

Clothing Drive Guidelines: A step-by-step approach

From: The National Khidmat-e-Khalq Office

To: All Qaideen

Vision: To collect good quality clothing items and deliver them to a community or an agency that can reliably distribute it to the population in need.

*And in their wealth was a share for one who asked for help and for one who could not
(Holy Qur'an 51: 20)*

Getting Started:

Find out what you will do with the clothing once it's collected? Depending upon local circumstances, it could be sent to developing areas of the world (via personal contacts), given to a local shelter, or passed on to an organization that can ensure proper distribution of clothing items. Ideally you should coordinate with other area or regional Jamaats where needy brothers or sisters could benefit from this. Islamic Society of North America, Islamic Center of North America, Eidhi trust are some of the other options. Under exceptional conditions, services of organizations like Salvation Army can be utilized.

A reliable partner on the receiving end needs to be in place before this system is started.

The Process:

Minimum requirements:

1. A storage space
2. Two-three khudaam who could organize the project
3. At least one Khadim who could drive a pick-up/van to deliver the clothing

What to collect?

It is suggested that these drives be limited to "very good quality" coats, jackets and sweaters only. Collection of used shirts, t-shirts, socks, shalwar qameez and other items is strongly discouraged unless there is a good reason to do so.

Criteria for accepting the clothes:

- a) The donor has to get the clothes dry cleaned/washed and properly ironed and starched if necessary. Coats should be wrapped in a clean plastic bag
- b) The donor should do minor repairs before the clothes are accepted. Clothes with major defects should be rejected
- c) Additional criteria as per local requirements

How to collect?

Clear public announcements at Jumma or meetings should be made about this activity. Please ensure repeatedly that people understand what is expected of them. Specify dates when people are requested to bring the clothing. Inspect clothing before someone leaves it at the masjid premises. Do not accept any donations before or after that date. Coordinate with your local Jamaat and Lajna president.

The last thing you want is to end up with a lot of untidy clutter that disrupts the cleanliness and spiritual mood of the masjid.

When to collect?

Clothing Drive is a khidmat e khalq target for second quarter of the year (April-June)

Where to send the clothing?

As mentioned above, if proper guidelines are used then you should be able to collect good quality clothing. The simple criterion for “good quality clothing” is something that you would not mind wearing yourself. Groups and individuals have utilized various approaches in the past.

- i) Deserving members of regional Jamaats may benefit from this. Careful collaboration with other Jamaats on a personal level may facilitate this process. Please understand the concepts of basic human dignity and be sensitive to the overall nature of this work.
- ii) Other possibilities include Eidhi Trust, ICNA, ISNA or other humanitarian organizations with a track record of transparent service to mankind.
- iii) Under exceptional conditions, services of organizations like Salvation Army could be considered.

Future Challenges?

To develop a process whereby this clothing could be shipped to underserved populations in other parts of the world. This may include corporate sponsorships. We are also actively seeking Jamaat members who have experience in the shipping business.

FAQs:

- 1) Why not ship this clothing to overseas, instead of giving it away to other organizations?
 - A) We do not have the infrastructure or manpower to do that at this stage. Kindly let us know if you are aware of the process and help us establish it.

Moreover, shipping costs can sometime make the whole process cost-ineffective.

2) Why do it?

A) There is a huge access of good quality clothing in US household. It is our hope that by doing it repeatedly we will learn innovative ways to reach and help the challenged populations. This is our starting point

3) Could we donate these clothes to Humanity First?

A) Not at this stage. Inshallah in the near future that will be possible.

For questions, please contact:

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Action Requested:

Please give us your feedback so we can improve this document over time, Jazakallah.