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Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ACCESS Regional Food Bank Warehouse Relocating to Larger Facility

Medford, March 15. ACCESS is proud to announce that its Regional Food Bank warehouse will be moving to a larger facility. The new warehouse will be located at Space LLC, 2195 Joseph St. in Medford. The new warehouse will double the space capacity for handling and distributing food throughout Jackson County.

For the past three years, ACCESS has been operating above capacity in its current warehouse. Optimally, warehouses should operate at 80%. However, ACCESS has been operating at about 120% capacity with food overflowing into a tractor-trailer in the parking lot and to an offsite storage unit. At only 5,000 square feet, ACCESS has the smallest warehouse in the state relative to the amount of food they distribute and the number of people who rely on them annually.

"We stepped back after the pandemic and the wildfires to assess if our current warehouse could adequately continue to meet this community's needs," says Carrie Borgen, ACCESS Executive Director, "With 1 in 5 residents relying on our food bank annually, the need to increase our capacity was clear."

Over the past five years, ACCESS has seen the need for food almost double. Last year, 45,618 people received food through its food pantries compared to 2018 when 26,682 people were served. Last year, ACCESS experienced a 70% increase in the number of visits to our pantries due to rising inflation. This trend has continued into 2023, with January 2023 seeing the highest number of food pantry visits ever in their history. That month more than 10,000 people visited an ACCESS food pantry. Further, with SNAP benefits being reduced to pre-pandemic levels effective March 1, the need for food assistance is expected to only increase.

"Because our current warehouse is so undersized, ACCESS also loses tens of thousands of dollars' worth of free, donated food a year that we could be getting from local producers because we don't have the space to always accept it. The new space will allow for us to accept all donated food and get it onto the tables of those who need it most," says Marcee Champion, Food Programs Director.

The new warehouse will have a 9,800 sq ft dry storage space for nonperishable food items, a 1,000 sq ft freezer, and a 1,000 sq ft cooler. Additionally, the new location will have a volunteer repack area that is separate from the active warehouse space and there will be two truck docks that any size semi-truck can dock to.

As the Regional Food Bank for Jackson County, ACCESS is the lead agency to provide food and drinking water to this community in disaster situations, such as fires, earthquakes, and pandemics. The new warehouse will allow ACCESS to establish an emergency stock of food and water for the County so they can effectively respond in a disaster situation.

ACCESS anticipates being in the new space in July 2023.

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ABOUT ACCESS

ACCESS provides food, warmth, shelter, and other essential services to Jackson County's low-income children, families, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities. As the Community Action Agency of Jackson County, Oregon, ACCESS has been helping residents break the cycle of poverty since 1976. Last year, more than 76,000 people received assistance from ACCESS's broad continuum of services, including obtaining safe, affordable housing, rental assistance, utility assistance, weatherization, free loaned durable medical equipment, and healthy food.

ACCESS provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or genetics. In addition to federal law requirements, ACCESS complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the company has facilities.

ACCESS is an equal opportunity provider. ACCESS is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization, Federal ID No. 93-0665396.

All donations are tax deductible per tax code. No goods or services are provided in consideration of donations.

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U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
Program.Intake@usda.gov

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