


News

Residents 60 and older eligible for free lunches

 rbeasleyjones / By Renee Beasley Jones Messenger-Inquirer

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Regardless of income or ability, all senior citizens in the Green River Area Development District are eligible for free hot lunches every weekday during the coronavirus crisis.

The program is made possible through Gov. Andy Beshear's Healthy at Home initiative, which asks residents to stay home unless they must go out for work, food and other necessities.

Residents ages 60 and older, especially those with chronic diseases and respiratory issues, are more vulnerable to the virus. Many elderly residents are anxious about making trips to the grocery and other public places, said Jennifer Williams, GRADD associate director for aging and social services.

"If you are concerned about going to the grocery, we still want to make sure you have food and get what you need," Williams said.

To request free lunches, call GRADD at 800-928-9094.

The meals are free; however, a donation of \$1.50 per lunch is suggested.

In the GRADD region, seniors who have transportation may go to their local senior centers, where volunteers deliver meals to car windows during the lunch hour every weekday.

Those coming to the Senior Community Center of Owensboro-Daviess County, 1650 W. Second St., should arrive by 11:30 a.m. Meals are handed out there until they are gone.

Home delivery is available to those who can't pick up meals.

The expanded lunch program had a soft opening on March 23. GRADD officials notified the public through social media, senior center coordinators and other community partners. Williams said seniors have responded positively, and the numbers of meals being requested increased late last week.

Last week, 3,280 meals were prepared for seniors in the GRADD region. Of those, 1,147 went to Daviess County residents.

Canteen at Your Service prepares the meals at the Senior Community Center. Williams said Canteen has indicated it can meet the increased demand.

Williams said seniors may become more frightened about leaving their homes when the regional numbers of coronavirus cases start to climb. Also, local health officials announced the region's first coronavirus death Tuesday morning.

“It really speaks volumes about how much the governor is committed to making Kentuckians feel safe,” Williams said.
“He wants people to be healthy at home.”

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