

Amazon is buying 10,000 meals from Arlington restaurants & donating them to the community

by Heather Graf
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ARLINGTON, Va. (ABC7) — On Thursday, Amazon made a different kind of delivery in Arlington.

It wasn't an order placed on the online retail giant's website. Instead, the company sent 1,753 pre-prepared meals to healthcare workers at Virginia Hospital Center.

The delivery is part of Amazon's commitment to purchase 10,000 meals from Arlington restaurants during the month of May, and then donate those meals to community members - including those serving on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic,

So far, the company has donated meals to the Arlington County police and sheriff's departments, along with firefighters and EMS staff in Arlington and Alexandria, and healthcare workers at Virginia Hospital Center.

The meals have been purchased from restaurants along 23rd Street South, including Enjera, Urban Tai, Crystal City Sports Pub, and Freddie's Beach Bar and Restaurant.

ABC7 spoke to the owner of Freddie's Beach Bar and Restaurant about what it means to be able to deliver those meals to front-line workers.

Thursday's delivery to Virginia Hospital Center is in honor of National Hospital Week.

"They're very special customers. I tell everyone, every time we go to deliver food they say thank you -- and they're the ones that deserve the thanks. I immediately tell them they're doing all the hard work and trying to save our lives, and we appreciate it so much," said Freddie Lutz, who is also President of the 23rd Street Merchants Association.

Amazon is currently building its second headquarters in Arlington and will eventually employ 25,000 people at HQ2.

[In a blog post on the company's website](#), Amazon says it's working to support businesses, schools, and organizations in both Arlington and Seattle, where the company's original headquarters is located.

The pledge to purchase 10,000 meals from Arlington restaurants is part of that effort, as restaurants are currently limited to take-out only due to COVID-19. Throughout the month of May, Amazon says purchased meals will be donated to first responders, healthcare workers, and the Cooperative for a Hunger-Free Arlington.

The [Cooperative for a Hunger-Free Arlington](#) (CHFA) is a new component of Arlington County's coronavirus response, tasked with coordinating efforts to feed residents and families in need during the pandemic.

"During this unprecedented time, Amazon is working to not only support our frontline healthcare workers and first responders across the Arlington area, but also our most vulnerable neighbors in immediate need," said Brian Huseman, Amazon's Vice President of Public Policy. "We are proud to work alongside Freddie's Beach Bar and Restaurant, a beloved local restaurant in our new neighborhood, to ensure that we're thanking our neighbors who are keeping us safe and caring for our neighbors who need extra support right now with hearty meals throughout May."