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## **How Darien Supermarkets Are Helping Vulnerable Shoppers During the COVID-19 Epidemic**

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**Categories :** [Food & Drink](#), [Restaurants & Bars](#), [Healthy Living](#)

**Tagged as :** [Coronavirus 2020](#), [COVID-19 2020](#), [Palmer's Market 2020](#), [Stop and Shop 2020](#), [Whole Foods Market 2020](#)

**Date :** March 18, 2020

Stop and Shop announced days ago that its stores would be open solely to seniors in the very early hours of each day. Palmer's Market in Darien also announced curbside and delivery service for people who need it.

On Wednesday, Whole Foods Market announced its stores were also taking steps to keep their stores safer for shoppers.

Trader Joe's has stopped all food sampling in its stores and changed its hours to give staff more time to make sure stores are well-sanitized.

Here's a rundown:

### **Whole Foods Market: 8 to 9 AM for 60+ Seniors**

"Starting on Wednesday, March 18, all Whole Foods Market stores in the U.S. and Canada will service customers who are 60 and older one hour before opening to the general public, under the new adjusted hours posted on the store's web page," [the company announced](#) on its website.

Whole Foods Market at 150 Ledge Road in Darien is now open to the general public from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., every day, according to the company [web page for the store](#).

The announcement also said:

"In addition, Whole Foods Market stores will close up to two hours early to give our Team Members more time to restock shelves, sanitize our stores and rest in preparation for the next day.

"During this time, stores will remain open for pickup (in stores that offer it), and we will continue to fulfill Prime delivery orders in an effort to meet unprecedented demand and ensure that people who need to remain at home can still get their groceries in a timely manner."

### **Palmer's Market: Delivery & Curbside Pickup**

*On Facebook, [Palmer's announced](#) on Monday:*

Starting on March 17, Palmers will be offering an EMERGENCY GROCERY SERVICE to assist those members in our community who are homebound, under quarantine or at high risk during this pandemic.

We ask that individuals who are capable of coming into the store not to use this service. We do not want to overwhelm our system which would prevent us from being able to assist those people who desperately need it.

#### **HOW IT WORKS:**

All orders must be called in between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. and will be ready for pick-up or delivery the same day. To place your order call Palmer's at 203-655-2077, then press #. A grocery concierge will take your order.

#### **WHAT'S AVAILABLE:**

Due to current demand, we cannot guarantee that every item on your list will be available. Brands are limited

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at this time so please give us broad requests (for example: whole milk, pasta, chicken breasts) instead of brand names.

We will do our very best to fill your order and will make substitutions for the next closest items when needed. We will not be accepting returns and ask that you do not get upset if the items you request are not available.

There is no up-charge for this service and your credit card will be charged before pick up/delivery. As we are not set up for online shopping, we will not be able to provide you with a total for your order until it is completed.

**FOR CURBSIDE PICKUP:**

Once your order has been filled, your grocery concierge will call to let you know that it is ready. Your order must be picked up within 1 hour of this notification as we have limited refrigeration capacity and cannot store orders. When you arrive at Palmer's, find a parking spot and call 203-655-2077 EXT 0 and our team will bring the groceries out and load them into your car.

If you do not pick-up within an hour of notification, the groceries will be returned to the shelf and your credit card will be refunded for the total amount minus a \$25 cancellation fee.

**FOR DELIVERY:**

At this current time, we will only be delivering to homes in Darien. A \$10 delivery will be assessed for delivered orders. We cannot guarantee a delivery time and assume that if you are at high risk, you will be at home. Our driver will ring your doorbell and place your groceries at the door. In order to ensure the safety and well-being of our staff, delivery drivers will not be permitted to enter your home or unpack your groceries.

We will not be responsible for groceries left unattended.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

This grocery concierge service is temporary and can/will be discontinued or altered at our discretion.

We have strict safety measures in place for all of our employees to ensure that Palmer's will be a safe place to shop. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you and be safe,  
The Palmer Family and Employees

**Stop and Shop: 6 to 7:30 AM for 60+ Seniors**

The supermarket chain [issued this announcement](#) on Wednesday, March 18, giving added information about their efforts, announced days earlier:

**New Store Hours for Customers Most Vulnerable to COVID-19**

Dear customers,

As you may have heard, beginning tomorrow all Stop & Shop stores will open early to service our most vulnerable customers from 6 to 7:30 a.m. daily. During those hours, we look forward to welcoming customers who are age 60 and over as well as customers who may have weakened immune systems and are more susceptible to COVID-19.

There has been a great deal of interest in this effort across our communities. However, in order to ensure that we provide the best experience we can for these customers, here are some guidelines and information:

- These hours are to help our more vulnerable customers shop in a less crowded environment, if they prefer.
- We plan to make these hours available EVERY day during this period, so it's not necessary for everyone to come on the first day. This could result in large crowds, the very situation we are looking to prevent as it will make it more difficult for customers to practice social distancing.
- While we recognize we may be experiencing product shortages in some areas, our stores receive deliveries throughout the day so our shelves will be replenished for shoppers at all hours. We are making our best efforts to have products available across high-demand categories throughout the day.
- Stop & Shop has implemented added cleaning and sanitation efforts, which will continue throughout the day at all stores.
- Finally, when you shop for your family, be sure to keep other families in mind. Shop responsibly and buy just what you need.

**Trader Joe's: Shorter Hours, No Free Samples, More Cleaning**

[This announcement](#) on the Trader Joe's website was last updated on Tuesday and originally appeared on March 11:

To Our Valued Customers:

As the coronavirus COVID-19 affects our communities, our work as your neighborhood grocery store continues. We are vigilant; heeding all federal, state and local health advisories; and where it makes sense, adjusting efforts to safeguard the health and safety of our Crew Members and customers. To date, we have taken the following precautionary measures:

**Revised Store Hours for All Trader Joe's Locations:** Beginning Monday, March 16th and until further notice, all Trader Joe's stores will be open from 9:00am until 7:00pm to support our Crew Members in

taking care of one another and our customers.

**Continued Communication:** We are closely monitoring the situation, and regularly providing all of our stores and Crew Members with the most up-to-date safety guidance, as recommended by the CDC and other health officials.

**Offering Additional Paid-for Sick Time to All Crew Members:** Crew Members have been asked to exercise increased precautions to safeguard their health and the health of their community, including staying home if they have any symptoms of illness or do not feel well. To better support each Crew Member in making community-minded decisions, we have made available additional paid sick time to all of our Crew Members.

**Prioritizing Good Hygiene Practices:** We are providing continuous reminders about good hygiene practices and supporting our Crew Members with necessary resources. For instance, ensuring every Crew Member at the registers has the opportunity to regularly wash their hands.

**Increasing Routine Cleaning:** In line with our longstanding commitment to provide a safe and clean shopping environment, stores have increased the frequency of cleanings, paying close attention to high touch areas such as restrooms, register areas, grocery carts and hand baskets.

**Suspending All Food and Beverage Sampling In Store:** As this situation has evolved, we have taken increased precautions related to our food and beverage sampling in stores, including our decision to stop the practice until further notice.

Upon notification of any possible exposure to the virus in any of our stores by Crew Member or customer, we are partnering closely with local health officials and taking all precautionary measures, including promptly notifying the public, closing our stores for thorough cleaning and sanitization (Crew Members will be paid for their scheduled shifts while a store is closed), and counseling potentially affected Crew Members to follow CDC-recommended self-monitoring protocols.

There is nothing more important to us than the health and safety of our customers and Crew Members. We will continue to provide information about what steps we are taking to address this rapidly evolving situation.

– Trader Joe’s