

# Our Closet

Powered by JFCS



Dear Volunteer,

Thank you so much for selecting Our Closet for your service project! Through your service, you will be helping to provide clothing for needy members of our Philadelphia community, and we could not be more grateful for your support.

Before you get started, check out the attached packet for some more background on what Our Closet does, as well as the information you will need to help plan and coordinate your service project. There are a lot of different ways to collect clothing for Our Closet. Here are a few project ideas:

- Send out a letter to your friends and family explaining your project and ask for clothing donations!
- Contact your school, synagogue, church or other community group to see if you can do a clothing collection at school
- Organize a clothing drive day, where people can come and drop off items all at once
- Ask local stores to donate new or gently used items
- Fundraise for Our Closet – you can plan a bake sale, do a letter writing campaign – every dollar counts, and helps us serve more people!

We want this to be fun and easy for you, so if you have any questions about what to do for your project, please contact us at [info@ourclosetpa.org](mailto:info@ourclosetpa.org). We recommend that you either come down to our warehouse or to our pop-up shop to volunteer and learn more about how your project is making a difference here in Philadelphia!

Thank you again!

Our Closet

### What is Our Closet? What does it do?

Our Closet provides free clothing to people in need without any questions or judgment. Our goal is to create a space where our customers can fulfill their basic needs with pride and dignity. Every week, we bring clothing donated by community members into Philadelphia, where we set up a free pop-up clothing shop. The clothes you collect for your service project will go directly to our pop-up shop, and help outfit Philadelphians in need. We typically distribute about 500 items during each pop-up shop to about 100 customers.

### Are there a minimum number of hours I need to complete for my service project?

There is not a minimum number of hours you need to complete for your project, but we do ask that you commit to collecting clothing over the course of at least three months. This helps keep our warehouse stocked with enough items to distribute at our store.

### What sorts of items should I collect?

Our Closet accepts gently used men's, women's, and children's clothing, shoes, and accessories. Items that appear old or dirty are not accepted. We also do not accept undergarments, bedding, or houseware items. If you receive items that you are unsure about, hold onto them, and together we can determine where to send them! Our Closet has a particularly high need for larger women's sizes and all men's clothing, which you might want to focus on for your project.

### Does clothing need to be sorted?

Yes! To keep our warehouse organized, we ask that you presort clothing before dropping items off to our warehouse by **GENDER** (Mens, Womens, Girls, Boys), **SEASON** (Spring/Summer or Fall/Winter), and **SIZE** (Small/Medium or Large/Extra Large). **For example, a medium sized women's sweater would be labeled: WOMENS, FALL/WINTER, SMALL/MEDIUM.** Not everything is clearly labeled, so if you are unsure about how to sort the item, just do your best! Any other items (shoes or accessories) can simply be placed in a bag labeled Accessories/Shoes.

### Will Our Closet pick up the donated clothing I collect?

Unfortunately, with limited resources, we are unable to collect clothing from you. Instead, we ask that you drop off items to our warehouse located in Springfield (400 S. State Rd., Springfield, PA). You can either drop off items when you complete your project, or drop off items to the warehouse periodically over the course of your project.

### Do I need to collect any information from people who donate clothing?

Yes! Because all clothing donations are tax deductible, please try to collect contact information from everyone who donates to your project. We ask that you collect the donor's name, address, email, and phone number (basic contact information), and a brief description of what is being donated (for example, assorted spring clothing for men and women). Using the valuation guide attached, please ask the donor to estimate the value of donated goods. This is for tax---receipt purposes, and ensures that we are accurately tracking clothing donations.

### How do I record donation information?

There is a sample contact form we have that you can use, as well as a clothing valuation guide to help your donors determine the estimated value of their donation. Just let your donors know that Our Closet can provide tax---receipts, and will contact them at the end of your project. If a donor would prefer to not leave their contact information or declines a tax receipt, that is alright. We ask that you try to collect as much information as possible, but want to be respectful of a donor's privacy. And, remember to thank your donors as well! **Please contact us for the Donor Information form, Tax Receipt, Donation Guideline, and Donation Valuation Guide.**



# Sample Service Letter

Dear Friends and Family,

This year, I am working on a service project to help give back those less fortunate in the community, and I am excited to share with my project with you all! For my project, I will be working with a program called Our Closet: Powered by JFCS. Our Closet is a program of Jewish Family and Children's Services. Our Closet provides free, quality clothing to Philadelphians in need by setting up free, weekly pop-up clothing shops throughout the city. The store is set up like a regular store might be – with tables, hanging racks, and even a check out counter! The only difference is that all of the items in this store are free, and the "sales associates" are all volunteers who help customers find sizes and select articles of clothing. Every week, the store has about 100 customers, and gives away more than 500 articles of clothing!

I am really excited to be working with Our Closet, and am writing to ask for your support as I begin my service project. Over the next few months, I will be collecting clothing for Our Closet to distribute at its pop-up shop, and I need your help! Our Closet accepts gently used clothing, shoes, and accessories for men, women, and children – any season is fine, and all donations are tax deductible. My goal is to collect as many items as possible, and I hope that as you clean out your closets, you can keep my project and me in mind!

If you have anything you would like to donate to the project, you can drop off items to my house, or I can come pick them up from you. You can package clothing in garbage bags, and do not need to worry about pre-sorting them. Once I collect all of the clothing for my project, I plan to sort the items by gender, size, and season before bringing the items to the Our Closet warehouse in Springfield. Once the donations are processed, the Our Closet team will take the items directly down to the pop-up shop!

If you are unable to donate clothing, but want to support my project, you can also make a donation directly to Our Closet, either online at [www.ourclosetpa.org](http://www.ourclosetpa.org) or via check. Checks should be made out to JFCS (Please write Our Closet in the memo), and can be sent to 2100 Arch Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

For more information on Our Closet's work, you can visit their website at [www.ourclosetpa.org](http://www.ourclosetpa.org)

Thank you so much for your support!



**Thank you very much for your donation to Our Closet. With your generosity, Our Closet is able to continue to provide free quality clothing to underserved Philadelphians, with the dignity and pride they deserve.**

Name:

Date:

Address:

Email:

Phone:

Please make a general list of the clothing donated and an estimate of the fair market value of these items. There is no fixed method for determining the fair market value of your donation. You should claim as the value the price that a buyer of used items would pay in a used clothing store, such as a consignment shop. Please consult your tax advisor for guidance.

<u>Items Donated</u>	<u>Value</u>
<b>EXAMPLE: Men's assorted clothing (pants &amp; shirts)</b>	<b>\$500</b>
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*JFCS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Unless otherwise specified, no goods or services were provided in exchange for your donation. The official registration and financial information of Our Closet may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within in Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*

**Our Closet**  
2100 Arch Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor | Philadelphia, PA 19103 | 267-256-2179  
[www.ourclosetpa.org](http://www.ourclosetpa.org)



**Our Closet accepts new and gently used clothing, shoes and accessories for men, women, and children.**

**WE ACCEPT:**

- Professional clothing, including suits, ties, & dresses/skirts
- Casual clothing, including sweat pants, exercise apparel, & t-shirts
- Shoes, boots, sneakers, & sandals
- Outerwear
- Accessories, including hats, scarves, gloves, & belts
- Purses, handbags, and backpacks
- Jewelry

**WE DO NOT ACCEPT:**

- Stained/ripped clothing
- Used undergarments
- Toys/books
- Housewares, including bedding & linens
- Luggage
- Electronics
- Furniture
- Hygiene products/toiletries
- Sports Equipment

**OUR WISHLIST:**

*The following items are most frequently requested by shoppers and/or help us run our pop up shops each week.*

- Extra Large/Plus Size Adult clothing
- Winter coats (large sizes)
- Work boots & Winter boots
- Large sweatpants/sweatshirts
- Hats, gloves, & scarves
- Handbags
- Clothing/Shoe Racks
- Storage Bins/Baskets
- Mirrors
- 30gallon garbage bags
- Shipping labels

Please feel free to email [info@ourclosetpa.org](mailto:info@ourclosetpa.org) with any additional questions about donations or getting involved.

***Thank you for supporting our work!***