



Dining Services Program



Thank You!

With the help of the United Way, the Center is able to serve more than 180,000 meals each year. Some individuals entering the Center haven't eaten in days. The dining room at the Center provides a place for nourishment as well as belonging for those experiencing homelessness.



Feeding The Hungry In Our Community

The Dining Services program is a full-service meal program serving the entire campus of the Center for the Homeless. The Dining program is open 365 days per year, and serves three meals a day. Our staff is highly experienced in the food service industry, with certifications in ServSafe, Management/Cost Control, and culinary arts. Our Executive Chef holds an Associates in Hospitality.

On any given night, there are an average of 500 homeless men, women, and children in St. Joseph County. The Center for the Homeless Dining Services Program prepares to feed approximately 165 individuals each day; therefore, we are responsible for ensuring proper nutrition for at least one-third of our community's homeless.



"I am fortunate to be here. To be able to eat in the dining room, to work in the dining room, its just a great feeling. I could never give back what the Center has done for me and my wife. Being able to help serve others makes me feel like I'm contributing, that I'm giving back a little bit."

ROBYN

Reducing Food Insecurity

While our offsite guests don't routinely access our dining services for daily meals, they do continue to experience food insecurity. When they are in need of food subsidies, our Dining Services staff works with them to put together a week's worth of food from our pantry, while their coach continues to help them access mainstream resources in the community and to improve their budgeting skills. At Thanksgiving, we ensure that each offsite guest receives a food box, including a turkey.

Through the Dining Services program, we also offer our guests instruction on nutrition. In our adult self-sufficiency classes, the Executive Chef not only covers the basics of good nutrition, but also how to eat healthy on a budget, how to make smarter shopping choices, and how what we eat affects our life as a whole. The chef also meets with guests one-on-one to provide them guidance about their diets and how they can improve/change them for their well-being. The chef also works with guests with dietary restrictions to ensure they can eat in a manner that supports their health and wellness.



Sustaining Personal Nutrition

Providing meals onsite at the Center for the Homeless ensures that all guests have access to high quality meals three times a day. Each meal provided includes a protein and a fruit or vegetable. We continually evaluate expenditures within the program and find ways to be more cost-effective without sacrificing quality.

To help keep costs low, the Center utilizes bulk and prepared food donations as well as fruits and vegetables grown in the Community Garden each summer. The Center is also fortunate to have a consistent amount of volunteers to serve and prepare meals to help cut down on staff costs.



"My daughter Elise, she's two. She has grown so much in PEDS. She eats lunch there every day, it's healthy and she just loves it!"

ERICA





Center for
the Homeless