

Cold Weather Kit Packing Instructions

Mission and Goals

United Way of the National Capital Area works to improve the health, education and economic opportunity of every person in the National Capital community. WHEN NONE ARE IGNORED, ALL WILL THRIVE.

United Way NCA's essential need kits are vital to supporting our communities, building resiliency, and preparing individuals for success. Our **cold weather kits** are thoughtfully created to provide adults and children with vital gear and products necessary for staying warm in DMV winter.

As you create your own volunteering opportunity assembling these kits, empathy, dignity, and equity should be top of mind. Items in your kits should be new, unused, unopened, and in original packaging as much as possible. Small, loose items should be grouped together in smaller zip-sealing bags to avoid being damaged by other larger items in the kit. While the brands you select may vary, completed kits must include all of the items listed below to ensure consistency across all donations. If you wish to add an additional item(s) to your kit, please contact volunteer@uwnca.org BEFORE kit assembly to confirm the recipients of the kits are ready to receive those additions.

Shopping List

Our job readiness kits contain one of each of the following personal care items. United Way NCA has created an [Amazon shopping list](#) to aid in your ordering process and are optional for you to use to order your supplies. Should you choose to use a vendor other than Amazon, please ensure the following items are in each kit. Completed kits should be placed into large, clear trash bags in sets of no more than 5.

Cold Weather Kit Items	
Scarf	Hat
Drawstring Bag	Gloves
Chapstick	Socks (2)
Lotion (2)	

Each kit should also include an encouragement card to brighten the recipient's day. Download [the template](#), print on cardstock or similar paper, and design your card with colorful markers, appropriate images/artwork, and/or thoughtful quotes.

Kit Packing Instructions – Packing Preparation

Setting up your packing stations is vital to creating a successful pack! Use the following outline to inventory and set-up your supplies for the smoothest event.

1. Order or collect your necessary cold weather items and supplies.
2. Confirm the drop-off date for your completed kits with United Way NCA's Volunteer Engagement Manager at volunteer@uwnca.org.
3. Before you begin packing, verify your inventory. Ensure you have enough of each item to assemble your pre-determined number of kits.
4. Print out your encouragement card templates (one for each kit) and gather markers, Sharpies, pens, stickers, and any other items you may want to use in decorating your cards.
5. Open your boxes and group all like items together in an assembly line style process. At the beginning of your line, place your drawstring bags then proceed with the larger items (scarf, gloves, hat, etc) down to the lighter items (chapstick, lotion, etc) so that the larger items will go into the bag first with the smaller items going into the bag last. Your final station should be your encouragement cards.
6. For larger packing initiatives and groups, you may want to use post-its or small signs to remind participants how many of each item go into each kit.
7. Designate a place for participants to drop completed kits.

Kit Packing Instructions – Packing

Once your supplies are gathered and set up in an ordered process, you and your fellow volunteers can begin assembling the kits! After giving a brief introduction to the process, have some fun! Whether you choose to sing along to some of your favorite music or pose some challenging ice breaker questions to your team, take advantage of the change in activity and scenery to build camaraderie and connection.

1. Each participant should only pack one kit at a time, grabbing a drawstring bag first and filling items in as you have laid them out in your assembly line.
2. Once volunteers create their encouragement card, completed kits should be taken to the designated area for completed kits.
3. Completed kits should be checked for quality assurance. Designate one or more volunteers to staff the drop-off zone, open each kit, verify all items are present, and then place the completed kit in a clear trash bag. Please group verified, completed bags in the large clear trash bags in sets of five.
4. In large, clear handwriting, label each trash bag with COLD WEATHER KITS and the number of kits in each bag.
5. Drop off completed kits and any additional supplies at the pre-determined time and location.



United Way of the
National Capital Area

Note: Please do not seal or tie-up the bags of the individual kits. United Way NCA will quality check kits as they come in and will supplement your kits with additional information on pertinent resources for the kit recipients.

Quality Assurance Checklist

Item	#/Kit
Scarf	1
Hat	1
Socks	2
Gloves	1
Chapstick	1
Lotion	2
Encouragement card	1
Drawstring bag	1

Share Your Experience!

Take some time during your event to document the great work you are doing. We would love to see your photos and videos of your event. Please email these to us at volunteer@uwnca.org and tag us in your social media posts so we can recognize your contributions to supporting your neighbors and community!

Similarly, we will be sure to share information with you about the recipient organization and the clients they serve so you know exactly where your contributions will go.

Branding

We understand your organization or group may want to include a bit of information in the kit to identify you as the donor. United Way NCA serves a diverse group of individuals, including students and youth. As such, we ask you to please refrain from using branded bags or externally placed logos in your kits to ensure individuals can receive the donations with dignity.

We encourage all groups to share their group or company name in their encouragement cards. Some kit items may be branded with your company name or logo and we encourage you to confirm with us BEFORE using branded items in your kits.

Questions?

Have questions, need clarification, or want to discuss options for United Way NCA to host a kit packing event for your group? Email us at volunteer@uwnca.org.