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FLAGLER COUNTY • 2026 • FREE GUIDE

TOYS FOR TOTS IN FLAGLER COUNTY, 2026

**HOW TO GIVE A TOY, HOW TO GET ONE FOR YOUR KIDS, AND EVERY
DATE THAT MATTERS — IN ONE PLACE, FROM A MARINE WHO
LIVES HERE.**

For anyone in Flagler County — Palm Coast, Flagler Beach, Bunnell, Marineland,
Beverly Beach and the unincorporated county — who wants to help this Christmas,
needs a little help this Christmas, or runs a business that could hold a box.

GARRETT DECKER

ASSISTANT COORDINATOR, FLAGLER COUNTY TOYS FOR TOTS • MARINE
CORPS VETERAN

WHY A REALTOR IS WRITING THIS

- **The Flagler County Association of REALTORS® runs this campaign.** It is the approved local organization for Toys for Tots in Flagler County, and I'm the assistant coordinator for the Flagler County area. That's why a Realtor is writing this: we are the organization, and I'm a Marine Corps veteran volunteering my time to give back to our community and its children.
- **I served 8½ years in the Marine Corps,** with two overseas deployments — Iraq and Africa. Today I'm an active member of the Marine Corps League, Flagler County Detachment. I live in Seminole Woods with my family. This is my county.
- **Toys for Tots started in 1947,** when a Marine Reserve major named Bill Hendricks and his unit collected and handed out 5,000 toys in Los Angeles. The Marine Corps adopted it the next year, and it has run every Christmas since. The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation says the program delivered 24 million toys to nearly 11 million children in 2025 alone (toysfortots.org, September 2026).
- **Here's what I noticed.** Every year people in Palm Coast ask me the same three things: where do I drop a toy, how do I sign my kids up, and can my office hold a box. And every year the answers are scattered across a Facebook page, a news story from two Decembers ago, and a website most people don't know exists.
- **So this guide puts all of it in one place for 2026.** Every date and rule in here comes from the Flagler County campaign's own page (palm-coast-fl.toysfortots.org) or the Foundation's national materials. Things can shift during a campaign — the local page is always the final word.

THE 2026 FLAGLER COUNTY CALENDAR

Let me break this down so it's simple. These are the dates posted on the Flagler County campaign page.

DATE	WHAT HAPPENS
OCTOBER 1	The campaign opens. Drop boxes start going out around the county, and toy requests open online the same day.
OCTOBER 1 – NOVEMBER 15	Families apply for toys. This window closes earlier than most people expect. Do not wait for December.
NOVEMBER 16 – 23	The campaign responds to applications.
DECEMBER 1 – 15	Distribution. Approved families are told their specific pickup date and location directly.
DECEMBER 15	Last pickup from drop-off sites. A toy dropped in a box after this may not make it to a child this year.
DECEMBER 23	The campaign closes.

WHO RUNS IT AND HOW TO REACH THEM

- **Flagler County Toys for Tots** — hosted by the Flagler County Association of REALTORS®, 4101 E Moody Blvd, Bunnell, FL 32110.
- **Coordinator:** Cassandra Pittman · **Assistant Coordinator:** Garrett Decker.
- **Phone** 386-313-6329 · **Email** palm.coast.fl@toysfortots.org · **Web** palm-coast-fl.toysfortots.org · **Facebook:** FCToysForTots.

WHAT LAST YEAR LOOKED LIKE



Source: Flagler County campaign page, "Local Impact." That's more than a thousand kids in a county of our size, and every one of those toys was given by somebody local. Flagler County's population and its number of children have grown this year, and we expect these numbers to rise.

HOW TO GIVE A TOY THE RIGHT WAY

Buy it new, leave it unwrapped, drop it before December 15. That's ninety percent of it. Here's the other ten.

WHAT WORKS

- **New and unwrapped.** That is the one rule the Foundation does not bend on. Volunteers sort every toy by age and gender, and they can't sort what they can't see. Books count as toys and are welcome.
- **Think about the ages nobody thinks about.** The Foundation's own coordinator manual says older kids have historically been the hardest to cover. Ideas that work for 12-to-17-year-olds: sports gear, backpacks, board games, remote-control vehicles, skateboards and helmets, hair tools, watch-and-wallet sets, cosmetics (toysfortots.org FAQ, September 2026). The Flagler campaign lists its age range as 0 to 18.
- **If it needs batteries, throw them in.** Batteries and wrapping paper are treated as accessories, not toys — helpful, but they don't replace the gift.
- **Cash works too, and it stays local.** The Flagler campaign has its own online donation page (secure.toysfortots.org, campaign code FLPMCT). Nationally, the Foundation reports that since 2000 an average of 97 cents of every dollar has gone to the program itself (toysfortots.org, September 2026). The campaign uses money to buy toys for the ages and quantities the boxes don't cover.

WHAT DOESN'T

- **Used toys, even good ones.** The Foundation won't distribute them — it's a safety and liability rule, not a judgment on your kid's old bike. Give those to a thrift store instead.
- **Anything that looks like a real gun or weapon.** The manual says those will not be distributed. Foam blasters and water guns are at the coordinator's discretion.
- **Food, candy, and gift cards.** Food isn't collected. Gift cards can't be handed to families — if one lands in a box it gets logged and used to buy toys, so it's not wasted, but it's not what the kid opens on Christmas morning either.
- **Homemade toys** are fine if they meet basic safety standards.

WHERE TO DROP IT

- The campaign posts its drop-off list on palm-coast-fl.toysfortots.org as boxes are confirmed, and on the FCToysForTots Facebook page. As of mid-September the 2026 list isn't up yet — check back after October 1.
- The Flagler County Association of REALTORS® office in Bunnell has served as the campaign's main drop site (Palm Coast Observer, December 2024). Call 386-313-6329 to confirm hours before you drive out.

ABOUT YOUR TAX DEDUCTION

- Every official box shows the campaign name and contact information so you can document your gift. The campaign doesn't issue tax letters at the box — keep your own store receipt. Talk to a tax professional about how to claim it; I'm not one.

HOW TO REQUEST TOYS FOR YOUR KIDS

Apply online between October 1 and November 15, and apply early. That's the whole page, but read the rest so nothing surprises you.

- **Who it's for.** The Foundation's rule, in its own words: "Financial need — not race, religion, occupation, or background — is the determining factor." You have to live in Flagler County, because each campaign serves its own county only. The Flagler campaign lists ages 0 to 18. Military families apply exactly the same way as everyone else.
- **There is no citizenship check.** The coordinator manual specifically bars campaigns from asking for proof of citizenship.
- **How to apply.** Go to palm-coast-fl.toysfortots.org and click Request Toys. Applications open October 1, 2026 and close November 15, 2026. A parent or legal guardian has to be the one who registers.
- **Apply early.** In 2025 the local listing said registration could close ahead of the deadline if capacity was reached (211live.org, 2025). Don't gamble on the last week.
- **What happens next.** The campaign responds between November 16 and 23. If you're approved, they tell you your pickup date and place directly. Distribution runs December 1 to 15.
- **Pickup day.** Last year's process was in-person pickup with your documents, and an alternate adult could pick up with a photo ID (211live.org, 2025). Confirm this year's details in your approval message.

And honestly — nobody's judging. I've watched what a hard year does to a family's December. If you need the help this year, that's what the program is for. If next year is better, be the one dropping a toy in the box. That's how it's supposed to work.

HOSTING A DROP BOX AT YOUR BUSINESS

If you run an office, a shop, a gym, an HOA clubhouse or a church, you can hold a box. Here's how it actually works, and the two rules that trip businesses up.

HOW TO GET A BOX

- **Ask for one.** Fill out the Toy Drop-Off Site form on palm-coast-fl.toysfortots.org, call the campaign at 386-313-6329, or call or text me directly at 386.449.9248. A standard box holds roughly 50 toys.
- **Pick up or deliver — your call.** Either way, the coordinator gives you a written pickup schedule and a contact name and number. The final pickup is December 15, 2026.
- **Ask to be listed.** The form lets you choose whether your location shows on the campaign's drop-off page and Facebook. Say yes — that's how people find you.
- **Put it where people walk past.** The manual's own guidance is high-traffic spots inside the county. A box in the back hallway collects dust.

THE TWO RULES THAT TRIP BUSINESSES UP

- **You can't use the Toys for Tots name or logo on your own without the coordinator's OK.** The name and the train logo are federally registered trademarks. The local coordinator can authorize a local business to use them for collecting toys inside the county — but anything you print, post or sell that carries the name or logo has to be submitted and approved first. Don't stretch the train, don't add trains, don't change the star colors, and never use the Marine Corps Eagle, Globe and Anchor. Ask, get the official files from toysfortots.org, and use them as-is.
- **You don't get a tax letter for hosting.** The Foundation's sponsorship guide is direct about this: the IRS doesn't let the campaign acknowledge the party hosting a drive. The people who drop toys in your box are the donors. Your box still has to show the campaign name and contact so they can document their gift.

A FEW MORE THINGS TO KNOW

- **No GoFundMe,** no third-party fundraising pages in the program's name. Donations go through toysfortots.org channels only.
- **You can run your own event** — a bingo night, a chili cook-off, a raffle your business runs — and give the proceeds to the campaign. The campaign itself doesn't run raffles. Coordinate with the coordinator before you put the name on a flyer.
- **Donated toys can never be sold, returned, raffled, or given to volunteers.** If you host a box, you're holding those toys in trust until pickup.
- **Don't imply the campaign endorses your business.** Being a drop site is real community support. It's not a sponsorship deal, and the campaign can't recognize you in a way that reads like one.

WHAT EVERYONE GETS WRONG

I'm going to tell you everything, good and bad. These are the mistakes I see every December.

- **Waiting until December to apply for toys.** Requests close November 15. By the time the lights are up on Palm Coast Parkway, the window is shut.
- **Wrapping the toy.** It feels right. It gets unwrapped by a volunteer so it can be sorted. Save the paper for your own tree.
- **Dropping the old stuff.** A used toy in the box means a volunteer has to pull it out. If it's gently used, a thrift store or a Buy Nothing group will put it to good use.
- **Buying only for the little ones.** Dolls and toy trucks pile up. Teenagers get thin coverage every single year. A basketball or a skateboard is the gift that's actually missing.
- **Dropping off on December 20.** Last box pickup is December 15. After that, your toy may sit until next year.
- **Thinking the toys leave the county.** They don't. Each campaign collects and distributes inside its own area, and the Flagler campaign has said it plainly: donations made here stay in Flagler County (Palm Coast Observer, December 2024).
- **Assuming there's an "approved toy list."** There isn't one by design. New, unwrapped, age-appropriate, no realistic weapons, no food. Use judgment.
- **Thinking a small campaign doesn't matter.** 1,313 kids in Flagler County last year. Think about that for a second. That's roughly the size of an entire elementary school, covered by neighbors. The county's population and its number of children have grown this year, and we expect that number to rise.

WAYS TO HELP BEYOND ONE TOY

If you want to do more than drop a toy, here's what actually moves the number.

- **Give money to the local page, not the national one.** Both are legitimate. But the Flagler campaign's own donation page (campaign code FLPMCT on secure.toysfortots.org) puts the dollars in the local coordinator's hands to fill the gaps in the boxes.
- **Host a box.** Page 5 covers it. One box holds about 50 toys. Ten businesses on Palm Coast Parkway with a box each is 500 toys.
- **Volunteer to sort.** Toys get sorted by age and gender before distribution, and that's people-hours. Call or text me at 386.449.9248, or email palm.coast.fl@toysfortots.org, and ask what the campaign needs in early December.
- **Host a fundraiser.** A bingo night, a chili cook-off, a raffle your business or group runs — with the proceeds going to the local campaign. Coordinate with the campaign before you put the name on a flyer, and watch the campaign's Facebook page for this year's events.
- **Share the request link, not just the donation link.** The family that needs toys is often the one that doesn't see the post. If you know somebody having a hard year, send them Page 4 of this guide.
- **Get your kids involved.** Take them to pick the toy. Let them put it in the box. It's the cheapest lesson in the whole season.
- **If you're a Marine,** the Marine Corps League Flagler County Detachment 876 has supported this program in the county for years. Come find us.

HOW GARRETT HELPS NEXT

That's the whole guide. Nothing to buy, nobody to call. Go put a toy in a box.



A little about me, since you've read this far. I'm a Marine Corps veteran, a Realtor® and a licensed loan originator here in Palm Coast, and the team lead for The Decker Group. We help people buy and sell in Florida, veterans and military families on PCS orders, folks moving here from out of state, and first-time buyers who want the whole process explained before it happens, not at closing.

The way I work is simple: you get the truth first, even when it costs me the deal. I answer — calls, texts, emails, after hours and weekends. And you'll know what's happening before it happens.

THINKING ABOUT A MOVE?

Into Flagler County, out of it, or across town — I'll give you answers, no pressure, no pitch.

CALL OR TEXT 386.449.9248

BUYAHOMEATTHEBEACH.COM · THE DECKER GROUP ON INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE

And if all you do with this guide is get one more toy into one more box — that's the job. Thank you.



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