

Knysna Municipality calls for concerted effort in implementing feeding schemes.

The extended nationwide lockdown has placed many residents under financial pressure, leaving them unable to feed themselves and their families. The community of Knysna is once again showing its mettle with various food relief programmes being organised.

Knysna Deputy Executive Mayor Aubrey Tsengwa said the various initiatives are heart warming. “We are all in this together. Lockdown is having a disastrous effect on our economy and there are very few residents whose lives are not touched by the virus. The efforts by individuals and companies to help the most vulnerable show that even in dire times we have not lost our ability to look out for our fellow human beings, and I want to thank them on behalf of the Knysna Council.”

He said that it is of the utmost importance that all involved does not work from different databases and according to varying qualifying criteria. “This creates the very real possibility of an inaccurate distribution of vital relief as applicants may potentially benefit from more than one organisation. For every household that benefits from a duplicate application, there will be another – just as needy – that will have to do without.”

“The only way in which we can ensure the fair distribution of these donations is to work from a shared database and to the same qualifying criteria,” he said. “For instance, Knysna Municipality does not provide food relief parcels to individuals who have access to UIF or those who receive SASSA grants. Alternatively, we ask independent relief programmes to share the details of their beneficiaries with us to prevent duplications.”

“The distribution of food relief is always a sensitive matter. This extended lockdown is already a tense time for everyone. It would be irresponsible of us all to potentially worsen the situation in our vulnerable communities by not working together,” he said. “We have received reports of unhappiness and unrests regarding the distribution of food parcels and must prevent at all costs that these continue.”

Tsengwa urged the public to donate to the relief efforts. “The people of Greater Knysna are known for helping their neighbours in times of need. We ask that those of you who are able to, please pay it forward. Just as no act of kindness is too small, neither is any donation – of food or monetary value. This virus has become the great equaliser of our time and we are all in this together. If you can help, please do.”

The wish list of donated goods includes, but is not limited to sugar, sunflower oil, juice/cooldrink concentrate, flour, teabags, instant coffee, long life milk, tinned pilchards, macaroni, rice, baked beans, tinned red kidney beans, soup mix, tinned corned meat, maize meal, stock cubes, soya mince, handwashing powder, toothpaste and soap bars. Drop-off points are clearly marked at Knysna Pick n Pay and Super Spar.

Financial contributions for the purchasing of food parcels should be deposited into the municipality’s disaster relief current account held at Nedbank. The account number is 114 792 0699, the universal branch code is 198-765 and the Swift code is NEDSZAJJ.

Please contact Pam Booth for further information at pbooth@knysna.gov.za or 060 998 6967.

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