

## Casserole Donation Guide

Revised January 2026

Thank you for your interest in our Casserole Donation Ministry! Your gift of a homemade meal is a wonderful way to bring comfort and nourishment to your neighbors who are staying at the St. Vincent de Paul shelter. **We are grateful for all donations we receive; however, the safety and well-being of our guests cannot be compromised. To ensure we are able to serve the food you have graciously prepared, please keep in mind:**

- St. Vincent de Paul follows CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) nutritional guidelines in the shelter to ensure balanced nutrition for all guests, especially vulnerable adults and children. Meeting these requirements also qualifies the shelter to receive essential funding to help cover food costs. The program requires that each meal includes the following: **whole grains, protein, a vegetable serving, a fruit or juice serving, and dairy**. Our menu always includes a fruit option and milk for the youth, and the other meal components are included in the entrée and sides. Please keep this in mind when you are preparing casseroles, specifically the “Donor’s Choice” option.
  
- The recipe options have been updated to include the following:
  - **Sausage Hash Brown Casserole**
  - **Sloppy Joe**
  - **Lasagna**
  - **Macaroni and Cheese**
    - Offered as a vegetarian entrée option and/or side item.
  - **Turkey Tetrizzini**
  - **Sausage, Potato, Green Bean Casserole**
    - Important: Please drain any excess juice before freezing. Our ovens are tall, and staff members could be burned by hot juices spilling over while removing them from the oven.
  - **Donor’s Choice**
    - Please refer to CACFP requirements listed above when choosing your recipe option. Also, if you choose this option, please make *at least 14 casseroles* so that the entire shelter can share the same meal together.
  
- **Casseroles MUST be delivered FROZEN to ensure food safety.** The reason: frozen casseroles present signs of time or temperature abuse, which staff consistently monitor. This helps us guarantee the food has been kept at a safe temperature for consumption, which is **essential**, especially when feeding vulnerable populations like our guests who are unhoused, and many of whom are children or elderly. To ensure we are able to serve the food you have graciously donated, please **prepare and freeze your casseroles according to the Casserole Preparation Instructions on page 4.**

## **Reminders**

- Please use a permanent marker to label the type of casserole on the lid or foil, as well as the date of preparation and your group name (it is easiest to do this *before* the casserole is frozen).
- Each recipe lists possible substitutions for certain ingredients. These substitutions can be made on an individual basis, and do not necessarily need to be the same for every casserole in a group.
- If you are a casserole donor group leader and you haven't already done so, please send an email to [jbrubaker@stvincentdayton.org](mailto:jbrubaker@stvincentdayton.org) with your name, your group or parish name, your contact info, how often you donate, and how many casseroles are typically donated. This helps us make sure you receive important information and updates.
- If you're interested in preparing casseroles in a group setting but are not able to come to our Central Kitchen, reach out to Janet at [jbrubaker@stvincentdayton.org](mailto:jbrubaker@stvincentdayton.org) to schedule a group casserole prep at your parish.

## **Tips for Organizing a Casserole Donation Drive:**

1. Announce the casserole drive several weeks prior to when you plan to deliver them to St. Vincent.
2. A table can be set up at your church or organization up to two weeks prior to scheduled delivery at St. Vincent to hand out pans and conduct a sign-up.
3. We recommend a sign-up sheet be used to include the maker's name, # of pans, and a telephone number or email so that your volunteers can be reached if they forget to drop off their casseroles on the designated date.
4. Include with each pan: 1) a copy of the recipe (please choose one recipe per drive), 2) the **Casserole Preparation Instructions**, and the Casserole Drive Drop Off Instructions (which should be completed *before* you give it to your volunteers). You can place these papers folded in the bottom of the pans.
  - We request that the pans used be ½ size disposable steam table pans (approx. 12x10), sturdy, and with sturdy foil lids. An example of this kind of pan and lid:





5. Please remember that all casseroles need to be delivered to our donation dock **together** and **frozen**.
  - Many groups find it helpful to set a designated drop off day/time at their church or central location and run it like a drive thru. Your volunteers drive up, you unload their casseroles, and they drive away. Pro tip: gloves are a good idea as all the casseroles will be frozen!
  
6. Once you have received all your group’s frozen casseroles, you can deliver them to our food donation dock at **1133 S. Edwin Moses Blvd., door W6** (at the back of the Job Center). Ring the bell for assistance. See the large sign with blue lettering for further instructions. Donations can be made any day of the week between **9 a.m. – 5 p.m.** If you prefer to schedule a delivery time outside of those hours, please email Janet at [jbrubaker@stvincentdayton.org](mailto:jbrubaker@stvincentdayton.org).

**\*Please ensure that all casseroles remain FROZEN when they are delivered to 1133 S. Edwin C. Moses Blvd.**

**St. Vincent de Paul Society is so grateful for your donations. Your generosity brings comfort to your neighbors when they are going through a difficult time. God bless.**

**Casserole Drive Drop Off Instructions**

Casserole Drive Group Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Casserole Drive Group Leader Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Casserole Drive Group Leader Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Casserole Drive Drop Off Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Casserole Drive Drop Off Location: \_\_\_\_\_

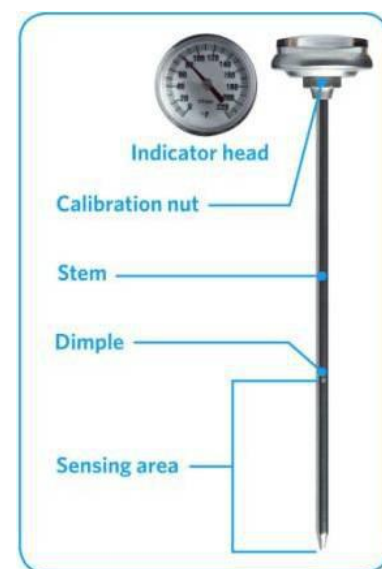
Casserole Drive Drop Off Further Instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

Recipe:

## Casserole Preparation Instructions

### General Directions and Important Food Safety Guidelines:

1. Before beginning food production, ensure all food surfaces and utensils are cleaned, sanitized, and air-dried.
2. Apply hair net or cap to protect loose hairs from getting into the food.
3. Wash hands thoroughly and apply food safe gloves (no latex due to risk of causing a latex reaction by a guest who may be allergic).
4. Assemble casserole(s) according to recipe. Ensure that when food is heated in the oven it reaches a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit. Always insert a thermometer into the middle of the product (up to the thermometer's dimple) as this area takes the longest to heat.
5. Allow casserole to cool at room temperature until it reaches 70 degrees (or cover and rapidly cool to at least 70 degrees in an ice bath). Do not cover the casserole while it is hot to prevent excess moisture. Never put hot food directly in the freezer.
6. Cover prepared casserole with aluminum foil or foil pan lid. Use a permanent marker to label the casserole with the name of the recipe, your group name, and date of assembly. Place covered casserole in the refrigerator until it reaches at least 41 degrees, then place in the freezer until it is time to donate.



### REMINDERS

- Please do not use plastic wrap on casserole pans.
- Please do not label with a sticker or paper. Please use a permanent marker to label every casserole indicating what type of casserole you have prepared, your group name, and date of assembly.
- To see if your thermometer is calibrated properly, put it in a cup of ice water. The thermometer should read 32 degrees within a couple of minutes. If you need help calibrating, please reach out to Janet and she will assist you.
- **Please ensure that all casseroles remain FROZEN until they are delivered to 1133 S. Edwin C. Moses Blvd.**

## Sausage Hash Brown Casserole

### *Ingredients:*

1 lb browned sausage [**Substitutions:** ground beef, ground chicken, or ground turkey]

26 oz bag frozen hash browns, thawed

½ cup butter melted

1 can cream of chicken soup [**Substitutions:** cream of mushroom or cream of celery]

1 small onion, chopped

16 oz cheddar cheese, grated [**Substitution:** shredded cheese]

8 oz sour cream [**Substitution:** plain Greek yogurt]

### *Directions:*

Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit and spray casserole pan with nonstick spray.

In a bowl, add hash browns and butter. Mix well.

In a separate bowl, mix sour cream, and cream of chicken soup. Add onions, cooked sausage, and 8 oz. of cheese. Mix well.

Combine soup/sour cream mixture with hash brown mixture and spread evenly in pan.

Top with remaining 8 oz. of cheese and bake for 30-45 minutes, until food reaches a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit.

Remove from oven and allow to cool at room temperature until internal temperature reaches 70 degrees.

Cover and label dish, then refrigerate until casserole reaches 41 degrees.

Place dish in freezer until ready to donate.

## Sloppy Joe

### *Ingredients:*

- 4 lbs ground beef [**Substitution:** ground turkey]
- 1 can lentils, drained and rinsed [**Substitution:** diced bell pepper]
- 12 oz tomato paste
- 1 ¼ cups chopped onion [**Substitution:** chopped spinach]
- 4 tbsp mustard [**Substitution:** Apple cider vinegar]
- 2.5 tbsp Worcestershire sauce [**Substitution:** Pickle relish]
- 2/3 cup ketchup
- 2 tsp Mrs. Dash seasoning [**Substitution:** Chili powder or garlic powder]
- ½ cup water

### *Directions:*

- Brown ground beef, then drain.
- Add all ingredients in a bowl and mix well.
- Spray the casserole pan and add mixture.
- Allow mixture to cool at room temperature until 70 degrees.
- Cover, label, and place in refrigerator until mixture reaches 41 degrees.
- Place casserole in freezer until ready to donate.

## Lasagna

### *Ingredients:*

- 1.5 lbs lasagna noodles [**Substitution:** any pasta, whole grain if possible]
- 2.5 lbs ground turkey [**Substitution:** ground beef or ground chicken]
- 2 onions, chopped [**Substitution:** 2 tbsp onion powder]
- 24 oz spaghetti sauce [**Substitution:** 24 oz crushed tomatoes]
- 15 oz can crushed tomatoes
- 15 oz container ricotta cheese [**Substitution:** 15 oz cottage cheese]
- 12 oz bag frozen chopped spinach [**Substitution:** 1 can of mushrooms drained]
- 2 cups shredded cheese
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 2 tsp onion powder
- 2 tbsp Italian seasoning

### *Directions:*

Thaw spinach in microwave, drain any extra water.

Brown meat and onion. Once cooked, mix in ricotta cheese and spinach.

Mix spaghetti sauce, tomatoes, and seasonings with meat and onion mixture.

Spray aluminum pan with cooking spray. Put small amount of tomato sauce mixture in bottom of pan.

Begin to layer the pasta and then the combined meat mixture. Repeat layering until you are out of meat sauce. Top with cheese.

Cover, label, and place in refrigerator until casserole reaches 41 degrees.

Place casserole in freezer until ready to donate.

## Macaroni and Cheese

### *Ingredients:*

2 tbsp of butter

2 tbsp all-purpose flour [**Substitutions:** corn starch, tapioca starch/flour]

½ tsp of salt

¼ tsp garlic powder

1 cup milk [**Substitutions:** half and half or heavy cream]

½ cup sour cream [**Substitution:** Greek yogurt]

8 oz (2 cups) shredded cheddar

16 oz macaroni pasta

### *Directions:*

Cook pasta according to package instructions.

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, melt the butter.

Mix flour, salt, and garlic powder together in a small bowl and whisk to combine.

Add flour mixture to saucepan and cook for 1 minute until mixture is slightly brown.

Add 1 cup of milk and whisk until the mixture is smooth.

Add sour cream and whisk until smooth.

Cook on medium-high heat until the mixture is thickened (about 3-5 minutes). Do not let it boil.

Once mixture is thick (sticks to back of spatula), reduce heat to low and add cheese. Whisk until cheese is melted and mixture is smooth.

Spray casserole pan with non-stick spray and add macaroni mixture.

Allow to cool at room temperature until 70 degrees.

Cover, label, and place in refrigerator until casserole reaches 41 degrees.

Place casserole in freezer until ready to donate.

## Turkey Tetrazzini

### *Ingredients:*

- 1 ½ pounds spaghetti [**Substitution:** any pasta (whole grain if possible)]
- 2 cans cream of mushroom soup [**Substitution:** cream of chicken]
- 15 oz (3 x 5 oz containers) plain Greek yogurt [**Substitutions:** sour cream, half and half, or heavy whipping cream]
- 4 cups shredded cheese
- 1 pound shredded turkey, cooked [**Substitution:** shredded chicken]
- 2 small cans mushrooms, drained [**Substitutions:** diced zucchini, eggplant, or carrots]
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 16 oz. frozen peas [**Substitution:** 2 cans of canned peas, drained]
- 1 ½ tbsp garlic powder
- 1 ½ tbsp onion powder

### *Directions:*

Cook pasta according to package instructions.

In a large saucepan, heat soup over low heat. Add shredded cheese (reserve some for topping) and stir together.

Add the cooked meat, mushrooms, peas, and cooked spaghetti. Stir.

Add the broth, yogurt, and spices. Mix together.

Spray casserole pan with non-stick spray and add all ingredients.

Allow to cool at room temperature until 70 degrees.

Cover the dish with foil or pan lid, label, then refrigerate until it reaches 41 degrees.

Place dish in freezer until ready to donate.

## Sausage, Potato, Green Bean Casserole

### *Ingredients:*

1 ½ lbs Kielbasa [**Substitutions:** chicken sausage, chorizo, or ground beef]

2 lbs potatoes

2 cans green beans, drained [**Substitution:** corn]

2 tbsp vegetable oil

¼ cup butter

1 cup onions, chopped [**Substitution:** diced bell peppers]

2 tsp garlic powder

1 tsp black pepper

¼ cup water

### *Directions:*

Wash potatoes and cut into chunks. Add vegetable oil and seasoning to potatoes and coat evenly in a bowl. In a large frying pan, cook potatoes over medium-high heat until almost done.

Add sliced sausage to the pan. Continue cooking until the sausage has a brown exterior.

In a separate pan, melt the butter and add onions. Cook until onions are translucent.

Add cooked onions to the sausage and potatoes and mix all ingredients together with drained green beans.

Drain excess juice and transfer to casserole pan. Allow to cool at room temperature until 70 degrees.

Cover the dish with foil or pan lid, label, and place in refrigerator until it reaches 41 degrees. Place dish in freezer until ready to donate.

***\*Please make sure there is not a lot of excess juice in pan prior to freezing. Our ovens are tall, and staff members could be burned by hot juices spilling over while removing them from the oven. Thank you!***