



# CAPTAIN

## Community Human Services

## How to Organize a Food Drive

Over 37 million people in the United States experience hunger, including more than 11 million children. Many of these people depend on community food banks and pantries to ensure that they and their families have enough to eat.

Organizing a food drive is a great way to support Karyl's Kupboard, CAPTAIN Community Human Services's Emergency Food and Hygiene Pantry, and help the people in your community who may be struggling, and a perfect opportunity for group and youth community service.

### Getting Started

- ◆ Contact Ava Martin at 518-399-4624 or [ava@captaincares.org](mailto:ava@captaincares.org) to learn about current food pantry needs and the many ways that CAPTAIN CHS can help your drive be a success!
- ◆ An effective marketing strategy is critical to the success of your food drive! You can even set a theme to make it engaging and fun. When you hold a food drive with CAPTAIN CHS, we can help you create flyers and posters to generate awareness. We can also help advertise your drive on our social media platforms.
- ◆ Set a goal for how much food and/or money you want to collect. This can be based on pounds of food, number of overall donations, or a monetary mark. You can make this goal visual to your donors by marking your progress with a thermometer or tally board.

### When and Where?

- ◆ Make sure to determine the dates of your food drive in advance. You can make your drive a one-day event, or hold it over a few days or even weeks! Whenever you decide to host it, be sure to promote the dates and send out reminders while it's going on so that people don't forget about it.
- ◆ Location, Location, Location! Determine where you want to hold your food drive and if you want multiple locations or one single one. Your location is everything! Don't hold a food drive where no one is; go where they are! Offices, schools, grocery stores, sporting events; any highly visible and popular spot will work.
  - ◆ Single-site food drive: Ask people to bring donations to one location during your set times and dates.
  - ◆ Multiple-location food drive: Set up collection boxes at each of your sites where people can leave food over the course of your food drive. Be sure to collect the donations at the end of every day.

## Running Your Food Drive

Now that everything is planned, it's time to actually hold your food drive! Here are some tips and ideas on how to increase participation and get people motivated.

- ◆ Everything is easier with some help, so ask your family members, friends, colleagues, and classmates to help spread the word and lend a hand on the day of the event. Ask them to donate themselves, have them bring collection boxes to their workplace, or have them ask for donations from their family and friends!
- ◆ Make it a competition. Competitions get people excited, so make it a contest to incentivize people to donate. If you have friends helping to collect donations, see who can collect the most food. If you're holding the food drive at work or a school, you can have departments or classrooms compete against each other.
- ◆ Offer incentives or prizes for any donors who help create excitement about your food drive. If you decide to make it a competition, throw a pizza party or bring in bagels for the winning department/classroom. Hand out raffle tickets to every person who donates and raffle off a small prize at the end of your drive to make it something fun to look forward to. You can even ask local businesses to donate prizes for the raffle. Whatever you do, try and get as many people involved as possible!
- ◆ Set up your collection site with a table and chairs, collection boxes, and lots of signs to make it very clear what you are doing there. Put out flyers and pamphlets to educate people on hunger so they understand why you're holding the food drive.

## What To Do When the Food Drive is Done

- ◆ When your food drive is over, take down any signs or postings about the drive. If you've used a public space, make sure to leave it as clean or cleaner than when you got there.
- ◆ Sort through the food that was donated and throw out any expired foods before you drop it off at the food pantry. If there were any monetary donations, compile them together in an envelope to make the drop off easier.
- ◆ Organize the donations you received, recruit help if you need it, and drop it off at CAPTAIN CHS's Clifton Park office at 5 Municipal Plaza, Suite 3, Clifton Park, NY 12065, Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.
- ◆ Don't forget to publicize your results and say thank you to your donors. You can send thank you notes to your volunteers and donors. Have staff snap a photo at drop-off and CAPTAIN CHS will post on social media to let everyone know how much food was donated and if you have any plans for future food drives.
- ◆ You're done! Enjoy knowing that you've made a difference for kids, families, and seniors in Saratoga County!

## Contact Information

- ◆ Ava Martin, Director of Philanthropy and Volunteer Engagement  
518.399.4624 or [ava@captaincares.org](mailto:ava@captaincares.org)