

Dear New York: SPREAD HOPE TO A FELLOW NEW YORKER

WE ARE FOR NYC

We're
in this
together

Staten
Island

Queens


SPREAD LOVE
it's the **FOOD**
BANK way

Dear Friend,
As a volunteer with Food Bank For New York City, I just wanted to reach out to personally wish you and your loved ones all the best during this challenging time. We want you to know that your neighbors are thinking of you and we are there to help. We hope you are staying safe and are looking ahead to a time when New York City will bounce back stronger than ever!

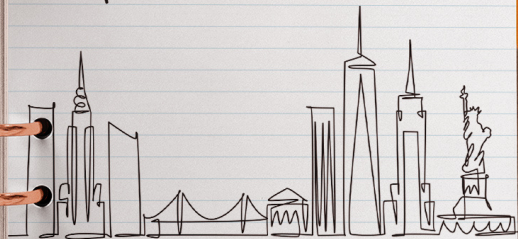
Best wishes,
A Fellow New Yorker

The
Bronx

Manhattan

New York

Brooklyn

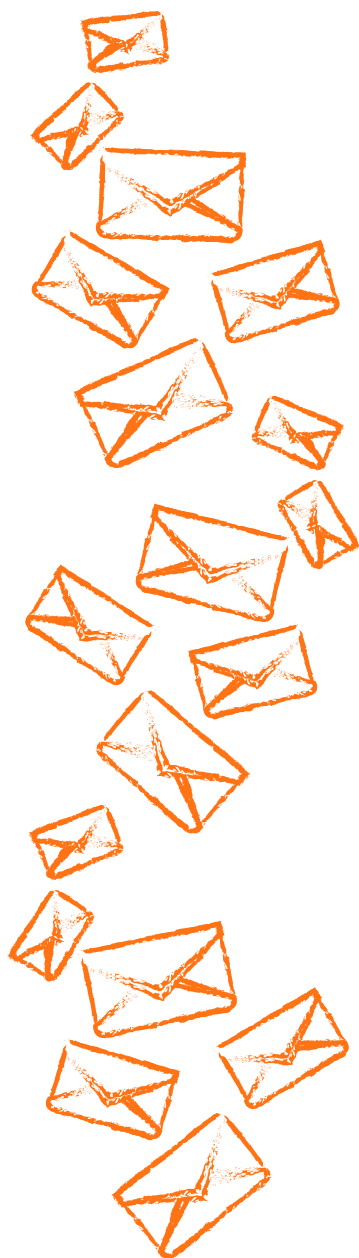


GETTING STARTED

During this challenging time, a kind note can make a huge impact! While we cannot currently accept volunteer assistance on site at our Community Kitchen, we are continuing to distribute emergency pantry bags to New Yorkers in need, and we are seeking volunteers to write brief notes to show our neighbors that we care!

This is a great activity to complete while sheltering-in-place at home. **Please mail completed notes to our Community Kitchen (address below).** Once you have mailed your note(s), email volunteer@foodbanknyc.org with the following information: (1) number of notes sent; (2) return address included on envelope; (3) date of postmark. Notes will be hand-distributed to clients who visit our network of food pantries and soup kitchens throughout the five boroughs.

ATTN: Charles Martinez
Dear New York
Community Kitchen of West Harlem
252 W. 116th Street
New York, NY 10026





HOW MANY NOTES DOES FOOD BANK NEED?

We have thousands of clients visit our network of sites each week, so every note helps and the need will be ongoing! Send one, or send a group mailed together!

WHO WILL RECEIVE MY NOTE?

Our staff team will hand-distribute notes to clients who come to pick up to-go meals and pantry bags from our Community Kitchen in Harlem, as well as our network of soup kitchens and food pantries across the five boroughs. Our clients include families, seniors, students, those who may already have been facing challenges prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, and also those who may be making use of our services for the first time since losing jobs or businesses during the past few weeks. Because we cannot know the personal circumstances of each New Yorker who visits our sites, **we ask that you address each note anonymously** (for example, to "a neighbor," "a friend," or "a fellow New Yorker") and use content appropriate for any potential recipient.

HOW LONG SHOULD THE NOTE BE?

It's your choice! Just a few lines to let someone know you care can go a long way, but you are welcome to write a longer note if you choose.

WHAT MATERIALS SHOULD I USE?

While stationery and postage are the responsibility of the volunteer, **we provided a template you can use on the last page of this toolkit.** You can also use a greeting card or just plain lined paper – whatever you have on hand! It's the content that counts!

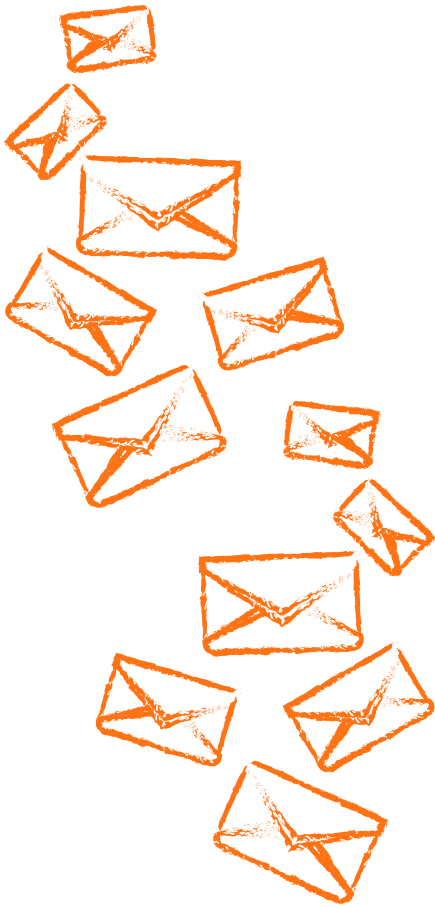
SHOULD I SIGN MY NAME?

The choice is yours. While we ask that you address your note anonymously so that it can be distributed to any client, you are welcome to include your real name if you choose, or an anonymous sign-off such as "a Food Bank volunteer" or "a fellow New Yorker."

CAN I GET MY CHILD/TEEN INVOLVED?

Children and teens of all ages are encouraged to participate! This is a great time to help them discover new and profound ways to serve others. They can write short letters of their own, or they can send in drawings with uplifting messages – what's most important is that they are encouraged to take action and **BE CREATIVE!** **We've provided some coloring pages toward the end of this toolkit** with space for your child to hand-write a note on the top and sign on the bottom.





WHAT SHOULD I SAY?

The message is up to you! Our goal is to share notes that are uplifting and offer hope during this challenging time. **Feel free to draw upon the example provided below**, or use your own language. We know that the COVID-19 outbreak has been a difficult time for all New Yorkers from all walks of life, so we ask that you refrain from using language that may communicate any assumptions about a particular client's situation. Your kind words can go a long way to help brighten someone's day!

FOOD BANK STAFF RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVIEW ALL NOTES PRIOR TO DISTRIBUTION TO ENSURE CONTENT IS APPROPRIATE.

Submitted letters become property of Food Bank For New York City and may also be used for display or stewardship purposes.

SAMPLE NOTE:

Dear Friend,

As a volunteer with Food Bank For New York City, I just wanted to reach out to personally wish you and your loved ones all the best during this challenging time. We want you to know that your neighbors are thinking of you and we are there to help. We hope you are staying safe and are looking ahead to a time when New York City will bounce back stronger than ever!

*Best wishes,
A Fellow New Yorker*

CAN I PARTICIPATE IN DEAR NEW YORK WITH A GROUP?

Yes! Gather your friends, family, students, or coworkers on a video call and come together to spread hope. You can share ideas, draft letters together, and show off your work at the end -- even snap a few screenshot photos of your favorite notes before mailing! If you are completing letters as part of a company, school, or nonprofit organization, we want to shout you out! Please email volunteer@foodbanknyc.org with (1) your group name, (2) total number of letters completed, and (3) total number of volunteers engaged. We can also credit service hours to your team for every letter completed.

HOST A DEAR NEW YORK LETTER-WRITING PARTY

Capacity allowing, Food Bank can provide a staff member to join your video call to give your group a personalized introduction to the project, share an overview of Food Bank's work and COVID-19 response efforts, and provide suggestions and guidance for facilitating your Dear New York Letter-Writing Party. For corporate groups, we recommend a minimum donation of \$500 for this option. Please reach out to Jessica Presedo at jpresedo@foodbanknyc.org to schedule your Dear New York Party.



CAN I RECEIVE VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOURS FOR THIS PROJECT?

Absolutely! If you would like a letter confirming your service hours, please email us at volunteer@foodbanknyc.org. We will credit 1 hour of service for every 3 notes written, upon receipt at our Community Kitchen.

QUESTIONS? EMAIL US AT VOLUNTEER@FOODBANKNYC.ORG.

Thank you!

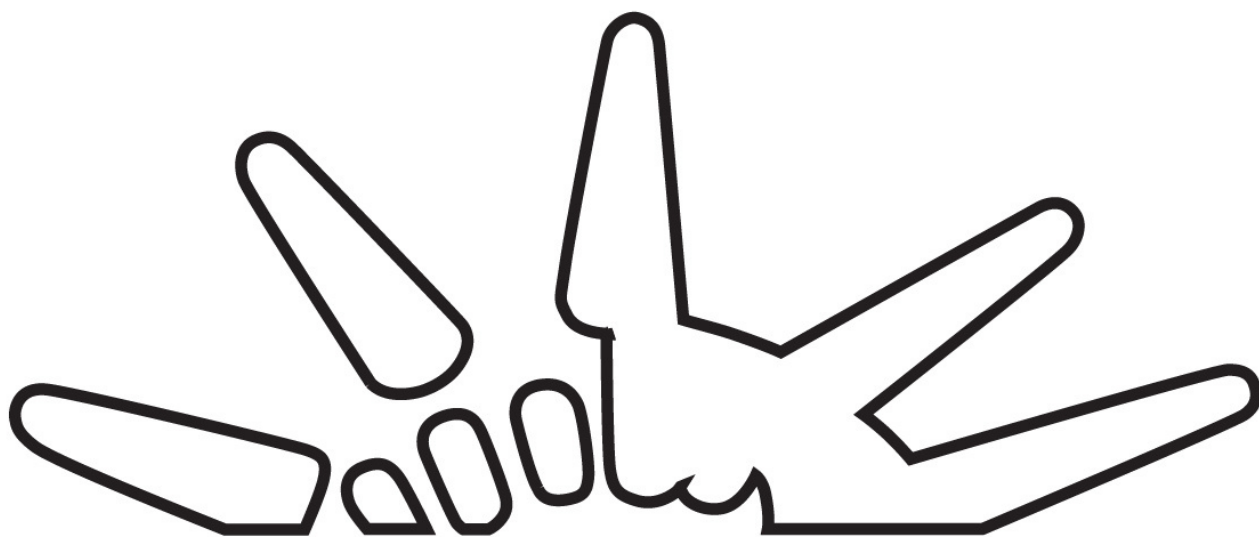


COLORING PAGES

For Kids & Teens



MEET LIBBY



FOOD IS LOVE



FOOD IS LOVE

