



LETTER CARRIERS' DONOR DRIVE

LETTER CARRIERS FIND A NEW WAY TO HELP
THE HUNGRY WHEN IT'S MOST NEEDED

The shelves of food banks across the country should be filled with donated food this time of year, thanks to the annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. On the second Saturday in May for the last 27 years, letter carriers have collected bag upon bag of groceries donated by postal customers and left at their mailboxes. The annual effort comes at a critical point on food pantry calendars—holiday donations are largely depleted, while the free or reduced-cost meals from school cafeterias are not available to needy children during the summer.

This year is different on two key counts. The COVID-19 pandemic forced NALC to postpone the food drive for safety reasons. And the economic shutdown caused by the pandemic has increased the problem of hunger—putting additional pressure on food banks as many working people have lost their income and struggle to buy food even as donations decline.

Unsurprisingly, letter carriers are finding new ways to step up to meet the challenge.

To help fulfill the nutritional needs of the one in eight Americans who face food insecurity, including millions of

children, older people and military veterans, NALC has launched a virtual food drive, the Stamp Out Hunger Donor Drive, to raise funds for food banks nationwide.

"As letter carriers in every neighborhood in the country six and seven days a week, we see the need and we cannot wait while food banks struggle, demand grows and people remain hungry," NALC President Fredric Rolando said.

"Each May, NALC's food drive has filled a gap between holiday food donations and the end of free meals in school during summer break,"



NALC
FREDRIC V. ROLANDO, PRESIDENT

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COMMUNITY SERVICE

2020 Stamp Out Hunger Donor Drive



For the last 27 years, the National Association of Letter Carriers has been proud to hold the Stamp Out Hunger food drive, the nation's largest one day food drive, on the second Saturday in May. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we weren't able to safely collect and distribute food in May this year. However, we will schedule the 28th annual Stamp out hunger food drive when it is safe to do so.

In the meantime, the need for food assistance is more urgent than ever and we want to give everyone the opportunity to continue to help meet that need.

The Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is a drive with a single mission—to feed the hungry in America, and as always, with your help, we will

Food drive coordinators can find resources to help them in their local communities [here](#).

Find all the media resources such as the PSA video, press release, media plan and flyer [here](#).

Please donate what you can to a food bank in your community. Simply find your state below and click on the link to donate directly. All collections stay in the local community.

Select Your State Food Bank

Pennsylvania Food Banks

Pennsylvania Food Banks

Aldan Union church
7 E. Providence rd.
Aldan, PA 19018
<https://www.eservicepayments.com/>

Allegheny Valley
Association of Churches
1913 Freeport Road
Natrona Heights, Pa 15065
<http://avaoc.org/donate/>

Allicance for Nonprofit Resources
127 South Main Street
Butler, PA 16001
<https://anrinfo.org/product/butler-county-food-bank-donation/>

American Rescue Workers
643 Elmira Avenue
Williamsport, PA 17701
<https://www.arwholly.org/donate>

Armstrong County Community Action Agency
706 Butler Road
Kittanning, PA 16201
<https://secure.squarespace.com>

Beream Fellowship Church

The website where people can pick the food bank in their area to donate to

ally see,” said Ann Snyder, marketing director for the Augusta, GA, area food pantry Golden Harvest, which serves 25 counties in Georgia and South Carolina. “About 50 percent have never needed help from a food bank before.”

For several months, Golden Harvest accepted donations of food in bulk from corporate donors only because of the risk of viral transmission, reducing its supply of food just as the number of families seeking help was growing three-fold.

Golden Harvest expects the additional need to continue after the pandemic wanes. “The virus is going to continue to have fallout,” Snyder said. Many area residents still have no jobs to return to or are logging fewer hours at work. Others are homebound, caring for children who are out of school or summer camp; or are staying home from their jobs without pay because they or their family members have medical conditions that leave them more at risk to the coronavirus. Because they still have jobs, though, many states will not pay unemployment benefits to workers who choose to stay home.

While food donations are always welcome, Snyder said, food banks make good use of cash donations. “With every dollar, we can provide three meals. It really does stretch further than a can of food.” Cash also gives food pantries the flexibility to buy what they need the most, she added.

Rolando said. “This year, the economic crisis and the disruption in food donations have made our support even more important. With the right effort, letter carriers could extend this online food drive to help fulfill the needs of local food banks for many months to come.”

By visiting nalc.org/food, donors can find a food bank in their area to support with an online donation. The site links directly to donation pages on each food bank's website.

As with the traditional Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, donations will stay in the communities of the donors. Any American, whether in a big city or suburb, small town or rural area, can donate funds for a local food pantry to purchase food and replenish their stocks so that local families can put food on their tables.

As always, our national partners in the food drive—the U.S. Postal

Service, United Way Worldwide, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, Kellogg Co., the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, CVS Health, Valpak, the AFL-CIO and Valassis—will be vital to its success.

Food banks feel stress from two sides

The pandemic is a double whammy for food banks. Safety concerns caused many other benefactors, along with NALC, to suspend food collection, and many food banks stopped accepting food donations from individuals. On the other hand, the sharp economic pain caused by the pandemic has increased the ranks of people seeking food assistance from local food pantries, homeless shelters, church shelves and other places that rely on food banks in their area.

“We've seen about three times as many people asking for help as we usu-

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The flexibility of monetary donations could be one of a few silver linings of the shift, for now, to an online donor drive, Rolando said. “By buying in bulk, food banks may end up with more food than donors give at their doors each May,” he said, because of the use the food bank can make of its purchasing resources. “In addition, the period of the donor drive is opened at this point.”

Food pantries eager for help from letter carriers

The response from food banks to NALC’s online fundraising effort shows how significant the need is in this pandemic.

As soon as he reached out to food banks in his region to include them in the virtual food drive, **Ron Oree** heard back from them with their messages of support and thanks.

“The food banks were very excited,” he said. “They were right on it. I was getting phone calls and emails instantly—they were so happy.”

Oree, a member of Flushing, NY Branch 294, is food drive coordinator

The larger food banks already had websites with online donation capabilities up and running, Oree said. Some added a website page just for NALC donors; others added code to their website to track donors who clicked through the NALC website donation page, nalc.org/food. Branches can direct donors directly to local food bank donor pages they find on that site through their own websites or social media channels.

The virtual food drive involves much more than website links—as with the traditional food drive, potential donors need to learn about the fundraising effort. Now that local food banks are lined up for donations through their websites, NALC branches and food drive coordinators are working tirelessly to publicize the effort, driving donors to give online.

Oree and other food drive coordinators across the country are working on ways to reach and attract donors.

“We’ll do any way that we can get the word out,” Oree said. “There are different ways we can do it.”

As with every annual food drive, NALC Headquarters is providing publicity resources for food coordinators, including the PSA video, media plan, flyer and local link, all available at nalc.org/food. Meanwhile, following a national press release and follow-up outreach to media outlets around the country, newspapers and broadcast outlets large and small have highlighted the donor drive, often quoting grateful food bank directors.

Relying on the materials NALC has created for the online drive and posted on the NALC website, Oree is looking at sending Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) mailers to postal patrons, at asking carriers to spread the news to

Mike Fosberg took to the radio to promote the food drive last year.



their customers by word of mouth, at putting up posters in postal facilities to remind postal employees to spread the word, and at running local PSAs and garnering news coverage.

“Our goal is to fill the shelves of food pantries with as much, or more, as we would through our traditional May food drive,” Rolando said. “To succeed, we will need to get the word out to our communities and encourage people to give.”

Fargo-West Fargo, ND Branch 205 already was exploring the idea of adding an online donation component to supplement its traditional May food collection, the branch’s food drive coordinator, **Mike Fosberg**, said, in part because carriers sometimes struggled to accommodate the generous food donations.

“We started kicking this around before the pandemic,” he said. “It’s been tougher to find room in the back of the van” for food on the collection day each May.

The branch already had set up a virtual food drive this year when the pandemic arrived, so it was prepared.

“Initially, we were going to run [the online donor drive] for the month

For every contribution from a branch’s treasury to a local food bank, NALC Headquarters will match that donation to that same local food bank. Please mail proof of such branch donations and information on the food bank to:

Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive
c/o NALC
100 Indiana Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20001

for NALC Region 15 (New York, northern New Jersey, western Connecticut, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands). His outreach was part of setting up the national donor drive.

Bustleton Post Office employees make big donation to feed the needy

By Tom Waring - June 18, 2020



of May," he said. "Then, here comes COVID."

With the head start, Branch 205 already has raised more than \$6,000 through its online donation drive. As with the traditional food drive, which distributed food to food banks based on the collection location, the branch is allocating online donations to three food banks in the area based on the ZIP codes of the donors.

To publicize the online donation drive, Branch 205 sent flyers through Valpak. The price was reasonable, Fosberg said, and postal patrons noticed. "Valpak did a really good job of doing that," he said, "and I got positive feedback from customers."

The branch plans to reach out to local media for additional publicity. One advantage of holding an online donation drive versus a one-day event on the second Saturday in May is that publicity efforts—and the event itself—are open-ended.

But his branch is also confronting a disadvantage—competition from other online donation efforts for food assistance during the pandemic, including one run by a local TV station that is promoting its own effort in PSAs. The crowded field of food-assistance efforts has made attracting attention to the NALC food drive more challenging. Of course, that's a welcome challenge to have, Fosberg said. "It's good that food pantries are getting the food they need," he said. "That's our goal."

A few loyal postal customers in Fargo automatically put food out every second Saturday in May regardless of publicity, Fosberg added—despite the postponement of the food drive this year, Fargo-area carriers brought back a total of 9 pounds of food on May 9.



Bustleton Post Office manager Michael Derrick and shop stewards Joe Delmont and George Borko.

Employees of Bustleton Post Office look forward every year to the National Association of Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, which takes place on the second Saturday in May.

Filling the food collection gap

When the May food drive was postponed, and before NALC launched the online donor effort, some branches found ways to collect food safely.

At Bustleton Station in Philadelphia, PA, postal employees donated food and money to help fill the shelves of their local food pantry to offset the loss of community donations, an effort that attracted news coverage.

"Food banks were low, people were unemployed, and we wanted to help out locally," Philadelphia Branch 157 member **George Borko** told Philadelphia's *Northeast Times Newsweekly*. The effort yielded enough food to fill three postal vehicles, plus more than \$800 in cash donations. The mini food drive benefited Caring for Friends, a pantry that delivers food and meals to

homebound people.

"We were able to fill up several vehicles with food," Branch 157 member **Joe Delmont** told the *Northeast Times*. "The employees work hard every day, and they have families of their own to support. We weren't twisting any arms, but it was a very good show of support."

With the national online donor effort in place, and the tools for branches to use available at nalc.org/food, every branch can help its local food banks restock their shelves.

"In the nearly three decades that NALC has held a national food drive, the need has never been greater," Rolando said. "It is essential that we make this year's virtual food drive a resounding success."

"And when it's safe to do so," he added, "letter carriers will be there to hold our traditional Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive." **PR**