



# Support Food Outreach through a Virtual Canned Food Drive in 2021!

## How it works:

Food Outreach regularly partners with businesses, schools, churches, service organizations, families and individuals who want to make an impact on food insecurity and chronic illness in our community. In 2020, we implemented a new “virtual canned food drive” system to assist our partners in raising money for our mission throughout the year.

The concept is simple:

- A \$1 donation = 1 can that will be provided to our clients
- Virtual drives are typically around one month long
- Groups can compete between departments, classes, etc.
- Donations can be made quickly and easily on our [website](#) and your specific food drive can be indicated in the “Dedicate this Donation” box.

## What Food Outreach provides:

Our team can provide you with our logo as well as canned-themed digital graphics to design internal advertisements, posters and other co-branded content. For larger drives (100+ participants), we can create a website with custom URL where your participants can donate directly to Food Outreach. Finally, we love to promote the outcomes of canned food drives through our social media channels! At the conclusion of your drive, we will share your efforts with more than 6,500 of our social media followers!

## When is the best time to hold a drive?

While you can hold a virtual canned food drive at any time, Food Outreach organizes our own virtual canned food drive at the end of each year. This year’s drive will take place **November 1-December 31, 2021**. Last year, we had more than 25 teams compete while cumulatively raising nearly \$75,000! Our event includes prizes and other fun engagement not offered through

stand-alone virtual drives. If you would like to take part in 2021, we would be happy to enroll you as it approaches. Just email [marcia@foodoutreach.org](mailto:marcia@foodoutreach.org) and let her know you are interested in participating this year!

**We are interested in holding a PHYSICAL canned food drive. Do you still offer those?**

In 2020, Food Outreach completely ***phased out*** our physical canned food drives. This took place for several reasons:

**QUALITY:** Due to their diagnosis, our clients require very specific food to meet national guidelines for our “medically tailored meals.” Over the years, it has become increasingly difficult to incorporate donated canned food items into our program. *Our virtual canned food drives allow us to directly purchase the nutritious food that meets these strict standards. Due to our agency’s size, we can also purchase food at a wholesale price which means your donation goes even further!*

**SPACE:** Our team is housing more food in our warehouse than ever before. Space continues to be a significant issue for our team. *Our virtual canned food drives allow us to purchase food for our clients, as needed, to ensure we have the available space.*

**SAFETY:** Due to our clients being immunocompromised, volunteers must check the expiration date of every can that is donated before we can distribute them to our clients. This is an important step (but also very time-consuming) in food safety for those we serve. *Our virtual canned food drive allows our volunteers to focus on distributing (can we use “packing” instead?) and producing meals for our clients. We continue to limit the number of individuals in our building due to social distancing, so our volunteers are doing more than ever before with even fewer hands to assist.*

**TIME:** With only 12 staff, our team is fully devoted to assisting the needs of our clients related to hunger and their illness. *Our virtual canned food drive allows our van drivers to remain focused on home-delivering our meals to our most vulnerable clients. In the past, our van drivers have had to deliver supplies and materials needed for offsite food drives and then return (sometimes multiple times) to pick up all of the collected food.*

**Questions?**

*If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out Marcia Whelan, Marketing and Events Manager at 314-652-3663 X 118 or [marcia@foodoutreach.org](mailto:marcia@foodoutreach.org).*

**Thank You for your interest in providing nutrition to our most vulnerable community members!**