

For Immediate Release

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NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PARTNERS WITH CITYMEALS ON WHEELS TO HELP HOMEBOUND SENIORS PLAN AND PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES

February 24, 2017 – The New York City Emergency Management Department partnered with Citymeals on Wheels in a new effort to empower the city’s most vulnerable New Yorkers with the knowledge they need to effectively prepare for emergencies. As part of the preparedness partnership, Citymeals on Wheels distributed *My Emergency Plan* preparedness workbooks to over 15,000 homebound elderly New Yorkers alongside Presidents Day holiday meal boxes. The workbook is designed to help New Yorkers — especially those with disabilities and access and functional needs — create an emergency plan. The interactive preparedness guide walks users through establishing a support network, capturing important health information, evacuation planning, and gathering emergency supplies. First responders or caregivers can also use the workbook to help people with disabilities and access and functional needs during an emergency.

“Seniors and people with disabilities can be particularly at risk during an emergency, but the *My Emergency Plan* guide outlines the steps they can take to be prepared,” said **NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Joseph Esposito**. “We’re pleased to be able to team up with Citymeals on Wheels to help ensure that critical, possibly even life-saving information will be available to some of NYC’s most vulnerable residents.”

“Citymeals on Wheels works hard year round to ensure that our meal recipients – who are alone, frail and vulnerable – have enough food on hand to get them through any emergency,” said **Beth Shapiro, Executive Director of Citymeals on Wheels**. “We are proud to partner with NYC Emergency Management on this Presidents Day initiative to make sure homebound seniors also have vitally important information on what to do and who to call when danger is imminent.”

As part of the agency’s mission to educate the public, NYC Emergency Management visits schools, businesses, faith-based and not-for-profit organizations, and senior centers and nursing homes to help prepare thousands of New Yorkers each year for emergencies ranging from hurricanes and winter storms to power outages and explosions.

Citymeals on Wheels, working in partnership with the NYC Department for the Aging, community-based organizations and senior centers, provides a continuous lifeline of nourishing meals and vital companionship to New York City’s homebound elderly. In addition to hand-delivering weekend and emergency meals, Citymeals ensures the city’s most vulnerable population has something to eat when local meal centers must close for national or religious observances. Citymeals prepares older New Yorkers for these long holiday weekends by providing packages with three shelf-stable meals – staples like tuna, organic quinoa, applesauce, canned vegetables, and more. This month, staff and volunteers hand-delivered over 15,000 boxes for Presidents Day. *My Emergency Plan* workbooks were included in these boxes and delivered to the homebound seniors Citymeals on Wheels serves. Last fiscal year, the organization funded, packed and delivered 326,675 shelf-stable meals for the holidays.

[My Emergency Plan](#) is an interactive workbook that teaches users preparedness lessons while they create an emergency plan. The guide has three sections designed to help people make a plan, gather emergency supplies, and get information. Once completed, the workbook is a useful tool for the user and for first responders, caregivers, and support network members.

NYC Emergency Management’s Special Needs Advisory Group – a planning group made up of government agencies, advocacy groups, and special needs service providers – contributed heavily to the development of the guide and ensured the content was accurate and user-friendly. *My Emergency Plan* is available in 12 languages and audio format at nyc.gov/emergencymanagement.

For more information on Citymeals on Wheels visit citymeals.org.

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