

Good morning Clergy and Coordinators in the FPL network!

It's been quite awhile since some of you have heard directly from me and far too long since we've all been together. The perception of time is so strange during this pandemic and it feels like it's been years since we've gathered together. I hope you all are doing well and staying healthy.

I want you to all know how critically important each of you and your congregations and organizations are to FPL and how grateful we are for all the work you have and are doing in support of our local community. FPL could not have gotten to this point without you, and though our work is handled differently in this time, we cannot move forward without you either! There are still plenty of opportunities to help, stay engaged, and keep volunteers active in this good kingdom work .

More than 70 families are currently enrolled in active FPL programs right now. That's more than 200 people and 65% of them are children. With the loss of income, especially hard hit are hourly workers. We anticipate, based on our increased calls, that this trend of families in need will continue, or at least to stay at this higher steady pace.

FPL has decided to keep the Rotation Program on pause until there is a vaccine available and the vaccine has been widely distributed. The decision is based on our concern for the risk of transmission, as 60-70 different volunteers are needed for each hosting week, the vulnerability of those we serve and for the volunteers, many who are in high risk populations.

We have pivoted our programs, and have continued to do intakes into active programs throughout the pandemic.

Current Active Programs at FPL:

- 1. Shelter** - Formally known as Rotation. Since we suspended the Rotation of families through congregations, we have been sheltering families in place using Temporary Housing apartments we have available. From 2-5 families have been sheltered each week since COVID-19 started.
- 2. Diversion from Shelter** - The purpose of this program is to divert families from needing shelter space (timely, since we have limited family beds for shelter right now in Douglas County).
- 3. P515** - much like the Diversion from Shelter Program, as families shelter safely elsewhere, but P515 is a program designed for those that may need additional, longer term case management supports.
- 4. Temporary Housing** - extended housing for 6 months to 1 year for qualified applicants form any active FPL program.
- 5. Prevention** - HUMI Program - prevention of homelessness - with financial supports for rent and case management supports.
- 6. Stabilization / HSC Program - stabilizing** housing and retaining housing - This program has grown and proven critical during the COVID pandemic.

How can Congregations and Volunteers Help Now?

1. When it is your hosting week on our 2020 Rotation schedule, will you still be able to provide groceries / food to the families in Shelter? We initiated a process for this the past 3.5 months, so most of you will have gone through one of these rotations! We'd like to continue this throughout the remainder of 2020, if it is working well for your congregations.

2. We have a volunteer sign up genius for all different types of tasks and volunteer options. I've included the link here. Please feel free to pass this along to your teams. We will be updated this weekly as other volunteer opportunities and needs arise.

www.signupgenius.com/go/8050f4ba5a72ea0fe3-fplvolunteer

3. We are making plans for a Shelter Cohort Team - which will be activated based on need for sheltering in place. The idea is to use rooms at congregations that are currently not in use for church activities and shelter families for 1 month at a time. Hosting would only be for sleeping overnight and would be from 7PM-7AM. Volunteers from the full network will sign up (does not have to be only from the one congregation or organization). The volunteers will sign up and commit to a specific Cohort Team and the volunteers and the families would remain constant through the sheltering period, so as to limit cross transmission of COVID-19.

If this is something that you may want to learn more about, please let me know and we can visit about this possibility and I can provide additional planning details.

4. We are participating in a National Family Promise awareness and fundraising effort in June, called Night without a bed. We'd love your help, and if you'd like to champion a fundraising page, please contact Kristin@lawrencefamilypromise.org. The link to our Family Promise of Lawrence fundraising page is included here for your information:

www.fpgives.org/organizations/family-promise-of-lawrence?fbclid=IwAR0QzL1g6pTHOEkPkvIkUyuRRAgppaSZaZcv33imJZ-4L4_GzdKZ7hvMFZE

We sure miss you all! We miss our community that is represented so well in the FPL network. The families are being served, and are also missing some of the benefits of that community connection. We are trying to replicate it somewhat with check in calls by volunteers and building a remote community with those who are enrolled. Hopefully we can all get together soon to celebrate and in the meantime, please prayerfully consider staying involved with FPL in some of these other ways. The need is real and we need your help!

God bless you all. Thank you for your service, prayers and support. Only through grace,

Dana M. Ortiz

Executive Director

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