

**Modern Woodmen Project-in-a-Box**

**Used Clothing Drive**

Modern Woodmen of America is pleased to offer this Project-in-a-Box for the use of our chapters, Summit chapters and youth service clubs. In the box you’ll find tools for planning a worthwhile service project in your community. This kit is designed to make your planning easy and successful.

**What is a used clothing drive?**

A used clothing drive is a collection of gently used outerwear, clothing, business attire, kids’ clothing and footwear. The articles are then donated or recycled.

**How does a used clothing drive benefit communities?**

A used clothing drive offers Modern Woodmen members and others in a community an opportunity to donate unwanted apparel and footwear. These donations:

* Provide clothing to those who may not have the financial means to purchase brand-new items at retail.
* Benefit the environment by keeping unwanted clothing out of landfills. The collected clothing can be recycled and the fibers used to produce insulation and other goods.
* Make good use of existing apparel. The manufacture of new clothing and footwear can contribute to pollution and the waste of natural resources.

**What is included in the Used Clothing Drive Project-in-a-Box?**

In addition to this project guide, the Used Clothing Drive Project-in-a-Box contains:

* A Modern Woodmen branded sign to help you promote this service project to your community. You may also use service pool money, existing funds or premier achievement dollars to order volunteer yard signs from the imakeanimpact.org website.
* A poster that communicates why this project is important and beneficial.
* Modern Woodmen branded plastic bags to help members organize donations.
* A valuation guide to help members estimate the value of their donations.
* Pre- and post-event media release templates to bring attention to your project.
* Modern Woodmen brochures.

**What else do I need to carry out this service project?**

Optional items you may want to have on hand include:

* Simple refreshments like bottles of water, granola bars or fresh fruit for volunteers. (Be sure to keep receipts for these purchases to attach to your activity report form.)
* Small prizes for different categories of donations: the most shoes or other specifically requested item, heaviest contribution, first donor, etc.
* A poster recognizing individuals, organizations and/or businesses that have donated space for the event, prizes, snack items for volunteers or other items.

**When should I start planning a used clothing drive?**

Though most of the preparation work can take place the week prior to the used clothing drive, *finding a venue for the event and promoting the clothing drive should begin six to eight weeks before the event.*

**Used Clothing Drive Checklist**

**Stage 1: Pre-event planning and organizing**

* **Find and reserve a location.**

A used clothing drive may be held in a church basement, school gym or cafeteria, or a community building or center. Some organizations may provide a room free of charge if they know your service project is for a good cause.

* **Decide on a timeframe for the event.**

The used clothing drive may be held on one day, over a weekend, a full week or an even longer period.

* **Arrange for pickup/delivery of items.**

Contact a local charitable agency/organization to see if it will pick up donated items, or arrange a time to deliver them. Consider supporting not only a general agency but also a specific need such as professional attire, prom dresses, etc.

* **Complete pre-event paperwork.**

This service project must be preapproved by the Fraternal Department. Complete and submit an activity request form online at imakeanimpact.org at least 30 days before the activity to ensure postcards are sent in a timely manner. *Always obtain approval from the Fraternal Department before making any binding decisions, commitments or arrangements.*

* **Create a plan and recruit volunteers.**

It’s very important for project coordinators to provide volunteers with meaningful, doable roles. Be sure everyone has a job to do before, during or after the event and understands how to carry it out. When members RSVP, offer one of the roles described below, or create other volunteer roles as needed.

**Before the event:**

* + **Donation seekers.** These people have connections within the community and will feel comfortable asking local individuals, organizations or businesses to:
    - Offer room space to hold the used clothing drive.
    - Contribute small prizes to award to those who donate the most shoes or other specifically requested item, etc.
    - Provide snack items for volunteers.
    - Donate other items as needed.
  + **Artist.** You will want to give credit to sponsors for their donations. An artistic volunteer can create a poster or two recognizing individuals, organizations or businesses that have donated space for the event, prizes, snack items for volunteers or other items.

**During the event:**

* + **Photographer.** This volunteer has experience taking photos of people in action. The photos can be shared after the project with volunteers, the Fraternal Department and media outlets to promote your successful event.
  + **Greeters.** Greeters staff the registration table and take donations. Since greeters are on the front line, they should be outgoing individuals who are comfortable interacting with those they don’t know.
  + **Sorters.** Sorters separate and organize donated clothing, footwear and other items. Detail-oriented people examine items for wear and tear to determine whether they can be reused or if they should be recycled.
  + **Baggers.** Baggers are patient and conscientious people who neatly fold items and place them carefully in the Modern Woodmen branded bags included in this Project-in-a-Box.

**After the event:**

* + **Clean-up crew.** The clean-up crew is a vital part of the used clothing drive volunteer team. These hard-working individuals fold up and stack tables and chairs, pick up trash, take down posters and signs and in general return the event site to its original condition.
  + **Donation assistants.** The donation assistants help the charitable agency pack up the donations to transport them to its site.
* **Determine light refreshments (optional).**

You may use service pool money, existing funds or premier achievement dollars to purchase light refreshments for volunteers, such as bottled water, granola bars or fresh fruit. (Be sure to keep receipts for these purchases to attach to your activity report form.) To conserve project funds, participants may instead contribute to a “potluck” of favorite snacks.

* **Promote the used clothing drive and extend invitations.**

*Start promoting the clothing drive six to eight weeks ahead of time to ensure as many people as possible attend.*

Volunteers and donors may be affiliated with Modern Woodmen chapters, Summit chapters and youth service clubs. They may also be members of local churches, environmental groups and the community.

Two or more chapters, Summit chapters or youth service clubs can join together to carry out a used clothing drive. Depending on the details of the project, premier status credit may be given to just one chapter, Summit chapter or youth service club, or multiple groups may receive credit. Contact the Fraternal Department with questions about project credit.

Promote the clothing drive to churches, environmental groups and other local organizations by asking them to include information about the event in their newsletters. Ask your local newspaper if you can include an item in its community calendar or other listing. These are easy, free ways to get the word out.

Promotional information should include:

* Details about where and when the drive will take place, along with how it can benefit the community and the environment.
* A reminder that clothing, outerwear and footwear should be gently used, clean, wrinkle-free and on hangers or neatly folded.
* **Submit a pre-release to your local media outlets.**

Spread the word about this Modern Woodmen volunteer activity by completing and emailing the pre-release to media outlets in a timely manner.

* **Make copies of the donation valuation guide.\***

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires donors to estimate the value of their items. Goodwill Industries International has compiled a list of commonly donated clothing and accessories. Make copies of the Valuation Guide to distribute to members and other donors.

* **Prepare for additional donors.**

This Project-in-a-Box contains enough Modern Woodmen branded plastic bags for an average used clothing drive. If you expect more donors, you may use service pool money, existing funds or premier achievement dollars to purchase additional, similarly-sized trash bags. (Be sure to keep receipts for any purchases to attach to your activity report form.)

* **Provide a friendly reminder.**

If possible, email or call members a few days before the clothing drive to remind them of the event and to bring their donations.

\*Printed with permission from Goodwill Industries International Inc. The Valuation Guide is also found online at: <https://www.goodwill.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Donation_Valuation_Guide.pdf>.

**Stage 2: Day of the used clothing drive**

* **Set up the room.**

Place supplies on the tables.

**Registration table (near the entrance to the clothing drive area):**

* Modern Woodmen attendance sheets for volunteers to sign.
* Donation valuation guides.
* Modern Woodmen brochures.

**Sorting and bagging tables:**

* Chairs for volunteers to sit down if needed.
* Modern Woodmen branded plastic bags, plus additional trash bags if needed.

**Snack table:**

* Arrange the snacks at the far end of the registration table or on a separate table nearby.

Place Modern Woodmen Volunteers at Work signage by the exterior door of your venue and/or the entrance to the room where the clothing drive is taking place, so volunteers know where to go.

Display one or more posters thanking sponsors for donations of event space, prizes or refreshments for volunteers and other items.

* **Welcome and thank volunteers.**

As volunteers arrive, welcome them to the activity and have them sign in on the attendance sheets. Take the time to thank people individually for donating their time. Make sure everyone feels comfortable as part of the group. Avoid the formation of cliques by introducing individuals and groups to each other and encouraging interaction.

* **Provide instructions to volunteers.**

One of the keys to holding successful volunteer projects and kindling enthusiasm for future fraternal activities is to make sure volunteers have meaningful, doable roles. Before the clothing drive starts, take time to ensure each volunteer has a job to do and understands how to do it.

* **Present background information.**

Take five minutes before the activity begins to remind volunteers how the used clothing drive will benefit their community and the environment. A poster for this purpose has been included in this Project-in-a-Box. A script is provided on the back of the poster to help you present the material. After the presentation, hang the poster in a well-traveled area so members and donors are reminded of the information.

* **Recognize sponsors.**

If you’ve received prizes, refreshments or other donations from individuals, organizations or businesses, be sure to announce these sponsors and thank them for their support at this time.

**Stage 3: Post-event procedures**

* **Celebrate!**

When the clothing drive is over, gather briefly with volunteers to recognize the number of items (or pounds of clothing!) collected, charitable agencies served, etc. See if a representative from one of the organizations is willing to address the group.

* **File Modern Woodmen paperwork.**

Complete and submit an activity report form online at imakeanimpact.org. Include receipts for items that were purchased in conjunction with the clothing drive as well as attendance sheets. To count toward the Fraternal Achievement Program, your report must be filed no more than 30 days after the activity and by Dec. 1. Upload good, clear photos of volunteers in action to the website.

* **Send thank you notes to sponsors and volunteers.**

It’s thoughtful – and wise – to thank individuals, organizations and businesses that helped make your used clothing drive successful. Take the time to write personal thank you notes – and send them as soon as possible.

* **Submit a post-release to local media outlets.**

Bring attention to your successful event and spread the good news about what Modern Woodmen does in communities by completing and emailing the post-release to media outlets in a timely manner. Attach good, clear photos showing volunteers in action.