



Town of Palm Beach United Way

44 Coconut Row, M201
Palm Beach, FL 33480
561-655-1919

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Town of Palm Beach United Way annual Empty Your Pantry Food Drive begins March 30

Pet food now accepted in addition to non-perishable food items

For Release – Thursday, March 27, 2025

Contact: Aleese Kopf, 561-655-1919; aleesekopf@palmbeachunitedway.org

PALM BEACH, FL – The arrival of spring in Palm Beach also signals the start to the Town of Palm Beach United Way's annual food drive. The 12th Annual Empty Your Pantry Food Drive runs Sunday, March 30 through Sunday, April 20.

Non-perishable food items and monetary donations will be collected to benefit low-income individuals and families struggling to make ends meet. This year the United Way is also accepting donations of pet food. Donors can drop off items at the town's fire stations, Field of Greens locations, or the United Way office inside the Palm Beach Towers.

"Food shortages are an ongoing issue in our community; especially during the summer months," said Board Chair **Richard Rothschild**. "Now is the time to help our partners fill their pantries. Every donation makes a difference for a family struggling to put food on the table."

Each year the Town of Palm Beach United Way chooses two of its nonprofit partner agencies to benefit from the drive. The agencies rotate each year. This year, food collected during the drive will be donated to CROS Ministries and The Glades Initiative.

CROS Ministries operates five brick-and-mortar food pantry locations throughout Palm Beach County, and one mobile food pantry. They serve communities across the county, from Belle Glade to Jupiter to Delray Beach. Clients include children, seniors, veterans, the unhoused homeless, people with disabilities, and working families.

"Food insecurity is not only persisting but intensifying," said Ruth Mageria, Executive Director of CROS Ministries. "Inflation, grocery prices, and housing costs have strained residents. At our food pantries, we have seen this reality firsthand, with a 71% increase in people served over the past five years."

The Glades Initiative provides healthy food to over 3,000 people a month in the Glades region of Palm Beach County. Clients are very low income with limited access to transportation and technology.

"We are just a straight 45 miles west on Southern Boulevard from Palm Beach, and it is likely hard to imagine just how different life is here," said Karis Engle, President and CEO of The Glades Initiative. "Many residents work really hard and due to low wages and high cost of living, they still do not earn enough to feed their families. We consider food of major importance to good health. If you don't have access to healthy food, you are much more likely to have chronic illness."

Pet food accepted

This year the Town of Palm Beach United Way is partnering with Peggy Adams Animal Rescue League to incorporate the collection of pet food into the food drive.

Peggy's Pantry assists families located in Palm Beach County to feed their pets. In 2024, the pantry distributed over 4000,000 meals. They accept wet and dry food of any brand for both cats and dogs. They also accept treats.

"Peggy's Pantry is about more than just feeding pets—it's about keeping families together," said Sue Berry, CEO of Peggy Adams Animal Rescue League. "By supporting Peggy's Pantry, you're helping ensure that families don't have to make the heartbreaking decision of giving up their beloved pets due to financial hardship."

In addition to food donations, the Town of Palm Beach United Way will gladly accept monetary contributions. Residents can donate online at www.palmbeachunitedway.org/food-drive or send a check. Checks should be payable to Town of Palm Beach United Way with "Food Drive" in the memo and mailed to the United Way office at 44 Cocoanut Row, Suite M201, Palm Beach, FL 33480.

Food Drive partners include Field of Greens, Palm Beach Daily News and Palm Beach Fire Rescue.

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