

Tzu Chi Resumes Food Aid in San Bernardino, California

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
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Volunteers of the Tzu Chi Foundation have resumed distribution of food aid in San Bernardino, a city of 250,000 in southern California with a high level of poverty. Like other cities in the United States, San Bernardino has been greatly affected by the COVID19 pandemic. It has pushed many families into financial difficulty. To relieve some of the pressure on them, Tzu Chi has since July restarted its food distribution.

Two months ago, life in the city seemed to be returning to normal, with shops reopening. But the number of virus cases increased sharply, the shops had to be closed again and people confined to their homes. One resident said: "Everything was open a week or two, but it all closed again. It's kind of sad." Due to the extended order to stay at home, the life of the city's residents is again limited. Children are disappointed not to be able to go back to school.

One resident Amelia said: "It is a difficult time for everyone, including the children. They have become anxious due to the closing of the school and seeing their fathers and uncles losing their jobs. They don't know what will happen, and also worry that they might get sick. It is a very difficult for all of us."

Seeing this need, Tzu Chi invited many volunteers to help these families.



Volunteer Jack Tseng said: "Today we try to reach 500 families. We are also looking for more, going forward. If the pandemic remains the same, we would like to come back regularly to San Bernardino for distribution."

Resident Amelia said: "I am grateful to have an organization like Tzu Chi that can help us. Instead of spending money on food, we can now use it to buy gasoline and other necessities."

John, a policeman in the city's school district, said: "In the city of San Bernardino, there is a 94% poverty rate and a lack of jobs. Some of the houses that you can see are vacant. So it is very easy to be discouraged in this community of 250,000 people. Your volunteers are out here in the hot sun. It's 90 degrees. They are putting food into people's cars and are directing traffic. They care about the community and they want to give something back. And that brings hope."