April 1, 2020

DHS Partners with Cedar Ridge Distillery and the Department of Corrections to Provide Hand Sanitizer to Frontline DHS Staff and Childcare Providers

(Des Moines, Iowa) – The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) is pleased to announce unique partnerships with Cedar Ridge Distillery and the Department of Corrections (DOC). DHS is exploring every opportunity to work with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure we're able to continue to provide critical services to Iowans, while protecting our team members.

Cedar Ridge Distillery of Swisher, IA, is providing DHS with more than 90 gallons of hand sanitizer. This will cover all of DHS' frontline staff. This includes child welfare and case management social workers who work directly with families and children in need of assistance. This also includes income maintenance workers, targeted case managers (TCM) and administrative staff who remain in offices. The Cedar Rapids field office is helping to distribute 36 gallons to the Cedar Rapids, Northern, and Eastern Service Areas while the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) will help transport the remaining supply to Des Moines, for distribution to the Des Moines and Western Service Areas.

"It felt like the right thing for us to do, at least temporarily until the big producers get caught back up with demand," said Jeff Quint, founder of Cedar Ridge Distillery. "Meanwhile, since our winery kitchen and event center have been shut down, it is keeping our retail staff fully employed. We look forward to getting back to full-time whiskey production. Until then, we plan to do all we can on the sanitizer front."

"Words cannot express how thankful I am for Cedar Ridge's partnership," said Director Garcia. "I also want to thank Senator Mathis for her continued support of our agency. After speaking with her, she picked up the phone and made one call, and Cedar Ridge committed to working with us to support our frontline staff. It's incredible seeing Iowans step up and answer the call to help. Our team members at DHS make great sacrifices every day to serve those in need, and I'm grateful we're able to find creative solutions to support them during this critical time."

Supporting our childcare providers is also critical during this time as they support the State's essential workforce, and ensuring they have the supplies they need to deploy robust mitigation strategies is key. The DOC is providing 35 gallons of hand sanitizer to be delivered to childcare providers by the end of the week. The DOC already stocked additional supplies at our six facilities.

"Director Skinner and her team at the DOC have been great partners in this effort, and I look forward to our continued collaboration. This really is a team effort," said Garcia. DHS purchased an additional 90 gallons of hand sanitizer using Childcare Development Funds (CCDF) for 125 gallons total going to Iowa childcare providers. DHS is working to secure other cleaning supplies as well.

DHS looks forward to building new relationships and continued collaboration. We expect to forge more partnerships in the future to help those we serve.

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