

**Editor's Note: If you would like post-event parade photos from your coverage area, please email your request to [Laura Aebi](mailto:laebi@wardcc.com).**



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## **Austin Apartment Association Kicks Off Annual Doc & Gayle Young Food Drive with Goal to Provide 100,000 Meals to Central Texas Residents**

**(Austin, TX – August 10, 2020)** The [Austin Apartment Association](#) (AAA) will kick off its [34<sup>th</sup> annual Doc & Gayle Young Food Drive](#) with a “Gobble Trot” parade on August 12<sup>th</sup> from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. CST starting at the Association’s office at [8620 Burnett Road](#). The volunteer-driven fundraiser will run through mid-November with a goal to raise \$25,000 to purchase 100,000 meals for residents in the Association’s 11-county Central Texas jurisdiction.

The food drive began in 1986 when the AAA Community Service committee raised \$600 to feed hungry Austinites. In recent years, more than 100 AAA member volunteers collected funds, purchased food and hand-delivered collected food packets to its partner organizations. This year, due to the pandemic, increased community need and social distancing guidelines, the fundraiser will start nearly a month earlier and accept online financial donations only. Donations are welcome – and needed – at <https://www.austinaptassoc.com/food-drive.html>.

The kickoff “Gobble Trot” parade will take on a new look as well. Socially distanced caravans of cars will drive three separate parade routes through participating apartment communities displaying the donation website address and QR code to minimize physical contact while giving Austin apartment residents the opportunity to contribute again this year. All caravan parade routes will have 10 cars or fewer and participants, unless alone in their car, will be advised to adhere to local mask guidelines, per Governor Abbott’s and local orders. Caravan parade routes cover much of the greater Austin area:

- South route - including 15 properties near Slaughter, William Cannon and South Lamar
- Central route – including 18 properties near the Domain and Arboretum
- North route – including 21 properties near Wells Branch and Anderson Mill

“The need for food is greater than ever,” said Emily Blair, Executive Vice President at AAA. “Every year, the apartment community in Austin comes together to collect food, school supplies and help get the word out to renters about rental assistance, voter registration and community initiatives to allocate resources based on Census data, to name a few. We were afraid we might have to cancel our food drive this year due to the Coronavirus, but the pandemic gave us an opportunity to do what multifamily professionals do best – adjust our approach and find a way to make it work to meet the need. Ultimately, altering the food drive into a literal ‘drive’ for funding actually allowed us to meet the food needs of even more people than in years past.”

Blair said 100 percent of collected donations will be distributed through the Association's partner organizations to feed families and individuals in the greater Austin area. Partner organizations include:

- The Housing Authority of the City of Austin (HACA)
- The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services Rainbow Room
- SAFE Austin
- Foundation Communities
- And, new in 2020, local Food Banks such as the Central Texas Food Bank

"For nearly 30 years, AAA has been a valuable partner of HACA. During Thanksgiving, 800 turkey dinners were distributed last year to low-income families at 18 of our public housing and Section 8 properties. This is the once-a-year meal that our residents enjoy and count on. We are pleased that AAA is continuing to step up and finding creative ways to provide the needed resources to our communities amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Although this year may look different, 100% of their generous donation will be distributed through electronic gift cards to ensure that HACA residents can prepare a wonderful family holiday dinner. We congratulate AAA for their consistency in helping build and support our communities by innovative ways such as this food drive." said Leilani Lim-Villegas, Senior Director of Community Development for the Housing Authority of the City of Austin.

Since the food drive's inception more than 30 years ago, AAA has raised more than \$869,000 in donations. Austin residents have received more than 23,050 Thanksgiving Food Packs from the Doc & Gayle Young Food Drive since 1986. And, food pantries in 10 counties surrounding Travis have received \$15,000 in total financial donations. Additional details and donation information can be found at <https://www.austinaptassoc.com/food-drive.html>

### **About the Austin Apartment Association**

The Austin Apartment Association was founded in 1964 and is composed of more than 1,000 diverse businesses that own, manage and service more than 260,000 rental homes in the Greater Austin Area. Our mission is to advance the expertise and collective community impact of the rental housing industry. To learn more about the Austin Apartment Association, please visit our website at <https://www.austinaptassoc.com/>.

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