



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Human Services Secretary Reminds Pennsylvanians of Food Assistance Resources**

**Philadelphia, PA** – Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Teresa Miller today visited Philabundance to assist with on-going volunteer efforts to ensure food is available for people and families experiencing challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic and current economic insecurity. Secretary Miller and Philabundance Chief Executive Officer Loree D. Jones reminded Pennsylvanians of food assistance resources available even and especially amidst COVID-19 mitigation efforts.

“Difficult circumstances created by the pandemic have not subsided, and many people around Pennsylvania still must endure challenges that come from COVID-19’s effect on the state’s and nation’s economies,” said Secretary Miller. “Food banks like Philabundance mobilized quickly to serve individuals and families in their communities so people affected by job or income loss would not have to go hungry, and the Wolf Administration is incredibly grateful for their unending commitment to communities they serve. If you are able, I encourage all Pennsylvanians to support their local food bank so the charitable food network can continue to be there to meet the need of people affected by this pandemic in the uncertain weeks and months to come.”

“The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted food banks on so many levels,” explained Philabundance CEO Loree D. Jones. “From seeing up to a 60% increase in need across the Delaware Valley to volunteers and donations dwindling and food prices sky rocketing, Philabundance needs your generosity to continue providing our neighbors with healthy food during this crisis and beyond.”

Pennsylvanians who need help feeding themselves or their family should find and contact their local food bank or pantry through [Feeding Pennsylvania](#) and [Hunger-Free Pennsylvania](#).

Help with buying food is also available through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP helps more than 1.9 million Pennsylvanians expand purchasing power by providing money each month to spend on groceries, helping households have resources to purchase enough food to avoid going hungry. Inadequate food and chronic nutrient deficiencies have profound effects on a person’s life and health, including increased risks for chronic diseases, higher chances of hospitalization, poorer overall health, and increased health care costs. As the nation faces the COVID-19 pandemic, access to essential needs like food is more important than ever to help keep vulnerable populations healthy and mitigate co-occurring health risks.

Applications for SNAP and other public assistance programs can be submitted online at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us). Those who prefer to submit paper documentation can print from the website or request an application by phone at 1-800-692-7462 and mail it to their [local County Assistance Office \(CAO\)](#) or place it in a CAO's secure drop box, if available. While CAOs remain closed, work processing applications, determining eligibility, and issuing benefits continues. Clients should use COMPASS or the MyCOMPASS PA mobile app to submit necessary updates to their case files while CAOs are closed.

All applications for SNAP are screened the day they are received for expedited services criteria. For households with minimal income and resources, the SNAP application can be expedited and processed within five days, and all Pennsylvanians who are in a difficult financial situation due to the economic challenges of this pandemic should apply to see if they are eligible for assistance.

Secretary Miller and CEO Jones also encouraged anyone who is healthy and able to please consider taking some time to support their food bank or pantry through volunteer time or monetary donations, as this time is creating an incredible strain on charitable organizations' volunteer efforts and resources.

Anyone interested in volunteering can find organizations in need of volunteer support on the [United Way of Pennsylvania's 211 website](#).

For more information about food assistance resources for people around Pennsylvania impacted by COVID-19 and the accompanying economic insecurity, visit [https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Food\\_Security/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.agriculture.pa.gov/Food_Security/Pages/default.aspx).

**NOTE:** B-roll and photos are available from this visit. Please contact the DHS or Philabundance press contacts if you would like these materials.