

ADVENTIST HEALTH WHITE MEMORIAL FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM SURVEY

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BACKGROUND

Based in East Los Angeles, the Community Information Center (CIC) at Adventist Health (AH) White Memorial is not simply a resource hub: staff provide robust programming to meet the changing needs of the broader Los Angeles Community. Under the vision of Rosa Navas, Director of Community Well-Being, the CIC continues to transform to carry out AH's mission of, "living God's love by inspiring health, wholeness and hope," especially in the realm of food security.

Food insecurity and in-access posed an ongoing threat to the general well-being of the East Los Angeles and Boyle Heights community long before the COVID-19 pandemic. AHWM/CIC launched several initiatives in effort to alleviate hunger and malnutrition, such as establishing a community garden and sponsoring a weekly farmer's market. But in March of 2020 when the pandemic struck, community friends responded by bringing donated healthy produce and other food to the AHWM Community Garden to share with those in need.

In June 2020, this effort was formally recognized by AHWM/CIC's leadership and since has established partnerships with organizations that rescue surplus food to relieve hunger, such as Food Forward and Gleanings for Hunger, to create the Food Security Program at AHWM. While over 563,000 pounds of food were distributed between September 2020 and January 2021, little information was known of those who participate in the walk-up, drive-up food distribution.

METHODS

Using material originally developed by the Natural Resources Defense Council, I drafted a survey that would eventually be administered to AHWM Food Security program participants. I translated the document from English to Spanish; and gathered feedback from volunteers, staff, and colleagues about the language, format, and flow of the surveys. Heeding the recommendations from staff and mentors, I distributed the surveys in paper form, providing all participants with individual pens to prevent the spread of COVID-19. While 217 surveys were collected, only the data from 212 surveys was used, since the other five proved illegible. The data was prepared and coded in Microsoft Excel (see **FIGURE 1**) and analyzed using SPSS. In addition to organizing the results into an infographic/visual report-back, I also used ArcGIS to map the results.

#	Age	Transportation means	How did you find out?	How often do you come here?	How long have you been coming here?	Language
0	16-29	Car	Word of Mouth	Once a week	Since June 2020	Spanish
1	30-40	Walking	Online	Twice a week	Since July 2020	English
2	41-50	Bus	Flyer	Monthly	Since August 2020	
3	51-60	Train/Metro	Sign Outside	First time	Since September 2020	
4	61-70	Taxi/Uber	Other	Rarely	Since October 2020	
5	70+	Mixed Method: Bus + Walking	Vive Bien	Twice a month	Since November 2020	
6			Hospital		Since December 2020	
7					Since January 2021	

FIGURE 1 . EXAMPLE OF CODING PROCESS

SURVEY RESULTS

ZIP CODES REPRESENTED

The follow three zip codes were the most represented among our respondents:

- 90033, Boyle Heights (42%)
- 90063, City Terrace (10%)
- 90031, Lincoln Heights (10%)

AGES REPRESENTED

- 77.8% of all survey respondents are 41 years of age or older
- 60.4% of all survey respondents are 51 years of age or older

HOUSEHOLDS REPRESENTED

- 28.8% (majority) of people who responded to the survey do not have children under the age of 18 at home

PARTICIPATION FREQUENCY

- 75% of survey respondents go the food distribution one or two times per week every week

REASONS FOR COMING

- 26.8% of responses mentioned that participants came because it was close to home
- 18% of responses cited financial struggle/unemployment as their reason for participating
- 14% mentioned they dropped by before/after their visit to AHWM for other services

COMMUNICATIONS

- 65% of respondents heard about the program through word of mouth
- 12% of respondents learned about the program from the sign outside

TRANSPORTATION REPRESENTED

- 52.8% of respondents travel to the site by car
- 38.2% of respondents walk to site

TOP 3 RESOURCES REQUESTS

1. Resources on food banks/pantries
2. Resources on rent/mortgage/utilities assistance
3. Resources on/for COVID

TOP 3 CHANGES TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO FOOD

1. More hours and/or days at AHWM
2. Additional programs near their homes
3. The ability to make an appointment/reserve food

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Food security policy:** In the last few years, we have seen an attack on policy that supports food security, such as stringent ABAWD requirements for SNAP. Policy that intends to support food security should loosen work requirements/other barriers to food security.
- **Rent cancellation/renters' eviction moratorium extension:** An alarming amount of responses pointed to people needing resources around rent assistance. As such, policy that intends to adjacently improve food security should also focus on increasing housing security.