

# SAFE PARKING PROGRAM

## Dinner Host Information and FAQs- Aero Lot

**Thank you for your interest in hosting a dinner for the unsheltered families and individuals participating in the Safe Parking Program!**

The Safe Parking Program serves unsheltered families and individuals living in their cars most of whom have recently found themselves homeless for the first time. JFS understands that a vehicle is often a critical asset, allowing individuals and families access to resources, ability to look for employment (or get to and from a job), and/or to get to and from school. Focused on stopping the downward spiral of homelessness, the Safe Parking Program provides more than a dependable place to park at night. The program includes supportive services to help individuals and families stabilize and transition back into permanent housing.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Who does this lot serve?** The Aero Lot hosts adults who are currently living in their cars. There are no children at the Aero Lot. Individuals have access to a gated lot, covered picnic tables, a little library, and outdoor lavatories.

**How many volunteers are needed to serve dinner?** We recommend groups bring between **5-10 volunteers** so that everyone feels like they have a meaningful role. Volunteers should be at least 7 years old and volunteers ages 7-13 should be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

**What time is the volunteer shift? What time is dinner served?** We ask that volunteer groups arrive at **5:30pm and be prepared to stay through 8:00pm** to allow time for set up, dinner service, and clean up. Clients begin to arrive to the lot as early as 6:00pm and can enter as late as 9:00pm. Dinner is generally served from 6:00-7:30pm.

**What should we bring?** The Dinner Host is asked to ensure that their volunteer group supplies everything for the dinner, including:

- Food (Please bring all food cooked and ready to serve as there is no access to a kitchen)
- Beverages
- Serving dishes
- Serving utensils
- Hot plates with extension cords, if needed (There is limited access to outdoor outlets.)
- Plates
- Napkins
- Cutlery
- Cups
- Tablecloths, if desired for serving tables
- Disposable packaging for any leftovers to leave for clients (There is limited refrigeration on site, but some participants have coolers.)

**How many people should we prepare to serve?** We recommend preparing dinner for approximately **40-50 adults**. While we host up to 60 cars at this lot, not everyone chooses to participate in the community dinners and/or some arrive later.

**How do families know dinner will be available on the night we are scheduled?** We post the dates of all upcoming dinners on the Safe Parking Program community bulletin board.

**Are there any restrictions on the food we bring?** No, although we do encourage healthy choices. Groups have provided everything from lasagna, soup, salad or pizza to tacos. Some groups love to bring a sweet dessert, but we also welcome fruit. Some groups stick with water while others prefer to include coffee. Occasionally there are families who have dietary restrictions (i.e., vegetarian/vegan, kosher, or food allergies), but we don't always know in advance. Ultimately, the families appreciate your effort to provide dinner whether store-bought or home-made, a hot or cold meal.

**What does JFS provide for the dinner service?**

- **Outdoor picnic tables** for the individuals to enjoy their dinner in a communal setting
- **Three 6' tables** on which to set up your food and drinks
- **Serving gloves** for all volunteers to ensure safe food handling
- **Water for washing hands** by hose (potable)
- **Trash cans and trash bags**

**What should volunteers expect to do?**

- **Set up:** Carry food and materials from volunteers' cars to set up on serving tables provided before guests arrive
- **Serve dinner:** Volunteers can dish out the food, pour drinks, replenish supplies and bus tables
- **Socialize:** Beyond providing a meal, your group can provide company. We welcome you to sit and get to know the individuals participating in the Safe Parking Program.
- **Clean Up:** After the dinner, we ask that you leave the area as it was found (i.e., clean up, package any leftover food, make sure any tables are returned to the shed, etc.)

**Are there any restrictions to volunteers' participation?** To respect our programmatic requirements and maintain a positive experience for all, *volunteers may not:*

- Solicit business from clients or staff,
- Promote or facilitate religious activities, including prayer with clients or staff regardless of faith tradition,
- Distribute literature that has not been preapproved by Jewish Family Service

**Can we take pictures?** We ask you to respect the privacy and confidentiality of our clients. Pictures are only permitted to be taken of your volunteer group. Additionally, while you may get to know some of the clients over dinner, please refrain from using any identifying client information (names, ages, places of employment/school, etc.) when sharing your volunteer experience with family, friends, or on social media.

**Can we bring any other donations?** Yes. Your group is welcome to bring additional donations when you come to serve dinner. Since the individuals have limited space in their vehicles, please reference the *Safe Parking Program Wish List* to ensure you are collecting needed items. Donations specifically for children will be taken to the JFS Balboa Lot which hosts families.

**Where is the Aero Lot located?** This Safe Parking Program lot is located at 9882 Aero Drive, San Diego, CA 92123. Access to the lot is actually on an unnamed road that runs behind the Sizzler shopping center. From Aero Drive, turn north onto Murphy Canyon Road. Turn right on the unnamed road just past the Hilton Garden Inn. Take the road to the end and the Safe Parking Program Lot is on the left behind the gates.

**Where should volunteers park?** Volunteers should park along the unnamed road rather than in the lot which is reserved for participants.

**Where do volunteers check in?** At 5:30pm, we welcome you to check in with staff at the modular building.

**How do I sign up my group to volunteer?** Visit [www.jfssd.org/safeparkingprogramapp](http://www.jfssd.org/safeparkingprogramapp)

**Who can I contact with additional questions?** Carole Yellen at [caroley@jfssd.org](mailto:caroley@jfssd.org) or (858) 637-3395



The Safe Parking Program is generously funded by  
the City of San Diego and community donors

Revised 101518