



## Governor Christie, First Lady and Family Serve Thanksgiving Meals at Trenton Area Soup Kitchen

Wednesday, November 24, 2010 • Tags: [Other](#)

**Trenton, NJ** - Governor Chris Christie joined by First Lady Mary Pat Christie and their children visited the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (T.A.S.K.) today to volunteer their time and serve Thanksgiving dinners to individuals and families in need. T.A.S.K. serves more than 3,000 free meals to community members every week.

"During these difficult economic times, many New Jerseyans are looking for help to make ends meet, feed their families or even find shelter," said Governor Christie. "For more than twenty years, the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen has been a beacon of hope for those less fortunate. Mary Pat and I applaud the work T.A.S.K. undertakes everyday to make a difference in the lives of the Trenton community."

Founded in the early 1980's in the basement of a Trenton-area church, T.A.S.K. also provides services that encourage self-sufficiency and improve quality of life and includes outreach programs such as adult education, computer training, healthcare counseling, screening and referrals as well as social and children's services.

According to the Food Research and Action Center, 15.5 percent of New Jersey households did not have enough money to purchase food at some point in 2009, an increase of 1.4 percent from 2008. New Jersey works to assist those in need through several programs.

As part of the State Food Purchase Program (SFFP) administered through the state Department of Agriculture, the Christie Administration has committed nearly \$7 million to help New Jersey's six emergency feeding operations at the Southern Region Food Distribution Center, Vineland; the Foodbank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, Neptune; Mercer Street Friends, Ewing; the Community Foodbank of NJ, Hillside; NORWESCAP, Phillipsburg and the Foodbank of South Jersey, Pennsauken. These operations supply food to 793 food pantries, soup kitchen and homeless shelters around the state.

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) also has awarded more than \$176,000 in federal funds through the federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program this year to New Jersey food banks. Funding is used to distribute groceries and fresh produce; provide education and training; and develop programs to help households with low income meet basic needs.

In addition, EndHungerNJ ([www.endhungernj.org](http://www.endhungernj.org)), a project of the New Jersey Hunger Prevention Advisory Committee within the Department of Human Services (DHS), provides information on its website by town and county on food pantry and soup kitchen locations. Another program maintained and operated by DHS, NJHelps ([www.njhelps.org](http://www.njhelps.org)), is a state agency partnership that provides a "one-stop" shopping resource and online pre-screening for a wide range of programs, information and services to assist individuals and families throughout the state.

Or, to learn about resources available in your community, dial 2-1-1 from any phone or by log in to [www.nj211.org](http://www.nj211.org). The 2-1-1 partnership is a community resource that makes it easier to locate where to go for help and how to apply to get information.

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