



HAWAII FOODBANK SEEING INFLUX IN FOOD NEEDS DUE TO GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

Nonprofit Urges Community to Give Food & Monetary Donations

HONOLULU (January 17, 2019) With 1 in 8 Hawaii residents already struggling with hunger, the ripple effect of food insecurity is quickly expanding statewide as the partial government shutdown will soon enter its fifth week. Hawaii Foodbank is reminding the community that food resources are available statewide for families affected by recent events.

On Saturday, January 19, volunteers will be at Hawaii Foodbank's Mapunapuna warehouse preparing emergency food bags for federal government workers and their families. The food distribution will happen Tuesday, January 22 at 1 p.m. at Seafarers Union Hall on Kalihi Street.

In addition to supporting local furloughed federal government workers, the nonprofit organization will also be providing food for more than 200 U.S Coast Guard families at the Coast Guard Exchange on Sand Island this Saturday from noon to 4 p.m.

"More and more of the 2,700 local furloughed federal workers and 1,626 military personnel serving in the Coast Guard who didn't receive their paychecks on January 11, are facing hunger, some for the first time in their lives," said Ron Mizutani, CEO of Hawaii Foodbank. "With every passing day, more families are being pressured into situations they're unfamiliar with and should never have to face them alone. It is unclear when the issues faced at our Nation's Capitol will be resolved but we must prepare as if a massive storm is quickly approaching."

More than 160,000 of families who rely on federal nutrition programs like SNAP are also concerned about what could be ahead if the stalemate continues.

"If SNAP is affected in anyway, it will ignite an unprecedented game-changing event," says Mizutani. "More people are suffering daily from hunger and we need to take action

immediately as Hawaii will experience an increase in food needs like we've never seen before."

Hawaii Foodbank is asking community members for monetary and food donations. Canned proteins, canned meals, canned vegetables, canned fruits and rice are in high demand. Residents are encouraged to drop their donations at Hawaii Foodbank as soon as possible.

"Regardless of one's political views, it is undeniable the issue of hunger is about real people and the lives that are now being impacted," said Mizutani. "We have entered uncharted waters and we need our community's full support to meet the increased demand."

For more information on how to receive food assistance or to make a donation, please call (808) 954-7869 or visit www.hawaiifoodbank.org/govshutdown.

About the Hawaii Foodbank

Hawaii Foodbank, in partnership with the food industry and community, serves as a link between charities and those in need of food assistance including the elderly, families, children and those facing financial crises each week. Last year, the Hawaii Foodbank distributed over 12.5 million pounds of food in Oahu and Kauai, including 3 million pounds of fresh produce. Hawaii Foodbank is a certified member of Feeding America and operates as the official food bank in the State of Hawaii. For more information, visit www.hawaiifoodbank.org or call (808) 836-3600.