



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Second Harvest Offers SNAP Application Assistance to Families in Need

Erie, Pa., May 8, 2020 – The unemployment rate has risen to the highest level since the Great Depression, as tens of millions of jobs have vanished due to the COVID-19 crisis. Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania urges those at risk of hunger to reach out to the organization to receive food assistance and also to receive help in applying for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, formerly known as “food stamps.”

“This crisis has required a massive response across our network,” says Karen S. Seggi, Second Harvest CEO. “Many people may, for the first time in their lives, be wondering how they’re going to pay for their groceries. Second Harvest is here to help.”

Second Harvest employs a full-time SNAP Outreach Coordinator who provides pre-screening and application assistance for those applying for benefits.

“For every meal that the Feeding America provides, SNAP provides 12 meals to those in need,” says Linda Kessler, SNAP Outreach Coordinator at Second Harvest. “Research shows that participating in SNAP plays a critical role in alleviating food insecurity and improving dietary intake and health.”

SNAP offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families and provides economic benefits to communities. SNAP is the largest program in the hunger safety net, and works with state agencies, nutrition educators and organizations to ensure those eligible for nutrition assistance make informed decisions about applying for the program and access benefits. Depending on income guidelines, SNAP recipients are allotted a specific dollar amount loaded onto a debit card, which gives clients the freedom to choose what they eat.

Individuals or families facing hunger should call (814) 459-3663 x 118 to find out if they qualify for SNAP benefits. Kessler will administer a short pre-screening interview and assist them throughout the application process. Kessler can also be reached at lkessler@nwpafoodbank.org.

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About the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania

The mission of the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania is to provide food to those in need within 11 counties of northwest Pennsylvania while creating awareness and educating the community on the realities of hunger. Last year, Second Harvest distributed 9.6 million meals through an anti-hunger network of 399 partner organizations. Second Harvest serves the following 11 counties in northwest Pennsylvania: Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Venango and Warren.