



MAYOR'S OFFICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
CITY OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 7, 2023

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**CITY OF CHICAGO, VIVERY COMMUNITY AND THE GREATER CHICAGO FOOD
DEPOSITORY ANNOUNCE CONTINUATION OF FOOD DELIVERY PILOT FOR
DISABLED CITY RESIDENTS IN AUSTIN NEIGHBORHOOD**

Piloted Food Delivery System Extended for Further Six Months

CHICAGO - The Mayor's Office of People with Disabilities (MOPD), the Community Safety Coordination Center (CSCC), Vivery Community (an organization helping increase access to nutritious food through technology), and the Greater Chicago Food Depository announce a continuation of an in-home food delivery pilot to ensure disabled residents in Austin have access to fresh, nutritious food.

"Using the full force of government to work in coordination with philanthropy, community and business to improve access to healthy food for my disabled neighbors in Austin is something I'm proud to continue," **said Mayor Brandon Johnson**. "This kind of partnership is essential to moving this work forward, and making sure we continue to nourish people, and invest in people, with care, compassion and collaboration."

The pilot [launched](#) in February 2023 in conjunction with the [Vivery Idea Lab](#) to harness technology when delivering groceries to qualified residents. As of August 2023, the program has distributed over 27,000 pounds of food with 1,059 deliveries to 100 residents. The program has created 38 new jobs held by residents of the Austin and Garfield Park communities. The current expansion includes continuation of the program for another six months to the same 100 residents. For now, the food delivery program is based in Austin, with efforts to identify funders so that an additional 1,000 disabled residents throughout Chicago can be served. The Greater Chicago Food Depository is providing the current funding for the program's extension.

"Everyone must have access to food, including disabled people. Our collaboration meets a critical need in this whole of government approach to reduce the staggering statistic that one third of all disabled people are food insecure. We are proud to work with partners like Vivery Community on this innovative program and build a model for other communities to replicate,

while also increasing access to our city’s food pantries,” **said MOPD Commissioner Rachel Arfa.**

The Austin delivery pilot uses in-home delivery to alleviate barriers that contribute to food insecurity while also strengthening the network of pantries and providers who support people with disabilities. Through the program, approved applicants are matched with local pantries and receive two monthly deliveries of fresh, nutritious food. Vivery uses communication tools to collect feedback about the program from participants on a monthly basis. Vernia Palmer, an Austin resident for over 50 years, signed up for the pilot because her mobility challenges made it difficult to get to a pantry and painful to wait in line for food. According to Vernia, “This program benefits people like me that can’t get to the food pantries. It’s a blessing and it’s good!”

“Access to healthy food is a key piece of a public health agenda and the CSCC is proud to leverage its outreach, data, and research capabilities to work with community partners to fulfill our mission to improve health outcomes for residents in one of Chicago’s most historically divested neighborhoods,” **said Greg Martinez, Senior Program Recovery Manager and Co-Lead of the CSCC.**

“We are committed to using technology so that everyone, regardless of their circumstances, can have access to nutritious food. Our strategy is to partner with local providers and key stakeholders, like the city government, to strengthen local communities and deliver sustainable solutions to help in the fight against hunger,” **said Ashley Friend, Managing Director of the Vivery Idea Lab.**

“The Greater Chicago Food Depository is proud to work with the city and local stakeholders to ensure that everyone has access to the nutritious food they need to thrive. A crucial component of this program is collecting regular feedback from participants to make sure that we are truly meeting the unique needs of our neighbors in a meaningful and dignified manner,” **said Kate Maehr, Executive Director and CEO of the Greater Chicago Food Depository.**

About the Greater Chicago Food Depository

The Greater Chicago Food Depository, Chicago’s food bank, believes a healthy community starts with food. The Food Depository is at the center of a network of 800 partner organizations and programs – food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, mobile distributions and other partners – working to bring food and hope to our neighbors across Chicago and Cook County. The Food Depository addresses the root causes of hunger with job training, advocacy and other innovative solutions. The Food Depository is a proud member of Feeding America – the national network of food banks. Learn more at chicagosfoodbank.org

About Vivery Community

Vivery Community is a public charity focused on scaling access to nutritious food by bringing powerful Vivery technology and local programs to food banks, food pantries, and the neighbors they serve. Vivery technology helps bridge the digital divide by connecting neighbors with resources to break the hunger cycle. Vivery Community fundraises to bring Vivery technology to every food bank and pantry at no cost, and partners with neighborhood communities to learn locally and develop innovative food access solutions that can extend nationally. As a passionate team, Vivery Community strives to do good with technology so everyone, regardless of their

circumstances, can effortlessly access essential food, nutritious food, and other services nearby. Visit <https://www.vivory.org/> to learn more.

To learn more about or support these in-home deliveries, visit [Vivory Idea Lab](#).

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