



Tips for Running a Charity Collection Drive

Conducting a charity collection drive can have many benefits for your business, church, club, or organization while at the same time providing a meaningful contribution to people in our local community who need help. Collection drives can be fun, bring people together, generate visibility for your organization, and leave organizers and donors alike with the good feeling that comes from “giving back.”

Conducting a successful collection drive requires planning and commitment but we’ve collected a few tips to make the process easier if you’d like to conduct a drive for Operation HELP—

- **The First step—contact us!** We can help identify the items we need most at the time of your drive. We’ll also help promote your efforts through Operation HELP’s social media and other channels. Knowing your plans also helps us in planning for future supply purchases. Client supplies needed in our Resource Center include:
 - Body Soap
 - Deodorant
 - Diapers and Pullups—all sizes
(generally our most needed item)
 - Feminine Hygiene products
 - Pet food (cat and dog)
 - Shampoo and Conditioner
 - Shaving razors and creme
 - Socks (men’s, women’s, girl’s boy’s sizes)
 - Toilet paper
 - Toothbrushes and Toothpaste
 - Underwear (men’s, women’s, girl’s boy’s sizes)
 - Wipes
- **Don’t do it alone.** Involve as many friends, family, coworkers, members, etc. as you can to help with planning, promotion, collections, delivery of collected items, etc.
- **Pick a date (or dates), times, and drop-off locations.** You’ll need these details to promote the project to prospective donors. Collections sometimes take place in conjunction with a one-time event or can take place over several weeks. High-visibility, high-traffic, and easily accessible drop-off locations work well.
- **Think through the logistics for your collection event.** Will you need collection boxes, signage, tables, etc.? Volunteers? If you anticipate collecting a lot of items or collecting over a long period of time, will you need storage space separate from the drop-off area? What about transporting the items?
- **Spread the Word!** Start promoting the collection event well in advance of the collection date(s) and continue up until the end. Be creative. Think about posters, flyers, emails,

social media, announcements at events and gatherings, and word-of-mouth. Ask your friends to tell their friends. **Note:** *People who will participate because they want to “give back” will be motivated by information about the need and cause being helped.*

Operation HELP has lots of info about financial hardship in St. Croix County and the people we serve. We’d be happy to share.

- **The collection event** After planning and promoting, there should be no surprises. Be sure to take photos to share after the event. Sometimes people want to contribute but don’t have an item. You’ll want to decide whether you’ll collect cash or checks or not. If you do, how will you secure them, who will be responsible, etc.? Will you need a donation jar or basket? Will you collect donor names and contact information from people giving cash? (Checks can be made out to Operation HELP.) We can also supply QR codes for Venmo payments and create a special URL for online credit card donations.
- **After the collection event** After items have been collected, be sure to sort and count donated items (plus financial contributions if you’ve collected them). You’ll want the information to report back to volunteers and donors about all you’ve accomplished.
- **Delivery of collected items** Call and arrange a day and time to deliver the collected items. Having a description and counts of items will be helpful for us in recording, acknowledging, and telling others about your gift. We’d also love to get a photo of the delivery to use in our publications or social media so be sure to include your key volunteers in this step.
- **Thank you’s and celebration** You’ll want to share photos and information about the results of your drive with everyone who helped make it happen so they can share in the success. Send thank you’s and generate public acknowledgment through emails, social media, announcements at events, and all the other channels you may have used to promote the drive.

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