FEEDING®
THE GULF COAST

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FEEDING THE GULF COAST | Food and Fund Drive Kit
Working through member organizations and special programs, we provide nutritious food to meet the challenge of feeding people who are hungry as a result of systemic poverty, personal crisis or disaster. We work to educate the public regarding domestic hunger, proper nutrition and related issues.

1 in 6 people along the Gulf Coast struggle with hunger. That means at some point in the year, they do not know where their next meal will come from. Feeding the Gulf Coast serves 24 counties throughout Alabama, Mississippi, and the Florida Panhandle. Last year we distributed over 19 million meals to those in need along the Central Gulf Coast through our network of over 400 partner agencies. We couldn’t have done that without your help!

Food and fund drives are a critical part of keeping our shelves stocked throughout the year. The money raised through fund drives help support the many programs we provide including Child Nutrition Programs, Mobile Pantries, Produce Drops, Disaster Relief, Cooking Matters Classes, and SNAP Outreach.

Thank you for hosting a food and/or fund drive. With your support, we can be the difference between hunger and hope in our community.
WHERE TO START

Coordinating a traditional, fund or virtual food drive is an exciting opportunity for local businesses, companies, schools, churches, and clubs to get involved and impact their community in a positive way. Read more to learn about our different food drive options and determine which the best fit is for you.

TRADITIONAL FOOD DRIVE

Food Drives allow members of a group to collect non-perishable food items to donate to the food bank. It can be a one day event or take place for a predetermined amount of time, typically a week or month.

FUND DRIVE

Fund Drives are geared towards raising money for the food bank to put towards one of our nutrition programs or general food distribution. They are often held in conjunction with traditional food drives giving participants the choice to bring a food or cash donation. For every $1 donated, Feeding the Gulf Coast can provide 5 meals.

LET’S BEGIN

1. Pick a Date
The length and date of your drive is up to you. Typically drives last between one day and three weeks. It comes down to what works best for your group. Give your participants enough notice so that they can be prepared.

2. Set a Goal
Having a goal in mind will help you organize and help give your group something to work towards. Some things to consider when setting a goal are:
- How much potential contributors do you have?
- How much can you reasonable expect to collect from each donor?
- Will you collect food, cash, or both?

3. Register Your Food Drive
Please contact us before starting your event. Our Food Drive Manager can help you get set up with food barrels/boxes and can schedule a pick-up for the end of your drive.

4. Get Creative
Food drives can be a lot of fun. Get creative with team competitions and incentives. Below are a few ideas:
- Have teams compete against one another. Offer rewards to the winning team.
- Have a Jeans Day: For $1 or $5, employees could wear jeans for the day.
- Incorporate Theme Days: Taco Tuesday, Wheat Wednesday, Canned Fruit Friday, etc.
- CANstruction: Have teams build a structure using their canned food donations.

5. Promote Your Food Drive
Share information throughout your organization to raise involvement. Share on social media. Make posters noting the specifics of your food drive. Our marketing department can also help you promote your food drive by featuring it on our social media sites.
1. The basics:
- Decide if you will raise food, money, or both.
- Decide what type of drive you want to stage, such as a party or a competition. Set a goal.
- Agree on the drive length. We recommend 2-3 weeks.
- Choose the drive’s location. Will it occur at one place or several locations?
- Decide on a collection method: boxes or barrels.
- Contact our Food Drive Manager to set up delivery and pick up dates will in advance or download the Request Form from our website at www.feedingthegulfcoast.org and e-mail to respective manager.

2. Get Everything Ready
- Send out memos, phone messages, newsletters, and e-mails to promote the drive.
- Come up with a creative angle for your food drive.
- Consider arranging a Hunger Awareness Day at the start of or during your drive. Speakers from the food bank can be requested.
- Acquire and decorate barrels or boxes for food collection.
- Place the barrels or boxes in convenient and visible areas.

3. During the Drive
- Update your participants on the amount of food and funds you’ve collected through announcements or e-mail.
- Send out creative messages to keep people excited about reaching goals.
- If you are delivering the food to the food bank, coordinate volunteers to pack food properly at the end of the food drive, load, and transport it to the food bank.

4. At the End
- Follow up about the delivery or pick up of your organization’s food donations scheduled with the Food Drive Manager.
- Deliver your food to the food bank’s loading dock between 8:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. or between 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on the weekdays or make arrangements with the food bank for pick up. If you deliver the food, please fill out a receipt and indicate that you collected the food through a food drive. A food drive representative will assist you with the intake process.
- Share drive results with all participants. Send thank you letters, throw a party, or even make awards to celebrate efforts.
- Feeding the Gulf Coast will send you a letter listing the total amount of food and funds raised during your event. This letter will serve as a receipt of your donation and can be referenced for tax purposes.
- Make a list of best practices to remember for next year!
The food bank needs and encourages food drives of **ALL SIZES**. We will provide boxes at no cost if a representative from your organization can pick them up from our warehouse.

**BOXES AND BARRELS**

**When to Use Your Own Boxes:**
Small to medium size boxes (copy paper boxes or smaller) work well for food drives and hold **approximately 30 lbs**. They are not too heavy when full and you can decorate with wrapping paper or posters. We encourage you to use boxes for any drive generating fewer than 300 pounds of food.

**When to Use Feeding the Gulf Coast Boxes:**
We can provide small boxes that hold **approximately 50 lbs**.

**When to Use Feeding the Gulf Coast Barrels:**
We can provide large barrels. These barrels hold **approximately 150 lbs**. You are welcome to decorate around the barrel, but please be careful not to damage it. Please remove all decorations before returning the barrel. Barrels hold more food if you remove the food from grocery bags before placing food in the barrel. Feeding the Gulf Coast can pick them up at the end of the event as necessary.

Please call in advance if you plan to pick up a barrel.

**SCHEDULING A PICK-UP OR DELIVERY**

Our trucks stay busy picking up food from grocery stores and donors during the week, so we need your help to get donated food to our warehouses. For Feeding the Gulf Coast to deliver and pick up food collection barrels for your food drive, the goal of the food drive needs to be at least 600 lbs. This amount of food will cover the costs associated with running our trucks. Please help us be a good steward of our resources.

If you will need food picked up, please schedule with our Food Drive Manager at least one week in advance. Please note that during the holiday season, our pick-up schedule fills quickly.
MOST NEEDED ITEMS:

Jarred and Canned Goods:
- Canned Meat (Tuna, Chicken, etc.)
- Canned Vegetables
- Canned Fruits
- Peanut Butter and Jelly (Plastic Containers)
- Canned or Dried Beans
- Canned Meals (Soup, Chili, etc.)

Please Note: If you donate glass packaged products, please box or bag them separately and label “GLASS” on all sides.

Boxed Goods:
- Boxed Meals (Mac and Cheese, Hamburger Helper, etc.)
- Pasta
- Rice
- Cereal and Breakfast Items
- Instant Mashed Potatoes

FOODS WE CANNOT ACCEPT FOR SAFETY:
- Rusty or Unlabeled Cans
- Perishable Items
- Homemade Items
- Non-commercial Canned or Packaged Items
- Alcoholic Beverages
- Opened or Used Items
Thank you for your interest in coordinating a food and/or fund drive. Please complete this form and submit it to Aubrey Grier at agrier@feedingthegulfcoast.org. We will contact you to confirm your pickup schedule and settle any remaining details. We will try to meet your pick up dates, however due to the high volume of requests, we cannot guarantee them.

Company/Organization Name: 

Mailing Address: 

City: ___________________________ State: ___________________________ Zip: ___________________________

Contact Person: ___________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: ___________________________

Physical Address: ___________________________

City: ___________________________ State: ___________________________ Zip: ___________________________

Special Instructions for Driver:

________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________

Dates of Drive: 

Details or Promotions: 

________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________

Would you like to volunteer or tour the food bank at the end of your drive?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

You may request any of the following materials and services to enhance your effort:

_____ Collection Barrels: For food drives anticipating 150 lbs. or more. Please designate how many you’ll need.

_____ Collection Boxes: Due to limited transportation, you must be able to pick up from Warehouse. Holds up to 50 lbs. Please designate how many you’ll need.

_____ Fund Collection Boxes

_____ Informational Brochures

CONTACT:

Aubrey Grier, Volunteer and Food Drive Coordinator
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