Food Drive Planning Kit:

Where do you start?

loudoun hunger relief

750 Miller Dr, Suite 110
Leesburg,VA 20175
www.loudounhunger.org

Where to Start

Thank you for coordinating a drive to benefit our community! As need continues to grow, food drives are becoming an increasingly important way for us to provide for people in need. Here are some steps for a successful drive:

Set a Goal

How many potential contributors do you have? How much can you reasonably expect to collect from each donor? Will you collect food, cash, or both?

(Note: For food drives generating less than 1000 pounds, please think about using your own boxes to collect food and deliver your donations to Loudoun Hunger Relief (LHR).)

Decide How to Collect the Food

When to use your own boxes: Small to medium-sized boxes work well for small food drives. They aren't too heavy when full and can be decorated with wrapping paper or a food drive poster. Please use this option for any drive generating less than 500 pounds of food.

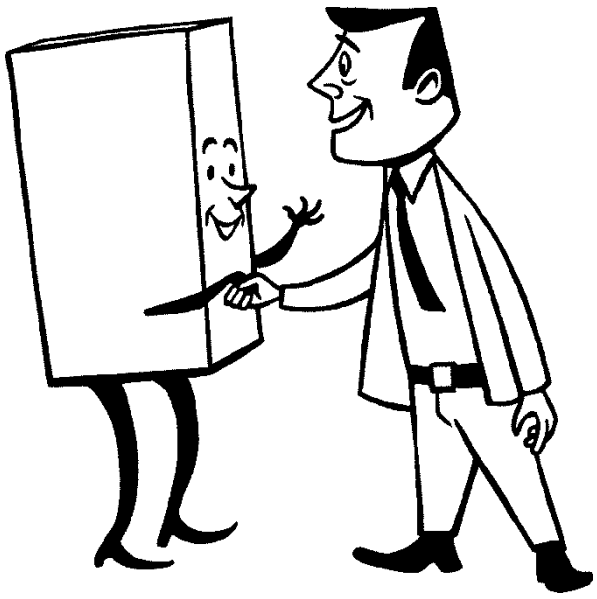
When to use food pantry boxes:
If you plan to raise more than 1000 pounds of food, just call us to arrange for pick up of LHR food collection boxes.

Magic boxes? No such thing!
Your containers and boxes are just as great at collecting food donations.

Loudoun Hunger Relief Food Pantry Receiving Hours (except for holidays and weather closures)

Mon–Fri
9:00 am - 3:00 pm
Sat
9:00 am - 12:00 pm

750 Miller Dr, Suite 110
Leesburg, VA 20175



Planning Checklist

The Basics

- ☐ Gather a small group to help organize the drive.
- ☐ Decide if you will raise food, money, or both. LHR values both contributions.
- ☐ Decide what type of drive you want to start: a party, a competition, etc.
- ☐ Set a reasonable goal.
- ☐ Agree on the drive length. Will it be one day, one week, or longer?
- ☐ Choose the drive's location. Will it occur at one place or at several locations?
- ☐ Decide on a collection method.

Getting Everything Ready

- ☐ Register your food drive with LHR.
- ☐ Send out emails, phone messages, and newsletters to promote the drive. Plan ways to keep up the momentum throughout the food drive.
- ☐ Consider arranging a Hunger Awareness Day at some point in your food drive.
- ☐ Acquire and decorate barrels or boxes for food collection.
- ☐ Arrange to store containers during the drive.

During the Drive

- ☐ Update participants on the amount of food and funds you've collected through a sign in a high traffic area, announcements in meetings and newsletters, or e-mail.
- ☐ Send out creative messages to keep people excited about reaching goals.

When the Drive is Over

- ☐ If you are delivering the food to LHR, coordinate volunteers to pack food properly at the end of the drive. Load and transport it to LHR.
- ☐ Deliver your food to LHR between 9 am to 3 pm on Monday through Friday, or make arrangements for pickup (greater than 1000 lbs only for pick-up).
- ☐ Share the results with all participants. Send thank-you letters. Throw a party. Make awards to celebrate efforts. LHR appreciates the hard work of all our donors!

Get Excited!

Foster Competition

- Plan a healthy competition between departments, classrooms, or teams. Friendly competition adds energy to a drive and helps people remember to donate.
- Offer rewards to top donors: pizza parties, gift certificates, front-row parking for a month, etc. Let employees wear jeans to work each day they donate a canned good. Use creative titles to describe your events.
- Assign specific foods from the "Most-Wanted Foods" list to each team. Alternatively, give a prize groups that donate a well-balanced collection of foods.
- Encourage monetary donations. A dollar goes a long way to bring food to people in need. It's also easier to store, deliver, and count cash.

Use Your Creative Spirit

- Make colorful posters noting the specifics of your food drive. Include LHR's list of "most-wanted" foods, along with facts and figures about hunger. Display posters or reminders in restrooms, hallways, lunchrooms, and classrooms, or hang on doorknobs.
- Create a giant thermometer or food can to measure progress toward your goal. Place the thermometer/can in the front lobby or employee break room.
- Identify your drive with a creative a fun name.
- Decorate bags for participants to take home, fill with food, and return.
- Design a paycheck stuffer with information about the drive.
- Designate theme days. Fill a playpen with infant formula one day. Plant a "garden" of planned vegetables the next day.
- Use your workplace's e-mail or other announcement system to distribute a hunger fact for each day of the drive. Quiz people at random and hand out small prizes to people who remember the facts.

Make it an Event

- Kick off your drive with opening day festivities. Be wacky, information, or inspirational.
- Try a silent auction. Nothing drives up cash donations like the possibility of a massage, airline tickets, or homemade items.
- Bake sales, pie-throwing contests, and car washes are tried and true fundraisers.

Creative Ideas

- Organize pledge drives. Ask family and friends to pledge money if you walk or cycle a specific distance.
- Recycle your treasures at a yard sale and donate funds to Food Finders.
- Sponsor a bake-sale.
- Collect food donations for a specific meal, i.e. chili day
- Hold a pizza party where the ticket is a food donation.
- Sponsor an ice cream social.
- Hold a potluck and ask guest to bring a canned good.
- Invite family and friends to make donations to Loudoun Hunger Relief as a birthday, anniversary, or holiday gift.
- Organize a silent auction.
- Auction your managers in a "Walk-an-hour-in-my-shoes" event.
- Challenge individuals or teams to fill a box with food that weighs more than your box of food.
- Collect food and funds at community events.
- Collect food and funds at sports events such as basketball games, mini-marathons, etc.
- Place donation jars and food bins near break rooms, copiers, and fax machines.
- Sponsor a brown bag lunch. Ask staff to donate a lunch sack full of nonperishable foods. Or, skip lunch on certain days and donate the cost of lunch.
- Have teams build a pyramid of food. Or, ask teams to bring foods representing the nutritional food pyramid.
- Have groups or teams donate a meal: pasta, spaghetti sauce, and canned vegetables, for example.
- Show short videos at lunch break and suggest that admission is a few cans of food.
- Let your imagination run wild, and have fun!
- Host Frugal Friday and have participants donate store-brand canned goods
- Host Thirsty Thursday and ask participants to donate 100% fruit juice.

Tell your most successful ideas to Loudoun Hunger Relief!

Most Wanted Foods

- Canned meats (tuna, chicken, salmon, etc.)
- Canned vegetables
- Canned fruits
- Canned and boxed meals (soup, macaroni and cheese, etc.)
- Peanut butter and other nut butters
- Canned or dried beans and peas (black, pinto, lentils, etc.)
- Pasta, rice, cereal
- 100 percent fruit juice (canned, plastic, or boxed)
- Cooking oil
- Shelf-stable milk
- Other healthy, low-fat, low-sugar products

To ensure safety, please do not donate:

- Rusty or unlabeled cans
- Perishable items
- Homemade items
- Non-commercial canned or packaged items
- Alcoholic beverages, mixes, or soda
- Open or used items

Registration

Thank you for your interest in coordinating a food and fund drive! Please complete your food drive registration form. If you have any questions, please email the Community Engagement Manager at kcoon@loudounhunger.org

You can also register your drive at this QR code or link below.

https://bit.ly/LHRFoodDriveForm

Best of luck with your drive, and thank you again for helping Loudoun Hunger Relief make a difference in your community!

Loudoun Hunger Relief

Food Drive FAQs

1. **How much does a can of food weigh?**
   A typical can of food weighs 15 oz– almost one pound.

2. **Can my food drive proceeds be picked up tomorrow?**
   Loudoun Hunger Relief wants to run the most efficient operation possible, making the best use of our donor dollars. Because of this, our drivers are pre-scheduled to be in specific areas each day during the week. It is recommended that you schedule a pick up or delivery of boxes 48 hours ahead of time (for 500 lbs or greater).

3. **Would you rather I donate money or food?**
   LHR values all donations. Monetary donations are flexible, letting us put the funds where the need is greatest. Food drives provide some of the healthiest and high-quality foods we receive. Food donations also provide a direct connection between donors and people who are hungry. Cash donations keep our freezers running and our trucks on the road. They also support innovative programs that address the root causes of hunger through advocacy and public education. This means that your dollars are hard at work actively ending hunger in Loudoun County.

Don't Stop There - Volunteer!

Keep fighting hunger, even after your food drive has ended, as a Loudoun Hunger Relief volunteer. Volunteers help with the most basic part of our mission: getting food to the people who need it most. Much of our donated food needs to be sorted, repacked, labeled, or processed before it can be distributed to hungry families. We also need volunteers to help in the bread department.

To sign up, visit our website:
www.loudounhunger.org/about/volunteer

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