Good Afternoon Sojourner House Volunteers & Supporters,

The community is now more rapidly changing. As I promised, I want to continue to give real-time transparent updates with changes at the Sojourner House. We continue to work on following local, federal, and state guidelines in keeping our guests, volunteers, and staff safe and healthy.

Capacity Updates:
Effective immediately, the Sojourner House will be serving guests at bunk capacity. We have enough beds to serve 36 men and 12 women, making the total capacity 48. Although our recliners allowed our space to accommodate an additional five guests per night, we are unable to maintain safe distancing with the space we have available.

At this time, only guests who are staying in the shelter at night will be allowed to enter the Sojourner House at check-in. We have typically had enough food at check in to serve even guests being turned away from the shelter. We have a plan to continue providing meals as they are available “to go” for guests who are not staying the night.

We are working closely with the Eau Claire County Health Department in finding solutions for what will happen if additional capacity and space is needed or if there were to be a Coronavirus exposure in the homeless community.

Volunteers:
We appreciate the volunteer support we continue to receive. I understand there are some fears of leaving the house right now. Especially when you know that you are going to serve in a place where we do have many of our fellow brothers and sisters in one place. I cannot express to you how thankful we at the Sojourner House are to all who are still able to come out and be with us to serve in our community during this time.

We have received some guidance from our local public health department regarding travel. It is recommended that you self-quarantine for 14 days and monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 (including fever and cough) if you were traveling to the following places:

Countries with a Level 3 Travel Notice:
  - China
  - Iran;
  - All European countries except the United Kingdom.

OR

States who are having community transmission occurring:
  - Illinois
  - California
  - New York
  - Washington
If you have been traveling and are returning home, welcome back! If you fall in any of these categories, we would ask if you have volunteer shifts scheduled that you make alternate arrangements for your shifts during your quarantine time. This situation is rapidly evolving, and travelers should refer to the list of “states Reporting Cases of Covid-19 to CDC on the CDC Website.

Donation Drop Off
At this time, the mass donation drop off time Monday-Friday 9 am-1 pm has been suspended to encourage further social distancing. As always, we rely on monetary donations to support our program. This time will challenge our resources. If you are interested in making monetary donations, you can do so on our Catholic Charities website, cclse.org, or mail them to:

Catholic Charities  
c/o Sojourner House  
318 Fulton Street  
Eau Claire, WI 54703

If you missed the first message that went out in response to the Coronavirus pandemic at Sojourner House, you can access the letter that was sent out on March 16, 2020, at cclse.org/coronavirus-program-and-event-updates/.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out. Feel free to contact me or the Eau Claire Community Relations Specialist, Clare, with any questions or needs that you may have at this time:

Brianne Berres, Director  
715-450-1702  
bberres@cclse.org

Clare Nelson, Community Relations Specialist  
715-450-1457  
cnelson@cclse.org

It is no secret at this point that our services will be evolving over the coming weeks. Thank you for your continued support during this difficult time. I will work diligently to keep everyone up to date with changes happening at the Sojourner House. I continue to offer my deepest prayers to all of you and your families, our guests, and my team. I look to God to lead our way through this challenging time. He refreshes my soul; He guides me along the right paths for His name’s sake. Psalm 23:3

God Bless,

Brianne Berres  
Sojourner House Director