

# MEET EACH NEED WITH DIGNITY



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## For Immediate Release

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## Santa's Helicopter and Red Cadillac Spotted in Pacoima

*Santa Claus to deliver gifts to families in need thanks to Anthem Blue Cross and Southern California Gas Company*

Santa makes his special flight again this year for MEND – Meet Each Need with Dignity, the San Fernando Valley's largest poverty-relief agency. Santa will arrive by helicopter and deliver gifts for MEND's annual Christmas Basket Program. The event is the unofficial start of MEND's Christmas distribution where pre-registered families choose toys from the MEND "Toy Land" and receive their holiday basket.

**WHERE:** Santa's helicopter – generously donated by Group 3 Aviation - will land at Whiteman Airport, across from the MEND Center, near Pierce Street and a classic red Cadillac will drive him to the MEND Center at **10641 N. San Fernando Rd, Pacoima.**

**WHEN:** Friday, December 8, 2017  
Helicopter arrives at 8:30 a.m. Basket distribution will continue at MEND until 4 p.m.

**WHO:** MEND identified over 900 of the area's neediest families to receive Christmas Baskets which include enough food for Christmas dinner plus staple items, a new blanket and a new gift/toy for each child under the age of 14.

**MEND's 2017 Christmas Basket Program is sponsored by Anthem Blue Cross, a fourth year sponsor of the program, and Southern California Gas Company.**

**WHY:** To enhance Christmas and the holiday season for families who would otherwise do without.

### **VISUALS:**

- Santa Claus flying in helicopter and arriving at MEND Center in red convertible Cadillac while families await his arrival, and attendees visiting with Santa Claus.
- Families awaiting Santa Claus' arrival in huge line around the block.
- Families and children receiving Christmas food baskets for their holiday meals and selecting toys and books from the huge selection of donated items.

## **ABOUT MEND**

[MEND-- Meet Each Need with Dignity](#), serves an average of 37,000 clients each month, while remarkably keeping operating costs to less than 6%. Born as a volunteer-powered organization four decades ago in a garage, today MEND benefits from the assistance of approximately 5000 volunteers (and only 30 paid staffers) to implement its vast array of programs that provide food; clothing; job training; medical, dental and vision care; classes for adults in English as a Second Language, literacy, and computer training; showers and other services for the homeless; and a Holiday Basket Program for approximately 1000 pre-screened families in need. In 2016, 187,252 volunteer hours were provided, equating to 103 full-time employees.

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