



How to Organize a Collection Drive

Would you like to organize a project for your school, business or other organization that's fun and will make a huge difference to those in need? Hosting a collection drive is a great way to support community members experiencing homelessness or poverty.

Here's how:

Step 1: Specify!

You may collect food, clothing or toiletries during your drive, but we recommend that you focus on one or two items 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 specific about your collecting. For instance, instead of a general toiletries drive you might ask for toothpaste and toothbrushes. Or move-in "Welcome Kits" items -- a laundry basket filled with items like detergent, new socks, towels, etc. Our greatest needs are the following items: diapers (especially larger sizes, 4-6), ground coffee, new adult-sized socks and new towels.

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. We can even provide you with a standard flyer that only requires you to fill in the specific time and place. Make sure there's a due date.

Step 3: Inform!

Remember that the success of a collections drive is measured not only in the number of socks dropped off at our door, but also by how many people have been reminded or have gained a new awareness of Union Station Homeless Services and those we serve. Be sure to include background information on Union Station Homeless Services in your publicity and consider leaving a few of our brochures at the drop box. Please visit our website at unionstationhs.org for information on our organization.

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. Contact inkinddonations@unionstationhs.org or call (626) 240-4550 x 302 between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:00 pm when Union Station Homeless Services representatives are available to assist you. If you're having trouble with a particularly large donation, call us and we'll schedule our driver to pick it up.

Your donations support Union Station's mission to help men, women and children rebuild their lives and end homelessness. Thank you!