



## Neighborhood Food Shelf Pick-up Tips & Timeline

### Step 1 The Invitation

Three weeks before the first pick-up date, give your neighbors a letter explaining your purpose and the invitation to participate. (For help with this letter, see the sample **Neighborhood Form Letter**.) You can send the letter with postage in an envelope so that it arrives in your neighbors' mailboxes (highest rate of response); stuff them in envelopes with "Our Neighbors" written on the envelope and place them in their newspaper box; or place the letter in newspaper boxes as a flier.

### Step 2 The Pick-Up

On the designated date, drive through your neighborhood and check the front step of each neighbor's home for bags of donated food items. Collect the bags.

**Family Tip: Begin a ritual with your kids for your drive through the neighborhood!** Say a prayer for those who have food waiting on the front step, those who will receive the food, and a safe journey as you connect the two. /// At every home where there is a bag of food waiting, applaud! Talk about the importance of giving and caring for others, and why that is worthy of applause. /// Make up a blessing song or prayer to have the children sing or say in the car at each home that leaves food. /// Have your kids take turns walking up to retrieve the food with you.

### Step 3 The Thanks

Leave a postcard in the door for everyone who has a bag of food waiting at their front step. Stick the postcard wherever it will be seen. Change the color and message of the postcard each month to express your gratitude for people's generosity in new ways!

### Step 4 The Drop-Off

Deliver the food to the food shelf you have selected.

**Family Tip: Visit the food shelf!** When you are ready to deliver the bags, call ahead and ask permission to tour the food shelf with your children to increase their understanding of how the food donations are used and give them a visual image of the vast amount of food that is needed to keep the shelves stocked.

### Step 5 The Follow-Up

Two weeks after your first pick-up, send a second letter to your neighbors to remind them that the second pick-up date is approaching. (For an example of this, see **Follow-up Neighborhood Form Letter**.) You can choose to report to them on the first month's pick-up, if you choose. You may also choose to include in the letter a picture of the bags from the first pick-up. (Reminder: when reporting on the number of items given, highlight that the significance is not so much in the numbers as in the spirit of giving and the community of care to which they are contributing.)

**Keep the energy going!** Think of creative approaches to reminding your neighbors about the pick-up date each month: create weather-proof signs that can be put up at each entrance to your neighborhood four days before each month's pick-up, and taken down the day of the pick-up; place a reminder postcard in your neighbors' newspaper boxes each month a few days before the pick-up date; give your neighbors a strip of labels to put in their calendars that are pre-printed with "Project FoodStock Pick-up."

As you experiment with techniques for reminding your own neighborhood, please email us at [engage@projectfoodstock.org](mailto:engage@projectfoodstock.org) to share your ideas with us.

**Thank you for mobilizing for the sake of the hungry in Dakota County; for contributing to the kind of community in which we all want to live.**