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Baltimore Housing Authority blocks elderly and disabled from receiving food

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Baltimore's Douglas Homes public housing development.

Peoples Power Assembly

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Contact Persons: Reverend Annie Chambers at 443-768-7682 or text or call her team at 410-996-4848

Today, Monday, March 30, at 12 p.m., the Housing Authority of Baltimore City staff members blocked the Franciscan Center and other food pantries from delivering essential groceries to families and senior citizens living in Baltimore's Douglas Homes public housing development.

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of last week the Housing and Urban Development Resident Advisory Board delegate for Douglas Homes, Reverend Annie Chambers, coordinated with several food pantries, including Living Classrooms, the Power House, The Free Farm and the Franciscan Center to deliver groceries to seniors, the disabled, mothers of newborns and other Douglas Homes residents that are unable to make it to a grocery store. Food was also distributed to those who cannot afford groceries, as no one was turned away. These groceries include bread, milk, diapers, infant formula, fresh produce, canned goods and more.

Today, an incident occurred around 12 p.m. Several housing authority staff members assembled on the corner of Bond and Orleans streets in Douglas Homes. They would not let the Franciscan Center deliver food to the residents of Douglas Homes. The Housing Authority's Cheryl Harrison Jackson said that giving away food on Housing Authority property violates Housing Authority rules. Food already delivered was instructed to be thrown away by Ms. Harrison, but the Housing Authority Staff members under her refused to comply.

The director of the Franciscan Center arrived to clarify that their center is an approved food pantry that is allowed by Baltimore City to distribute meals and food during this crisis. The Housing Authority staff still denied him access to Douglas Home and said they will not allow them or other pantries to make food deliveries even during this crisis.

The director of The Franciscan Center said, "My understanding is that the Housing Authority is saying that you can't give out food in a public housing setting. Our food consists of bagged lunches and vegetables, and that's what we're trying to give out." The Franciscan Center is one of the many community locations designated by Baltimore City to provide food during this crisis.

The Housing Authority has made it clear that they will continue to deny drop-offs from food pantries. Reverend Annie Chambers, who is coordinating the food drop-

offs, is vowing to do everything in her power to get these groceries to the people in need despite the Housing Authority trying to stop her. The Housing Authority has threatened to evict Reverend Chambers when she attempts to distribute food tomorrow (March 31st) even though no evictions are currently allowed due to the coronavirus crisis.

Reverend Chambers said, “We’re here in public housing with no help and no support. Just for giving out food today, they threatened to call the cops on us. They threatened to evict me. But I’ll be here again tomorrow to give out more food no matter what! We’re just trying to survive. People here have nothing.”

For more information, call Reverend Annie Chambers at 443-768-7682 or text or call her team at 410-996-4848. Her address is 247 North Dallas Ct., Baltimore, MD, on the corner of Bond and Orleans streets.

