

Kitchen One demobilized after suspected COVID-19 infection

Updated 9/14/21

*By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor*

Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief's (MBDR) Kitchen One returned Sept. 5 from New Orleans, where volunteers had been preparing meals for victims of Hurricane Ida, when one of the volunteers developed symptoms of what is believed to be the COVID-19 coronavirus.

Hubert Yates, director of disaster relief for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, said the possible pandemic infection was detected during routine screenings at the site of the kitchen in the Jefferson area and a positive rapid test conducted by the Salvation Army site leadership.

All 16 team members on site at the time are being monitored and tested. All team members have returned to their homes as of the afternoon of Sept. 5.

The Kitchen One unit, which can ramp up to 10,000 meals per day when necessary, was able to operate two days and produce about 5,500 meals, Yates stated. Kitchen One was expected to reach maximum production during a four to six week mobilization.

Kitchen One's assignment has been turned over to the feeding unit from the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, which is presently in the New Orleans disaster area and has the capability to pick up the assignment, Yates said.

MBDR reported the following mobilizations for response to Hurricane Ida damage:

– Chainsaw teams from Pearl River Association in Carriere, Jackson Association in Pascagoula, Temple Church in Hattiesburg, and Carterville Church in Petal, are moving into the Covington, La., area later this week.

– Chainsaw teams from Temple Church, Hattiesburg, and Carterville Church Petal, responded to New Orleans Seminary after Ida cleared the area.

– A number of Mississippi Baptist churches are responding through church-to-church connections with Louisiana Baptist churches.

In addition, Louisiana Baptist Disaster Relief has requested MBDR establish an Incident Management Team to coordinate chainsaw operations in the hard-hit area around Covington, La., Yates reported. That team will be operating from First Church, Covington.

Disaster relief teams from the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, the Illinois Baptist State Association, and the Baptist General Convention of Virginia were mobilizing to Louisiana but have been reassigned to assist the Baptist Convention of New England in responding to the severe Ida damage in that area of the country, Yates said.

Donations to MBDR can be made online at <https://www.mbc.org/giving/>. Select “Give as an Individual” and designate the gift to Disaster Relief.

Check donations are also accepted. Make the check payable to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, designate Disaster Relief on the memo line, and mail to MBCB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

All financial donations given through MBDR go directly to support relief/recovery efforts in partnership with local Baptist churches and associations in affected areas. In-kind donations such as clothing cannot be accepted as MBDR is not

set up to receive and distribute those items.