

News Release



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The Drive for Volunteers in Benton County

Recruiting Neighbors to Help the Homebound in the Age of COVID-19

NASHVILLE, April 1, 2020 -- The coronavirus has upended lives all across Tennessee, disrupting citizens' health, work, education, family time -- and even their ability to help out their neighbors.

The disruption has reached Benton County too, as social service organizations are finding themselves short of their usual corps of dependable volunteers who drive meals to homebound older adults.

Many of the volunteers are older citizens themselves and must be especially mindful of the COVID-19 threat. And with the steady progress of the coronavirus across Tennessee, support organizations must plan for the growing possibility that even more of their volunteers will be unable to contribute in coming weeks.

The Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability has a plan.

It has boosted its efforts to recruit a new corps of volunteers to meet the growing demand, especially for people who rely on the regular delivery of nutritious meals to their homes.

In the past week alone, more than 300 Tennesseans have contacted the commission and passed the background checks necessary to become the type of neighbor who is willing to drive a hot meal to an older adult's home and make sure that everyone is OK.

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Benton County is facing a shortage of volunteer delivery drivers, and the commission is working to rally more people to the cause.

Follow this link to the Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability website:
<https://www.tn.gov/aging/learn-about/volunteer-opportunities.html>.

The page will guide volunteers through the quick registration process.

Or call to speak to a recruiter: 615-557-7202.

Once volunteers have been vetted to ensure they meet the state's safety requirements, Benton County and Tennessee will be able to react much more quickly to a potential shortfall in volunteers.