Guide for Conducting a Successful Food Drive
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Guide for Conducting a Successful Food Drive

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Thank you for your interest in conducting a food drive! At The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries (SSKP), we rely on community food donations for a large portion of our pantry distributions.

The most important part of conducting a food drive is the planning; the better the planning, the better the results. This guide is designed to help you plan and conduct a successful event. We’ll go through the key aspects of planning your event such as; location, timing, target donors, staffing, getting the word out, collection and delivery. We’ll also offer suggestions and examples to help you decide what is best and most manageable for your situation. You can read through the guide or skip to the checklist in the appendix and refer back to the guide pages for more detail. So let’s get started and have some fun!

Planning Your Food Drive

You can increase the potential for a successful food drive right at the very start by answering the following questions:

When will you conduct your food drive?
You can choose any time frame that works for your situation: one-day, multiple days, a week, a month or more. Your selected time frame will likely depend on the location and type of drive you are planning.

Where will the event take place?
If you are staging the event for your school or workplace, you will want to decide on a collection point or points. If it is going to be a public food drive, you will want to select and obtain permission for a collection point or points.
What type of event will you conduct?

You will want to decide on who your target donors are. Is it a school group, company employees, or the general public? It can be a general food drive or, if you are conducting the drive at your school or workplace, you can have a competition.

Who will participate?

You will need to recruit volunteers to help staff the collection points if necessary, collect and condense the food for transport, and deliver the collected items to SSKP.

How will you publicize the event?

Spreading the word to as many people as possible is a key factor in obtaining good results.

How will you pull it all together and finish up?

You will need to organize and transport the food to SSKP. You will also want to thank those who contribute, whether it be food or time. Finally, it’s important to share your results with those who participate.

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Step 1: Timing

When will you conduct your food drive?

The best time to conduct a food drive depends on the type of event you are planning. If your food drive is tied to a specific date, (ex. a school sports match, a community or corporate event), then that will dictate when your food drive will take place. If your dates are flexible you can decide based on other factors, such as location availability, volunteer staffing, or any other factors that might determine what will work best for your situation. From the standpoint of SSKP, we welcome food drive donations whenever they come. Summertime tends to be a low point in donation volume, and end-of-the-year holiday time the high point. If you would like more guidance from SSKP concerning the most beneficial time(s) of need, you can always call our office and we can connect you with the appropriate pantry manager for your location. It’s also a good idea to check and make sure that there are no other food drive events taking place on
the day(s) when you are scheduling yours. Our office administrator will be happy let you know if and when there are any other major food collection events on the calendar.

**Step 2: Location**

*Where will the event take place?*

Location will be a determining factor in most of the other aspects of your food drive. Decide on who your target donors will be and select a location where your event will be most visible to those people. It is important to hold your food drive in an area that will be exposed to a high number of people. Here are some ideas for locations to hold a drive lasting more than one day, where people can return and donate items at different times.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civic Locations</th>
<th>Commercial Locations</th>
<th>Professional Locations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambulance Station</td>
<td>Amusement Park</td>
<td>Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Station</td>
<td>Bowling Alley</td>
<td>Doctor’s Office</td>
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<td>Police Station</td>
<td>Car Wash</td>
<td>Hospital</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coffee Shop</td>
<td>Physical Therapy Center</td>
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<td><strong>Community Locations</strong></td>
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<td>Supermarket</td>
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<td>Farmers Market</td>
<td>Convenience Store</td>
<td>Veterinary Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gym or YMCA</td>
<td>Deli</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ice Skating Rink</td>
<td>Gas Station</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Golf Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>Grocery Store</td>
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<tr>
<td>Place of Worship</td>
<td>Hair / Nail Salon</td>
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<td>Pool</td>
<td>Movie Theater</td>
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<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Outlet Mall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Club</td>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Town Hall or Green</td>
<td>Restaurant</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shopping Mall</td>
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</table>

And here are some ideas for locating a food drive at a specific event. This type of collection typically needs a lot of advance notice and advertisement since there are limitations on the opportunities for people to donate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Events</th>
<th>Family / Neighborhood Events</th>
<th>School / Work Events</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5k Run</td>
<td>Barbecue</td>
<td>Back-to-School Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Athletic Tournament</td>
<td>Birthday Party</td>
<td>Casual Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bingo Night</td>
<td>Block Party</td>
<td>College Move-In Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Car Show</td>
<td>Dance Recital</td>
<td>Golf Outing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carnival/Fair</td>
<td>Garage Sale</td>
<td>Graduation Ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Concert</td>
<td>Holiday Party</td>
<td>Holiday Pageant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 3: Design
What type of event will you conduct?

Food donation drives come in all sizes and varieties. Have fun and be creative! You can brainstorm ideas by sharing your interest in holding a food drive with a teacher or administrator at your school, your scout master, club president, clergy person, employer, fellow workers or family members. Find out if there are any restrictions for holding a food drive in your area or chosen location. If you are planning to coordinate your collection with a specific event, then a general food collection will probably work best. If you have your sights set on a multi-day event, then a related theme or competition may boost your results.

Themes:
Themed events create additional focus and excitement. To help stir those creative ideas, here are just a few examples.

*Back to School:* Encourage your donors to bring non-perishable items that are associated with school lunches; peanut butter, jelly, juice boxes, cookies, dried fruit, canned tuna, etc. This is a great event to hold at a school or workplace.

*Christmas in July:* The holiday season is a very popular time to hold food drives, but the middle of summer tends to be a low point for food donations. Hold a drive in which you collect items typically served at holiday time. Suggested items could include: instant mashed potatoes, rice, canned vegetables, canned fruit, pudding, jello, tea, instant coffee, and canned soup.

*Kick Out Hunger:* Tie your drive to a local soccer and/or football game; encourage all attendees to bring a non-perishable food item to the game. Got a big rivalry or homecoming game on the schedule? That’s even better!

*Pick a Pack of Pasta:* There are endless varieties of pasta; spaghetti, elbows, penne, rotini, linguine, ziti, the list goes on and on. Invite people to bring containers of pasta, and sauce too!
**Stuff – a – Truck:** Park a collection truck or van at your location and challenge donors to try and fill it to capacity. This theme can work well for either a single or multiple day collections, although for a multiple day event you will need to consider available parking and off-hours securement of your collection. If available, SSKP may be able to provide a collection truck.

**Competitions:**

There’s nothing like a fun competition to help drive up your collection numbers. Offer an incentive or a door prize to create excitement around your food drive. The prize can be an item, a coupon, a service, or even just bragging rights! Here are just a few ideas to help you create your own special contest.

**At School:**

- **Ice Cream Social:** The class or group that collects the most food wins an ice cream social with all the fixins’. Or perhaps you can set a goal and if you reach it the whole school wins!
- **Homework Pass:** Make arrangements with a teacher (or teachers) for donors to receive a homework pass for one day.
- **Pizza Party:** The class or group that collects the most food wins a pizza party.

**At Work:**

- **Inter-Departmental Competition:** Create a little friendly rivalry between departments. You can get creative with goals and rewards; bragging rights may be enough!
- **Location Challenge:** If your employer has multiple locations you can challenge them to be the one that collects the most food.
- **There Is Such a Thing as a Free Lunch:** Work with your employer to set a goal, and if the team meets it, the company springs for lunch.
Step 4: Staffing
Who will help get the job done?

Once you have your time, location and type of event planned out, you will want to recruit volunteers to assist the effort. “Many hands make light work”, as the saying goes, so you can never have too much help. You will need volunteers to:

- Help distribute flyers, post signs, spread the word
- Staff the drop-off location(s)
- Collect and condense the donated food for transportation to the chosen SSKP pantry
- Transport your donations to the SSKP pantry and unload them
- Clean up the collection point(s) and take down posters, etc.

Step 5: Publicity
How will you get the word out?

The amount of food that a drive collects is directly proportional to how many people know about it. With that in mind, here are some ideas for spreading the news about your event.

At School
- Posters in key areas (cafeteria, library, student lounge, etc.)
- Morning announcements
- School newspaper
- Student handouts

At Work
- Posters in key areas (cafeteria, break room, time clock, etc.)
- Company newsletter
- Department memos
- Company website

In the Community
- Advance posters at collection points
- Local newspaper announcement
- Community events calendar
- Public access radio/television

- Posters/flyers on public bulletin boards (libraries, town halls, public beaches, etc.)
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
Step 6: Wrapping Up
What still needs to be accomplished?

Once your food drive is completed, there are still a few things that have to be done.

What to do with the donations.

First, you need to consolidate the donations and transport them to a previously determined SSKP food pantry. Then the donations can be brought to, and unloaded in, that pantry at the time you arrange with the pantry manager.

Cleaning up

It’s important to leave a good impression. One way to make sure that happens is to leave collection points in good condition. This includes removing any posters or flyers that have been put up, removing boxes, bags or other refuse from collection areas, and anything else that can be done to return the space(s) to the original condition.

Sharing Your Success

People are always interested to know the impact of their efforts. Be sure to get a photograph of you with all of your donated food. It’s the perfect addition to a social media post, email, or text to thank all of the donors and volunteers that contribute to your food drive. And don’t forget to send a copy of your picture to The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries so that we can post your awesome effort on our website, Facebook page, and in our newsletter.

In the following appendix you will find contact information, a coverage area map, a step-by-step checklist, a general list of most frequently needed items, and sample flyers that you can use for ideas or print and post. Thank you for your interest in the mission of The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries!
APPENDIX

Key Contacts for Food Drives

Website:  https://www.shorelinesoupkitchens.org/

Office:  Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries
P.O. Box 804
Essex Connecticut, USA 06426
Tel: 860-388-1988

Food Pantry Managers:

Clinton Pantry
First Church of Christ Congregational – 55 Church Road – Clinton
Pantry Manager: Lin Smith – Email: lsmith@shorelinesoupkitchens.org

East Lyme Pantry
St. John's Episcopal Church – 400 Main Street – Niantic
Pantry Manager: Sherrie Weiss – Email: sweiss@shorelinesoupkitchens.org

Old Lyme Pantry
First Congregational Church of Old Lyme – 2 Ferry Road – Old Lyme
Pantry Manager: Audrey Brainerd – Email: abrainerd@shorelinesoupkitchens.org

Old Saybrook Pantry
First Church of Christ in Saybrook (Congregational) – 366 Main Street – Old Saybrook
Pantry Manager: Laura Dean-Frazier – Email: ldeanfrazier@shorelinesoupkitchens.org

Westbrook Pantry
Saint Mark's Roman Catholic Church – 222 McVeagh Road – Westbrook
Pantry Manager: Bob Eburg – Email: reburg@shorelinesoupkitchens.com

Volunteer & Programs Coordinator:

Jeff Ward – Email: jward@shorelinesoupkitchens.org
Guide for Conducting a Successful Food Drive

The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries Coverage Area

Location of Food Pantry
Food Drive Quick-Start Checklist

Getting Started

☐ Contact our office (860) 388-1988, or one of our food pantries (see contact list) to determine which pantry you will collect food for, what items are most needed, and to schedule a delivery date and time for your collections.

☐ Decide who will host the drive. Is it through work, school, a club or a community group?

☐ Obtain permission from management or leaders to collect food.

☐ Decide what type of drive you will have: a one-time event, themed event, or a competition?

☐ Pick your start and finish dates. You can collect for one day, several weeks or all year round.

☐ Set a food drive goal by pounds or number of items collected.

☐ Choose the location of the drive. Will it occur at one place, or several locations?

☐ Decide if food will be collected in boxes or bags. (Call “Stuff-A-Truck” program)

Planning and Publicity

☐ Send out memos, text messages, newsletters and emails to promote your drive.

☐ Put up posters if allowed, and get local media involved if possible.

☐ Consider competitions between teams, classes, or departments and plan a kick-off event.

☐ Pick a theme. Offer incentives to those who contribute the most.

☐ Recruit volunteers to help set up, staff collection points, and clean up after you are done.

☐ Acquire and decorate boxes or bags for food collection.

☐ Download a Food Drive Flyer from our website or request our logo to make your own.

☐ If using boxes, remember to place them in heavily trafficked, easily visible areas.

Making it Happen

☐ Once your drive starts, update participants on the amount of food you’ve collected.

☐ Send out creative messages to keep people interested in reaching the goals.

☐ Identify volunteers able to load and transport the food. In some cases, we are able to pick up.

Finishing Up

☐ Deliver the food to the designated SSKP pantry at your pre-arranged time.

☐ Provide a name and contact information so that we can keep in touch.

☐ SSKP will send a letter listing the total number of pounds raised during your drive.

☐ Share your drive results and celebrate your efforts! Send us a photo we can post!
# Most Frequently Needed Items

## Beverages
- Juice
- Juice Boxes
- Shelf-Stable Milk

## Canned/Jarred Goods
- Beans:
  - Baked
  - Black
  - Great Northern
  - Kidney
  - Navy
  - Pinto
  - Red
-Corn
- Fruit
- Jam/Jelly
- Peanut Butter
- Soups
- Pancake Syrup
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Tomato Sauce
- Tomatoes:
  - Crushed
  - Diced
  - Stewed
  - Whole
- Tuna

## Miscellaneous
- Ketchup
- Mayonnaise
- Mustard
- Relish
- Snacks
- (Individual for school or work)
- Appreciated Non-Food Items
  - Bath Soap
  - Bath Tissue
  - Cleaners
  - Dish Soap
  - Laundry Soap
  - Paper Towels
  - Toothpaste

## Boxed/Bagged Goods
- Breakfast Cereal
- Cake Mix
- Dried Beans
- Instant Oatmeal
- Muffin Mix
- Nuts
- Pancake Mix
- Pasta:
  - Bowtie
  - Elbows
  - Penne
  - Rigatoni
  - Rotini
  - Spaghetti
  - Ziti
- Rice:
  - 1 lb. White
  - Boil-In-Bag
  - Microwave
Please support our FOOD DRIVE!

Help feed the hungry along the shoreline!

Date: ___________________________

Time: ___________________________

Location: _______________________

Thank You!

The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries provides food and fellowship to those in need. Serving 11 towns along the shoreline and lower Connecticut River valley: Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Lyme, Essex, Killingworth, Lyme, Madison, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook & Westbrook

- Providing food for over 1,000,000 meals each year
- Home-style meals are served each day at one of our 9 meal sites
- Groceries are distributed each week at 5 area food pantries
- SSKP is an interfaith ministry, with all locations hosted by faith communities
- Over 900 dedicated volunteers make our work possible
- SSKP is sustained by donors and receives no direct state or federal funding
- All residents of the towns we serve are welcome – no questions asked
- Last year nearly 8,000 people in need received food from an SSKP program

For more information call: (860) 388-1988

www.shorelinesoupkitchens.org

The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries
P.O. Box 804
Essex, CT 06426
FOOD DRIVE

To Benefit:

The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries

Where

When

What Time

Help us reach our goal of ___ pounds of food collected!

Thank You!
Please support our
“Stuff – A – Truck”
FOOD DRIVE!
Help feed the hungry!
All non-perishable foods are appreciated!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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The Shoreline Soup Kitchens & Pantries is an interfaith organization providing food and fellowship to those in need.

Serving 11 towns:
Chester, Clinton, Deep River, East Lyme, Essex, Killingworth, Lyme, Madison, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook & Westbrook

THANK YOU!

www.shorelinesoupkitchens.org