



## How to Conduct a Collections Drive

How would you like to organize a project for your school, business, or group that's really fun and will make a huge difference to the homeless, people living the HIV/AIDS, and others in need this holiday season? Then try hosting a collections drive for Dolores Street Community Services and help your neighbors in need! Here's how:

### Step 1: Specify!

You can collect food, clothing, or toiletries during your drive but we recommend that you focus on just one area as it is both easier to organize and generally much more successful. We can always use non-perishable goods, men's clothes, and toiletries but for a complete rundown of the types of things we need the most please take a look at our Wish List.

If you want to make your collections drive a really fun and memorable experience, consider adding a twist to it with one of the following suggestions:

**The Super Specific Collections Drive:** How about collecting work boots and blue jeans instead of a general clothing drive? Or instead of a general office or school wide toiletries drive, have different departments or classes collect different items such as assigning toothbrushes to one group, toothpaste to another, mouthwash to a third, and so on. This also works well for canned food drives where we need large numbers of the same items to make a meal for everyone in the shelter each night. Finally, it saves hours of time otherwise spent sorting!

**The Dolores Spirit Gift Bag Project:** With just a little more planning, you can really bring some holiday cheer to our clients and feel good yourself by turning your collections drive into a gift making project! Using the same premise as the Super Specific Collections Drive above, make a list of the items you want to collect and assign them to different groups or areas. At the conclusion of your drive, have some volunteers ready to assemble the gift bags using an item collected from each area. So what goes in a Gift Bag? The options are endless so it all depends on you! Gift Bags can be as simple as a razor and shaving cream wrapped tied together with a bit of ribbon or as extravagant as a backpack stuffed full with things like a sweater, bottle of cologne, postage paid holiday stationary or international calling card, gift certificate to a neighborhood restaurant, homemade cookies, playing cards, books or magazines in Spanish, or any number of other items both practical and fun. Please call us at 415-282-6209 x22 for more information on coordinating this project.

Whatever you decide to collect during your drive, you will be saving us valuable resources that can be invested in case management and other services that go beyond the basic needs and make a real difference in ending homelessness one person at a time. Thank You!



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### Step 2: Publicize!

Start publicizing early to make sure everyone knows about the drive. Try using flyers, your newsletter, personal notes, and word-of-mouth to let everyone know the what, when, where and why of your drive. We can even provide you with a generic flyer with spaces for you to fill in the specific dates and drop off locations. Once the drive begins, consider using email to countdown how many days are left to bring in donations along with how far you are at reaching your goal if you've set one or who's winning if you're having a competition.

### Step 3: Inform!

Remember that the success of a collections drive is measured not only in the number of socks dropped off at our door but also by how many people have gained a new awareness of Dolores Street Community Services and those served through our programs. Be sure to include information about Dolores Street when publicizing the drive. We can also provide you with brochures to leave at the drop boxes.

### Step 4: Collect!

Any large, sturdy box works well for collecting, storing, and transporting the donations. If you don't have one around try looking behind your local grocery store. Plain brown cardboard boxes are pretty boring but a few decorations can grab the attention of those passing by and give them another reminder that the drive has begun. Of course, even a box with flashing neon lights won't attract much attention sitting in a dark corner, so be sure to place yours in a central and visible high traffic area. Now just sit back and watch the donations pile in!

### Step 5: Drop it off!

Don't forget to arrange a means of getting all the stuff you've collected over to us when the drive is over. Donations should be dropped off at our main office at 938 Valencia Street between the hours of 9AM and 5PM when staff are available to assist you. If you've got a particularly large donation, please call ahead so we can be prepared to accept, sort and store it.

### Step 6: Celebrate!

It's time to pat yourself on the back for a job well done! You can be assured that your hard work and the donations you collected will go to good use. But there's nothing quite like seeing the programs in person and having a conversation with one of our clients to make it all come together. So why not get a small group together and take a tour of the programs one evening or even spend a few hours volunteering on site? We'd be more than happy to arrange either for you!