

## **Silver Key Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response Plan and Service Update.**

**Friday, March 13, 2020 - Effective Immediately -**

Silver Key has announced further plans to address coronavirus (COVID-19) in addition to some of the preventative measures already previously announced. All our services will remain open, but each will operate under our public health crisis plan. The primary focus remains the health and safety of our clients, volunteers, and staff. For any senior in need, please contact Silver Key's Silver Line at 719-884-2300.

Older adults are particularly vulnerable and at risk with this outbreak. The needs of seniors to receive transportation, nutritional, and other assistance services remain in spite of the current public health crisis. We are balancing maintaining the necessity of services for seniors and to the community while simultaneously taking additional measures to ensure the health and wellbeing of all.

A key goal for our additional actions is mitigating the potential spread of the virus both by suspending non-essential large group gatherings, which include most Active Living activities and other meetings. Decisions about future events later this spring are not yet determined. We base our decisions on the best advice of public health experts, including the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, El Paso County Public Health, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

### **Silver Key Connection Cafes:**

The most significant change at this time, is in our Connections Café congregate meal sites. Patrons will be offered the opportunity to receive their meal in a prepared "*grab and go*" format. This will allow clients the choice to receive their meal in a portable format, to then return home-mitigating any potential exposure. For those who themselves choose to still dine in the Café location the regularly prepared meal will remain an option. This elective option was made after careful contemplation and discussion with experts and health officials to find the best solution to senior food insecurity needs as well as to avoid excessive social isolation. Those who choose to dine at the Café, will be met with signage and informed staff who will advise about the need to be mindful of best practices in illness prevention including social distancing. Moreover, we will be increasing our cleaning protocols above and beyond our normal high-quality practices.

Sites are hosted throughout [El Paso County](#). Some sites may, without notice, elect to pause service in the best interest of public health and wellness. This will be handled on a case by case basis. Please contact Silver Key's Silver Line 719-884-2300 for the latest updates.

### **Silver Key Home Delivered Meals (HDM) including Meals on Wheels:**

Perhaps more than ever, this service (that is so much more than a meal), is critical to older adults. Seniors who are regularly homebound and/or those who have followed precautionary advice to stay home and away from large public settings need the visit of reassurance that includes a hot delicious nutritious meal-conveniently delivered to their homes. We place the utmost importance on the health and safety of clients. We also know that having someone visit with healthy meals is also important to our clients. To that end we are following the advice and direction of Meals on Wheels America and public health officials, by enacting the following protocols:

During the current circumstances, concerning the Coronavirus (COVID-19), we will make every effort to continue to bring this important service as we always have.

**We plan to observe a 6-foot distance between the delivery person and the client.**

- When delivering meals to homes, we will bring the meals to the door as usual and leave them in any cooler or container that is designated for HDM or Meals on Wheels. This service will not change.
- If there is not already a container, each driver will bring a cooler with them, in order to place the meals in for clients to retrieve, once they have maintained the 6-foot distance.
- Meals will be placed in a cooler bag and left at the door before knocking or ringing the doorbell, then the driver will step back at least 6 feet.
- If you would like to speak with the person delivering meals, the driver will need to maintain the 6-foot distance as a precaution for client's health.
- If you require assistance to carry meals or the cooler to a more accessible location in your home, the delivery person will respectfully remain 6 feet or more away, as they provide assistance.

If we are uncertain if the client has received the meal, we will follow up with a phone call the same day.

For those interested in our Home Delivered Meals service this is a helpful and convenient option to consider. Please call 719-884-2300 or visit: <https://www.silverkey.org/services/home-delivered-meals/> to sign-up today.

### **Silver Key Reserve & Ride-Transportation:**

Silver Key's Reserve & Ride transportation service provides door-through-door ADA accessible transportation for medical appointments, shopping, group meals, and more. At this time, we are continuing our Reserve & Ride services as usual with the following additional protocols:

- Vehicles will be receiving increased cleaning protocols above and beyond our normal high-quality practices.
- Additional signage and well-versed staff who will advise about the need to be mindful of best practices in illness prevention including social distancing.
- Anyone who displays flu like symptoms may be asked about their symptoms and to consider if their trip is vital at this time.

### **Silver Key Senior Assistance and Food Pantry:**

**Silver Key Senior Assistance** supports senior well-being by addressing temporary hardships, mental and physical challenges, financial matters, health care benefits and connections to available federal and local resources.

At this time, we are continuing our Senior Assistance services as usual with the following additional protocols:

- Communal and other workspaces will be receiving increased cleaning protocols above and beyond our normal high-quality practices.
- Additional signage and well-versed staff who will advise about the need to be mindful of best practices in illness prevention including social distancing.
- Anyone who displays flu like symptoms may be asked about their symptoms and to consider if their visit is vital at this time and/or if their concern can be handled via phone/email.

**Silver Key's Food Pantry**, in partnership with others, distributes government food assistance, to supplement a senior's diet and improve the health of the low-income elderly. The food pantry also provides food for people age 60+ in a temporary emergency situation.

In recognition of COVID-19 we will be *temporarily* switching to a “*pick-up*” **ONLY** model for all Food Pantry programs, including: Commodities (CSFP), Emergency Food Pantry (TEFAP), etc until further notice. During this time, we will be pausing on our “*client choice*” model in the interest of public health and safety.

In keeping with our normal process, clients will be asked to come in during their designated times, according to their last name. Hours will not change. They will then receive their pre-packaged food items, with limited wait time so as to continue providing them with essential provisions without waiting in a group setting--thus minimizing risks associated with crowd or group environments.

\*Please note, clients who use Silver Key Reserve & Ride transportation for their food pantry visits, will have their Food Pantry items delivered to them. Please contact Silver Key's Silver Line 719-884-2300 for the latest updates.

### **Silver Key Volunteer Impact Program (V.I.P.) and Active Living:**

Silver Key V.I.P. volunteers provide a plethora of diverse assistance positively impacting older adults in our community. Silver Key Active Living focuses on new and innovative ways for people to engage at every age.

Out of the abundance of caution, Silver Key Active Living is placing a temporary pause on all non-essential trainings, activities, and events through March 31<sup>st</sup>. Cancelled events include Zumba Gold, Movies at Silver Key, Live Music: Cinnamon Tea Flute Quartet, Bunco, Top 10 Scams/Identity Theft by Adam's Bank, and Painting classes. We will reevaluate all Active Living trainings in April.

Because older adults, especially those with underlying health conditions, have been disproportionately effected by this virus the need for volunteers to serve is great. For those that the virus poses less of a risk and that are able, please consider serving those who are vulnerable. This is a highly personal decision and should be one that each considers for themselves and their families.

At this time, volunteer orientations will continue as scheduled, with the next one on Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Please RSVP by Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> to [info@silverkey.org](mailto:info@silverkey.org) or calling 719-884-2300 if you would like to attend the volunteer orientation for current or newly onboarded volunteers to receive guidance regarding the volunteer handbook, expectations, and an overview of services.

We have been and will continue to be in close consultation with El Paso County Public Health, particularly Medical Director (Dr. Robin Johnson) as well as other State and Local officials to monitor the ongoing cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) throughout the world and our local community. As we make decisions amid this fast-moving issue, Silver Key issued a [statement](#) March 9<sup>th</sup> as a first step in ongoing measures taken. We will continually assess our protocols and practices during this unprecedented time. Likewise, we will continue to update the public as promptly as possible as updates are made available.

We particularly appreciate the work of our volunteers and staff, who have stepped up to ensure we continue to deliver high-quality services despite challenging circumstances. Likewise, we want to thank our clients for their patience and understanding as we navigate these changes. We are closely monitoring the situation and will make decisions in the best interests for all in our community. We

have made additional resources available on our [website](#), including prevention information.

Thank you for supporting our efforts to keep older adults healthy and safe while also continuing to meet our mission. Every facet of our community is challenged by this outbreak. We are confident that together we will rise to this challenge and overcome the obstacles set before us.

**Here's How to Help:**

Donations to support older adults during this crisis can be made at: <https://www.silverkey.org/donate/>

If you'd like to join others in volunteering please visit: <https://www.silverkey.org/volunteer/>