



## City of Fresno & Reading and Beyond COVID-19 Food Distribution and Delivery

**Introduction:** The mission of Reading and Beyond is to empower individuals and their families to live productive, self-reliant lives. To break the cycle of multigenerational poverty, RaB improves their economic security by implementing a continuum of evidence-based, cradle-to-career services to help both children and adults succeed academically, complete college education, find meaningful careers, and become tomorrow's leaders. All of Reading and Beyond's programs take a "two-generational" approach to services with an understanding that the needs of the whole family must be addressed. To accomplish this most effectively, Reading and Beyond locates its facilities in underserved neighborhoods.

Reading and Beyond was founded in 1999 to provide literacy tutoring and parenting programs. After just a few years, Reading and Beyond's methods were recognized both locally and nationally. Executive Director Luis Santana and Board Chair Donald Larson received recognition from Fresno Unified School District as a "model for other organizations." Shortly after, Reading and Beyond was one of only four organizations to receive national funding from the U.S. Department of Education to develop its Early Childhood Education program. In 2009, Reading and Beyond's Executive Director became the first person from the Central Valley to receive the James Irvine Leadership Award. The founder of Reading and Beyond's workforce development program, Pete Weber, has since also received the James Irvine Leadership Award.

Today, Reading and Beyond provides employment and training services to CalFresh ("Food Stamps") recipients in Fresno, Kings, and Madera Counties. This employment and training program has served more than 5,000 participants since it was founded in 2010. In Fresno, Reading and Beyond administers a Local Dental Pilot Project, which has served almost 6,000 families and seeks to provide increased access to dental care for low-income children. Two preschool sites and several after school tutoring sites serve approximately 200 children in Fresno each year as well. Reading and Beyond is also participating in a state funded disaster preparedness training program and an outreach initiative aimed at boosting completion of the 2020 Census by South East Fresno residents.

Beginning in March of this year, Reading and Beyond partnered with United Way of Fresno and Madera Counties to provide case management for complex calls received through United Way's community assistance hotline, 211. This partnership brought Reading and Beyond's experienced case managers to help support United Way with the large volume of calls 211 was receiving and the complicated nature of many of these calls as unemployment skyrocketed and

public health concerns created barriers to accessing services. During this partnership, Reading and Beyond gained valuable insight into the needs of the community as it confronts this crisis.

**Project Overview and Objective:** The City of Fresno will fund food distribution in response to the public health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and with an emphasis on reaching underserved communities. To that end, community based organizations (CBOs) are uniquely positioned to accomplish the objectives of this project and address a lack of services targeting historically disadvantaged communities. As a well-established CBO located in the heart of South East Fresno, Reading and Beyond is well positioned to distribute food to one of the hardest hit zip codes in the city<sup>1</sup>. **The goal of this project will be to provide Fresno residents in need with food, supplies, and referrals to other services to assist underserved residents of the city during the COVID-19 crisis.**

**Period of Services:** August 2020 until December 2020 or until funds are exhausted.

**Project Activities:**

- Coordinate with other community and faith based organizations to leverage resources for food distribution and match these resources to individuals and families in need.
- Provide food and supplies distribution at least once per week at the Mosqueda Community Center (4670 E. Butler Ave, Fresno). Distributions will include:
  - Prepared boxes containing a variety of food items (as long as supplies last).
  - Participants will also be able to request (if available) household cleaning supplies, personal hygiene supplies, and personal protective equipment.
- Reading and Beyond's experienced case managers will assist individuals and families by screening and referring them to additional services in the community, including but not limited to Reading and Beyond's programs and services.

**Project Narrative:** COVID-19 continues to jeopardize the health and wellbeing of residents of the City of Fresno. Unemployment in the area has doubled during the crisis going from about 8% in early 2020 to about 16% in May 2020<sup>2</sup>. Reading and Beyond, which provides a range of services assisting low-income residents of Fresno, has seen a sharp rise in the number of referrals addressing food insecurity among its participating families. Fresno recognizes the need to address food insecurity in underserved communities and has targeted aid toward South East and South West Fresno.

Reading and Beyond has a long history of administering the Mosqueda Community Center (4670 E. Butler Ave, Fresno), which also operates as the organization's headquarters. This site is ideally located to serve as a hub for food distribution activities in South East Fresno. Moreover, the facility has two gates connecting a vehicle lane that can facilitate safer distribution of food and supplies. Reading and Beyond also has many hundreds of active clients and thousands of

---

<sup>1</sup> Fresno Bee: <https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/medical/a-north-south-divide-see-where-more-people-test-positive-for-virus-in-fresno-clovis/ar-BB17eZPr>

<sup>2</sup> Source: BLS Fresno Metropolitan Statistical Area: [https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ca\\_fresno\\_msa.htm](https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ca_fresno_msa.htm)

former clients as well as experienced case managers who can provide additional services to individuals and families in need. The mission of Reading and Beyond is to help break the cycle of multigenerational poverty by providing place-based services focused on empowering individuals and families to become self-reliant. Because of this, Reading and Beyond serves exclusively low-income individuals and families, the majority of whom are from minority backgrounds, in neighborhoods with concentrated rates of poverty.

Reading and Beyond will acquire, prepare, and distribute hundreds of presorted boxes of food and supplies per distribution event. Reading and Beyond will attempt to source food and supplies from donations and through the California Food Bank. However, due to the large scale of the food distribution program in Fresno for the remainder of 2020, Reading and Beyond anticipates that additional means will be required to source food and supplies including local farmers and farming associations, grocery outlets, community based organizations, and other partnerships. As such, the budget outlined below assumes costs for the acquisition and provision of these food and supplies. Delivery of food and supplies to individuals and families at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (due to age, pre-existing conditions, etc.) as well as distribution during outside hours will be conducted on a case by case basis. Reading and Beyond's distribution plan will focus primarily on vehicle based pick-up at scheduled events in order to help ensure the health and safety of all those involved. For this reason, presorted and prepared food boxes will be the primary distribution mechanism.

A clearly marked vehicle lane will conduct program participants into and out of the Mosqueda Community Center during these distribution events. Participants will be asked if they require additional supplies other than food or specialized boxes of food based on dietary restrictions – all of which will be available as long as supplies last. Project staff will load the boxes into the vehicles in order to minimize contact between staff and recipients and reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. This public health precaution is the underlying rationale for presorted boxes. Reading and Beyond will solicit feedback from participants and adjust the items provided in the boxes week to week as needed based on feedback and availability. By operating food distribution through vehicle pickup lanes, During the pick-up events, signs and flyers will indicate how to contact Reading and Beyond for additional assistance from the organization's experienced case managers and other programs. An estimated 200 prepared boxes of food will be distributed at Mosqueda at least once per week. The exact number of boxes will be determined by the needs of the community and the costs for the production and distribution of boxes. Each box will provide food sufficient to make meals for several days for individuals or families and contain a variety of items.

Additional supplies that will be made available include: household cleaning supplies, personal hygiene supplies, and personal protective equipment. During the first months of the COVID-19 crisis, Reading and Beyond partnered with United Way of Fresno and Madera Counties to address complex cases referred through United Way's 211 community assistance line. Reading and Beyond learned through this collaboration that many members of the community lack these supplies.

Approximately 200 individuals or families will be served during each of these distribution events although the exact number will depend on demand and the cost for meal box preparation and delivery.

Reading and Beyond will also assist the City of Fresno and other community based organizations with outreach to raise awareness of this food distribution program. In addition to this, Reading and Beyond will also coordinate with other community and faith based organizations to leverage supplies, services, and funding for food distribution and other essential services. Reading and Beyond will contact current and former clients to promote this service.

Reading and Beyond will seek to maximize the local economic benefit of any food and supplies acquisition for Fresno as well. Local producers of food and locally owned food distributors will be prioritized so long as there is not a detrimental impact to the average cost per prepared box of food. Locally sourced goods should help keep costs down and facilitate the freshest possible food in addition to supporting the local economy.

Project staff will consist of paid employees of Reading and Beyond. This will ensure that project staff are trained in operating the distribution events in as safe a manner as possible. Paid staff will also ensure the project is able to provide a stable, dependable source of food and other supplies for those in need. Given the complexity of obtaining a large volume of food and conducting numerous distribution events, Reading and Beyond will employ an experienced, full-time project coordinator. This coordinator will be responsible for obtaining items to be distributed at these events. The coordinator will also be responsible for the scheduling, promotion, and staffing of events. The coordinator will work with other community based or faith based organizations as well as managers from Reading and Beyond's other programs.

Reading and Beyond will also allocate some of the time of the organization's data analyst and office manager to this program. The data analyst will be responsible for assisting the project coordinator in monitoring and reporting related to the organization's food distribution program. The office manager will play an important role in assisting the project coordinator with managing deliveries and providing access to the office for program staff and the community.

Reading and Beyond will allocate the equivalent of two full time staff (allocated across multiple employees on a part-time basis) to assist with community outreach related to the project and the preparation and distribution of food and supplies. These staff will be drawn from Reading and Beyond's experienced case managers and will also help participating individuals and families access vital services. Common barriers that Reading and Beyond addresses through referrals and partnerships include housing, transportation, child care, and health care. Reading and Beyond's employment and training program will be made available to any food distribution recipients that qualify for this service and would like to enroll in training programs in order to eventually find a higher paying job. This employment and training program focuses on building hard and soft skills and assisting participants with finding and keeping jobs in order to reduce

their dependence on government benefits. Incorporating Reading and Beyond programs, case management, and referrals to food distribution services will result in long-term benefits to participants, their families, and the region.

**Project Outcomes:**

- Assist in coordinating with the City of Fresno and other community and faith based organizations for the food distribution program and related services
- Conduct food distribution at the Mosqueda Community Center at least once per week from August 2020 through December 2020 (or until funds are exhausted)
  - Distribute an estimated 200 prepared boxes of meals to individuals and families each week
  - Distribute personal protective equipment, personal hygiene products, and/or household cleaning supplies in addition to food distribution until supplies are exhausted
- Schedule periodic food deliveries for high-risk individuals and families to ensure wide spread availability of the city's food distribution program.
- Provide short-term case management and referrals for services to 30% of food distribution participants. These referrals will address participants' needs in addition to food insecurity and provide opportunities for additional support long after this project has concluded.

**Project Budget**

<b>City of Fresno &amp; Reading and Beyond</b>		
<b>COVID-19 Food Distribution and Delivery</b>		
<b>Monthly Budget</b>		
<b>Line Item</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Project Staff Salaries</b>		
Project Coordinator (1 FTE)	\$5,000.00	Coordinates the acquisition, preparation, and distribution of food and supplies in SE Fresno. Oversees and contributes to outreach, providing referrals for services, and enrolling eligible participants into other programs at Reading and Beyond.
Case Managers (2 FTE; Allocated Part-Time)	\$6,062.00	Provide referrals, short-term case management, and enroll eligible participants into programs at Reading and Beyond. Prepare and distribute food during events. Assist with outreach.
Data Analyst (0.20 FTE)	\$916.67	Assists the project coordinator with the monitoring of the project and reporting required by the City of Fresno.
Office Manager (0.20 FTE)	\$1,000.00	Facilitates access to site(s) for project staff and the community. Assists with deliveries and distributions.
<b>Project Staff Salaries Subtotal</b>	<b>\$12,978.67</b>	
<b>Staff Benefits and Payroll Taxes</b>		
	\$4,087.97	OASDI, FICA, SUI, 4% match to 401k contributions, PTO, Worker's Comp, Health, Dental, Vision, and Life Insurance
<b>Staff Benefits and Payroll Taxes</b>	<b>\$4,087.97</b>	
<b>Operational Expenses</b>		
Staff personal protective equipment (PPE) and hygiene supplies	\$750.00	PPE and hygiene supplies for project staff include: face masks, face shields, gloves, disinfectant wipes, disinfectant spray, floor disinfectant, hand sanitizer, and hand soap.
Flyers and signage for distribution events	\$250.00	Flyers and signage will facilitate the safe movement of people and vehicles at distribution events. Signage will also inform participants about programs and services as well as providing feedback / requests for subsequent distributions.

Data Management User Licenses	\$539.24	Reading and Beyond uses Apricot from Social Solutions. Subscription licenses to Apricot will be purchased for project staff to conduct activities and monitor results.
Printing & Photocopying	\$100.00	Production and duplication of materials related to the project's activities and management, invoicing, and record keeping for the project.
Telephone and Internet	\$186.67	Office telephone and Internet access for project staff. Cell phone service for project coordinator.
Staff mileage	\$143.75	For food and supply acquisition, partnership site visits, and limited home delivery for at risk participants.
Increased insurance costs	\$200.00	Increase to liability insurance rates due to the provision of food distribution services.
<b>Operational Subtotal</b>	<b>\$2,169.66</b>	
<b>Program Expenses</b>		
Personal Hygiene Supplies	\$1,500.00	Personal hygiene supplies will be acquired and distributed when requested by project participants until these supplies are exhausted.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Food Distribution Participants	\$1,500.00	PPE for participants will include: face masks, face shields, gloves, and hand sanitizer (depending on availability). Distributed until supplies are exhausted.
Household Cleaning Supplies	\$1,500.00	Household cleaning supplies will be acquired and distributed when requested by project participants until these supplies are exhausted.
Distribution of boxed food at one or more of Reading and Beyond's sites in SE Fresno	\$21,718.25	Reading and Beyond acquires food for distribution. This line item will cover costs for food acquisition not sourced from no-cost providers.
<b>Program Expenses Subtotal</b>	<b>\$26,218.25</b>	
<b>Administrative Costs</b> (10% of Personnel, Program, and Operational expenses.)	<b>\$4,545.45</b>	Administrative costs provide for the following positions necessary to operations: Executive Director, Controller, Human Resource Manager, Payroll Administrator, and Custodian.
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$50,000.00</b>	