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To all members of the Vermont Legal Community:

Vermonters continue to face the challenge of keeping food on the table. The COVID-19 pandemic caused an increase in food insecurity and the results of a [recent University of Vermont study](#) show that need has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. The Vermont Foodbank continues to meet the need of our neighbors facing hunger by distributing food across all 14 counties of Vermont through a number of programs and services, including distribution of food to partner food shelves and meal sites, sharing fresh produce directly with individuals and families, assisting neighbors in accessing 3SquaresVT benefits, and reducing barriers to accessing food.

Vermont's Legal Community can continue to support Vermonters and this [vital work of the Vermont Foodbank](#).

This year will mark the fifth year the Vermont Foodbank, the Vermont Bar Association, and my Office will have hosted a Food Drive, and we are thrilled to have the Vermont Paralegal Organization join this year. For the first three years, along with many other law offices throughout the state, we hosted the *Lawyers Fighting Hunger Food Drive* during Hunger Action Month in September. Last year, due to the increase in food insecurity caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we held the Food Drive in June with the goal of helping in a time of unprecedented need. We encouraged the Vermont Legal Community to join the collective effort and the drive was a great success.

Whether a lawyer, paralegal, judge, investigator, law student, professor, or staff member of a legal team, together the Vermont Legal Community can make a meaningful impact. **We will kick off the fifth annual Vermont Legal Community Fighting Hunger Food Drive on Friday, September 3rd, for a two-week fundraiser ending on Friday, September 17th.**

This year's drive will be structured similar to the first three years with an optional friendly competition in the interest of keeping food on Vermonters' tables. Attached is a sign-up sheet to indicate your preferred type of participation and to receive further information. There are a few ways to consider participating through your office, legal group, or as an individual member of the legal community:

1. **through a Vermont Foodbank fundraising page.** All funds would be collected through your unique fundraising page hosted by the Vermont Foodbank. Participants would manage their own fundraising pages, including noting efforts through the Activity Feed. See the attached sign-up sheet and submit to natasha.sala@vermont.gov by Tuesday, August 31st, to receive instructions on creating your fundraising page.
2. **AND/OR to a collection box.** See the attached sign-up sheet, and submit to natasha.sala@vermont.gov by Tuesday, August 31st, to receive templates for creating your collection box. If you also have a fundraising page, just count the number of items you donated and add a personalized comment in the Activity Feed. Add a photo if you would like!

Every dollar amount and every effort to further this cause will help.

All members of the Vermont Legal Community are welcome to join this effort. We encourage participants to talk up our collective good work on social media by using the hashtag **#VTLegalFoodDrive**.

During the second week of the drive on Tuesday, September 14th, the Vermont Paralegal Organization will accept item donations from any members wishing to contribute through a VPO collection box rather than the VPO's online fundraising page. A press release reporting the overall totals raised together, the results of the friendly competition, and thanking participants will follow at the completion of the drive. On Friday, October 8th, a brief announcement will be made at the Vermont Bar Association Annual Meeting Luncheon.

As a member of the Vermont Legal Community, I hope that you will join my Office, the Vermont Foodbank, the Vermont Bar Association, and the Vermont Paralegal Organization to make the ***Vermont Legal Community Fighting Hunger Food Drive*** a success. Together, we can help to make sure all Vermonters are fed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T.J. Donovan', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

T.J. Donovan
Vermont Attorney General