



# FOOD ACCESS ALEXANDRIA

SPRING 2023

## WE'RE HERE FOR THOSE TOUGH DAYS

and your support ensures the City of Alexandria residents have the food they need to get through.

### WHAT'S INSIDE?



FOOD SECURITY  
WORK GROUP



NEWS



PARTNER FEATURE:  
SENIOR SERVICES OF ALEXANDRIA



UPCOMING EVENTS

# Alexandria Food Security Work Group

In February, the Alexandria Food Security Work Group met for the first time. This group of Alexandrian stakeholders was formed to improve the food security system and infrastructure, measure baseline data, and advise on a strategic plan to address food insecurity in Alexandria. The Work Group will meet monthly for 12-18 months to meet these goals and address challenges that Alexandrians face accessing food.

We are currently recruiting people with lived experience in food insecurity, who can commit one hour a month, to join the Work Group. Meetings will be held virtually. Participants will be compensated with grocery cards. If you, or someone you know or serve, are interested, please contact the Food Security Coordinator, Melissa Jensen at [melissa.jensen@alexandriava.gov](mailto:melissa.jensen@alexandriava.gov).

## Double Your SNAP

With the end of the SNAP Emergency Allotments and the rising cost of food, many families need to stretch their SNAP dollars. The [SNAP Double Dollar Program](#) allows SNAP customers who visit the Old Town, Old Town North, and Southern Towers Farmers' Markets to receive **up to \$20 in double dollars** to purchase eligible food products. Participants just need to visit the DCHS information booth at participating markets, decide how much they want to spend, up to \$20, and then receive Double Dollar tokens to buy SNAP eligible foods at the market. This helps families access healthy, local foods such as fruits, vegetables, eggs, bread, milk, and more!



### PARTICIPATING MARKETS:

- **Four Mile Run Farmers Market:** Four Mile Run Park (4109 Mt. Vernon Ave.), Sun, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., year round
- **Old Town Farmers Market:** Market Square (301 King St.), Sat, 7 a.m.-12 p.m., year round
- **Old Town North Farmers Market:** Montgomery Park (901 North Royal St.), Thurs, 3 p.m.-7 p.m., Sun, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., year round
- **Southern Towers Farmers Market:** 5067 Seminary Rd., Sat & Sun, 7 a.m.-1 p.m., year round

## Data – Participation March 2023

SNAP	12,120 Individuals
WIC	39,501 Individuals
SCHOOL BREAKFAST	5,500 Individuals
SCHOOL LUNCH	9,500 Individuals
CONGREGATE SENIOR MEALS	70 Individuals
MEALS ON WHEELS	130 Individuals
SENIOR HOME DELIVERED GROCERIES	92 Individuals
ALIVE!	19,149 individuals / 4,972 households

From **July 1, 2022-March 16, 2023**, Capital Area Food Bank distributed **1,640,712 lbs. of food** through **24 active agencies**.

**8.4%**  
**FOOD INSECURITY:**

Economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food.

**9.4%**  
**POVERTY RATE:**

a household that lives at or below the official poverty measure.

# News

## Welcome to the Mark Center!

During February 2023, nearly all DCHS programs and services began moving to 4850 Mark Center Drive. We are excited to welcome you to our new building for Benefits programs, including SNAP, TANF, and Medicaid! You can access these services on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor.

Information about the specific dates that program locations that will be available at the Mark Center will be shared with clients and the community as they become available; visit [alexandriava.gov/go/3569](https://alexandriava.gov/go/3569) for updates.

## Second ALIVE! Food Hub Opening

ALIVE! has opened a second Food Hub at 2601 Mount Vernon Ave, across from Mt. Vernon Community School. The ALIVE! Food Hub offers residents of the City of Alexandria: food, personal items, cleaning supplies, school supplies, community, and information about other services. Visit [alive-inc.org](https://alive-inc.org) for more information.

### HOURS:

Monday: Closed

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 11 a.m.- 6 p.m.  
(Closed 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.)

Friday: Closed

Saturday: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Sunday: Closed

### ACCESSIBILITY:

Street Parking / Buses: DASH 33, Metro 10A, Metro 10B (at Mt. Vernon Ave. & E. Uhler Ave.)

## Food Directory Map

- The bi-monthly [DCHS Alexandria Food Resource Directory](#) is available in Spanish and Amharic, and a map is coming soon! If you would like to add or update your program information for future issues, please complete this [form](#).



# Senior Services of Alexandria

Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA)'s mission is "to foster independence and self-sufficiency, enabling seniors within the City of Alexandria to age with dignity." SSA operates two nutrition programs that serve older adults (60+) who are homebound with mobility impairment in the City of Alexandria.

- **Meals on Wheels** is a program run in collaboration with the Division of Aging and Adult Services. Homebound older adults receive a daily delivery of two prepared meals, one hot and one cold, that meet Virginia nutrition guidelines. Trained and screened volunteers deliver meals to the client's doorstep while also providing a quick wellness check. Qualifying Meals on Wheels recipients receive city subsidized meals at no cost. For other clients, the cost of meals is \$12 per day, with a minimum of three days a week of delivery. Meals are delivered 365 days a year, including holidays, rain or shine!
- **Groceries to Go** is a grocery shopping and delivery service for older adults with a mobility impairment. Clients are matched with a screened volunteer who shops based on their personal grocery list every other week at a time agreed upon by the client and volunteer. Grocery orders may be placed by phone or email, whatever method is easiest for the client. Volunteers deliver groceries, helping to put them away, lift heavy items, or loosen any tight-fitting lids. There is no fee for delivery and no minimum order requirement. Clients only pay for their groceries. There are three partner stores to choose from: Giant, Safeway, or Harris Teeter. SSA is also able to accept EBT cards as payment for groceries for clients who receive SNAP. To further support SNAP recipients, SSA has partnered with ALIVE! to deliver a supply of pantry staples once a month.

## WE SPOKE WITH EMPLOYEES OF SSA, AND ASKED THEM:

### WHAT DO YOU HOPE FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY?

“ I hope that our community continues to focus on the needs of older adults, especially addressing food security among our aging population. Older adults are often on a fixed income, and inflation as well as rising food costs leave them vulnerable to food insecurity and hunger. Proper nutrition is especially important as we age. SSA hopes to meet this rising need and continue to serve Alexandria's seniors.”

### WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT ALEXANDRIA?

“ Alexandria is a city that takes care of its older adults! This is evidenced by our many dedicated volunteers, city officials, and non-profit partners who are always willing to lend a hand and support our programs. We wouldn't be able to support Alexandria's older adults to maintain their independence as they age at home without the support of the community.”

### HOW CAN PEOPLE HELP, VOLUNTEER, OR DONATE?

“ We are always looking for volunteers to support our nutrition programs or other SSA programs. To see our different volunteer needs and to apply to volunteer, please visit [seniorservicesalex.org/volunteer](https://seniorservicesalex.org/volunteer). For individual giving and other donation options, visit [seniorservicesalex.org/donate](https://seniorservicesalex.org/donate).”

### CONTACT INFORMATION:

- 206 N. Washington Street, Suite 301 • Alexandria, VA 22314
- [seniorservicesalex.org](https://seniorservicesalex.org)
- Marshall Hespe, Director of Nutrition Programs: 703.836.4414, ext. 112.

Call Aging & Adult Services, 703.746.5999, to see if you are eligible for subsidized Meals on Wheels

# Upcoming Events

## Free Income Tax Prep Now Through April 19

The City of Alexandria is offering [free tax return preparation](#) to eligible residents Wednesdays, 6-8 p.m., and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon, through April 19.

## Spring2ACTion 2023 April 26

[Spring2ACTion](#) is a 24-hour online event that provides a simple way to connect donors to the charitable causes they care about most and encourages them to take action. This virtual fundraising effort, presented by ACT for Alexandria, with the help of generous sponsors, offers local nonprofits the chance to raise thousands of dollars to ensure that Alexandria is a strong, vibrant community for all. Last year, 7,700 donors gave \$2.65M to 172 nonprofits serving Alexandria. Spring2ACTion 2023 is on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, from midnight to 11:59 PM.

## The Market at Southern Towers Expansion Extravaganza, May 6

The Market at Southern Towers is growing! Come celebrate with us on Saturday, May 6, 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at 5201 Seminary Road! The Expansion Extravaganza will have gift card raffles, hot food/beverages, a DJ and live music, a moon bounce, face painting, cotton candy, giveaways and much more! View [flyer](#) for details.

## Personal Finance & Career Building Virtual Workshops

City of Alexandria residents may register for free Personal Finance & Career Building virtual workshops by calling 703.746.5700 or emailing [brandon.hare@alexandriava.gov](mailto:brandon.hare@alexandriava.gov). Space is limited and registration is required. See [flyer](#) for details.

## Hunger Free Alexandria Meetings: Third Tuesday of the month, 10 a.m.

Join food providers, faith-based communities, schools, social services organizations, and advocates to coordinate efforts to end hunger in Alexandria. For more information, visit [hungerfreealexandria.com/member-resources](https://hungerfreealexandria.com/member-resources).

- May meeting: 5/16

### Meeting via [Zoom](#)

- Meeting ID: 939 1538 5141
- Passcode: 472026

## Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia: Classes & Lectures

Want to learn more about gardening for food and fun? Check out the [MGNV's free Public Education Classes](#). There is also a collection of pre-recorded lectures in the [Master Gardener Virtual Classroom](#) on native plants, vegetable gardening, fruit tree care, soil science, and lawn care.

