

Press Release

Hamilton County Health Department



Web: health.hamiltontn.org

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

September 8, 2020

Health Department, Food Bank Distribute Free Food Boxes at the Alstom COVID-19 Test Site

HAMILTON COUNTY, TN – The Hamilton County Health Department and the Chattanooga Area Food Bank have partnered to distribute food boxes at the [Health Department's Alstom Plant COVID-19 test site](#) to anyone who is being tested and may be facing hunger.

The initiative will meet the need of persons who are unable to go out for supplies because they need to isolate or quarantine at home following a test, while addressing food insecurity, or limited or uncertain access to adequate food, due to the COVID pandemic.

"We appreciate the Food Bank for making this service possible through our test site," said Health Department Administrator Becky Barnes. "We know this pandemic has been difficult on our residents in many ways."

The food boxes will be distributed on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00AM to 11:30AM, while supplies last. The Alstom test site is open from 7:00AM to 11:30, seven days a week.

According to a recent [study by Feeding America](#), the nation's largest hunger-relief organization, of which the local Food Bank is a member, one in five people overall and more than one in four children could face hunger as a result of the COVID pandemic's economic impact. The report also identifies those at highest risk of COVID illness- seniors, those with chronic illnesses, and minority populations- may be the most affected by the pandemic's economic impact and associated food insecurity.

"When people are screened for COVID-19, many have no choice but to stay at home for an extended period, which often means they aren't able to go to work and earn money they would use to pay for rent, utilities and food," said Chattanooga Area Food Bank Director of Operations Chris Payne. "No one should have to choose between their health, having somewhere to live or being able to eat. While people wait on results or isolate while they are sick, these boxes provide access to nutritious food no matter how uncertain their financial situation may be."

The free food boxes at the test site are intended for people who participate in the COVID testing process. However, anyone in need of food can visit chattfoodbank.org/hungry to find help close to where they live. Hamilton County residents may dial 211 or text their zip code to 898-211 to be connected with a voucher for an emergency food box.

For more information about the Chattanooga Area Food Bank, please contact Sophie Moore, Director of Community Outreach, at smoore@chattfoodbank.org or 678-977-8647.

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It is recommended that anyone who has any symptoms of illness be tested, and especially those who have been in close contact to a known or probable case of COVID-19.

For more information about COVID-19, please call the hotline at (423) 209-8383.

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