



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Second Harvest's Ramped Up Efforts Requires More Volunteers**

**Erie, Pa., October 29, 2020** – The Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania continues to provide food to the most vulnerable in the area. This has required additional effort to both meet the need while also following strict COVID-19 safety guidelines. Volunteers are a crucial part of these expanded operations. The organization seeks more individuals to contribute their time as Second Harvest adds weekend volunteer opportunities to its calendar.

“We need help,” says Karen S. Seggi, CEO of Second Harvest. “Every day we continue to provide food through hundreds of member agencies and partner organizations. We are the primary source of grocery items for food pantries, soup kitchens, Backpack Programs, School Pantries, Produce Expresses, Military Shares, senior boxes or other organizations. We are in desperate need of volunteers to help us address all of these challenges.”

Second Harvest's operational response to COVID-19 has led to substantial changes within the volunteer department. Second Harvest hosts fewer volunteers per shift to ensure social distancing. Hand sanitizer has been placed at multiple locations throughout the building and staff has increased the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting, especially around high-traffic areas (e.g. volunteer lounge, bathrooms, break room). Volunteers are required to wear masks and gloves, and any equipment used during a shift is not to be shared between individuals.

The addition of a Saturday shifts creates an immediate need for an additional 24 volunteers per week. It is anticipated that 168 Saturday slots will need filled between now and the end of the calendar year. In total, Second Harvest hosts more than 100 volunteers each week. Volunteer shifts include:

Day	Morning	Afternoon
Monday	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	
Tuesday	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	1 – 4 p.m.
Wednesday	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	
Thursday	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	1 – 4 p.m.
Friday	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	
Saturday	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	1 – 4 p.m.

Volunteer shifts are limited to 10-12 individuals per project. Participants will be working building boxes that are delivered to seniors across our area; packing BackPacks of food for school children; assembling boxes of dry goods, refrigerated goods or produce for Second Harvest mobile food distributions; or other programs that ultimately provide food for those in need.

If you are interested in assisting Second Harvest by volunteering during this critical time, please visit <https://nwpafoodbank.org/become-a-volunteer/> to view available shifts and schedule for a session. Please contact Andrea Velez at [avelez@nwpafoodbank.org](mailto:avelez@nwpafoodbank.org) should you have specific questions.

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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 10.4 million meals through an anti-hunger network of 395 partner organizations. Second Harvest serves the following 11 counties in northwest Pennsylvania: Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Venango and Warren.