



March 10, 2020

Hello Dry Bones Community,

Alongside the entire world, we continue to process the potential impacts of COVID-19 on our vulnerable population here at Dry Bones. We all hope and pray that this virus does not impact our world to the great degree of possibility we read about. Whether it does or does not, we already know that we *will* be impacted. Precautions, closings, and supply chains are already impacting our world.

There are so many unknowns and so we're simply trying to prepare now as best as we can. We also know that our houseless friends often get left out of all the planning. We're here for and with them.

As you work to protect yourself and your family in responsible ways, we invite you to imagine and prepare alongside the Dry Bones community too. We're filled with questions and ideas.

Some of our questions - from a source of preparation and care (not worry):

What will happen in crowded shelters if there's an outbreak? What about healthcare for our uninsured poor friends? What if a Dry Bones friend gets the (any) virus and has no place to find rest for recuperation? Where can they go? What would I do without my comfy bed if I even had the flu, much less a scary new disease? Do we continue gathering together if the virus begins to spread more rapidly in Denver? What if restaurants, soup kitchens, and services shut down for a week or two at a time? What about quarantines for houseless humans? Where will the unhoused find food and water? What if our crucial volunteer team becomes less available? What if stores close and even our access to food supply is unavailable to share? If the stock market continues to experience challenging days, will Dry Bones donors decrease or cut their support?

These, and many other questions will begin to find some response in the coming days.

Some of the opportunities:

We are privileged to get to love and care for the most vulnerable year round, and especially at this time. We get to teach, model, and promote self-care - from hand washing to showers to simple Purell stations and caring for others. We are experiencing the global community in a profound way! We get to continue to demonstrate unsurpassable worth and value through presence and service. We get to ask questions on behalf of a vulnerable population that most are not asking. We have the opportunity to advocate and mobilize to serve food, water, and sustenance during a challenging time. This may become a unique time of community building and uniting. We get to practice Christo-centric wise courage and fearlessness. We have yet another opportunity to be the family and support system we claim and long to be regardless of COVID-19.

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What can I do? How can I help?

- We know you'll pray. Pray for those losing loved ones around the world, those filled with extreme fear and anxiety, and for our unique community of houseless friends. I like to imaginatively envision Christ giving the world a big hug - especially when I don't know what to pray.
- Please continue to give. We hope, pray, and trust that Dry Bones' services will continue to be provided for financially and physically through tough economic and uncertain times. drybonesdenver.org/donate
- Shop our Amazon Wish List. Directly help us with the supplies we need to offer, such as fresh underwear, clothing, warmth, and hygiene. <http://bit.ly/dryboneswish>
- Share your ideas or what you see other agencies like ours doing. What are we missing? What have we *not* thought of yet? **We are keeping in close contact with many other agencies and will continue to follow best practices and learn from others around us.** Contact us here: <https://drybonesdenver.org/contact-us/>

If I am a volunteer, what should I expect? How will you communicate news and updates?

- Haley will keep you informed about our plans for weekly gatherings and needs through the volunteer **weekly email**. We will also use **Facebook** and **Instagram** to share updates.
- We already have a few Thursday night meal volunteers that will be unable to send their cooks and helpers due to company restrictions and personal decisions. We understand!
- We will work extra hard to keep our gatherings and meals as clean as ever. Wear gloves while serving food, don't come if you're feeling ill, have Purell ready and available to all, and practice all the precautionary cleanliness concepts you're hearing about on the news.
- If the spread of the virus increases locally, we will move gatherings outdoors as much as possible, will keep people reasonably separated, and may potentially need to cancel some events. We will hope to continue to be able to offer food, survival supplies, showers, and laundry throughout. If city ordinances or landlord closures come up, we will address those at that time. Nothing has changed in our schedule for now.
- We will continue to practice unconditional love and belonging. And that always moves in all directions. Keep in communication and know that we love you as you make personal decisions. It's ok if you need to stay home. It's necessary if you're feeling sick!

I have no doubt that there are organizations out there with some great ideas and questions that we've missed. We're learning from them. We plan to follow any new "best practices" as we learn together.

We're not freaking out, but did want to communicate as we're thinking and in response to your questions.

Thank you for consistent love, support, and prayers for the Dry Bones community!

Matt Wallace