

## Tips for Collecting Food or Other Items

Thanks so much for wanting to help! We rely on the generosity of people like you.

**Food donations** are ALWAYS needed, especially in the summer when schools and civic groups are not collecting. Suggestions include:

- Peanut butter and jelly
- Canned beans, vegetables and fruit
- Cereal and oatmeal
- Rice, rice mixes, meal in a box (Hamburger helper, etc)
- Pasta and sauce
- Canned tuna
- Fresh vegetables from home gardens
- Paper products and personal care items (toothpaste, shampoo, soap)

**Seasonal items** are needed throughout the year:

- New backpacks and school supplies during June/July
- Winter coats during September/October
- Thanksgiving meals and grocery certificates during October/early November
- New toys and gifts during November/early December
- Baskets, candy and small gifts during the 6 weeks preceding Easter

### Steps for collecting

1. Contact our Food Pantry Coordinator or Sharing Projects Coordinator at 412-487-6316 opt 1 to let us know you will be collecting and ask about specific needs (and if it is a Sharing Project, to **check on our deadline dates**).
2. Arrange a drop off date and time at NHCO.
3. Create a flier **OR** contact our Director of Communications for a flier at 412-487-6316 opt 1 x 3112. Include why you are doing the collection, what is needed, and what day you will pick up the items. Find statistics at [nhco.org/about-us/statistics](http://nhco.org/about-us/statistics).
4. Distribute your fliers (perhaps attached to empty grocery bags) wherever you plan to collect. Share the information on social media.
5. Ask permission to have a collection box in your place of business, place of worship, school, municipal building, etc.
6. Ask permission to advertise via school newsletters, company email lists, and congregation bulletins.
7. Collect the items on the date mentioned on your flier. Bring the items to NHCO on the pre-arranged date.
8. **Please fill out an in-kind donation slip** when you bring the items...**this is extremely important for our records!**
9. Be sure to thank everyone who donated and let them know how much you collected!

**IDEAS** Feel free to improvise!

These refer to food drives but can be applied to Sharing Projects drives.

- **Have a party for someone who has everything!** Ask guests to bring non-perishable food items for the food pantry in lieu of presents. This is popular among children, teenagers and senior citizens and for wedding anniversaries.
- Hold a collection **in honor or in memory** of a special person.
- Ask your workplace to do a food collection in conjunction with a **grand opening, anniversary or special event**.
- Have a **dance** at school and accept food for the admission.
- Conduct a food drive for a **service project** for a class or youth group.
- Have a **piano concert or a mini play** and accept food for the admission.
- Have a **canstruction** event!
- Do a **"Minute for Mission"** at your place of worship and do a food collection emphasizing helping your neighbors.
- Have a **"Super Bowl"** party to coincide with the Super Bowl (Steelers or no Steelers). Ask guests to bring nonperishable food items for our pantries.