

## Organizing a Collection/Donation Drive

1. Select and Contact an Organization Visit Volunteer
  - a. Search for Collection/Donation Drives on the Civic and Community Engagement Website: <https://cce.buffalostate.edu/virtualvolunteering>
  - b. Once you have searched through the potential agencies to donate the item to, you will need to contact the agency directly. When contacting an agency it is best to give them a description of the item(s) you are trying to donate and letting them know any time constraints you may have in donating the item.
2. Gather a committee that wants to be an integral part of your drive and assign everyone specific tasks.
3. Set Goals: Determine the amount of donations you want to raise. Encourage people to help you meet or surpass your goals by putting up flyers and telling them the importance of your drive.

## Running the Drive

1. Collect: Depending on what your planning committee decides, you can collect your donations at one or more locations.
  - a. Engage multiple locations:
    - i. If possible/desired, coordinate donation drive events and collections at multiple locations in your area: other schools, stores, banks, restaurants, pharmacies, or grocery stores.
    - ii. Use same branded collection bins at all locations to increase recognition & awareness.
    - iii. Encourage everyone to promote the opportunity to colleagues and peers in the weeks leading up to event.
    - iv. Engage planning committee to create promotional items (signs, bag stuffers, table tents, counter signs).
  - b. Make Supply Drive Event a Destination: Decorate a portion of the office or school to make the drop-off area exciting. Incorporate into existing events, especially company picnics or school celebrations. “
2. Sort As donations are received, take time to run through the donations to look for items that cannot be used once delivered to the nonprofit. Consider taking photos of mounds of supplies before they are sorted into the way that the receiving nonprofit has designated. See the timeline in the following pages for ideas to consider as you plan your drive.
3. Deliver: Delivering the supplies, too, is a great way to engage others and generate attention for the success of the donation drive. Ideas may include: Inviting donors to assist in the delivery of the donations. Wear school/office t-shirts to promote publicity of donations.
4. Promote: There are many ways to generate excitement and visibility throughout the drive. In the tool-kit you will find samples of documents to use when promoting the donation drive. A few tips to consider:
  - a. Is there a way to film/photo the pile of supplies, supplies being sorted, hundreds of backpacks filling a bus, volunteers and children?
  - b. Use social media to reach new audiences: Twitter, Facebook to spread messages

## Timeline

Every donation drive is different. Whatever form your donation drive takes, this sample timeline will help guide your collection and event planning from concept to celebration.

- 6-8 Weeks
  - Identify potential community partners (companies, retail businesses, agencies, chambers of commerce, council on corporate volunteerism, faith-based groups, colleges, labor unions) and others
  - Receive and deliver school supply collections. Serve as collection or drop-off centers.
  - Provide transportation and logistical support. Donate warehouse or parking lot space for an event. Help promote the project, e.g., media, publicity volunteers. Create a list with information on all partners, including: name, address, contact name(s), phone, e-mail address, category, website, notes. Schedule face-to-face or phone meetings to discuss a project ideas.
  - Determine next steps for each member of the planning committee (their role, time commitment, how to manage collection of supplies).
- 4-6 Weeks
  - Brief other staff or committee members on all aspects of the project and involve them in any further planning and preparation.
  - Schedule post-event meeting, to ensure that committee members are available to debrief and attend to follow-up tasks.
  - Draft agenda for the day of an event.
  - Notify your marketing & communication departments for PR/media plan. Discuss documentation (photos, video) of an event.
  - Recruit a volunteer photographer if possible. If needed, verify need for photo a release form. If needed, order event t-shirts, signage or other collateral, as needed. Plan any transportation and other logistics needed.
- 2-4 Weeks
  - Visit collection sites. Address any remaining questions and concerns.
  - Recruit volunteers.
  - Secure attendance of all dignitaries as needed for an event's agenda.
  - Draft or secure talking points for dignitaries to include in the run of show document.
  - Finalize task lists and make sure all committee members are comfortable with scope of work.
- 1-2 Weeks
  - Confirm all final details. Make sure you will have tables and chairs for all donation drop-off stations.
  - Confirm materials needed, will be onsite.
  - Pack a "project kit" to include things such as:
    - Signage and banners
    - Pens, markers
    - Tape
    - Extra paper/card stock/poster board
    - Flyers about the donation drive