



Garden State Council Scouting for Food Campaign

Bag Distribution: November 14, 2026 | Food Collection: November 21, 2026

User Guide & Position Descriptions

Garden State Council's signature service project, Scouting for Food is an annual campaign that provides our Scouts with a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate service, leadership, and care for others. Scouting for Food answers the call of food insecurity in our communities as, together, we aim to collect over 100,000 pounds of food for those in need.

We extend our sincerest thanks to the Associated Builders and Contractors of New Jersey for their generous support as the presenting sponsor for Scouting for Food. Thanks to their partnership with Scouting—now in its fourth year—the Council is providing units with 100,000 reusable bags to distribute across the six counties served by the Garden State Council. In 2025, units collected over 115,000 pounds of food.

The Scouting for Food Drive began as a National Good Turn in 1988 and the tradition continues every year at the Garden State Council! The food drive, which collects non-perishable items, provides much-needed resources to help fight hunger in our communities. One out of five children and one out of every twelve households with seniors go hungry in New Jersey and an estimated 900,000 people rely on food banks just to survive.

All Scouting units are encouraged to participate in the annual Scouting for Food Drive community service initiative.

Please note that Scouting for Food materials are only available to units participating on the council-designated collection dates of November 14 and November 21. Units that choose to conduct their food drive on a different date are still encouraged to participate and may report their collections using the [Monday.com reporting link](#).

Scouting for Food Campaign Timeline

Date	Activity
September 29, 2026	Council Scouting for Food Kickoff. District and Unit Coordinators receive campaign information, materials details, and program updates.
October 2026	Scouting for Food bags and campaign materials distributed to districts and units through Roundtable meetings.
November 14, 2026	Distribution Day. Units distribute Scouting for Food bags throughout assigned neighborhoods and communities.
November 21, 2026	Collection Day. Units return to collect donated food items from neighborhoods and transport donations to designated food collection sites or local food banks.
November 21, 2026	Food sorting and delivery. Donations are weighed, recorded, sorted as needed, and prepared for transport to local food banks and community food pantries.
November 22-28, 2026	Reporting and Recognition. Units submit food collection totals, volunteer service hours, and participation reports through the online reporting system. Units also verify patch distribution and recognize volunteers for their service.

Role of a District Coordinator

1. Contact Units

- Inform every unit of the important campaign dates
- Get commitments-use Monday.com tool

2.. Attend the Scouting for Food Kick off September 29th

3. Coordinate Unit Pickup of Materials

- Bags available beginning October 2026 at Round Table
- Coordinate pickup logistics with your District Executive
- Coordinate with units about neighborhoods they will be distributing bags in

4. Follow up Actions

- a. Follow up with units to ensure we get accurate information about collections and volunteer hours
- b. Ensure everyone received their 2026 SFF patch

Distribution Day

Saturday, November 14, 2026

Units distribute Scouting for Food bags throughout their assigned neighborhoods. Check in with Units to see if they had enough materials or ran into any unforeseen circumstances.

Collection Day

Saturday, November 21, 2026

Units return to collect donated food and deliver it to the district collection site. Be on hand at one of the collection sites to hand out SFF patches to the units

Distribute Campaign Materials

Coordinate with your District Executive for receiving materials. Materials should be available in time to distribute at October Roundtable.

Recommended Materials Package

Each participating unit should receive:

- Scouting for Food bags
- Unit reporting form
- Best Practices flyer
- Collection site information
- Emergency contact information

Pro Tip

Pre-package bags by unit and clearly label each bundle based on the unit's assigned territory. This streamlines distribution and helps ensure each unit receives the correct quantity.

Collection Day Operations

Saturday, November 21, 2026

Unit Responsibilities

Beginning around **10:00 AM**, units should:

1. Return to the neighborhoods where bags were distributed.
 2. Collect food donations left by residents.
 3. Return donations to a Food Donation location of their choosing or the Food Bank of South Jersey or The Community Food Bank of New Jersey .
 4. Weigh the food collect and record as well as record service hours.
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District Coordinator Action Plan

Pro Tips for Success

- Ensure each unit receives enough bags to cover its assigned area.
 - Encourage units to distribute bags one week before collection day.
 - Remind families to place their filled bags in a visible location for pickup on November 21. Pick Bags up after 10 am
 - Use social media and community outreach to remind residents about collection day.
 - Consider keeping a small reserve supply of bags available for units that need additional materials.
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Final District Coordinator Checklist

Before Distribution Day

- ☐ Recruit District Coordinator
- ☐ Coordinate unit territories
- ☐ Collect unit contact information
- ☐ Obtain and distribute bags
- ☐ Promote campaign
- ☐ Coordinate with food bank

Distribution Day (November 14)

- ☐ Units distribute bags
- ☐ Address any coverage issues
- ☐ Send collection-day reminders

Collection Day (November 21)

- ☐ Collect reports

After Collection

- ☐ Have units submit service-hour totals through the Monday Board
- ☐ Thank volunteers and partners
- ☐ Document lessons learned for next year

Role of a Unit Scouting for Food Coordinator

The Unit Scouting for Food Coordinator serves as the primary point of contact within the unit for planning, organizing, and executing the annual Scouting for Food campaign. This individual helps ensure the unit's participation is successful and that collection and service information is accurately reported.

Responsibilities

1. Attend the Scouting for Food Kickoff

- Attend the Scouting for Food Kickoff on **September 29, 2026**, or designate a representative from the unit.
- Obtain campaign information, timelines, and best practices to share with unit leadership and families.

2. Coordinate Campaign Materials

- Coordinate with the District Coordinator or District Executive to receive:
 - Scouting for Food bags
 - Unit reporting forms
 - Best Practices flyer
 - Collection site information
 - Emergency contact information
- Verify that the unit receives enough bags to cover its assigned territory.
- Organize and distribute materials to Scouts and families.

3. Plan Distribution Day Activities

Saturday, November 14, 2026

- Coordinate volunteers and assign neighborhoods for bag distribution.
- Ensure all distribution areas are covered.
- Communicate distribution instructions to Scouts and families.
- Monitor progress and address any issues that arise during distribution.
- Notify the District Coordinator if additional materials or assistance are needed.

4. Plan Collection Day Activities

Saturday, November 21, 2026

- Organize volunteers for food collection efforts.
- Ensure Scouts return to assigned neighborhoods after **10:00 AM** to collect donated food.
- Coordinate transportation of collected food to:
 - A local food pantry,
 - The Food Bank of South Jersey, or
 - The Community FoodBank of New Jersey.
- Ensure food is weighed and documented.

5. Reporting and Follow-Up

- Record the total pounds of food collected.
- Record volunteer service hours from Scouts and adults.
- Submit required reports to the District Coordinator promptly after collection day.

- Submit service hours through the Monday Board as directed.
- Confirm all participating Scouts receive their 2026 Scouting for Food patch.
- Share lessons learned and recommendations for future campaigns.

Unit Coordinator Success Tips

- Begin recruiting volunteers early.
- Communicate campaign dates frequently to families.
- Distribute bags one week before collection day.
- Remind residents to place filled bags in a visible location for pickup on November 21.
- Use unit emails, social media, and meetings to promote participation.
- Keep a small reserve supply of bags available if possible.

Unit Coordinator Checklist

Before Distribution Day

- ☐ Attend kickoff meeting
- ☐ Receive campaign materials
- ☐ Organize volunteers
- ☐ Assign distribution areas
- ☐ Communicate plan to families

Distribution Day (November 14)

- ☐ Distribute bags throughout assigned neighborhoods
- ☐ Address any coverage issues
- ☐ Remind families about collection day

Collection Day (November 21)

- ☐ Collect food donations after 10:00 AM
- ☐ Deliver food to designated collection site or food bank
- ☐ Weigh and record donations
- ☐ Record service hours

After Collection

- ☐ Submit collection and service-hour reports
- ☐ Confirm patch distribution
- ☐ Thank volunteers and community supporters
- ☐ Document lessons learned for next year

Purpose: The Unit Scouting for Food Coordinator ensures the unit's Scouts, leaders, and families work together to make a meaningful impact in the community through a safe, organized, and successful food collection campaign.

Scouting for Food: Unit Do's and Don'ts

DO's

Before Collection Day

- Review the Scouting for Food plan with all Scouts and adults.
- Wear complete Scout uniform whenever possible.
- Travel in groups of two or more Scouts with adult supervision following Safeguarding Youth Protection .
- Know your assigned collection area and stay within those boundaries.
- Carry identification and be prepared to explain the food drive to residents.
- Be courteous, respectful, and professional when interacting with the public.
- Provide Unit information on the bags as part of membership recruitment
- Contact your local Food Bank to ensure they will be able to receive the Food on Collection Day
- Have a scale to be able to weigh the food

During Collection

- Start collecting Food after 9:30 am giving neighborhoods more time
- Collect only non-perishable food items.
- Check donated items for damaged packaging or expired dates when possible.
- Thank every donor for supporting the community.
- Follow all traffic and pedestrian safety rules.
- Use proper lifting techniques for heavy boxes or bags.
- Keep donated food clean, dry, and organized.

After Collection

- Deliver collected food to the designated drop-off location promptly.
- Weigh the donated food for reporting purposes
- Report any issues or concerns to unit leadership.
- Help sort, count, and load donations as directed.
- Leave collection areas cleaner than you found them.
- Celebrate and recognize the service provided by Scouts and volunteers.

DON'Ts

Safety

- Do not enter anyone's home for any reason.
- Do not collect food alone.
- Do not run across streets or between parked vehicles.
- Do not overload Scouts with heavy items.
- Do not enter fenced yards or areas marked "No Trespassing."

Conduct

- Do not pressure anyone to donate.
- Do not argue with residents.
- Do not leave flyers or bags in unauthorized locations.
- Do not place any bags inside a mailbox
- Do not use inappropriate language or behavior.
- Do not handle donations carelessly.

Collection & Transportation

- Do not accept opened, homemade, or damaged food items.
- Do not collect expired food products.
- Do not leave donated food unattended.
- Do not mix personal items with collected food.
- Do not transport food in unsafe or overcrowded vehicles.

Representation of Scouting

- Do not block driveways, sidewalks, or mailboxes.
 - Do not litter or leave collection materials behind.
 - Do not post photos of residents or their property without permission.
 - Do not engage in political, commercial, or fundraising discussions unrelated to Scouting for Food.
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Remember

Safety First • Service Always • Respect Everyone • Leave a Positive Impression of Scouting

"Every can and every bag of food helps a neighbor in need."