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Contact Information
Organization Name: Phoenixville Area Community Services (PACS)  
Address: 257 Church St., Phoenixville, PA 19460  
Phone: 610-933-1105  
Website: www.pacsphx.org  
FEIN: 23-1902190

ED/CEO Name: Mary Fuller  
ED/CEO E-mail: mary.fuller@pacsphx.org  
Board Chair Name: Frederick Hubler Jr.  
Primary Contact Name: Mary Fuller  
Primary Contact E-mail: mary.fuller@pacsphx.org

In a few brief paragraphs, please explain:

1. What geographic area is served?  
(If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served)

Although PACS traditionally serves those in Phoenixville Borough, Schuylkill Township, East and West Pikeland Townships, Oaks and Mont Clare, during the COVID-19 crisis we have taken pride in distributing emergency food and food boxes to anyone in need from surrounding communities.

2. What population is served, what has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?

Throughout the Phoenixville community, PACS is known as the place to go for food assistance. In the past fiscal year (July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019) our emergency pantry served some type of food assistance for 909 individuals a total of 8,700 times. Those individuals included 297 children, 114 seniors, and 493 adults from 385 different households. In February of 2020, before the pandemic crisis was upon us as it is today, PACS signed up 35 new families who met the income criteria to have monthly access to our food pantry. In March, that number skyrocketed to 118 and the number of new families has since continued to increase. Additionally, the number of hungry we served through our free-bin items and other daily donated items for distribution rose exponentially in the same time frame as well. We also found a significant increase in the number of times clients visited per week; prior to COVID-19 duplicating clients would come to us once, maybe twice a week for extra food but now we are seeing these folks come to us nearly every day. While we always serve a diverse community, this pandemic seems to have hit our Hispanic population the hardest. Many of the clients who fall into this category are now unemployed and have no access to the food they need for their families. We have also seen a drastic increase in the need for food in families who now have school-aged children (including college) home for all meals.

PACS has responded to this crisis in a number of ways. Our primary goal is to get food into the hands of those who need it in our community. First and foremost, our staff is committed to keeping our doors open all of our scheduled hours, which are 9am to 4pm Monday through Friday (we do offer Saturday morning and evening appointments if needed) and we are the only pantry in the area open every day of the week. As mentioned above, we have relaxed the serving area boundaries in cases where people need emergency food and have no other immediate access. Additionally, we have provided some of the other local agencies and pantries with food boxes or items to use for distribution or for meal packages they distribute at their sites. PACS is also a free lunch site for the Phoenixville Area School District and when needed we have shared our emergency food boxes with PASD families who do not have enough food. PACS has also revised our whole distribution process to allow for best health & safety practices during this pandemic: clients’ selections are pre-bagged by gloved volunteers or staff and handed to them through the door; monthly food selections are now done by pre-order and delivered curbside or directly to the home; staff and volunteers practice social distancing with each other as well as clients; surfaces, door knobs, etc. are sanitized regularly throughout the day and the building gets professionally cleaned twice a week with a fogging disinfectant process conducted weekly.

3. How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget? What will the funding be used for? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?

PACS is requesting $5,000 in order to obtain enough food to keep our pantry stocked for service throughout this crisis. Typically, we supplement our county-provided and donated items by purchasing the items we either do not receive or need greater quantities of. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, in a typical month, we would spend about $2,700 to stock the items our families need for a balanced diet. Since the COVID crisis that expense has nearly quadrupled. As we are anticipating this
crisis to continue for at least the remainder of the year, $5,000 would enable us to offset the costs associated with the extra inventory that is so critical to helping our neighbors in need. Not only will this additional inventory be distributed to those directly served at PACS but will also go to help stock other area pantries and/or agencies. Our annual operating budget is $306,300 and $854,000 if you include in-kind donations.

Please email grants@chescofc.org

_____ This Brief COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request
_____ Copy of annual operating budget or most recent audit
_____ 501c3 determination letter

Request letters will be posted on the Community Foundation’s website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources.

Grants will be processed a few times monthly.
We estimate mini-grants will range from $500 to $5000.

Please direct general questions & inquiries about the Rapid Response Mini-Grants to grants@chescofc.org.
Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.