

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Neighbor Ride pivots to deliver food during coronavirus crisis

COLUMBIA, Md.—Neighbor Ride, which provides volunteer-based transportation to seniors in Howard County, partnered with the Howard County Food Bank and Howard County Office on Aging and Independence to deliver food to vulnerable, homebound clients during the coronavirus pandemic. In addition, Neighbor Ride is continuing to provide rides for seniors to essential medical appointments.

“As an established transportation service, we’re well equipped with a sophisticated ride-match database and committed volunteers to pivot to fill the need for food delivery, a critical service as we’re sheltering at home to limit the spread of COVID-19,” said Bruce Fulton, executive director of Neighbor Ride. “We’re ramping up deliveries to help as many seniors and other county residents as possible.”

Neighbor Ride coordinates the delivery process from beginning to end, including contacting clients for confirmation, planning logistics based on residence type and completing the delivery while following physical distancing guidelines. This frees the Howard County Food Bank and Office on Aging and Independence to prioritize continuing to supply food and serve residents at food pickup locations.

“We’re fortunate to have a strong group of dedicated volunteer drivers who want to stay involved during the crisis. It’s because of them and interest from potential new volunteers that we estimate we could quickly increase food deliveries to more than 90 per week,” Fulton said. Neighbor Ride provided 18 food deliveries during its first full week of delivery service at the end of March, increasing to nearly 50 food deliveries the following week.

Neighbor Ride provides food deliveries for free, though the nonprofit organization’s finances have been affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Neighbor Ride needs financial support for food deliveries as well as resuming operations after the crisis. To learn more or donate, visit NeighborRide.org.

Neighbor Ride enhances the health and quality of life for Howard County’s seniors by providing the comfort and peace of mind of affordable, passenger-focused transportation services through a reliable, volunteer-based system. The organization provided more than 17,000 trips to seniors in 2019. (NeighborRide.org)

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