



Spotlight on VEAP

Spring 2024

Why Does Peace Support VEAP?

In the early 1970s, a group of churches in Richfield and South Minneapolis that delivered Meals on Wheels became increasingly concerned about the poor and deteriorating living conditions of seniors in their community. This along with other societal issues mobilized a group of 13 Bloomington and Richfield churches to band together and in 1973 to form VEAP. Peace was one of those churches. Over its first years, VEAP provided a variety of programs with many of them focused on meeting the needs of the elderly including food deliveries, snow shoveling and basic handyman services. These programs evolved to focus on Food and Basic Needs. Today, VEAP is the largest food shelf in Minnesota.

How is VEAP Supported/Funded?

VEAP receives support from a diverse base of congregations, businesses, foundations, schools, civic and fraternal organizations and individuals in Bloomington, Richfield, Edina and South Minneapolis. Second Harvest and local grocery stores provide most of the food. Local food drives are also supportive.

How Do People Access VEAP's Programs and Services

Visitors make an appointment with a case worker and then can come twice a month to the on-site Food Pantry and receive a whole grocery cart of food with shelf-stable products, meats, dairy, and fresh produce. There are no income guidelines for VEAP's food pantry.

VEAP also offers an array of social services to alleviate short-term emergency needs (i.e., financial assistance to help families stay in their homes, get current on utility bills, or meet an immediate financial need that will lead to longer-term financial stability) and also works with clients to help build greater stability by addressing longer-term areas of need.

Rent assistance is offered and the VEAP staff can connect clients to community resources offered by Bloomington, Richfield, Edina, Hennepin County, etc. depending on the need.

How Can You Get Involved?

VEAP depends on volunteers in everything that they do—all ages 16 and above and skill sets are needed; no experience needed. Children ages 9-15 can volunteer when accompanied by an adult. VEAP's website has a Volunteer Resources page that lists the open volunteer positions. Volunteer shifts range from 2.5-4.0 hours. There is no minimum requirement for number of hours volunteering.

Other ways to give include donating funds (\$10 will provide food for 30 meals!) and/or donating food (shelf-stable food, household products, pet food). VEAP can buy \$7-\$10 worth of food for every \$1.00 we give them.

How Is Peace Currently Involved?

Peace gives money, "most needed items," and food. VEAP's "Most Needed" list includes: laundry detergent, toilet paper, soap, paper towels, shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant and all other home and personal hygiene products (including feminine hygiene items and adult diapers). They never have enough of these items. Every Friday morning a member of the Service & Mission Committee brings Peace's weekly donations to VEAP. Our donations are usually distributed that same day.