

# COVID-19 Update



The safety and well-being of the people we serve is our top priority.



*A Message from Julie Manworren, President and CEO,  
Volunteers of America Minnesota and Wisconsin*

**To our Volunteers of America MN and WI Community,**

All of us at Volunteers of America MN/WI are thinking of you – the people we serve, volunteers, partners, supporters, and neighbors. Thank you for your words of encouragement and support, during this difficult time and always.

I wanted to take a moment to tell you a little bit more about how our community is working together to step up in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



## **Stories of Hope and Community Building**

In the Twin Cities, community members have been donating books and games to kids at our Children’s Residential Treatment Centers. In Mora, a maintenance worker was able to gather a donation of hotdog and hamburger buns and deliver them to our homes for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities across several greater Minnesota communities. In Wisconsin, some of our colleagues are putting in long hours to prepare housing for someone coming to live with us who has complex needs for round-the-clock care. Without us, he would have no place else to go.

These are just a few of the stories we are seeing across our two states.

## **Our Response to COVID-19: Supporting Our Community**

We provide vastly different services in over 100 different communities, so our plans for emergency preparedness and business continuity vary to meet the specific needs

in each location. For example, we've been playing our part to socially distance and reduce the spread of the virus by working remotely in those programs and services where we can operate virtually. **Students** at our VOA High School are participating in distance learning, we've been distributing packaged meals to **thousands of seniors** to the front doors of their homes, and **children, youth and families** are accessing case management and outpatient mental health services via telemedicine.

Yet, we also provide essential services: **24/7 residential care for over 1,600 Minnesotans and Wisconsinites** across the lifespan every year, many of whom have underlying health conditions and are impacted by poor social determinants of health. **Children and adolescents** with complex mental health needs depend on our three Children Residential Treatment Centers and a Children's Shelter Program. **Men and women** completing part of their prison sentences in community depend on our two Residential Reentry Centers. And over a thousand low-income **older adults, families with children**, and **individuals with disabilities** depend on our affordable, service-enriched housing.

And we rely on the **241 direct service professionals** in our 24-hour/7-day-a-week residential facilities, who care for the community members depending on them in the face of this dynamic and unprecedented situation.

### Stepping Forward for Our Community

We are more concerned than ever for the safety and well-being of the people we serve, most of whom are low-wealth Minnesotans and Wisconsinites. We know that many of the people we support are counting on us. It's no secret that our work is essential; however, COVID-19 has reinforced this to our community.

Volunteers of America MN/WI has been an integral part of the community fabric for nearly 125 years. As we have so many times before, we will meet this challenge together. We will continue to step up and work through this health crisis for the people we serve, our colleagues, and everyone in our community.

Take care and be well,  
Julie

**Julie Manworren** | President & CEO  
Volunteers of America – Minnesota & Wisconsin

PS. To stay up to date on our response to COVID-19 please visit: [www.voamnwi.org](http://www.voamnwi.org)

