

FIRST RESPONDER APPRECIATION (COMMUNITY)

Honor first-responders in your community who put their lives on the line every day to protect and enhance your way of life. Recognize these special people by providing lunch to departments in your area. To get started, decide which first responders you'd like to acknowledge. This could be law enforcement officers, firefighters, paramedics, or EMTs. Next, pick a date and coordinate event specifics. If you farm a community, consider making this a neighborhood event and ask volunteers to help prepare and serve the meal. You can also get the kids involved by creating a thank you banner. Recruit support by advertising in your community newsletter, sending out a flyer, or posting on social media. This is a great way for you to connect with people in your area and demonstrate your leadership skills.

WHO TO INVITE

This event is all about showing gratitude to the first responders in your community. Reach out to police departments, fire stations, paramedics, and EMTs. Pick one department or several to recognize.

TIMING

These unsung heroes deserve recognition all year round. However, there are a couple of key times you may want to consider for your event. The month of September is National Preparedness Month and October 28th is National First Responder's Day. Both are perfect times to call attention to these special folks and celebrate existing national holidays.

VENUE

Good news! Your venue is taken care of. Ask the department staff in advance where they'd like you to set up and make sure you know where to go when you arrive.

AGENDA

It's always helpful to have a plan. That way everyone knows what needs to be done on the day of an event. For your First Responder lunch plan on the following.

1. Load cars with food and supplies
2. Check-in with department contact
3. Unload food and supplies
4. Set-up/decorate room
5. Feed first responders
6. Take photos/post on social media

WHAT YOU NEED

Supplies

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tables | <input type="checkbox"/> Serving utensils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Table coverings | <input type="checkbox"/> Serving platters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chairs | <input type="checkbox"/> Styrofoam coolers (to keep drinks chilled) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paper plates | <input type="checkbox"/> Bags of ice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Napkins | <input type="checkbox"/> Decorations/banner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic cutlery | <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer gifts |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> iPhone or camera to take pictures |

Awkward Agent®

Food & Drink

This meal is a group effort. As the coordinator, we recommend you pick a theme for the lunch, like Mexican or Italian, and provide assignments to volunteers. This will ensure you have a well-balanced meal with plenty to offer. For beverages, provide an assortment of soda, sparkling, and bottled waters.

GOOD VIBES ONLY

Icebreaker

Here's an icebreaker that will spark conversation with others. Feature a personal story on social media about how a first responder has helped you or someone you love. Give this individual a shout-out and ask others to share their stories. Make sure you comment on everyone's posts. This is a great way to connect to your community and raise awareness for the cause.

Music

If you're serving lunch in a room with a sound system, create an upbeat playlist your guests will enjoy. If you have a theme, select songs that fit the mood. For example, if the menu is Italian, play classic Sinatra.

HELPFUL TIPS

Get the Word Out

Recruit volunteers and raise awareness of your event with the following.

- ☐ Personal phone calls
- ☐ Flyer
- ☐ Community newsletter
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Text messages
- ☐ Social media

Collateral

Further promote your personal brand with the following:

- ☐ Banner
- ☐ Water bottle labels
- ☐ Thank you cards
- ☐ Social media posts and volunteer shout outs (after the event)

Also be sure to check out our [Party Planning Checklist](#) to make sure you have all your bases covered.