

Governor Phil Murphy

# CRDA Board Approves An Additional \$300,000 in Food Funding Support for Atlantic City Community

05/13/2020

**ATLANTIC CITY** – At a special board meeting held Monday, the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA) approved an additional \$300,000 in funding support for various food services in Atlantic City in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The current COVID-19 state of emergency has created significant uncertainty for families in Atlantic City. In the first month after the declaration of the COVID-19 state of emergency, New Jersey saw an unprecedented amount of unemployment filings with the State. Atlantic City was among the top three most impacted municipalities. Recently, the Press of Atlantic City reported a 300% increase in visits to local food pantries in Atlantic County.

“This partnership is the result of government, private industry, and labor coming together as one New Jersey family to leverage our collective resources to fight food insecurity in Atlantic City,” **said Governor Murphy.** “With so many of our tourism and gaming employees out of work, this collaborative effort will put food on the table for those who need it most and have a profound impact on a community that’s been devastated economically as a result of COVID-19.”

“Governor Murphy and I recognize the severe economic impact that the coronavirus pandemic is having on New Jersey families and their ability to put food on the table. We are pleased to see CRDA step up to help address this public health emergency and appreciate that the private sector, the City of Atlantic City, non-profit groups, and labor organizations are all collaborating to provide critical food assistance to Atlantic City residents and casino workers,” **said Lt. Governor Sheila Y. Oliver, who serves as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.**

The food distribution is a collaboration between the Community Food Bank of New Jersey, CRDA, the City of Atlantic City, AFL-CIO, Local 54 and other private donors. This is a first-of-its-kind partnership between State and local governments, the casino industry, and union representatives, which includes Local 54 providing boots-on-the-ground coordination with the Community Food Bank of New Jersey and the AFL-CIO providing both financial and volunteer support. While CRDA is allocating \$300,000 to the effort, private donors include Joe Jingoli from Hard Rock Hotel Casino Atlantic City: \$50,000; Jim Allen from Hard Rock International: \$25,000; Morris Bailey from Resorts Atlantic City: \$25,000; Charles Wowkanec from AFL-CIO: \$10,000, with additional private funding being pursued.

This new funding provides additional food assistance for casino workers and Atlantic City residents. The first food distribution will take place at 10 a.m. on Thursday, May 14th at Bader Field and will be on a first come, first serve basis for Atlantic City residents and casino workers. The distribution will be drive-up only. People will not be getting out of their cars.



The food distribution initiative will extend for approximately 2 months with the goal of holding two food distribution events each month (May and June) and to distribute 9,000 meal kits per month. Each kit contains 12 servings of food, including fresh produce.

To date, the CRDA has funded \$523,052 of various community food initiatives, including Jewish Family Services: \$23,500; Hispanic Association of Atlantic County: \$80,000; Gateway Community Action Partnership: \$50,000; Agreement with the City of Atlantic City to fund the purchase and delivery of hot meals to seniors and disabled: \$69,552; Community Food Bank of New Jersey: \$300,000 (toward a total of \$608,100 which includes private funding.)

The number of families and seniors in need of food services in Atlantic City is significant and the need is immediate. In funding these additional services to the community, the CRDA remains steadfast in its mission of helping the residents of Atlantic City.

## Governor Phil Murphy

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