



United Way of Pierce County



Pierce County Connected Community Response Daily Report

Prepared by: Erika Tucci, Erika@benbcheneyfoundation.org

Effective as of: 4:30 p.m., April 9, 2020

The Pierce County Connected Community Response Committee is working diligently every day to source and vet information to share across networks as we all work together to meet human service needs.

If you have information to contribute, please email us.

Please see the last two pages of this report to learn more about this response.

OPERATIONS (What's Happening)

Food System:

- If you are not familiar with the food system in Pierce County and how we intersect with the rest of the state, please see documents at the end of this report prepared by Emergency Food Network.
- Notes from the United Way food providers Monday call.

If you would like to be added to this weekly convening Mondays at 11 a.m., please email Shawn at shawnp@uwpc.org.

- **WSDA UPDATE – MICHELLE DOUGLAS, EMERGENCY FOOD NETWORK**

- Statewide Emergency Food Response moving forward. Michelle is on the calls 2x/week and talking to partners in Seattle

- State is divided into 3 regions
 - Food Lifeline – 14 counties
 - Have a resource map with Second Harvest and NW Harvest. Includes food banks and hours/and how programs are working. Will eventually go to the Governor’s website and it can be populated with volunteers.
 - EFN has a new warehouse in SoDo for the boxes arriving.
 - EFN is looking to distribute 150,000-300,000 food boxes a week.
 - Lawmakers are looking at a fourth stimulus package
 - NW Harvest (covering Pierce County) – sites are reporting a doubling of visits in the past month. Demand is expected to quadruple. NW Harvest will distribute 2,000 boxes each week for the next four weeks to EFN.
- Funding
 - EFN is receiving TFAP or federal assistance food
 - WSCA – April, May, and June orders have all been moved to April. 31 truckloads in one month.
 - Emergency food response is about day by day.
 - Additional funding through state funds – EFAP – potentially used to buy food
 - Individual grants to majority of Pierce County sites for sites to buy food
- Other news
 - Buying food is like being on the stock exchange. You make an offer then it gets bid out from under you.
 - There are other efforts to open stockpiles happening.
 - Reps Shreier, Heck have inquired on food and we’ve let them know the current allocation of food is not nearly enough.
 - National Guard is already working with Nourish and other sites.
 - We are not experiencing declines in donations from grocery stores as projected weeks ago. However, our sites are having a hard time buying.
 - We know Eatonville needs help - - so if anyone can, please do so
- **PROVIDER REPORT OUTS ON UNITED WAY WEEKLY CALL**
 - **Orting Food Bank**
 - Drive up model only
 - Demand is up by 50% in one week

- **Bonney Lake Food Bank**
 - Drive up model only
 - We leverage our resources/volunteers and take care of 270 families in one day.
 - Starting Tuesday, going to home delivery – 300 boxes. Not sure sustainable.
 - Client base is steadily increasing by 25%
 - Having clients communicate with us online and it hasn't been as challenging as we thought it would be
 - Some volunteers (over age of 70) are doing client/customer care from home.
 - One person is handling inventory control inside the building with two paid staff are doing deliveries
 - Challenges: Have a lot of people who want to volunteer. There will be more illness. Feel like it's a math problem and there's a potential operation may be compromised with infection.

- **Center for Food Preservation Arts**
 - Have lost the two kitchens they've been using for low-scale production. Won't be able to produce anything until another location is found.

- **Prairie Ridge & White River Families First**
 - Been handing our resources and things are going well
 - Partnered with Pierce County Library to also hand out books
 - Prairie Ridge – Usually 70-80 dinners on Wed night. Last Wed, made 104 meals and ran out with 12 cars left. Increasing prep to 150 meal.
 - GTCF provided funding to support the faith-based communities preparing the meals. They are an amazing partner and we are so thankful to GTCF. Now able to buy grocery gift cards for those who can't make it to the location. Can take the card to them/or have someone shop for them.

- **Bethel School District**
 - Kept 6 child nutrition locations open with roughly 3,000 meals a week
 - Have delivery option
 - Appreciate the van that UWPC gave. Been helpful to families who are far out
 - Grateful to GTCF for giving us support at this time

- **Food Backpack for Kids**
 - This is in the Key Peninsula and Gig Harbor
 - Switched to drive-up model. Families sign up with us and we have three pick-up locations. Depending on family size, get different sizes of boxes.
 - Many have already signed up, and we are seeing a huge influx of new families.

- Usual is 182 food backpacks. We are up to 400 sign-ups this week.
- Asking community to do food donations at our sites. Had 1,200 pounds of food donated last week. Haven't weighed the food this week but maybe 800 pounds.
- Seeing families not show up. Are going to reach out to those to see if they are missing transportation, or if it's something else.
- Some district staff are reaching out. Partnering with them with what they know about families. Reaching out to non-English speaking families and have been able to sign up 12 families this way.
- Concerns are with volunteers: Facility is small so we've limited volunteers to maintain distancing.

- **Communities In Schools – Puyallup**
 - Providing weekend food backpacks.
 - Now delivering food, but on spring break currently. Helping with basic needs and resources.

- **St Leo's Food Connection**
 - Still doing mobile food bank on Sat in Springbrook.
 - Back to 5 days a week and pre-bagging as much as possible
 - Location is not conducive for drive through
 - Continuing to send weekend food bags out to Clover Park and others

- **Clover Park School District**
 - Had break bags thanks to EFN
 - Have 69 bus stops and families don't show up. Feel so terrible about people who aren't getting food. Would love suggestions what we can do.
 - (Jay) We had the same thing in Bethel - - we scrubbed the list and tried to get specific information from families. It took a lot of people calling families. Can you set up reminders?

- **Andrea – Eloise's Cooking Pot/MADF**
 - Still doing deliveries. Delivered to several schools doing lunch meals.
 - Doing regular deliveries and added 35 COVID-specific routes
 - Doing drive up and delivery
 - Struggle is real as we ran out of food
 - Need volunteers
 - UWPC can upload volunteer opportunities on their website.

- **Pierce County SNAP-Ed**
 - Focused on nutritious recipes for food banks

Shelter & Housing:

- Tacoma Democratic Socialists of America put forward a petition asking that Tacoma high school gyms be opened as emergency shelters.
- Senator Tina Smith (D-MN) and 27 sponsors sent a [letter](#) to Treasury Secretary Mnuchin regarding the direct relief payments from the CARES Act. The letter urges Secretary Mnuchin to make sure that people experiencing homelessness know about their eligibility for these payments, and that Treasury find a way to distribute the money without creating barriers to access.
- Pierce County Connected Response members will be part of tomorrow's Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness meeting.

First Responder Childcare:

- No report today.

General Info:

- [Coronavirus job losses continue in Pierce County; 18% of workforce is gone in 3 weeks](#) – *News Tribune*
- Comcast is offering [free internet to low income individuals](#) for 60 days. [Learn more](#)
- Because the Employment Security Department is experiencing extremely high volumes of calls and emails, the best way to find out more information is to visit online resources like the ones listed below. **Please do not call** their toll-free numbers first. Instead:
 - **Visit their website** at esd.wa.gov. There you can sign up for their [action alerts](#) to receive the most recent information possible about these benefits
 - View their Frequently Asked Questions [for Workers](#) and [for Businesses](#) and use [their checklist](#) before applying for benefits.
 - [Watch this video tutorial](#) on how to create an account with ESD and apply for unemployment benefits.

ESD [launched a webinar program](#) to help unemployed workers navigate the unemployment insurance process during the COVID-19 emergency. Registration is required. There is a limit of 1,000 attendees.

- Job Announcement: [DSHS ESA Engagement Manager](#)
As the Engagement Manager, we want you to bring your curiosity, creativity, and collaboration to build momentum for the state's poverty reduction efforts. In your role, you will become an integral part of the department's strategic efforts to more effectively engage with government and non-government entities in a results-driven, dynamic, fast-paced, political environment.
- Pierce Co. Connected Response is adding a behavioral health pod. Stay tuned for more information.
- [Nearly a third of Americans didn't pay rent this month, data shows](#) – CNN
- [Help is Here: Tacoma-Pierce County Chamber & the Economic Development Board for Pierce County Launch New COVID-19 Rapid Response Team](#) – *South Sound Talk*
- With the stay home order, some agencies offering free tax prep services aren't operating at present. Couple options:
 - Incomes under \$66,000 can [file a simple return for free online](#) through United Way's partnership with H&R Block.
 - Additional free resources on the [IRS website](#)
- How are you communicating through this crisis? Joan Garry Consulting offers some [good advice on message planning](#) for nonprofits.
- Additional [COVID-specific communications guidance](#) from WA State Agencies.
- TECH HELP NEEDED FOR STUDENTS
If there is anyone already doing refurbish work on computers/tech devices, could you email [Erika Tucci](#) and let her know? School districts are fielding offers to donate tech, but do not have the capacity to intake those donations or manage any necessary refurb. Looking for someone to help get tech access for students without it.
- If all of this is starting to feel heavy, maybe [this TedTalk from Laura van Dernoot Lipsky](#), founder and director of the Trauma Stewardship Institute, can help.
In this talk, Laura offers us a window into the cumulative toll that can occur when we are exposed to the suffering, hardship, crisis or trauma of humans, other living beings, or the planet itself. Held within a larger context of systematic oppression and liberation theory, we'll dive into what gets hard and how to work toward reconciling it both individually and collectively.

LOGISTICS (Resources)

Funding:

- As of today, 146 local and regional foundations, businesses and individuals have donated a combined \$5,114,800 to the Pierce County Connected Fund. Our community's generosity is something to celebrate. We invite everyone to share the [donation link](#) with their network and invite them to join in the community-wide response.
- Visit the [PIERCE COUNTY CONNECTED Fund FAQ page](#) for answers to your application questions. This page will be updated with questions from yesterday's technical assistance session.
- Learn more about [the PIERCE COUNTY CONNECTED Fund](#)
- Information on the [Working Washington Small Business Emergency Grants](#)
 - Commerce announces [\\$5 million emergency response grant for tribes](#).

Volunteers:

- Volunteer pod lead Christina Turner sat in on a call today with Sterling Volunteers RE: engaging volunteers in pandemic response. Notes below:
 - Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic on volunteer engagement across the sector:
 - POLL taken at beginning of webinar - As a result of the pandemic:
 - 36% reduced services offered
 - 52% reduced some services and expanded others
 - 7% expanded services due to increased demands
 - 3% not many any changes in services
 - Many organizations reporting a reduction of volunteer availability. Volunteer cancellations and many are afraid of getting ill themselves or are afraid of spreading the virus.
 - There are volunteers who are interested in volunteering virtually
 - Some may need help learning technology

Many states are launching a centralized portal to consolidate opportunities (Pierce Co. is listing all volunteer opportunities on the United Way's website)

- Important to be thoughtful and strategic from a risk management standpoint, stewarding resources, and building capacity to sustain and help organizations thrive in the future

- Develop new volunteer opportunities (virtual visits, meal delivery, expanded food pantries)
- Support remote volunteering
 - Think carefully about what technology or tools need to be put in place. Can you safely equip them with access to database or files? Do you need to loan devices?
 - Policies for remote work? Who has access to what?
 - How are you going to check-in with volunteers?
 - How are you going to screen volunteers?
- Develop online orientations and trainings
 - Videos- can be very valuable and highly engage. Open rates for emails higher with a video.
 - Online training: get beyond a simple recording or video.
 - Orientations should have general information about the organization. Training can enhance specific topics for specific volunteer roles.
- Keep inactive volunteers engaged
- How do you balance the need to engage and support volunteers with not wanting to overwhelm them, especially now?
 - You need to take the temperature of your volunteer core
 - Do not require volunteers to stay involved in a level that is uncomfortable of them
 - Be exceedingly clear about volunteer options and can we create new categories, and allow volunteers to be on intermission and come back in when they are ready

We have the slides from the call as well as some volunteer engagement planning documents. If interested, email [Erika Tucci](#) and we'll send them.

Faith Community Resources:

- No report today

ONLINE RESOURCES:

General Information

- [State of WA COVID-19 Response Website](#)
- [Governor's Website of Resources](#)
- [COVID-19 Equity Response Information](#)
- [Nonprofit Relief Task Force](#)
- [Office of Civil Legal Aid](#)

Funding/Financial Resources

- [Info on regional Rapid Response Funding Programs related to COVID-19](#)
- [Philanthropy NW Multi-state List of COVID-19 Funds](#)
- [Employment Security Resource Page](#)
- [WA State Unemployment COVID-19 application checklist](#)
- [Tacoma Public Utilities' COVID-19 assistance website](#)
- [Puget Sound Energy's COVID-19 assistance website](#)
- [List of Coordinated Entry access points](#)
- [Piercecountywa.gov/veterans](#) (veteran specific supports)
- [WA Dept. of Veterans Affairs webpage](#)
- [National Council of Nonprofits COVID resources](#)
- The City of Tacoma [has financial resources for business and nonprofits, including be the COVID-19 Stabilization Loan Program.](#)

Foodbanks & Feeding Sites

- [WA Food Fund](#) – statewide fundraising effort
- [List of Pierce County's free breakfast and lunch for kids by district](#)
- [Tacoma Public School's bus meal delivery map/schedule](#)
- [Updated list of operating food banks in Pierce County](#)
- [The most current information from the USDA](#)
- [USDA: Waivers granted for states](#)
- [TEFAP flexibilities for state agencies](#)
- [Website for kids to find free school meal finder](#)
- [TANF Guidance on Job Search during pandemic](#)
- [USDA COVID-19 Resources Page](#)

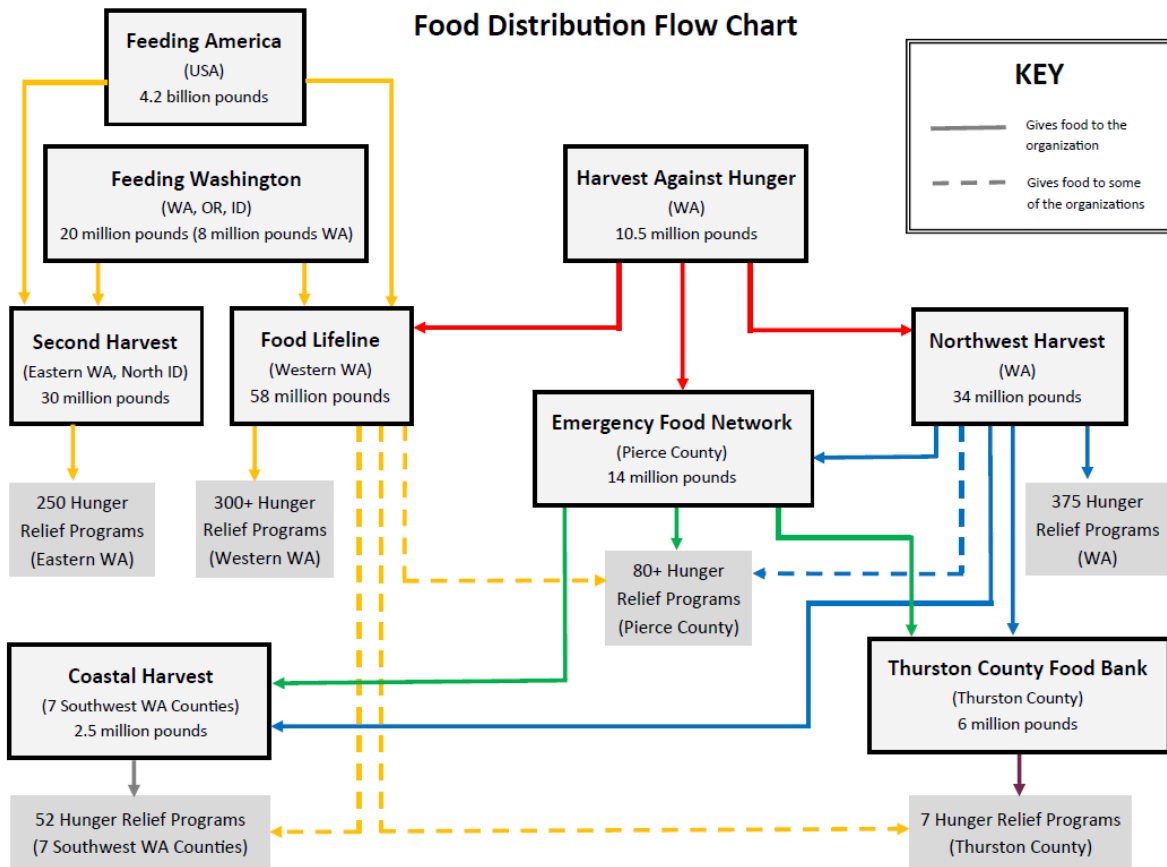
Shelter & Housing

- [WA Low Income Housing Alliance Resources Page](#)

Child & Families

- Child Care Resources [resource and referral webpage](#)

Food Distribution Flow Chart



Modified 1.14.2020

Pierce County Emergency Food System

The emergency food network in Pierce County consists of 82 food pantries, meal sites, and shelters partnered with Emergency Food Network (EFN). EFN's partners served 1.3 visits in 2019, and average of 114,000 visits per month. EFN distributed 14 million pounds of food in 2019, more than 50% of food in the system. Some of EFN's Partner Programs procure their own food through purchase or donations while others rely on EFN for 100% of their food.

EFN's Role

- Collects food in bulk for region's food pantries, meal sites, and shelters. EFN distributed 14 million pounds of food in 2019, more than 50% of the food that went out to the network.
 - Donated food comes from grocery stores, farmers, and food drives and nonprofit partners like Northwest Harvest
 - Purchases food by the semi-truckload
 - Brings in government food as the county contractor for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
 - Grows fruits and vegetables at Mother Earth Farm
- EFN has a larger storage capacity for food than food pantries. Instead of one semi-truck going to one program and overwhelming that site, the load goes to EFN and is divided throughout the region.
- EFN also provides equity across the county, ensuring that smaller, remote communities with limited resources, like Eatonville, have access to resources that may otherwise stay in Tacoma or Lakewood.
- EFN also provides Partner Programs with pass-through funding, best-practice guidance, and assistance with equipment resourcing.

Role of Northwest Harvest and Food Lifeline

- Larger, state-wide entities that have a limited scope in Pierce County.
- Agencies provide some food to Pierce County either directly to sites or distributed through EFN

Covid-19 Response

- Washington State divided into 3 regions focusing on Covid-19 response
- Pierce County will fall under Northwest Harvest jurisdiction for response, but EFN will serve as primary resource for the county and will work with Northwest Harvest on a united response to the crisis.
- EFN is currently making additional food purchase to increase the amount of food available in Pierce County's emergency food system as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Prepared by Emergency Food Network 3/26/2020, for more information contact Michelle Douglas, CEO, at MichelleD@efoodnet.org or 253-584-1040 (office) 253-208-2962 (cell)



Potential impact of COVID-19 on Pierce County

COVID-19 Response Needed

- State-wide authorized coordination body to lead response of nonprofit and government agencies. This body should assess resources, lead centralized planning, and organize county-based response in coordination with the entire state.
- Cash disbursements to families to keep families afloat and to lessen need for emergency food.
- Online, centralized communication directing households to available resources. Many families will be visiting food pantries for the first time and will need assistance navigating resources.

Community Need

- 1 in 7 adults and 1 in 5 children are food insecure in Pierce County.
- 60,542 students in Pierce County receive free or reduced-cost meals at school, 44% of students.
- Monthly food pantry visits in 2019: 114,618. Total visits in 2019: 1,375,411.

Emergency Food Network (EFN)

- Pierce County's emergency food distributor, provides network of 82 food pantries, meal sites, and shelters with food and pass-through funding.
- Regional contractor for federal food and funds from USDA through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Trade Mitigation Program (TMP) as well as state funds through Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP).
- EFN distributed 14,081,397 pounds of food in 2019, average of 1,117,449 pounds per month.

Anticipated Impacts of COVID-19

- Northwest Harvest estimates that 640,000 households statewide are impacted and that the number of households visiting food pantries could increase by 80%.
- Northwest Harvest estimates that the most acute need will last for 8 to 20 weeks, with dire need accelerating 3 weeks from 3/19/20.
- USDA estimates that visits by households could increase by 400-600% as households will need to visit food pantries more frequently to receive groceries as a result of lost wages or jobs.
- Based on USDA estimates, Pierce County food pantries could see 732,000 visits per month during peak need, up from a monthly average of 114,618.
- EFN would need to increase monthly food distribution by 7.5 million pounds per month to accommodate peak need
- Staff and volunteers serving on the front lines at food pantries and shelters face the burden of fatigue due to the increased need and the risk of exposure to Coronavirus.

A coordinated, statewide effort focused on procuring food and funds and distributing those goods to families is essential to keeping Washingtonians health and fed during these times.

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PIERCE COUNTY CONNECTED

The Pierce County Connected Community Response Committee supports an aligned philanthropic response to COVID-19 in Pierce County.

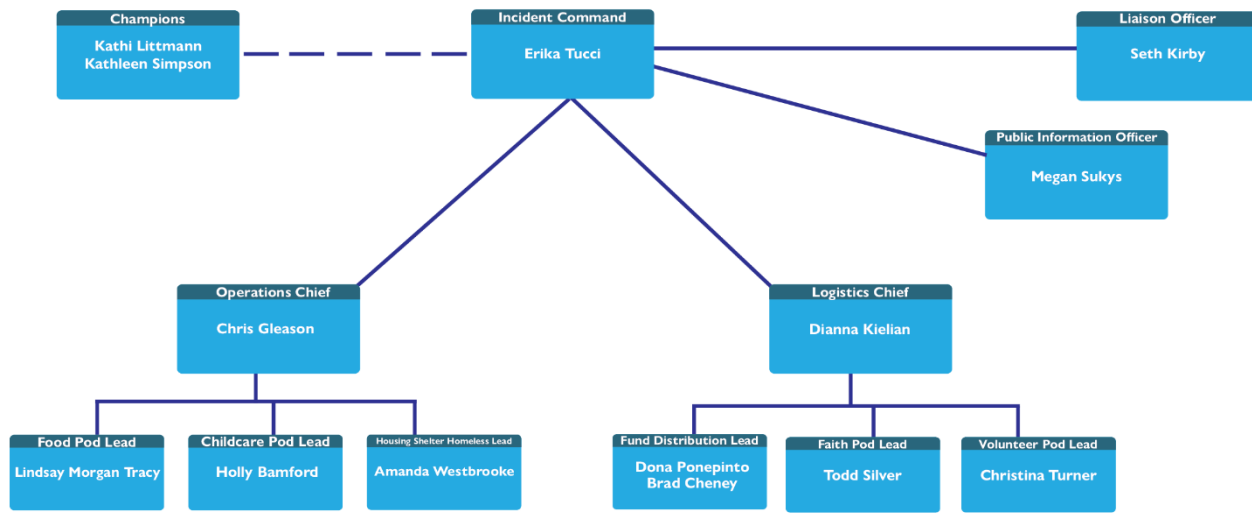
Through coordinated contacts with organizations in key service sectors, referred to as 'pods', real-time on-the-ground information will be compiled and shared in a regular report to all participants.

The goal of these contacts and reports is to provide information that can reduce unnecessary duplication of efforts and surface emerging and urgent needs for rapid response.

Report information is intended to support streamlined communications:

- between nonprofits and other community service providers about who is providing help and what needs there are in Pierce County related to COVID-19
- from the nonprofit sector to individual donors, foundations, and corporations about urgent funding needs
- from nonprofits and community service providers to government agencies about needs to meet effective and continued services in Pierce County related to COVID-19
- with the philanthropic field about lessons and successes around addressing COVID-19 in Pierce County in an aligned way with the lowest burden possible on nonprofits and service providers

PIERCE COUNTY CONNECTED COMMUNITY RESPONSE COMMITTEE



OVERVIEW:

As the public health response to COVID-19 in Pierce County escalated Friday, March 13, United Way of Pierce County and Greater Tacoma Community Foundation partnered for an aligned philanthropic response to emerging community needs.

Together, they launched the PIERCE COUNTY CONNECTED fund, seeded with \$750,000 from GTCF. GTCF committed another \$1M in matching dollars for regional funders joining in the effort. By March 26, 25 regional funders contributed more than \$2M, exceeding the GTCF match and bringing the total fund to \$3.8M.

To support shared learning and aligned response efforts across community sectors, including funding partners to the Pierce County Connected fund, nonprofits, municipal agencies, and community donors and volunteers, a COMMUNITY RESPONSE COMMITTEE was established to provide real-time, on-the-ground information from providers about impacts and needs due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Community Response Committee is informed by the structure and protocols of an Incident Command Structure (ICS). ICS is used across the country by fire, FEMA, and other governmental organizations to streamline resources and communication during emergencies.

The goal of the Community Response Committee is to ensure real-time, on-the-ground information is surfaced in a way that supports aligned philanthropic response by funders, donors, nonprofits, and community-serving agencies with a minimum of burden placed on nonprofits actively providing services.

The Community Response Committee is organized by priority operational areas – called pods. The first set of pods are based on immediate needs surfacing at the system level since March 13: Food, Housing, First Responder Childcare, Funding, Faith Community Response, and Volunteer Coordination.

As the community impacts of COVID-19 and the necessary public health measures to slow the pandemic evolve, the Community Response Committee may scale up to survey and inform other communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19 like: Mental Health, Individuals with Physical Disability, Elderly, Immigrants, First Responders, and Youth.

The Pierce County Connected Community Response Committee will:

- Work in the best interest of the Pierce County community and its residents.
- Facilitate sector collaboration and communication.
- Provide a central point of verified information and communication for the sector.
- Staff the philanthropy liaison position inside the Emergency Operations Centers to represent the sector with daily updates and information received from the pod leads.
- Provide Pierce County-specific guidance from pods to funders to help them make informed COVID-19 response funding decisions.
- Help advocate with government entities for resources and policy decisions as needed.

The Pierce County Connected Community Response will not:

- Extend its scope beyond the immediate COVID-19 public health crisis.
- Take ownership or responsibility of the service provision.

Pod leads, as shown into the organizational chart, will be reaching out to organizations within those sectors to arrange ways to get regular updates to inform the reports. The goal is for these check-ins to take a minimum of time for participants, in respect the tremendous amount of work organizations are already doing to support the community during COVID-19.