SCOUTING FOR FOOD

2026

COLLECTION SITE COORDINATOR GUIDE

GREATER ST. LOUIS AREA SCOUTING



AT A GLANCE

OVERVIEW AND SITE SETUP

What to expect on Nov. 21 and suggestions for setting up your site.

LIFTGATE TRUCK PLAN

How to operate your site when food is packaged outside the truck then loaded into it using a liftgate.

NO-LIFTGATE TRUCK PLAN

How to organize and run your site when food must be packaged directly in the back of the truck because it has no liftgate.

CLOSING YOUR SITE

How to wrap up, report your food counts and return supplies.

COLLECTION-SITE GUIDE

A day-of timeline and universal setup for a successful Scouting for Food collection.



OVERVIEW

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

- On November 21, Scouts deliver donated food to collection sites. In St. Louis City and County, these are mostly firehouses, where commercial truck drivers pick up the food and take it to the St. Louis Area Foodbank (a few loads go to Operation Food Search). In surrounding counties, food goes straight to local pantries.
- This guide explains **how to set up St. Louis City and County sites**. Pantry coordinators may find it helpful too, but should also follow their pantry's guidance.

SITE LAYOUT AND SORTING

- Designate a drop-off zone where cars can park and unload.
- Designate a sorting zone where glass items are separated and packaged in small boxes. No other sorting is needed.
- **Liftgate Trucks:** If your site receives a truck with a liftgate, you'll package non-glass items in pallet-sized boxes at the sorting zone. Designate a third zone to store filled boxes until a truck is ready to collect them.
- **Non-Liftgate Trucks:** If your site has a truck without a liftgate, you'll pull out glass items, then put all other directly into the pallet-sized boxes already in the truck. Set up a third zone to hold the small glass boxes until ready to load them.
- Found something that isn't a food donation, like a store delivery? Set it aside and call Scouting for Food Headquarters so we can return it to the homeowner.

DAY-OF TIMELINE

BY 10:00 A.M. — Open the collection site. Scouts begin bringing donated food.

DURING THE DAY — Volunteers direct vehicles, unload donations, sort food, and package it.

TRUCK TIMING — Trucks may arrive Friday night, by 10:00 a.m. Saturday, or later as trucks rotate. If a second truck is needed, we'll aim to have it on its way by 1:00 p.m.

2:00 P.M. — Call units that have not arrived to confirm whether they are still on track to arrive by 4:00 p.m.

BY 4:00 P.M. — **Scout collection and reporting deadline.** All units should be finished. Report the number of filled pallet-sized boxes and small boxes of glass items to your District Executive and District SFF Chairperson.

CLOSING — Once all units have finished (by 4:00 p.m.), clean up and load leftover boxes and trash onto the rear of the truck. Keep the banner and tape gun to return to your District Executive. Close your site by 5:00 p.m.

UNIVERSAL SITE SETUP

BEFORE NOV. 21

- Confirm the site is ready for Nov. 21; food collection runs from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Recruit help to run your site. People dropping off food may not stay to help, though you can ask them.
- Pick up small boxes (for glass), tape, trash bags, banner, and a list of units assigned to your site from your district SFF leadership.
- St. Louis Area Foodbank will deliver pallets, pallet-sized boxes, and pallet jacks.

VOLUNTEERS

ROLE	MINIMUM NUMBER
Collection Site Coordinator	1
Pallet and Pallet Jack Movers	1-2
Traffic Monitors	2-3
Unloaders	5-8
Sorters	6-15

Recommendations only; all roles except the Collection Site Coordinator may rotate during the day.

GENERAL SITE SETUP

SET UP 3 ZONES: One where cars can park and unload, one where food is sorted, and one where filled boxes are stored until picked up by trucks.



DROP OFF: Vehicles stop or park here to unload food donations.

SORTING: Sort cans, boxes, and dry goods into large pallet-sized boxes; place glass in small boxes.

HOLDING: Keep filled boxes here until the truck is ready for loading.

For assistance on November 21, call Scouting for Food Headquarters at 314-361-0600.

IF YOUR COLLECTION SITE RECEIVES A

TRUCK WITH A LIFTGATE



1 ARRIVING

Cars stop at the designated drop-off zone.



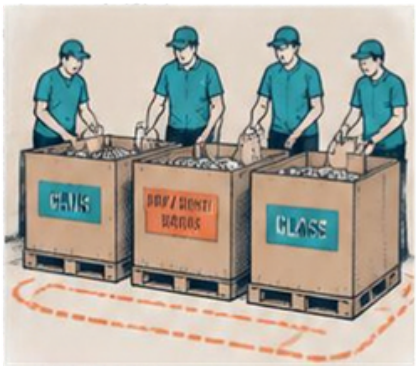
2 UNLOADING

Volunteers unload food and place those bags at the start of the sorting area.



3 SORTING

- Each sorter takes 1-2 bags.
- Walk alongside the pallet area.
- Place cans and dry/boxed goods in the pallet boxes.
- Place glass in the small cardboard boxes.
- Continue through the path, drop items, and loop back.



4 PALLET MOVEMENT

- When a pallet is full, a Pallet Jack Mover takes it to the truck.
- If the truck has not arrived, move it to a designated holding area.
- Replace full pallets immediately.





HOLDING AREA

5 REPEAT

Repeat steps 1-4 until all food has been collected, sorted, and loaded.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Truck arrival times vary.
- Truck drivers are volunteers too. Be courteous, patient, and flexible.
- Adapt the plan as needed to fit your collection site.
- Rotate volunteers and encourage breaks.
- Coordinate with the firehouse chief or property manager before using any onsite equipment, materials, or space.

For assistance on November 21, call Scouting for Food Headquarters at 314-361-0600.

SETUP USED AT ST. LOUIS FIREHOUSE #31

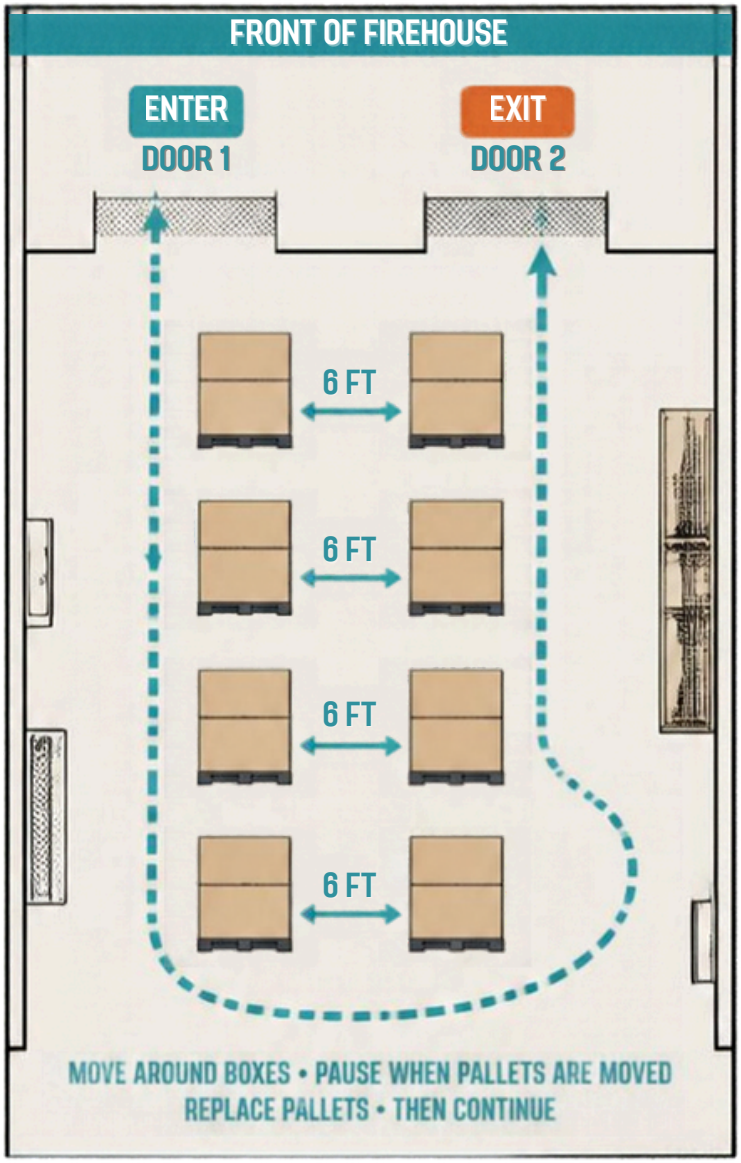
EXAMPLE LAYOUT AND TRAFFIC FLOW

FOR TRUCKS WITH A LIFTGATE

Front garage doors
12’ WIDE

Pallet size
40” X 48”

Pallet separation
SIX FEET



Food is collected from cars outside the firehouse.

This same flow can be adapted to an outdoor environment.

No more than 6–8 people inside at one time.

Traffic pauses whenever a pallet is moved and replaced.

Enter through one door, move around the boxes, and exit through the second door.



IF YOUR COLLECTION SITE RECEIVES A

TRUCK WITHOUT A LIFTGATE

PHASES AND SAFETY

Fill the rear three pallet boxes first, then progress through each phase and repeat the rotation until the truck is full.



1 PHASE 1

Start with pallet boxes already in the truck. Fill boxes at the rear first.



2 PHASE 2

Once the pallet boxes at the rear are full, create a new row in front of it.



3 PHASE 3

Continue filling the pallet boxes from the back to the front until the truck is full.



SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

- Assign a **Safety Monitor**.
- Avoid constant climbing by keeping volunteers in designated positions – on the ground or in the truck.
- If needed, use a sturdy **step stool** no higher than **3 feet** and limit it to older Scouts and adults.
- **Reduce** the number of volunteers inside the truck as it fills up.
- Direct extra volunteers to **neighborhood collection teams** or use **hourly shifts** to manage fatigue.
- Encourage **regular breaks**.

GREATER ST. LOUIS AREA SCOUTING

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Operation Food Search