

Greater Cleveland Food Bank  
COVID-19 Update  
Week of June 8– June 12, 2020: Week in Review

We had a busy week – so what’s new? But, this past week included multiple drive thru distributions, a welcome back of volunteers, some new equipment to help keep us safe, and more. So, let’s get to the facts of another amazing week.

In our current strategic plan, approved by our board in the fall of 2018, one of our key strategies was to make diversity, equity and inclusion strengths of our organization. We formed a DEI Council which was made up of staff members from all departments and levels of our organization – all volunteered to participate and discuss, explore and determine what DEI means to the Food Bank. We created a DEI Plan and have been implementing it ever since. With the increased workload due to the pandemic, the DEI Council’s April meeting was cancelled. In light of our statement on the killing of George Floyd and the yearning of Council members to gather and discuss our work, we met on Wednesday. To say it was a powerful meeting would be an understatement. We shared our feelings about recent events and what we as an organization could do. Many staff members added comments to our internal Idea Board about our DEI work and a suggestion was made for a Juneteenth celebration and gathering – albeit virtually – to lend our collective voices to this day. We all left the meeting energized and more thoughtful as well as with a list of action items. Give busy people more to do and they will get it done!

This was the first week for our Summer Feeding trucks and they’ve gone out every day to different locations to deliver meals in parts of our community that don’t have the benefit of an organized summer feeding site. Each day, the trucks returned to the Food Bank empty of the meals they started with. The feeding truck program came together in less than 4 weeks’ time when our programs staff realized that many children would be without meals given the number of sites that couldn’t participate this year. The creativity and flexibility of so many staff and departments – the kitchen, programs, communications and warehouse -- all had a hand in making this a success!

We hosted two drive thru distributions this week – yes, you read that right – two distributions. We partnered with Lakeland Community College who held their first drive through distribution. Under the guidance of our programs and volunteer experience teams, this past Tuesday, over 700 households were served with the help of the Guard, volunteers and GCFB staff. Lakeland folks are so excited that they are strategizing about holding additional distributions this summer. Then, of course, was another very successful distribution at the Muni Lot. We had a great group of volunteers who helped to direct traffic and check families in. We realized about midway through that we had more cars than expected and our operations team had to pull more boxes to get to the Lot and an emergency call out to staff to help man an extra traffic lane. All in all, a successful day – we served 1726 households and almost 5,200 people.

We saw our busiest volunteer week since March and we are thrilled, thankful and happy to see so many familiar faces. On Thursday, we hosted two shifts of volunteers in our repack area – a trial run to get volunteers back in to the jobs they know so well but with added safety precautions and protocols. The shifts are longer in length and we received great feedback on these trial runs. We are hoping to be able to start promoting more shifts and bringing more people in the door as our volunteer needs will be on the uptick as the Guard begins to decrease their presence. Thermographic cameras were installed at all doors for temperature taking of everyone entering the building!

Mark your calendar for the week of June 22 as we present Market at Home – this year’s version of Market at the Food Bank – but, with a twist. See the attached flyer. Grab some grub, Tune-In Live, Share Your Support and Take a Chance.

This past week – so much happened and trying to keep it to one page is a challenge. Every staff member puts their heart and soul into every day and everything they do! And our supporters and volunteers do the same – THANK YOU!!

***“Do your little bit of good where you are; it is those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”***  
***Desmond Tutu***

***Focus on possibility and who can help and how. Mary LaVigne Butler, VP of External Affairs***



