

# How to Organize a Collection Drive

How would you like to organize a project for your school, business, or other organization that's really fun and will make a huge difference to those in need this holiday season? Then try hosting a collections drive to benefit your poor and homeless neighbors!

Here's how:

## Step 1: Specify!

You can collect food, clothing, or toiletries during your drive but we recommend that you focus on only one of them as it makes your drive both easier to organize and generally much more successful. You might even want to consider adding a unique twist to your drive by getting super specific with what you're collecting. For instance, instead of a general toiletries drive you might ask for toothpaste and toothbrushes. But of course, accept anything that comes in as we can probably use it!

## Step 2: Publicize!

Start publicizing early to make sure everyone knows about the drive. Try using flyers, announcements in your newsletter, personal notes and reminders, and simple word-of-mouth to let everyone know the what, when, where and why of your drive.

## Step 3: Inform!

Remember that the success of a collections drive is measured not only in the number of items dropped off at our door but also by how many people have been reminded or have even gained a new awareness of the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless and those we serve. Be sure to include background information on MCCH in your publicity and ensure that others understand how your advocacy helps better your community.

## Step 4: Collect!

Any large, sturdy box works well for collecting, storing, and transporting the donations. If you don't have one around try looking behind your local grocery store. Plain brown cardboard boxes are pretty boring but a few decorations can grab the attention of those passing by and give them a final reminder that your drive has begun. Of course, even a box with flashing neon lights won't attract much attention sitting in a dark corner, so be sure to place yours in a central and visible high traffic area. Now just sit back and watch the donations pile in!

## Step 5: Drop it off!

Don't forget to arrange a means of getting all the stuff you've collected over to us when the drive is over. Donations should be dropped off at our complex at 600-B East Gude Drive - our entrance is directly across the street from the Fisher Lumber building. You can reach East Gude via MD-355 N/Hungerford Drive/Frederick Road or from MD-28 W - East Gude runs perpendicular to MD-355 and MD-28. The closest Metro stop is at Rockville which is approximately 2 miles from where our shelter is located. (You will need to check available bus schedules/routes to ensure that you will have transportation from the Metro to our shelter; otherwise, plenty of taxi cabs are available).

If you make the drop off **before 5 pm on weekdays**, go to the Safe Havens building (located towards the very back of the lot as you enter the gates, the building is light brown with blue trim and has a "Safe Havens" sign by the door). **After 5 pm on weekdays and anytime on weekends**, go to the Men's Emergency Shelter (first building on your left as you enter - it's grey with double doors).

Thank you so much for your generosity and hard work! Your support takes us closer to our goal of ending homelessness in Montgomery County.