

FOOD SECURITY Playbook Summary

Concerns/Issues | Connecting to Solutions

Playbooks: Adams Clay Nuckolls Webster County, Buffalo County, Growing Community Connections (Dakota), Keith Perkins County, Panhandle Partnership, Sandhills Community Collaborative, Cherry Brown County, Dawson County, Douglas County, Fremont Family Coalition, Hall County, Lancaster County, Lift Up Sarpy, McCook County, Norfolk Family Coalition, Otoe County, York County, Tribal Communities (Santee, Omaha, Winnebago, Western Nebraska, Omaha Metro)

Themes and priorities common across communities:

- Funding for hot meals and need to replenish food pantries as a result of increase in demand (all collaboratives)
- Lack of or minimal access to cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, personal hygiene, diapers, and formula (Adams Clay Nuckolls Webster Counties, Douglas County, Otoe County)
- Difficulty communicating in an effective and consistent way regarding the available resources and access times to all the different populations that may be food insecure (all collaboratives)
 - Communication and public awareness need to be improved regarding location of resources, times food banks are open, and limitations or requirement to access services (i.e. requires having student/present with you, SNAP application, etc.)
 - Communication plans need to address the challenges unique to non-native English speakers, seniors, and disabled or chronically ill populations
 - Address the fear people may have about picking up donations that are being handled or distributed by volunteers without PPE
 - Undocumented people are afraid to access resources
- Transportation of food for those unable to leave home or don't have cars/public transportation (all collaboratives)
 - Families in very rural areas and Tribal communities need to travel to the pickup sites for food and do not have as much access to food delivery options (North Platte, Metro Omaha Tribes)
 - Seniors, people unable to leave their homes, families without cars or access to public transportation cannot travel to pantries or grocery stores
 - Delivery options are limited or overwhelmed/not enough delivery driver volunteers
 - Individuals and families without the technology to order food online (North Platte, rural counties in Panhandle)

Unique needs and disparities:

- A majority of volunteers are in the at-risk population (seniors) so volunteering is limited (Panhandle Partnership, Lancaster, Hall, Sarpy)
- Additional refrigeration for frozen food donations (Hall County)
- College-age students no longer in school, lost jobs, and have no access to meal plans (Norfolk)
- Transportation to food drop-offs and foodbanks (Tribal Communities – Metro Omaha, Omaha Tribe)

Barriers that exist for people to access necessary services:

- Increase in the number of people needing food and unemployment assistance that have not had to access services in the past (contract/hourly workers) and they need help navigating the system for applying for benefits
- People who have never accessed services are hesitant to request help
- Flexible funding to access food resources as they are needed instead of relying heavily on donations (some high demand items are not in supply or not being donated)
- Increased prices in grocery stores for basic food items (Panhandle)
- Undocumented families afraid to access services (Douglas, Fremont)
- Seniors applying for support services unable to navigate the system/don't know who to call

Workforce capacity related barriers to serve people impacted by COVID-19:

- Not enough volunteers in food pantries and food delivery services, both of which are seeing an increase in need and time in processing donations (ex. Donations from public need to be sanitized)

Barriers around serving specific populations (historically segregated neighborhoods, immigrant populations, LGBT youth):

- Transporting food to seniors or those people unable to leave their homes or transporting seniors without transportation to grocery stores
- Undocumented families may be afraid to apply for assistance (Douglas County, Fremont)
- Transportation of people to food bank locations (Tribal Communities)

Solutions being implemented or proposed:

- Buffalo County has a website, bcchp.org/covid19/ and bcchp.org/covid19espanol/, which is receiving 400+ hits daily from residents looking for resources
- SNAP recipients purchasing online at Walmart and Amazon online
- Using bus drivers to deliver school lunches to students and families (Sandhills)
- Empowerment Network and OHA partnering to address food needs of seniors living (Douglas County)
- Law enforcement doing food delivery service (Sarpy)
- McCook is encouraging furloughed workers to volunteer
- (Proposed solution) School paraprofessionals deliver needed home care products to families (Otoe County)
- Pantries accepting proxy applications and verbal verification if someone is picking up food for another person (North Platte)