July 30, 2021 | 3:15 pm

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SEPTEMBER 2, 2020 | Albany, NY

Governor Cuomo Announces New York State to Extend Partnership with HelloFresh to Combat Food Insecurity Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

HEALTH (/KI CORONAVIRUS (/KI VETERANS)NA KEYWORDS/VETERANS)

Program With State Division of Veterans' Services Focuses On Addressing Food Insecurity Among Veterans, Military Families And Other New Yorkers Adversely Impacted By COVID-19

Program Builds on Governor Cuomo's Successful Nourish New York Initiative and Will Provide Over 200,000 Meals Through the End of the Year

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the New York State Division of Veterans' Services will extend a partnership with HelloFresh, the world's leading meal kit delivery company, to combat food insecurity amid the COVID-19 pandemic. HelloFresh will provide over 200,000 fresh meals to veterans, military families and other residents in New York City who are experiencing food insecurity as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. The program builds on the successful Nourish New York initiative, a multi-agency effort to reduce food insecurity and support food producers during this unprecedented time.

HelloFresh and the New York State Division of Veterans' Services kicked off an initial pilot program in June, providing over 65,000 meals to date to families in New York City.

"The pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity across New York and across this nation and it's the most vulnerable among us that bear the brunt," **Governor Cuomo said.** "I am proud to see great New York companies taking a stand to help ensure that no family goes hungry and on behalf of New Yorkers - thank you to HelloFresh for its dedication and efforts on this critical mission."

CEO of HelloFresh US Uwe Voss said, "At HelloFresh, we believe that everyone should have access to fresh, healthy food and the ability to share a home-cooked meal with loved ones. We are extremely proud to support Governor

Cuomo's efforts by providing nourishing meal kits to veterans and New Yorkers facing hardship during the pandemic."

Each week, volunteers with Black Veterans for Social Justice and The Campaign Against Hunger pack and assemble HelloFresh meal kits consisting of fresh, high-quality ingredients, recipe cards and a bag of fruit - free of charge - to veterans, service members and their families, and other New Yorkers adversely impacted by COVID-19. The meal kits are packed at TCAH's Brooklyn headquarters and distributed, with the help of the NYC Department of Veteran's Affairs, to individuals in New York City who are currently struggling to put healthy, nourishing food on their tables.

Following the success of the initial pilot program, HelloFresh and the State of New York will be extending the program in Brooklyn, providing an additional 150,000 meals to veterans and food insecure families over the next four months.

Food insecurity is high among veterans, service members and their families. The United States Department of Veterans Affairs reports that veterans who served in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are twice as likely to be food insecure compared with the general population, and a 2018 study showed that 1.5 million veterans in the United States lived in a household that relied completely on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits to supplement their food intake. In New York State alone, according to the Center on Budget & Policy Priorities, 59,000 veterans rely on SNAP benefits to feed themselves and their families — a number that only worsened due to the adverse impacts of COVID-19.

Executive Deputy Director of the New York State Division of Veterans' Services Joel Evans said, "No veteran should ever confront a lack of food for themselves or for their family members. Unfortunately, the medical and financial challenges imposed by COVID-19 have placed too many of our state's heroes and their families in this dangerous position. We commend Governor Cuomo and HelloFresh for devoting resources toward addressing this crucial issue, and offer our utmost thanks to all the veterans and veterans' advocates who have volunteered their time to assist in this necessary effort."

The Campaign Against Hunger Executive Director and Founder Dr. Melony Samuels said, "The Campaign Against Hunger is excited to partner with Hello Fresh to support veterans that have been plunged into food insecurity by COVID-19. Veterans have served our country selflessly, and we now must ensure that their needs are met and centered in any relief efforts. Together, we are ensuring that veterans have access to nutritious food as we navigate these uncertain times in our city and country. I commend Hello Fresh for taking the initiative to ensure that our veterans have what they need to live and thrive."

Black Veterans for Social Justice CEO Wendy McClinton said, "Everything is done for the betterment of the Veteran, their families and the community! Forward Ever, Backwards, never."

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