October 4, 2021

Hello All,

I am happy to be reconnecting with everyone after the very challenging year we all had in 2020. I would like to express our sincere gratitude to each and every one of you for being understanding through the many changes we proposed in hopes of continuing on with our annual party. Unfortunately, in the end, we felt the health and safety of our guests and volunteers could not be sacrificed to hold an event.

As much as we all hoped Covid would be a thing of the past by this year’s Christmas season, it looks as though we are not going to be so lucky. With current provincial restrictions on social gatherings and the fact that 80% of our guests, children under the age of 12, are unable to be vaccinated at this time, we have made our decision on how to proceed with this year’s event.

The good news is that **YES,** we will be hosting an event! As no one wants to go through the ups and downs of last year’s planning, we have chosen to go ahead with an event that is most likely to succeed. This decision is to go with a **Drive Thru event**, similar to what we proposed last year. We have also extended the event to two days this year in order to safely see all our guests. Please be aware that should regulations change prior to the event, there is a possibility of cancellation. This information will be conveyed to you as soon as possible should this occur.

The drive thru event will allow families to safely receive their gifts without having to leave the comfort of their vehicles. There will be guidelines to follow in order for families to participate. It is important that you, as the referring agencies, are clear on what these new guidelines are and that you convey them to all of your families.  Please be sure that these new guidelines will work for your families before referring them as we are unable to make any concessions. Unfortunately, there will be no opportunity to provide a gift outside of this event.

**This year’s event will be held on December 18th & 19th, 2021, between the hours of 9 am - 4 pm at the CFD Vehicle Maintenance Building (1755 18 St NE). Each family will be given a time slot to attend and this must be adhered to in order for us to logistically process the potential of 1500 vehicles. We will not be able accommodate personal preferences of day or time to attend. In order to ensure the safety of all guests and volunteers, we can only accept guests arriving in vehicles, no pedestrian traffic. We are hopeful that knowing ahead of time, families will be able to arrange transportation.**

**We will be accepting 1500 families and will continue to receive referrals until we reach capacity or November 15th, whichever comes first. Referrals are received on a first come, first served basis. Please submit your referrals as soon as possible. If you are the one submitting referrals, it is your responsibility that names and addresses are complete and accurate. We can not mail an invite to your client if we can’t read the form or if it has a wrong address. Please take the time to ensure the forms are complete before sending them in. Forms that are incomplete or cannot be read will not be processed and the family will not be able to participate. As it may be more difficult this year to obtain parent signatures, you may sign on behalf of your parents if they approve of it.**

**To avoid delays in processing, SCAN AND EMAIL all submissions to****cfdtoyparty@gmail.com****. Please use a trackable email address so I can track where and who referrals are coming from. Under NO circumstances is this email to be shared with your clients. We only accept referrals that come through an agency or school.**

I know that you put a lot of work into the referring of your families and I appreciate your efforts. Please contact me if you have any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

**Stacy Burr**

**Invitation Coordinator**

**Calgary Firefighters Toy Association**

**Reference Sheet**

**Guidelines to consider when referring families:**

1. Event will be held on December 18th & 19th, between the hours of 9 am – 4 pm at the CFD Vehicle Maintenance Building (1755 – 18St NE)
2. Arrive only at the time you are scheduled to be on site. We are unable to accommodate personal preferences of day or time to attend.
3. Guests must remain in their vehicle at all times.
4. No walk- up attendees will be permitted.
5. There will be no food on site this year.

**Information and helpful tips when submitting referrals:**

1. Confirm family is aware of new guidelines and would like to attend.
2. Please double check your forms before submitting. It is the responsibility of the referring person to ensure the form is filled out completely and accurately, including quadrant of city, postal code, age and gender of children. When details are missing, I spend a significant amount of time following up with you or looking up the information. This may be one or two for you, but can be up to 100 for me. Ultimately, I want your clients to receive their invitation in a timely manner.
3. When submitting your forms:
* Send as a pdf file, I can not open a jpeg file.
* Try sending only one email daily with all submissions you received for that day.
* Use a cover letter or make a note in your email referencing how many forms you are submitting. This way I can confirm I have received them all. It is also helpful to list the family names so both you and I can find the form later on if changes need to be made.
1. I will reply to your submission with a “Received”. If you do not get this reply within 3-4 days of submitting, please check with me as there is a chance there was a problem with the transmission.
2. When you get a “Received” reply from me, that is your confirmation that the family has been accepted to the event.
3. I will send out updates when we are starting to fill up and when capacity has been reached for the event. Please look out for these emails and submit accordingly.
4. Invitations will be put in the mail no later than December 6, 2021.
5. I try to process emails and referrals in a timely fashion, however, be aware that I am a shift worker so sometimes the days you are working are my days off. Your patience is appreciated.
6. If you have any questions or concerns about referring your families, please do not hesitate to reach out to me via email, cfdtoyparty@gmail.com Just a reminder, this email address is not to be shared with your families under any circumstances.

I look forward to working together to share some Christmas cheer with deserving Calgary families!