

During the past several months of the COVID-19 pandemic, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Newark has provided many essential services to the community, as noted below, though the challenges have been significant. While all of our program operations have been affected by insufficient funding, the top three areas are struggling the most to maintain our basic services.

Our Emergency Shelters and other residential programs (of which we have 16 different facilities) have **remain** opened each night for approximately 250 people, including over 60 children ranging from 6 months to age 16. Given the nature of the close quarters of the shelters, efforts have been made to reduce our census to 50% of our capacity. We did this through attrition, as clients left for other housing options. All of our clients and staff have been tested by the City of Jersey City. For those clients who showed symptoms or tested positive, they were able to go to a hotel paid for by the City.

We continue rigorous clean protocols in all our residential programs. We have unbudgeted costs for a number of reasons, including overtime due to a number of staff being out because they need to self-quarantine. Staff provide access immediately to each individual with the care they need, whether in hospital or isolation. At our family shelters, we have increased the wifi in each building to accommodate school-aged children who are participating in remote learning. It will remain difficult to find these individuals and families housing during this challenging time.

Catholic Charities' Emergency Food and Nutrition Network provides bulk food support to a network of approximately 80 volunteer-run food pantries throughout the Archdiocese. About 1/3 of the pantries have had to close due to the pandemic. As they are run primarily by volunteers, they needed to close to ensure the health and safety of these individuals, many of whom are older adults. Those that are open are reporting an increase in demand from people who haven't needed a food bank before. Thanks to generous support from CCUSA, the Knights of Columbus, Goya and others we have been able to increase delivery at a number of locations. However, with so many people still unemployed we expect this increased demand to continue for some time.....thus underscoring our need for additional funding/donations.

Catholic Charities continues to offers a number of behavioral health and clinical programs for people with mental illness. People with mental illness are dealing with confusion and anxiety of the unknown, as well as the stress of quarantine and isolation. Using technology to support the telehealth platform, CCAN now uses online access to address the needs of more clients than through in-person meetings. Over the past two months we have found many clients to be very responsive to this form of treatment. With HIPPA rules temporarily relaxed in the face of the pandemic, we are able to combine in-house visits with iPhone and online visits as the situation demands. All the offices are staffed so that those clients who need and want to have real face time. The offices are being cleaned and carefully maintained so that everyone is safe.

We are planning to continue providing telehealth services, as long as it's covered under Medicaid. Our clients are typically individuals who are more significantly mentally ill, who are often more at risk during these times of crisis such as the pandemic.

Catholic Charities welcomes donations to help us continue to serve people through this crisis.

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Our Parish Access Centers are open to help people with their basic needs, including veterans. For many of the daily callers to the CCAN hotline 1-800-227-7413, the inability to pay rent or utilities at this time is quickly becoming an insurmountable challenge. Staff are available to help people who are now unemployed and stressed about paying rent and buying food. Staff assist the community by directing people to the appropriate resources. CCAN draws on grants to help cover emergencies when we can. We anticipate that the state and federal government will provide funds for these situations going forward. The utility companies have announced that all services will continue regardless of the ability to keep payments current at this time.

Our Workforce Development programs are offering HSE/ABE and Computer instruction online. Our Culinary Arts staff are cooking up meals and staff are delivering them to people with disabilities in our community. Catholic Charities has a number of programs still operating to help children and families.

Telemental health services are being provided to families to ensure that they are receiving the care and support that they need. Social workers are checking in on their students who could use some support during their time at home. Catholic Charities is connecting with seniors in our communities who might be isolated, checking in to see that they have food and care that they need. Staff and volunteers are delivering food to seniors as needed.

Our Immigration Assistance Program has suspended walk-in consultations, in-person legal services appointments, and ESL classes. Safe Release Support services (fingerprinting) and Legal Orientation Program for Custodians continue to be available, but by appointment only.

All three of our educational programs have moved to a remote learning environment. The Academy has teachers providing lessons electronically and staff provide daily feedback with parents and students. The pre-schools have provided parents with lesson plans, and are connecting with parents regularly. Families that rely on the schools for meals are being connected with appropriate resources.

Catholic Charities welcomes donations to help us continue to serve people through this crisis. To give, [click here](#). If you would like to support our food pantries, we ask that a monetary donation be made instead of food items, to minimize the need for people to go out in the community to purchase or deliver donations, as well as to reduce any risk to our volunteers and staff processing the food items. Simply put "Food Pantries" in the memo section of the donation