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With the support of our generous community and partners, Interfaith Outreach provides assistance to families celebrating a variety of holiday traditions including Chanukah, Christmas, Eid al-Fitr and Thanksgiving.
What is the Holiday Gift Program?

The Interfaith Outreach Holiday Gift Program ignites the goodwill of the community in the form of sponsors who provide gifts for families. The lean budgets of the families we see often don’t stretch far enough for holiday gift giving. The holidays can be a time of anxiety rather than celebration. Low-income families within the Interfaith Outreach service area (Plymouth, Long Lake, Wayzata, Hamel, Medina, Medicine Lake, Minnetonka Beach and Orono) are eligible to participate. 94% of Interfaith Outreach client families live at 200% of poverty or below. This equates to an annual income of $51,500 for a family of four. 61% of Interfaith Outreach client families live at 100% of poverty, which equates to an annual income of $25,750 for a family of four.

Together we help families as they celebrate special holidays like Christmas, Chanukah and Eid al-Fitr.

Client families may participate in one holiday event per year. Our Christmastime program is the largest initiative, with holiday support provided to over 700 local families each year.

Christmas program
The Christmas program matches client families in need of holiday gift assistance to sponsors who anonymously provide gifts for them using a $50-per-person guideline.

You can sponsor one person, one family or multiple families depending on how much you want to spend. Families of all sizes and ages need support. Last year, 775 program participant households (2,822 people) were provided welcome holiday assistance.

Our client registration for the gift card sponsorship program ends in October. Families who did not register at that time can still receive support around the holidays in the form of gift cards. Community members make a financial contribution or donate Target gift cards ($25 increments) to make this just-in-time holiday help possible. Last year we were able to serve another 186 families (667 individuals) through this December gift card effort.

We have all kinds of sponsors...
Individuals Families
Extended families Corporations
Student Council Neighborhood groups and faith groups
Scouts and youth organizations Book clubs, Red Hat clubs and Bridge clubs

Eid Program
Each year Interfaith Outreach serves around 75 families who are celebrating Eid al-Fitr, the Islamic holiday that celebrates the end of Ramadan. We facilitate providing families with gift cards to venues for community celebrations of Eid, as well as financial support for gift giving. Registered client families receive support in the form of gift cards. You can support this effort by making a financial donation or donating gift cards.
Key Dates

2019 Holiday Gift Sponsor Match:

Sept. 6: Sponsor online registration opens
  • You may request family size, type and ages – we will make every effort to match your requests. Early registration ensures the best match!
  • You will receive a confirmation email of your registration

Nov. 6: Registered sponsors notified of family match and given a gift/shopping list

Nov. 8: Sponsor registration closes

Nov. 14: Registered sponsors can begin shopping for gifts for families

Nov. 15: Financial donors continue to donate financially or provide gift cards (in $25 increments to Target) so that families who were not able to participate in the “sponsor matched” portion of the program can still be supported (limited depending on availability).

Dec. 6-7 (Friday & Saturday): The BIG Gift Drop! Sponsors drop off gifts to Interfaith Outreach.

Dec. 8 (Sunday): The BIG Gift Pickup! Matched families pick up their gifts.

Holiday Gift Card Support:

November-December: Additional client families who were unable to register for the gift giving portion of the program may register for gift card support (limited depending on availability).

Eid program

All year: Gift card and financial donations are accepted

May: Client families are registered

June: Client families pick up gift cards
How to sign up to be a sponsor

1. Register
   - Registration is open from after Labor Day until all clients are matched with a sponsor (usually the first days of November).
   - You may request family size, type and ages — we will make every effort to match your requests. Early registration ensures the best match!
   - You will receive a confirmation email of your registration.
   - You will be notified in early November about the individual or family you’ve been matched with.

2. Receive individual or family match
   You will receive an email from holidaygiftprogram@iocp.org with your family gift wish list no sooner than Nov. 6. Confirm receipt with an email back to Interfaith so we know you received it. We do this sponsor confirmation to make sure every family is matched, so we must hear back from you to confirm.

3. Confidentiality
   Families seeking support live in our community; they may be families that you know from school, church, sports and activities. As they seek support from Interfaith Outreach, we ask that you honor our confidentiality promise: that all forms of assistance provided will be held confidential, both in our building as well as when out in the community.

4. Tips about your family gift wish list
   Follow the $50-per-person gift spending guideline.

   - Your list may have several choices of items listed per person. Choose from among the items on the list. The list of choices does not mean you should purchase all the items on the list! These are simply here to give you choices.
   - Attention to this spending guideline is important for equity within each family, as well as across the program.
   - Each wish list is different. We try to honor each family’s wishes as they present them to us. Some lists can be very detailed; others can be simple and limited to practical needs. Our volunteer registration assistants encourage families to specify multiple gift ideas and capture as much information about size, color and style to help you as a sponsor.
How to sign up to be a sponsor (continued)

5. Shop, shop, shop!
   - Have fun shopping!
   - Gift receipts are important whenever possible. This ensures that your gifts truly meet the needs of the family you are sponsoring.
   - Use your best judgment if your gift list is less detailed.
   - Gifts for children 12 years and under are strongly preferred over gift cards.

6. Preparing Gifts for Drop-Off
   - Wrap gifts and label each package with the name of the recipient.
   - Fill out the gift itemization form that is provided (Appendix A).
   - Put all gift receipts in one envelope with the gifts.
   - Put gifts in large garbage bags. Label each bag with family number and number of bags (1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3), and tie closed. *NOTE: Gift cards should also be put in a large kitchen garbage bag so they do not get lost.*
   - Keep the donor receipt form for your tax records.
   - Deliver gifts to Interfaith Outreach Dec. 6-7.
     - i. Groups must deliver gifts at one time.
     - ii. Drop off gifts only at the specified hours (when we have personnel checking in gifts).
       - A. Early drop-off is discouraged due to space and security concerns.
       - B. Late drop-off IS NOT POSSIBLE because families and individuals come to pick up their gifts on Dec. 8.
Sponsor Timeline

1. Register Sept. 6
2. Get matched to a family Nov. 14
3. Shop $50 per person
4. Wrap gifts, bag and tag
5. Drop off items at Interfaith Dec. 6-7
6. Families pick up gifts Dec. 8
Volunteer

Last year 2,822 people in our community experienced the warmth of your kindness through the Holiday Gift Program including:

- Individuals with disabilities
- Seniors on fixed incomes
- Families and kids with lean budgets and/or experiencing homelessness

We need YOUR help to pull off this community effort! Over 200 volunteers help out each year. Please consider giving a few hours of your time in October or again in December for one of the many Holiday Gift Program shifts.

Holiday Gift Program volunteer shifts fill up quickly, so sign up early (iocp.org/holidaygift) and tell a friend!
Spread the word through social

Step 1 – Like and Follow. Connect with Interfaith Outreach on social media

Facebook /interfaith outreach cp

Step 2 – Post, Engage, Invite. Spread awareness for Holiday Gift Program

Post about Holiday Gift on your own social media channels. Tag Interfaith Outreach and any friends who are involved or might be interested. Like/comment/share our posts about Holiday Gift!

Step 3 – Strike a Pose. Everyone loves a good photo!

Post photos on your own social media channels of you and your family shopping for holiday gifts. Mix it up with a smiling pose, a funny pose...or even throw your arms up in the air. Have fun with it! (You know the drill — tag your friends, tag Interfaith Outreach. We might share!)

Sample posts

Facebook

(Post group photo) So proud of [my sports team, company, church] for donating XX dollars to the @tag Interfaith Outreach Holiday Gift Program. Help them by sponsoring a family or donating so families can be less stressed during the holidays!

Twitter

(Post photo of your group with their families shopping) Grateful for giving and receiving during the holidays. Help us ensure our neighbors feel good too: iocp.org/holidaygift

(Post photo of your family) Let your family put a smile on a neighboring families face! Please support the Holiday Gift Program: iocp.org/donate @iocp interfaith
Holiday Gift Program FAQ

Q: What is the Holiday Gift Program?
A: This wonderful outreach has been a community gift-giving tradition since 1980. The effort supports over 500 families each year. Interfaith Outreach client families requesting holiday gift assistance are matched with community sponsors who anonymously provide gifts. Learn more about sponsoring and shopping for a family.

Q: Who receives the gifts I’m giving?
A: Low-income families living in the Interfaith Outreach service area (Plymouth, Long Lake, Wayzata, Hamel, Medina, Medicine Lake, Minnetonka Beach and Orono) who receive services from Interfaith Outreach are eligible to participate. Learn more about who you help.

Q: What kind of families and individuals participate?
A: Participating families range in size and include singles and seniors; small, medium, large, and multi-generational families. Learn more about who you help.

Q: When should I sign up to sponsor?
A: It happens early! Registration opens in September, and runs through Oct. 31! View more important Holiday Gift dates.

Q: How do I know what to buy and how much should I spend?
A: Sponsors are provided specific gift ideas from the client families, based on a $50-per-person guideline. Sponsors are not expected to purchase all suggestions, but can choose the ones that they prefer within the $50-per-person guideline.

Q: When do I drop off my gifts?
A: The “Big Weekends” sponsors drop off the gifts are Friday, Dec. 6, 3:30-8 p.m. or Saturday, Dec. 7, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Client families pick up the gifts that Sunday! View more important Holiday Gift dates. Volunteers will be available to accept gifts during these times only unless alternate arrangements have been made with Interfaith Outreach Community Engagement staff.
Holiday Gift Program FAQ (continued)

Q: Do I wrap the presents?
A: Sponsors wrap and tag gifts with each recipient’s first name, and fill out a Gift Itemization form (pg 11).

Q: Once I’ve wrapped the presents, how do I label them and keep them together?
A: Place wrapped gifts and the Gift Itemization form in sturdy plastic garbage bags, along with the family number. Clearly label the garbage bags and tape the family number to the outside of the bag. Please be sure the bags are tied in a bow so that they can be opened and reused. Please do not overfill the bags.

Q: What if I have multiple bags?
A: Label multiple bags for one family as “1 of 2,” “2 of 2,” and so on. MORE THAN 2,000 BAGS WILL BE DROPPED OFF IN A VERY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, SO YOUR HELP IN LABELING BAGS CORRECTLY IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.

Q: When do I drop off my gifts?
A: The “Big Weekends” that sponsors drop off gifts are Friday, Dec. 6, 3:30-8 p.m. or Saturday, Dec. 7, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Client families pick up the gifts that Sunday, Dec. 8! Volunteers will be available to accept gifts during these times only unless alternate arrangements have been made with Interfaith Outreach Community Engagement staff.

Q: What if I sign up to sponsor but something comes up and I can’t anymore?
A: It is crucial for sponsors to contact Interfaith Outreach IMMEDIATELY by email at holidaygiftprogram@iocp.org or by calling 763-489-7517 if unable to fulfill the sponsorship commitment.

Q: If my group is sponsoring multiple families, can we drop off presents for each family separately?
A: No. If you or your group is sponsoring more than one family, all gifts for all families MUST be dropped off at the same time. Thank you!

Q: What else should I know about sponsoring?
A: Visit iocp.org/holidaygift for more information!
Appendix A: Gift itemization + Labeling

So no one gets left without a gift by mistake!

Your itemized list is a great help to our volunteers who make sure that every person on our list matches every person on your list. With hundreds and hundreds of gifts being delivered to Interfaith Outreach in a just a single day, your gift itemization and labeling is so important and appreciated.

Simply fill out the sheet and place it INSIDE your large garbage bag containing the gifts.

List the name of the gift recipient and item that is in each package. Only a general description is needed. For example, “jeans” instead of “Lee jeans, size 13.”

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Name:</th>
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Appendix B: Donor Receipt Form

Thank you for your thoughtful donation. Your generosity will help us respond to emergency needs and create opportunities for all to thrive.

Donor or Organization Name: __________________________________________ Date: ____________________

Organization Contact Person (if applicable): _____________________________________________________

Address/City/Zip Code: ________________________________________________________________

Email: ________________________________ Phone: ________________________________

(We will send occasional updates but never sell or share your email.)

Donation Description:

I understand upon delivering items for donation at Interfaith Outreach, I relinquish ownership of those items.

☐ Food Shelf _______ lbs.
☐ Resale Select
☐ Holiday Gift Program
☐ Back-to-School Program

☐ Fundraising Event: ________________

☐ Other: ___________________________

$ __________________________

Donor’s Estimated Value

Interfaith Outreach & Community Partners is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your donation is tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. Interfaith Outreach did not provide any goods or services in consideration of this gift. Tax ID 36-3482724
Appendix C: Bag Tags Form

Family # ______
Bag ___ of ___

Family # ______
Bag ___ of ___

Family # ______
Bag ___ of ___