CANNOT EXPRESS HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO ATTEND THE MEALS AT THE BREAD OF LIFE 3 TIMES A WEEK. THROUGH THE MONTH THAT IS 12 FREE MEALS FOR EACH PERSON IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD PLUS ADDITIONAL GROCERIES.

ALL OF THESE PANTRIES OPERATE ON DONATIONS, SO PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING TO THEM IF YOU ARE ABLE. THERE ARE ALSO MANY FOOD DRIVES BEING PLANNED IN OUR COMMUNITY, WITH THE FOOD GOING TO THESE PANTRIES. HELP WHERE YOU CAN. THEY COULD USE VOLUNTEERS AS WELL.

EVEN AFTER THE SNAP BENEFITS GET REINSTATED, THERE IS ALWAYS NEED FOR DONATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS AT THE ONGOING FOOD PANTRIES ALREADY MENTIONED. THEY DO A WONDERFUL JOB CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY ALL THE TIME.

NOW I WILL ADDRESS WHAT OUR OFFICE IS DOING SPECIFICALLY. WE ARE THE WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP OFFICE AND SUPPORT REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE FOR RESIDENTS OF WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP ONLY. WE HAVE THE LIST OF OTHER TRUSTEES IF ANYONE NEEDS TO KNOW WHAT IS BEING PLANNED IN THEIR TOWNSHIP.

BEGINNING MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, WE WILL BE SCHEDULING INDIVIDUAL APPOINTMENTS FOR THE HOUSEHOLDS WHO CURRENTLY RECEIVE SNAP BENEFITS. WE WILL HAVE SOME ADDITIONAL FOOD ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE. RESIDENTS WILL NEED TO CALL 812-663-5501 FOR AN APPOINTMENT AND BRING THEIR EBT CARD WITH THEM AS WELL AS THEIR LATEST LETTER SHOWING PROOF OF THEIR BENEFIT. WE MUST HAVE THESE TO VERIFY ENROLLMENT IN THE PROGRAM AND THE AMOUNT OF BENEFITS RECEIVED. THE PERSON ON THE SNAP ACCOUNT MUST BE PRESENT IN OUR APPOINTMENT. WE CANNOT OFFER ASSISTANCE WITHOUT THE PAPERWORK AND THE ACCOUNT RECIPIENT.

TO HELP THIS PROCESS GO SMOOTHER, THIS PART IS VERY IMPORTANT. WE ARE ASKING FOR RESIDENTS TO CALL OUR OFFICE WITHIN 2 DAYS OF THEIR NORMAL BENEFIT DAY. IF THEY RECEIVE SNAP ON THE 10TH OF THE MONTH, THEY CAN CALL BEGINNING THE 8TH. WE ARE DOING THIS TO ENSURE WE HAVE ENOUGH FOOD AND MANPOWER EACH DAY

TO ACCOMMODATE OUR APPOINTMENTS AND ASSISTANCE IN THE SAME TIME OF THE MONTH AS THEY NORMALLY RECEIVE BENEFITS.

WE APPRECIATE EVERYONE DISPLAYING AN EXTREME AMOUNT OF PATIENCE AND KINDNESS DURING THIS TIME. WE WILL BE HELPING EACH HOUSEHOLD AS WE CAN. OUR OFFICE IS SMALL - WITH ONLY ONE FULL TIME AND ONE PART TIME STAFF PERSON.

TO BEGIN NEXT WEEK, WE WILL HAVE A PERCENTAGE OF THE MONTHLY BENEFIT AVAILABLE TO EACH HOUSEHOLD. IF THE DELAY OR SUSPENSION OF SNAP BENEFITS CONTINUES, WE WILL BEGIN SEEING RECIPIENTS AGAIN FOR A SECOND WEEK OF ASSISTANCE.

OUR PROGRAM WILL CONTINUE AS LONG AS THE SUSPENSION, DELAY OR REDUCTION IN SNAP BENEFITS IS IN EFFECT. OUR PROGRAM WILL TERMINATE AS SOON AS BENEFITS ARE FULLY RESTORED THROUGH THE SNAP PROGRAM.

HOWEVER, AS MENTIONED BEFORE, THE FOOD PANTRIES WILL CONTINUE YEAR ROUND AS USUAL.

I KNOW THIS IS A LOT OF INFORMATION ALL AT ONCE. YOU MAY CALL OUR OFFICE AT 812-663-5501 IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.

THANK YOU.

BEVERLY RIVERA, WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP TRUSTEE