

## Housing for Health and World Central Kitchen Collaboration

### Program Outline

**Housing for Health is a program in the Department of Health Services in Los Angeles County.** Formed in 2013, this group of County staff were responsible for decreasing inpatient and emergency room visits for people experiencing homelessness by offering low barrier temporary and permanent housing options. Since then, HFH has gone on to house over 10,000 of the most high acuity, medically vulnerable people and is the high acuity arm of the county-wide Coordinated Entry System (CES). HFH connects people experiencing homelessness to services and housing by funding multi-disciplinary street based outreach/engagement, interim housing including recuperative care, permanent supportive housing and benefits advocacy services. HFH has over a 92% retention rate for clients living in permanent supportive housing.

**Why did HFH and World Central Kitchen partner?** HFH stays connected to contracted providers on a continuous basis and responded to their calls for the need to provide food to COVID high risk individuals and families. It was important to address the food insecurity that was quickly building as we worked together to flatten the curve and not inundate the hospital system. For more information about World Center Kitchen, visit their website here: <https://wck.org/> World Central Kitchen provided a fast, low barrier way to access fresh and healthy meals during a time when funding for food was not available for a coordinated response, grocery stores had food shortages, and there was uncertainty for people who needed to self-isolate or shelter in place.

**How much food is needed ?** The need is unprecedented. In a survey conducted by HFH with contracted providers they report over 10,000 who are housed in PSH in need of food on a daily basis. There are over 60,000 people living on the streets, 15,000 of whom have been identified as COVID high risk, and there was no coordinated food response until this partnership began.

### Logistical Details

Each service planning area (SPA) has a meal distribution site. Pre-packaged meals are delivered to each site in the morning Monday through Friday. The meals are then stored in a refrigerated truck while HFH-contracted providers come to the site to pick up meals for the population they serve. The trucks remain continually onsite, so a secure site with would be ideal to decrease the chances of vandalism or theft of items from the trucks. Staff are onsite from 6:00am to 9:30am to receive the delivery, set up the site, manage distributions, and close down the site.

All sites directly communicate with agencies to ensure pick-ups are happening daily. If an agency does not arrive by 9:00 am their meals are redistributed to another agency or food will be delivered to a local food bank. Per World Central Kitchen policy, no food is wasted and therefore agency no-shows are monitored by onsite staff.

*Video made by LA County highlighting the work:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYDv7u4zq8I>

