



## HOW TO ORGANIZE A FOOD DRIVE

Your participation in a food drive is critical to helping us keep our pantry shelves full with food we distribute to those in our community who experience food insecurity. We are grateful for your participation.

The Newton Food Pantry stocks its shelves in two ways:

- Donated food and toiletries from individuals, schools, religious institutions, businesses, other non-profits, and the Greater Boston Food Bank;
- Purchased food from the GBFB and other food industry partners.

Financial donations are always welcome, as they allow the Newton Food Pantry to purchase necessary supplemental items to stock our shelves. As a 501(c)3 organization, all donations are tax deductible.

### **First Steps**

Identify dates that you would like to run the food drive in your community.

Contact the Newton Food Pantry at [fooddrivecoordinator@newtonfoodpantry.org](mailto:fooddrivecoordinator@newtonfoodpantry.org) to obtain the current list of the "Most Needed Items", and to coordinate your drive.

### **Publicize the Food Drive**

Post information on the dates of the drive, the items requested, and the importance of this drive to provide for those in need in our community.

Make sure the collection spots are easily identified and accessible.

Use supporting materials including flyers to raise awareness about hunger in Newton and the services the Newton Food Pantry provides. (The NFP will provide a flyer you can reproduce and handout.)

### **Food Collection**

The food can be collected in bags or in cardboard boxes. If you use boxes, make sure that they are sturdy and not too large. Canned and boxed food can be quite heavy and you need to consider the weight of the boxes when transporting the donations to the NFP.

### **Recruit Volunteers**

Once the drive is completed, you can drop your donations off at the Newton Food Pantry located in the basement of City Hall any Wednesday between 9:30–1pm, or on a mutually convenient day/time that you have coordinated with the pantry. It is ideal to have volunteers that can help you gather the donations and help you drop them off at Newton Food Pantry.

Sometimes there may be opportunities for your group of volunteers to help sort and box the donations at the pantry. Please contact the Newton Food Pantry Food Drive Coordinator to make these arrangements.

**Tips From Past Drives**

- Handout paper bags to participants with a list of items needed attached to each bag.
- Targeted drives (such as drives using our most needed list) are very important for the NFP.
- Provide participants with a list of limited items for collection to ensure that the donations are most helpful to the pantry.
- Conduct the drive at a local supermarket and ask shoppers to participate before they enter the store. (This requires coordination and partnership with the supermarket.)
- Conduct the drive as part of another bigger event within the community such as at a school, a community center, or a block party.
- If you have the volunteer capacity, offering to pick up donations is appreciated.
- This is a community experience and involving neighbors can be very fulfilling and successful.
- Become a “friend” of the Newton Food Pantry by organizing a targeted drive annually.

**Keep In Mind**

- We accept all unexpired, unopened food and toiletries. No fresh produce or home made baked goods are accepted.
- Encourage donors to shop for the items they are donating because then the food is in good condition and not expired.
- The food pantry needs food 12 months of the year.
- Financial donations are always welcome – they allow us to purchase items that we cannot get at the Greater Boston Food Bank.

**Fun Themes & Food Drive Suggestions**

<b>Warmer Winter Nights</b> - soups, hot chocolate, stews in a can	<b>Feeling Squeaky Clean</b> – soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, shaving cream
<b>Breakfast is the Best</b> – Cereal, pancake mix, instant oatmeal, ground coffee, tea	<b>Doing Dinner</b> – pasta, sauces, meals in a can, canned salmon chicken, ham and crab
<b>Loving Lunch</b> – Juice boxes, applesauce, canned tuna, peanut butter, jam, protein/energy bars	<b>Big Smile</b> – toothpaste, toothbrushes (in packs of one or two) mouthwash, dental floss