

ECHO is aware of many families who would welcome the gift of groceries for a festive holiday meal at Thanksgiving or Christmas, especially in a time that we are seeing food prices rise. ECHO can arrange for a donor to provide those resources directly to a specific local family. For the safety of all, we are urging that donors mail grocery gift cards instead of delivering bags of food. If you would like to help a family, or families, have a special meal, contact holidayfoodprograms@echo-inc.org for more information.

To our generous and thoughtful FOOD Donors: ECHO doesn't repackage bulk foods into smaller servings, or use foods that have been repackaged because we cannot attest to their safe handling. We appreciate the thrift of those who would like to divide bulk items to serve more people, but ECHO must distribute food in the manufacturer's packaging. "Regular" sizes work best for us. Another update for ECHO donors is a new rule that ECHO, along with other food-providers, cannot place large orders for food or hygiene products now because of supply chain problems. This will impact our food distribution dramatically because we will be unable to use funds to purchase cartons of basic items that run low. We are asking donors to step up once again to bring food and supplies directly to ECHO, or to one of the ECHO collection sites at the Braddock District or West Springfield Government Offices or the Bingo Hall of Springfield's Volunteer Fire Dept., or to a food drive so that we can keep our pantry stocked. Items most urgently needed are listed on our homepage at www.echo-inc.org.

Scouting for Food! Area Scout Troops work hard to collect and deliver food donations, and ECHO benefits from their work for months afterward. On Saturday, November 6, Scouts will place flyers at homes in the neighborhoods where they will be collecting asking people to leave a bag of non-perishable foods on their porch by 8:30 am, November 13 for the scouts to pick up. The National Capital Area Council of the BSA has a goal of collecting a million pounds of food this year for the entire metro area. Much of the food collected in Springfield will go to ECHO. It is a vital resource! Please participate.

Help ECHO bring happy holidays to local children whose families are struggling financially. ECHO needs new toys (not gift-wrapped) for children ages 0 to 15 that will be made available for parents/clients to come in by appointment to choose appropriate gifts for their children. We are collecting from now until Tuesday, December 7 at our Donation Door a 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield, on weekdays between 9:30 am and 12:30 pm, or on Tuesday and Thursday evenings between 7:00 and 9:00. We have an Amazon Wishlist for donors who would like to make a purchase to be delivered directly to ECHO. The easiest way to access the wishlist is from our homepage at echo-inc.org. Questions should be directed to ECHOHOLIDAYSHOP@gmail.com.

ECHO's Clothing Department is now welcoming clients who are vaccinated back into the building by appointment to choose clothing for their families. Items in short supply are women's winter coats, all items of men's clothing in Small or Medium sizes, and men's shoes sizes 7 to 9. Our Housewares Department is low on pots and pans. Used items that are clean and in good repair are welcome- except for underwear and socks. ECHO only distributes new underwear, and we are in need of donations of men's and boy's sizes. ECHO is open to accept donations Monday through Friday, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 7:00 to 9:00.

Do you have a few hours a month and an interest in making our community a better place? ECHO is in search of a few volunteers: people interested in organizing donated household items on Friday mornings, or Thursday evenings, or on the first Saturday each month; a Donation Door greeter (able to carry heavy packages) on Friday mornings; people interested in organizing clothing donations and helping clients find the clothing they need on the first Saturday each month; Co-chairs for ECHO's Clothing Program. If you want more information, e-mail Volunteercoordinator@echo-inc.org.

Upcoming Dates to Note

November 11 - Closed for Veterans Day

November 15 - Bd of Dir Meeting

November 21 - Thanksgiving Food Basket deadline

November 24 - Closed in the evening

November 25-26- Closed for Thanksgiving

December 1-9 - Holiday gift program by appointment

December 19 - Holiday Food Basket deadline

December 23 - 31 Closed

Congregational and Other Food Drives

November 13 - Scouting for Food Drive

December - Springfield Chamber of Commerce Food Drive