

About the Program

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with the St. Leo Food Connection Backpack Program! The Backpack Program partners with schools in Tacoma School District and Clover Park School District to bridge the gap left by school meals when school is not in session. Students involved in our program are selected by counselors at their school and receive a bag of food each Friday to carry them through the weekend. Each “Backpack” includes 2 Breakfasts, 2 Lunches, 2 Dinners, and snacks. The food is aimed at the student directly, but we often include one family-sized dinner option meant to be eaten by the student and their family. We are currently serving over 1,100 students each week in over 35 schools!

Volunteer Position Descriptions

There are three volunteer opportunities available with the Backpack Program. Read the following descriptions thoroughly and choose the option that fits best for you. If neither of these positions is quite what you’re looking for, please contact us directly. We do our best to find the right fit for each of our volunteers!

Packing Food – Our food packers assist with the initial stages of the Backpack Program by processing food before it is delivered to students each week. We pack different components of our Backpacks each day (this may vary week to week). Food packing shifts range from 1-3 hours and can be one-time or on-going based on your schedule.

Tasks include:

- Packing bags with shelf-stable foods
- Repacking bulk food items
- Packing family-sized meal options (i.e. soup mixes)
- Packing fresh produce
- Sorting bags for delivery

Delivering Backpacks – Our drivers are a direct point of contact between the Backpack Program and our partner schools. Drivers pick up food from our warehouse each week and deliver the food to designated schools based on need. Pickups and deliveries are done on Thursdays and Fridays, depending on the preference of each school. Most drivers need between 1-3 hours to do their deliveries.

Requirements:

- Use of a personal vehicle
- Valid Driver’s License
- Ability to lift 40 pounds
- Commitment to a weekly delivery

Delivering Break Bags – We partner with the Emergency Food Network to provide larger bags of food to students over the extended school holidays (Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring Break). Regular Backpack Drivers and extra volunteers are needed to deliver these larger bags of food to schools.

Note: All drivers must pass a background check prior to their first delivery.