

COVID-19 Support Initiative by Neighbor Brigade Chapters

Neighbor Brigade and its board of directors have made a temporary amendment towards its scope of services in efforts to help communities and support residents during this unprecedented health crisis. Effective immediately Neighbor Brigade Chapter Leaders and their volunteers will have the option of supporting residents and town-wide efforts focusing on food security, food distribution, and distribution of essential supplies and medications to some of our most vulnerable populations listed below:

- Kids/teens on reduced and free lunches at the schools
- Constituents of local food pantries
- Seniors
- Individuals and families that are at low-income and poverty levels
- Quarantined or self-isolating residents that also meet at least one of the above criteria

Plan of Action:

1. Neighbor Brigade Chapter Leaders will decide if they would like to embark on this initiative. Outreach will be made to programs supporting individuals in the groups above to see if temporary aid is necessary and possible. The list of Chapters that are currently engaging in this initiative include: Maynard MA, Acton MA, Boxborough MA. As of 3/14/20 we have added Northborough MA, Southborough MA, Sudbury MA, Easton MA, Braintree MA, Wayland MA, Lexington MA, Mendon MA and Bedford MA to the list of participating Chapters. On 3/15/20, Natick MA has joined the initiative. On 3/24/20 Concord MA and Carlisle MA have been added and will providing support. The Ashland MA Neighbor Brigade will join efforts starting 3/31/2020. We added Berkley MA, and our West Essex, NJ chapter into the collaboration on 4/5/2020 and Franklin MA on 4/6/2020.
2. Any current volunteer from a participating town Chapter who would like to participate in this initiative must complete the COVID-19 Training found under their volunteer profile when they login to our software.
3. New volunteers may sign-up as a Neighbor Brigade volunteer to help during the COVID-19 crisis. They too must complete our COVID-19 Training and most activities will require a CORI background check.
4. Neighbor Brigade Program Director, Executive Director and Chapter Leaders will work on communicating with local town groups about our willingness and ability to mobilize our volunteers and to bring on new volunteers, to help distribute food. Groups to be partner with include but are not limited to:
 - Local food pantries
 - School officials (superintendents, guidance counselors and principals)
 - Town administrators
 - Town board of health officials

- Councils on Aging or Senior Centers
 - Local United Way chapters
 - Places of worship
5. Neighbor Brigade will follow instructions from town groups and leaders on how they would like the food and supplies to be distributed and will communicate with Neighbor Brigade volunteers about the appropriate steps to follow for distribution.
 6. Regardless if a recipient of food is self-isolating or quarantined, NO volunteers will be entering homes and food or essential supplies will be delivered outside of each home in bags. Coolers will not be used for food delivery.
 7. Neighbor Brigade Chapters, as needed, will also initiate collection drives for gift cards for ride share services and supermarket gift cards which local families can use for getting to essential appointments and to purchase essential supplies not distributed by food pantries (sanitation products, medications and personal hygiene products).

Update March 14, 2020; March 24, 2020; March 31, 2020; April 5, 2020; and April 6, 2020 to add additional town participation.