

Feeding scheme launched to help over 200 homeless people in CPT

The staff at The Peninsula All-Suite Hotel in Sea Point have rallied together to help feed over 200 people currently housed at a designated safe space under Culemborg bridge in Cape Town. The 'Culemborg Mission', launched on Friday, 7 May, entails mass production of hot and nutritious meals prepared under strict sanitary conditions in the hotel's kitchen.



Images(s) Supplied.

The meals are delivered to the site, located along Hertzog Boulevard, on a weekly basis.

"The nationwide lockdown has been a very humbling experience for both myself and the team," explains Chris Godenir, general manager of The Peninsula All-Suite Hotel. "We have a restricted amount of staff on-site at the moment but we still wanted to do something meaningful for our community. We wanted to do something that we could action right now, instead of waiting around for the lockdown to ease up."

Giving overwhelmed NGOs a hand

Established in 2018 in order to address a shortage of beds in shelters in and around the CBD, the Culemborg bridge site offers respite and relief to the city's homeless. South Africa's Covid-19 imposed lockdown has only magnified the need – especially for feeding schemes.

"The facilities available include beds, ablution facilities and storage lockers for up to 230 people, free of charge, but the only thing not provided are meals," explained Godenir. "This service is only provided by voluntary initiatives and NGOs who are overwhelmed as you can imagine, which is why we stepped in to help."

"We know how cold Cape Town can get, especially now as we move into winter and we wanted to make sure the Culemborg residents could bed down with a full belly."

Along with their mission at Culemborg, Godenir and his team are continuing their efforts to get more involved in community projects, while management focuses on doing more for the 159 staff that are currently still employed at the hotel.

"With the situation as it is now, we've realised that this is our chance to truly make a difference in how we operate, day-to-day, and not just for our guests, but for those still very much a part of our Peninsula family.

"Our doors may still be closed during the nationwide restrictions, but our hearts are very much open," he concludes.

Those wishing to get more involved in helping the residents based in Culemborg can assist by dropping off food donations at The Peninsula All-Suite Hotel. For more information, contact Brynn Rorich, guest services manager at +27 (0)21 430 777 or guestserv@peninsula.co.za.



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