

FOOD BANK  
of ALASKA



## **FAQs for food and fund drives**

### **How do I start a food drive?**

To host a food and fund drive, please [register your drive](#). You may also contact our Food Donation Coordinator at 222-3115 or [mredmon@foodbankofalaska.org](mailto:mredmon@foodbankofalaska.org). You will receive a phone call or e-mail to confirm your food drive, arrange barrel pick-ups or delivery if needed, and answer your questions.

### **What type of food is needed most?**

Our most needed shelf-stable items are tuna and canned protein, pasta and sauce, macaroni and cheese, noodle bowls or top ramen, soups, stews, chili, boxed meal helpers, peanut butter & jelly, canned fruit and vegetables, cereal, oatmeal and other breakfast items and coffee. If it is a nutritious, regular staple in your diet, chances are it is a great item to donate. Kid-friendly foods and easy-open cans are especially appreciated. See a list of [most needed items](#).

### **When is the best time to hold a Food Drive?**

Food drives are needed all year round. We typically see a surge of food drives in November and December, and significantly fewer drives in spring and summer. To have a big impact, consider organizing your food drive during the “off season” of January through September. That being said, any time you can host a food drive is a good time.

### **Can you accept food that is past its date?**

Yes, we can! We have trained volunteers who sort through food donations to determine whether the food is still safe to distribute. Often canned food that is years past date is still usable. Food that we cannot distribute is frequently donated to local pig farms for animal feed.

### **What food can't you accept?**

We cannot accept home canned or processed items (home canned or vacuum sealed fish, jams, baked goods, etc.), food that is open to the air, or food that is missing its original packaging. For example, we can accept a box of crackers where one tube of crackers has been eaten, provided the remaining cracker tubes are still sealed and in the original box. Glass is also discouraged because it breaks easily in handling.

### **What resources does Food Bank of Alaska provide for my food drive?**

We are glad to provide support and tips while planning your food drive, as well as food drive barrels, sandwich boards, informational materials, and a list of most needed food drive items.

### **How do I get barrels for my drive? What sizes are they? How many do I need?**

To request barrels please fill out a registration form. Barrels come in a variety of sizes with the largest being 32 gallons and the smallest being 16” in diameter by 30” high. How many you need depends on the amount of food you think you will collect during your food drive. Before requesting barrels consider how you will plan to deliver the food back to Food Bank of Alaska at the conclusion of your drive. A smaller sized barrel fits easily into the back seat of a sedan and can collect up to 75-100 pounds of cans,

and the larger barrels can hold 150 pounds or more but are more suitably transported in an SUV or truck.

**Do I have to use Food Bank of Alaska's barrels?**

No. In fact, many people choose to collect food in smaller boxes or containers that they decorate for their food drive and can move more easily. Full food drive barrels can be heavy and do not always fit easily into smaller vehicles.

**Where can I drop off my food & fund donations?**

Donations are accepted at Food Bank of Alaska located at 2121 Spar Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501 between 8 am-4 pm Monday through Friday and 8 am – 3 pm Saturday. We also have a bin for after-hours food donations and food barrels at Allen & Petersen stores in both Anchorage and Wasilla. Please note that we will be unable to provide a donation receipt for food dropped off after hours or at Allen & Petersen. For significant food donations, please call our Food Donation Coordinator, 907-222-3115, to confirm your drop-off time.

**We raised more food than I can transport? What should I do?**

Thank you! Consider enlisting the support of friends or coworkers with trucks. We can make pick-ups for donations of 500 pounds (the equivalent of four full food drive barrels, a filled SUV or pickup truck). Please schedule food pick-ups several days in advance. We appreciate having even more notice from October through December.

**Can I hold a food drive if I live outside of Anchorage or Mat-Su?**

Yes! We can work with you to find one of our partner agencies in your community where you can drop off food donations. Financial donations can be made to Food Bank of Alaska online or by mail.

**Should I donate food or money?**

The short answer is both! Food donations go onto our shelves immediately and are redistributed back into the community, often within 24-48 hours.

Financial donations are just as crucial to feeding hungry Alaskans and providing a consistent flow of food year-round. With every \$1 you donate we can access up to five pounds (four meals) that we will purchase strategically at times when the amount of donated food is low. We look for opportunities through our Feeding America network to source truckloads of produce or cereal at very low cost – often cents on the pound – from the Lower 48 and work with generous transportation donors to ship it to Alaska. The ability to leverage your dollars is the best way to provide a consistent year-round food supply and put the largest amount of food into the most hands.

Give in the way that you can and know that whether financial or food donation, both are necessary and important to the work that we do.

**How do I get a tax donation receipt?**

Most donations to Food Bank of Alaska are tax-deductable. We are a 501c3 non-profit organization, tax identification number 92-0073175. Food Bank of Alaska provides receipts at the time of donation or a thank you letter that acts as a receipt for donations made online or by mail. To obtain a duplicate receipt or inquire about a letter, please contact the Food Donation Coordinator at 222-3115.