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**For Immediate Release**

## **Are You Hungry? Fulfill Launches New Text System to Help Those in Need Find Nearest Food Pantries**

*Tri-State Area's First Text System to Locate Food Pantries*

**Neptune, New Jersey, April 20, 2020** – Fulfill, formerly The FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, is offering a new tool to help people who need food find the closest food pantries in their area within Monmouth and Ocean Counties. The “FindFood” text system, the first of its kind in New Jersey and the tri-state area, will help children, families, and seniors access food during the current COVID-19 crisis and beyond.

The “FindFood” text system will identify the three nearest food pantries to the person when he or she texts "findfood" (no space) in English or "comida" in Spanish to 888-918-2729. Texters will be prompted to give their zip code and will receive responses in their chosen language.

“If you’ve just lost your job and you are struggling to put food on the table for your family, the last thing you want to do is hunt around for a food pantry. Fulfill’s ‘FindFood’ text platform provides our food insecure neighbors with immediate and customized resources. We want to make it as easy as possible for people in need to find a food pantry that’s convenient and open... and now, that information is available to them in the palm of their hands. This is a major milestone for food access to all at a critical time,” said Fulfill CEO and President Kim Guadagno, the former Lieutenant Governor of New Jersey.

One thousand lawn signs, in both Spanish and English, and billboards have been strategically placed throughout Monmouth and Ocean Counties to promote the program. Flyers have also been distributed to Fulfill’s 289+ feeding agencies and elected officials to help Fulfill spread the word about the service, with stickers also being placed on Fulfill’s Crisis Relief Boxes. A social media campaign with the hashtags #FindFood and #comida can be found on Fulfill’s Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube channel. We want to thank New Jersey State Senator Vin Gopal for organizing dozens of volunteers who helped Fulfill prepare the lawn signs and post them throughout the Jersey Shore.

Since the coronavirus outbreak in our area began, Fulfill has seen a 40% increase in the demand for food. Fulfill has served more than 364,000 extra meals in the past month with its Crisis Relief Boxes and Restaurant Partnership Program. This food is in addition to the food Fulfill was already distributing. Individuals, businesses, and organizations can support Fulfill’s efforts by donating at [fulfillnj.org](http://fulfillnj.org).



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## **About Fulfill, formerly The FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties**

Fulfill has been providing food for families in Monmouth and Ocean Counties for more than thirty years. We were there to provide food and comfort during economic storms, Superstorm Sandy, and now a pandemic. During the pandemic, the demand for food has already grown 40% and Fulfill has served an additional 364,000 meals to people in need. We expect the demand to grow as the unemployed run out of paychecks, incentives, and savings.

Fulfill feeds children, seniors, veterans, and the working poor. Fulfill serves pantries, shelters, and soup kitchens, provided hot meals for children after school when schools were open, and sent food home for those same children over the weekend during the school year. We now provide food to those children and their families at home through our partnerships. Fulfill also provides additional services to help our neighbors improve their overall situation. Fulfill assists with tax preparation, connecting people to SNAP (food stamps) benefits, and, before the pandemic, with job training in our culinary program. It is important to note that all non-food programs are currently on hold during the coronavirus crisis.

Fulfill has earned a 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for more than ten consecutive years. This distinction means Fulfill, a 501 (c)3 charitable organization, outperformed most charities in America in areas of efficiency, fiscal integrity, and effectiveness. In fact, 95 cents of every dollar donated to Fulfill goes directly to feeding the hungry in our community.

Follow Fulfill on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube, and share our posts to help raise awareness about hunger. To donate or volunteer, go to [fulfillnj.org](http://fulfillnj.org). Sponsorship opportunities are also available.

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