

CARITAS AMBROSIANA'S SERVICES IN CORONAVIRUS HARD TIMES

Thanks to the collaboration of the volunteers and operators of Caritas Ambrosiana, solidarity has not diminished despite the security measures imposed by civil authorities to counter the spread of the Coronavirus epidemic.

«I want to express my great gratitude to all the operators and volunteers, who, with great generosity, have not made their closeness to the people in difficulty less effective. In this difficult moment we are called to implement all those measures necessary to protect volunteers and operators, without leaving our guests alone, because they risk to suffer the worst consequences of this emergency, "commented Luciano Gualzetti.

Attentions that must be followed in general in all services

The need to limit the exits from the house and to avoid gatherings, queues, waiting rooms, circumstances in which more people stay in contact in limited spaces must be stressed in any case, respecting the hygiene standards indicated by the health authorities:

- Avoid handshakes, kisses and hugs.
- Guarantee the safety distances of at least one meter between people, possibly two.
- Upon entering the service, operators, volunteers and users must sanitize their hands using alcoholic solutions or washing hands with soap and water. The same must be done when returning to one's own house
- Take care of the hygiene of rooms and surfaces
- If it is not possible to guarantee the maintenance of the minimum distances all the time, it is necessary to wear the mask

As for the ban on movements, you must have proven working/health/necessity reasons to leave the house. In the case of volunteers who go to or return from services, they must indicate "proven working needs



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EMOPORIUMS OF SOLIDARITY

The eight Emporiums of Solidarity and the four shops of the Diocese of Milan remain open. Following the provisions of Caritas Ambrosiana to avoid queues or gatherings at distribution points, the volunteers delivered tickets to the needy with a timetable at which they would have had to present themselves for the collection of the shopping in the following days. It is estimated that in this way, on average 3.5 quintals of food were distributed per day to 200 people, in an orderly manner. The volunteers did not report any assault on the shelves: everyone took what needed respecting the shifts. Pasta, peeled, canned sauces are the most popular products.



Attentions that must be followed in this service:

Security distances must be maintained while in queue at the entrance and the stay of more people in confined spaces must be avoided, by setting appointments for "shopping" operations.

It is necessary to make everyone do the shopping after hand sanitization or by providing gloves (like those in use for choosing fruit and vegetables). The cashier may have disposable gloves.

People with modest respiratory symptoms can access exceptionally and only if equipped with surgical mask and disposable gloves.

REFETTORIO AMBROSIANO

At the Refettorio Ambrosiano canteen, volunteers and operators packed lunch boxes, instead of serving meals. Each box contained a hot dish (usually a first course), a portion of vegetables, fruit, bread and desserts that guests were able to consume individually or in small groups. On average, 90 meals a day were offered to guests in this way. Out of these, 50 packed lunch were delivered directly to the Caritas shelter for homeless people.



Attentions that must be followed in this service:

Avoid queues at the entrance and stay in closed rooms without keeping the distances of safety among people. People can only access if few can be accommodated people respecting the safety distances at all time and ensuring the hygiene of the hands at the entrance, as well as the isolation of people with respiratory symptoms. Alternatively, food can be distributed in individual bags to take away. The operators/volunteers must wash the hands before and after food distribution avoiding touching eyes, nose and mouth during the distribution. The use of disposable gloves avoids contamination of the hands (which must be however washed before wearing and once removed), but it does not protect against the risk of touching eyes, nose and mouth. Gloves must be removed by taking the upper edge, reversing the outside inside and should be thrown into a closed bag. If it is not possible to guarantee the safety distance between people, the mask must be worn (it obviously must be lowered in order to eat when the other has moved away).

RIFUGIO – NIGHT SHELTER FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE

The night shelter for homeless people is also open. Here a health facility was also set up, created by operators and volunteer doctors, which acted as a filter at the entrance. There are currently 54 guests, slightly less than the maximum capacity (60 people).



Attentions that must be followed in this service:

It is desirable to guarantee the service to prevent people from staying on the street, exposing themselves and others to possible risks. In this period it would also be desirable to extend the night reception also during the day to increase security of guests and operators. At the entrance, we invite you to carry out an evaluation by a health operator who judges the suitability for reception and any measures to be taken towards those with fever and respiratory symptoms in compliance with the indications of the health authorities (isolation, reporting). If it is not possible to guarantee the minimum distances, the mask must be worn.

LISTENING CENTRES



Talks continue in the 380 listening centers spread in the parishes of the Diocese and in the desks at Caritas' central services (Milanese Reception Service, Immigrant Reception Service, Job Orientation Service - Siloe) by appointment, in order to avoid gatherings in the waiting room and to set up the safest environment. Although the number of people reached by these services is high (around 4 thousand people per day), the average of daily accesses for each single centres is around ten, therefore manageable, according to the protection indications given by public authorities.

Attentions that must be followed in this service:

Listening must be guaranteed primarily through the telephone or digitally. The listening centre phone can be diverted, for example, to personal numbers (also with shifts) and emails can be read remotely. When meeting in person is essential and not deferrable, it is necessary to fix single appointments and make sure that the people you are going to meet has no fever and / or respiratory symptoms and, if otherwise, send them to the doctor. The volunteer involved in physical appointments must be under 65 years of age, be in good health and asymptomatic. The interview room must allow for distances to be maintained and good natural ventilation of the room. The waiting room should preferably be empty, otherwise people must sit at least one meter apart. At the entrance, the hand hygiene of both the volunteer and the person must be guaranteed. If it is not possible to guarantee the maintenance of minimum distances all the time, the mask must be worn. At the end of the appointment, handles, tables and chairs must be sanitized, as well as everything else that was touched.