

THE SUN-GAZETTE

Tulare County asks public for donations of PPE

By: Staff

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Personal protective gear donations for frontline workers and first responders can be dropped off at any Tulare County Fire Department station

VISALIA – As Tulare County continues to advance further into recovery, more people will need to be tested for coronavirus, which means those administering tests will need more equipment to protect themselves and the public.

Unfortunately, supply chain issues continue to make purchasing and obtaining personal protective equipment (PPE) difficult. In the hopes of replenishing the supply more quickly, the Friends of Tulare County, a non-profit organization, is accepting monetary donations through the Friends of Tulare County Emergency Relief Fund Program as well as in-kind donations of supplies, in support of the COVID-19 response.

PPE donations needed by frontline workers and first responders include new/unopened and non-expired:

- N95 masks (all brands and sizes)
- Surgical masks
- Face shields
- Surgical gowns
- Gloves (latex, vinyl, or nitrile)
- Hand sanitizer
- Eye protection (goggles)

Cloth face masks, including homemade cloth masks, are also welcomed.

The Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) and Tulare County Fire Department are collaborating to accept in-kind donations at all Tulare County-operated fire stations (Note: this does not include city, CAL FIRE, or Forest Service fire stations). Donors are encouraged to contact their fire station to coordinate a drop-off. There are 25 county fire stations in Tulare County. For map and contact information visit tularecounty.ca.gov/fire/index.cfm/stations-map.

“Please be patient, as fire personnel may be called away to emergency calls at any time,” HHSA spokesperson Carrie Monteiro said.

Friends of Tulare County (FTC) began looking for a way to assist the community when the COVID-19 pandemic hit Tulare County in March 2020. With this goal in mind, FTC launched a dynamic COVID-19 campaign in collaboration with Self-Help Enterprises and a grant from Listos California, a state program that helps individuals, families, and communities prepare for and address disasters. The FTC campaign’s outreach focuses on precautions against COVID-19, symptoms of COVID-19, the spread of COVID-19, and those 65 and older who need assistance.

From May through July, various media platforms (e.g. billboards, radio, television) in multiple languages are being used to reach vulnerable community members throughout the county who may be challenged by linguistic, access, or functional needs (AFN). Additionally, the campaign is distributing its message via mobile apps, postcard mailers for seniors, and bandannas for the homeless population.