

## Prepare now for a successful food drive

**E**ach year, NALC branches are encouraged to register for the Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive held on the second Saturday in May. Stamp Out Hunger is the largest single-day food drive in the nation. The food drive's success is due to the dedication of letter carriers and volunteers and support from partners and local food agencies.

Following are tips for branches on organizing a successful food drive.

### Registration

Work on the food drive must start in advance and must be a priority. The process begins with the branch selecting a food drive coordinator.

Once the food drive coordinator has been identified, the branch president should log in to their Members Only portal via the NALC website. Registration is simple and requires only a few minutes to complete. For a step-by-step guide on how to register your branch, watch the video posted at [nalc.org/toolkit](http://nalc.org/toolkit).

### Groundwork

Once the branch is registered, the food drive coordinator should explore NALC's Stamp Out Hunger webpage at [nalc.org/food](http://nalc.org/food) to find information, such as deadlines (to receive postcards, bags and posters), the coordinator's manual, a sample press release, and a list of state and regional coordinators with up-to-date contact information.

The food drive coordinator should first review the coordinator's manual and then enlist help, as the branch will need volunteers. Start by asking the branch members to sign up by placing a sign-up sheet at your monthly branch meeting and on your branch web page and/or social media pages. Be mindful that the coordinator can solicit help

from other crafts and from food drive co-sponsors, such as United Way.

Review the coordinator's manual and then create a timeline of duties and the branch's available budget to share with your volunteers so that they'll know what is expected of them. Schedule a meeting with the volunteers to identify skills or useful contacts. Make sure to set realistic expectations, assist with training if needed, provide reassurance, and follow up regularly with the volunteers.

### Building partnerships

Take advantage of local opportunities to solicit donations from businesses. Letter carriers have an advantage, because they interact with businesses daily and have a relationship with the point of contact. Find tips and talking points on how to secure local support here: [nalc.org/community-service/food-drive/food-drive-toolkit/getting-partners-and-sponsors](http://nalc.org/community-service/food-drive/food-drive-toolkit/getting-partners-and-sponsors).

Prior to meeting with a potential partner, the food drive coordinator should create a folder and include materials that can be left with the prospective partner, including a letter explaining the cause, what type of donations are requested, and how those donations will be used. The food drive coordinator should create a list of the possible partners and include the date the meeting with those potential partners took place, or the date the packet of information was mailed if no meeting was held, so the coordinator can follow up.

The local United Way might be able to assist with finding local pantries, coordinating distribution of food, and attempting to get sponsors for bags. More information is available at [unitedway.org/find-your-united-way](http://unitedway.org/find-your-united-way).

Other partners who may be able to assist include the AFL-CIO and the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), which can be found by visiting [ufcw.org/members/find-your-local](http://ufcw.org/members/find-your-local). The most common sponsors for bags are local grocery stores. Bag information and deadlines can be found at [nalc.org/toolkit](http://nalc.org/toolkit) under the heading "Important information for coordinators."

### Advertising

There are numerous ways a branch can get the word out. One way is by establishing media contacts and asking them to help publicize the drive. Also, contact elected officials and ask them to declare the second Saturday in May Food Drive Day. A sample press release for news and radio stations, along with a sample proclamation for elected officials, are in the coordinator's manual.

Other ways include wearing food drive T-shirts; putting out lawn signs; hanging posters and flyers inside apartment complexes, banks, places of worship and grocery stores; providing stand-up talks with carriers to get them excited about the food drive; working with apartment complexes to send community emails and to set up a common area drop-off location for food; and sharing information on social media. This will help boost community support and improve the outcome of the food drive.

NALC's social media team and the Department of Communications and Media Relations, both at Headquarters, along with NALC's national partners, will continue spreading the word and raising awareness for the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. Remember to follow NALC's social media accounts on Facebook at [facebook.com/StampOutHunger](http://facebook.com/StampOutHunger) and at

@StampOutHunger on X for more ideas. To find or send messages about the food drive on either platform, use #StampOutHunger.

### Next steps

After the food drive, what's next? The food drive coordinator should visit the food drive database via their Members Only portal. The coordinator will select the "Sponsors/Food Banks" tab, click "Add Local Sponsor or Food Bank" and a dialog box will appear, input money collected and/or pounds of food collected, and click "Submit." The money collected will be automatically converted to pounds of food. To verify that the information is accurate, click the "Donated" tab. The total pounds of food with the converted dollars to pounds will be populated under

this tab.

Once the final results have been submitted, the coordinator should compile the information that has been collected and provide it to the branch president. The information should include lists of volunteers, vendor and partner contacts; food banks in the area along with their contact information; and a timeline of events leading up to the food drive, together with notes on what worked and areas to improve.

Finally, the food drive coordinator needs to determine whether this is something they are interested in doing again. If not, help find a replacement. For a branch to succeed, leaders must train the next

generation.

"Thank you for helping continue the fight to end hunger within our communities with our annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive," Presi-



## Postal Record wins three ILCA awards

**T**he International Labor Communications Association (ILCA) has announced the results of its 2025 annual labor media contest. Once again, NALC was recognized for excellence, with three *Postal Record* stories receiving awards.

NALC rejoined ILCA in 2019, and *The Postal Record* has won multiple awards each year since in North America's largest and longest-standing competition for labor journalists.

The contest was for work done and published in 2024. NALC's three awards for written articles were surpassed in that bracket by only two unions nationwide.

Editorial Assistant Sarah Eccleston won second place in the Best Feature Story of an Issue, Campaign or Topic category for her article on efforts by

our members to raise awareness about autism, and third place in the Best Profile of a Person or Group category for her story of a letter carrier/singer. Managing Editor Mike Shea took third place in the Best Labor History Story category for an article on the history of absentee voting.

The ILCA Labor Media Contest recognizes excellence among publications, websites, film, video and electronic media. Dozens of international unions and many more individual locals enter



the annual contest, including some of the nation's biggest unions. It draws thousands of entries, which are judged by experts in the fields of labor and communications. **PR**