

Initial Setup Of Organizing Donations

1

Lay out the space: Use high-level categories like those suggested below to help process donations more easily.

- **Baby Foods**
- **Baby Supplies** (cups, bottles, utensils, bibs, diaper cream)
- **Baby Wipes***
- **Bottled Water**
- **Clothes*:** Separate by gender/sizes
- **Diapers*:** Separate by size (Pro Tip: size 2 and 2T are not the same)
- **Dry Goods**
- **First Aid/Personal Hygiene**
- **Formula:** Separate by type
 - Ready-To-Feed Liquid (Pro Tip: this will go first if there are limited water resources)
 - Traditional Powder
 - Specialty (lactose-free, sensitive, goat milk, Nutramagin, Alimentum)
- **Gasoline/Propane**
- **Household Items**
- **Medicines:** Isolate pediatric items
- **Paper Goods***
- **Shoes:** Separate by gender/sizes

- *Any categories in **red** should be set up with shelving and/or bins.*
- *All remaining categories should be palletized for easy movement.*

**Indicates an area that will likely take up a large footprint for donations.*

2

Mark the space: Use duct tape or painter's tape to outline the area for each category.

3

Label the space: Create signs for each category and subcategory that anyone processing inbound donations can easily identify.

4

Identify high movers: You will quickly learn which items are most requested in your area. Move those to the front of the space so they can be easily retrieved for distribution.

5

Replenishments: If possible, have your distribution separate from your extra bulk storage set up.

- **Distribution should be set up and marked** with each of the same categories in a bin format (Pro Tip: laundry baskets, milk crates, plastic storage containers all make great replenishment bins.)
- **Use volunteer runners** to pull items from bulk storage and bring them to the replenishment bins.

Best Practices

- **Have a consistent volunteer dedicated to showing the new volunteers the lay of the land.** It's likely you will have new faces offering support daily.
- **Process inbound items as they come in.** The more you can keep up with the categorizing and putting away of items, the less overwhelming it will feel when you receive a lot of donations at one time.
- **If you have multiple pallets of the same item in bulk storage, shrink wrap all but one.** That way, you are replenishing from one pallet at a time.
- **Designate some people as official "organizers" for your bulk storage area.** As things get busier, items will start to get mixed up and disorganized, so it helps to have personnel whose only job is to keep an eye on this area.
- **Repurpose cardboard.** As you break open donations, reuse the boxes they arrived in as either replenishment bins or to distribute supplies.
- **Create bundles of related items.** Survivors are under tremendous stress. As a result, while they may have thought to ask for items like diapers, they may forget to ask for the related products, like wipes and diaper cream that they'll also need. By creating kits or bundles such as the ones suggested below, you can help them ensure that they'll be better supplied -- and save them another trip to your distribution center.
 - Baby Care (diapers, wipes, diaper cream)
 - Baby Food (formula, bottles, apple sauce pouches, bibs)
 - Household (cleaning wipes, toilet paper, paper towels, trash bags)
- **Medicine/first aid:** If you have any volunteers who work in the medical profession, tap into their expertise to help set up and oversee distribution of the medical and first aid items in your facility's "pharmacy."
- **Keep the following supplies on hand:**
 - Sharpies
 - Duct tape
 - Box cutters
 - Posterboard for signage (broken down cardboard works in a pinch)
 - Shrink wrap
 - Pallet jack
- **Dedicate time at the end of each operational day** to try to have all inbound donations processed, put away and all replenishment bins stocked. That way, you are ready to distribute first thing the next day.