

Lakeview Pantry



▶ making a difference
By Kathryn Lyons



For fifty years, Lakeview Pantry has served as an invaluable resource in Chicago, ensuring our low-income neighbors have enough to eat and have access to critical, and sometimes lifesaving, social services. Our ultimate goal is the eradication of hunger and poverty in our communities.

We believe that food is a human right. The pandemic brought unprecedented challenges, but we were prepared to pivot our programming to meet the needs of our neighbors. Our full emergency response to the pandemic included adhering to all safety measures and removing our traditional service boundaries. Since March, we have served households from 40+ unique ZIP codes throughout the Chicagoland area, and we continue to see a 150 percent increase in the number of individuals coming to us for emergency food access, and a 77 percent increase in demand for social services. (Pre-COVID-19, on average, we provided over 10,000 unique individuals with 1.7 million meals through 50,000 site visits, as well as social services.)



Lakeview Pantry operates on a hub and spoke model. The Hub, our 10,000 square-foot warehouse space at 5151 North Ravenswood Avenue, is the center of our food rescue and acquisition efforts. Food is then pushed out to the “spokes” or distribution programs. The average amount of groceries a client receives is 88 pounds. That’s enough to last more than two weeks!

Our Main Spokes

Allotments distributed at the Sheridan Market provide two weeks’ worth of fresh, nutritious groceries once per month: fresh fruits and vegetables (40 percent), meat, eggs, dairy, bread, and dry goods. Baskets of “ready-to-eat” items are available for those experiencing homelessness or lack access to cooking facilities. The Sheridan Market holds daytime and evening distributions six days a week.

Our online market allows individuals to place grocery orders for pickup. Clients can request appointments for social services through the online platform too. Pick-up windows are open four days a week at the Hub and Sheridan Market locations.

Our home delivery program was the first of its kind in Chicago. We deliver groceries to individuals who remain homebound due to age or illness. Since COVID-19, this program is serving 150 percent more individuals.

Please visit our website to learn about our other food distribution programs.

Pressures from COVID-19, Relief from a Team

As the demand for food assistance and case management services increased greatly and rapidly, we quickly found that the capacity of our three permanent locations presented us with social-distance safety challenges.

In mid-April, the Chicago Cubs generously opened Wrigley Field to us. We established a food packing and distribution center there, and offered all clients the chance to receive help from our social services team.

Social Services

The Pantry’s social services programs are designed to meet people where they are and increase our clients’ independence and stability. *All services are free of cost* and Lakeview Pantry bills no insurance.

Our comprehensive case management services includes employment search and support, crisis intervention and management, and referrals to other agencies as needed.

The mental health counseling program offers emotional support and crisis management, and teaches emotional self-regulation skills. We are in a unique position to serve individuals who may not otherwise seek treatment elsewhere.

Please visit our website to learn about our Survivor and Family Empowerment (SAFE) program, a non-traditional and low-suspecting access point for survivors of domestic violence and their families, as well as our Public Benefits Access Program.

Community Support

We truly rely on the efforts of the 5,000+ individual volunteers and corporate groups that help us each year. Our ability to meet the increasing need in Chicago is only possible with their support.



There are many ways you can help Lakeview Pantry!

- **Donate:** We have a critical and ongoing need for financial contributions. Every \$1 provides eight meals!
- **Volunteer:** We always need the help of healthy volunteers to help us pack groceries, sort through donations for quality, restock our shelves, distribute groceries to clients, and more. New volunteers should email volunteers@lakeviewpantry.org to receive a video orientation link and steps to become an active volunteer.
- **Make an In-kind Contribution:** We’ve seen food donations from our grocery partners sharply decline, and food and supply costs increase. For more information about in-kind donations, please contact Bill Thomas, our COO, at bill@lakeviewpantry.org. Our most-needed items are:
 - o Peanut butter
 - o Canned tuna
 - o Canned vegetables
 - o Canned fruit
 - o Canned beans
- **Donate Masks:** An ongoing need to protect our clients, employees, and volunteers. Masks can be dropped off at our Sheridan Market or Hub locations.



About the Author

Kathryn joined Lakeview Pantry in May 2020 as Chief Development Officer, where she leads fundraising and marketing efforts to advance the mission of Lakeview Pantry. Before coming to the Pantry, Kathryn served as Chief Growth Officer of Women’s Foodservice Forum (WFF), an organization dedicated to helping advance women leaders in the food industry. Prior to WFF, she spent nearly nine years at Feeding America, the nation’s largest hunger-relief organization, as Managing Director of Corporate Partnerships.

For more information about Lakeview Pantry, please visit our website: www.lakeviewpantry.org