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State Distributes More Than 13,000 Meals to Local Foodbanks

SPRINGFIELD – The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) is working with the Department of Human Services and our local emergency managers to address an identified need in our communities. To date, the SEOC has received requests for food assistance from more than 40 local emergency management agencies.

Since the escalation of the pandemic, the demand for food relief has skyrocketed. Food banks are surging to meet an unprecedented demand. To help meet this need, the state is distributing 286 pallets of MREs (Ready Made-Meals) to six foodbanks, as identified by IDHS, for local distribution throughout the state.

MREs are frequently used for service members in combat or other field operations where organized food facilities are not available. Inside each MRE bag is an entrée featuring a variety of food items. One MRE contains roughly 1,250 calories (13% protein, 36% fat, 51% carbohydrates and 1/3 of the recommended daily allowance of vitamins and minerals)

“No family should ever have to worry about putting food on the table, especially during this extremely difficult time,” said IDHS Secretary Grace B. Hou. “We are pleased to announce the distribution of additional meals to our food banks across the state and the assistance it will provide for the families that need it most.”

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a Federal program, administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and is managed by IDHS for the State of Illinois. TEFAP provides food at no cost to help supplement the diets of low-income households.

IDHS helps to manage the overall food distribution from the USDA to the eight food banks that serve more than 670 pantries, shelters, and soup kitchens across the state.

IDHS connected the food banks with this generous offer of MREs and provided contacts, delivery information, and support wherever it was necessary to ensure that the meals could be delivered to six food banks in Illinois.

The State of Illinois will continue to work with our state and federal partners to identify ways to address this continued need.