March 18, 2020

Dear Friends,

Everyone recognizes that our world, country and community are challenged in ways we never considered. Operating during times of crisis is something each of our Salvation Army officers is prepared and trained to do. In the wake of the current COVID-19 pandemic, we stand ready to respond together, with you, with a caring heart.

Below is a brief update on steps we're taking to ramp up our efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus, especially among the homeless and other vulnerable populations. One in three Clevelanders lives in poverty, including 50 percent of children. The demand for our services under normal circumstances is high, and we anticipate the demand for our services to grow in the coming months.

As of today, our Salvation Army corps community centers and Harbor Light Complex continue to operate to serve those in need. Safety is our top priority for our clients, staff and volunteers. In compliance with federal, state and local authorities, we have made necessary adjustments in how we are delivering some of our programs and services. Below are a few:

**Food service:** Our food pantries are following a no-touch model, meaning food is being pre-bagged and handed to clients rather than letting them choose their own products as they can under normal conditions. We are also adjusting hot-meal programs to offer to-go meals so as to avoid people congregating.

**Shelter facilities:** Close living conditions mean infectious disease can easily spread among residents. We have increased cleaning throughout the day, with elevated focus on high-traffic areas. If a resident gets sick, a quarantine area will be established. Our goal is to deliver services while providing a safe and healthy environment for residents and staff.

**Learning programs:** After school programs have been suspended until schools are back in session. At this time, we continue to offer pre-school programs. We have increased cleaning throughout the day to provide a safe and healthy environment for children and staff. Maintaining our pre-school programs enable parents to continue working.

**Worship services:** All corps remain open on Sundays until further notice. Sunday School and worship services will be kept below the 50-person threshold and follow social distancing in accordance with Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine’s latest instruction.

We have other programs and services that have not yet been affected by required restrictions. As things change, we will continue to cooperate with authorities and remain compliant as we strive to offer maximum services to those in need.
We live in hope that we will effectively navigate our way through this crisis together, minimizing loss and hardship. Please pray with us for our neighbors, our nation, and our world.

For further updates and information, please go to SalvationArmyCleveland.org. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me, Irene Mishreky Nasr, Donor Relations Director (cell: 216-618-5107), or Carol Skoglund, Corporate Relations Director (cell: 216-317-5426).

We appreciate your support of our mission and pray God’s blessings on you.

In HIS service,

Major Thomas V. Applin  
Divisional Secretary for Greater Cleveland Area Services  
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