

Khalsa Aid partners with Ambassador Bridge Duty Free to provide relief at Canadian border

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Mike Maskery, Store Manager/Liquor & Tobacco Category Manager Ambassador Bridge Duty Free

American and Canadian governments confirmed border closures in early March to decrease the spread of COVID-19. Shipments, trade and commerce have been the exception to cross borders during these unconventional times.

As the world learns to navigate these unusual times, Ambassador Bridge Duty Free, located between Detroit, Michigan, United States and Windsor, Ontario, Canada, has partnered with Khalsa Aid, an International group at the forefront of supporting vulnerable people, to offer free meals to those that have had an essential hand in keeping trade alive during this time.

Americas Duty Free spoke to Mike Maskery, Store Manager/Liquor & Tobacco Category Manager Ambassador Bridge Duty Free Store to understand how this partnership came into fruition and why it is so important right now.



Khalsa Aid has partnered with Ambassador Bridge Duty Free to provide free meals to essential workers crossing the border

Maskery was initially contacted by Japman Kaur from a local branch of Khalsa Aid. Kaur asked if their organization could use the Ambassador Bridge Duty Free facility to hand out free meals to essential workers, who are still allowed to cross into the US.

“Since both The Canadian and US Governments shut down the border to Non-Essential traffic, on March 20, only Essential traffic is allowed to cross at this time, which included truckers, health care workers, etc,” shares Maskery.

“Most of these truckers have been on the road for many hours, before they end up at our store. They cannot stop at a regular store, or go through a drive-through with their trucks, to get a coffee, a meal, or to use a washroom. We are relying on them, to keep the trade between Canada and the US flowing, and to make sure our grocery stores, etc., are stocked, during this very difficult time.”

Khalsa Aid is currently handing out free meals on Sundays and Thursdays. They set up in a truck parking lot, and are focussing on handing out the meals to mostly truckers, that are crossing into the US, although there have been some bridge construction workers, traffic control employees, nurses, and the retailer’s staff, that have also enjoyed the meals.

The partnership is going strong on its third week, having handed out hundreds of free meals. Other Windsor based business involved in the charitable work include Swaad Restaurant, Subway and Pizza Depot.



Mayor of Windsor, Drew Dilken, seen here thanking the Khalsa Aid organization

Says Maskery: “I cannot thank Khalsa Aid enough for what they are doing. The Mayor of Windsor, Drew Dilken, also came out a week ago, to give his support for these workers.

The Ambassador Bridge is considered one of the busiest international crossings in North America in terms of trade volume, carrying more than 25% of all merchandise trade between the United States and Canada. The Ambassador Duty Free Store is currently open 24/7, to service the essential traffic and continues to provide diesel fuel for the truckers.