COOKIE FAIRY VOLUNTEER INSTRUCTIONS

Feel free to edit any of this as needed!

My personal notes and updates are in [green brackets]. Variables to change according to your situation are in {braces}.

Here is the original post that includes info about Cookie Fairies and downloadable templates.

Cookie Fairies!

Thanks for offering to bake and/or deliver cookies to people who could use cheering up! The Cookie Fairies generally work in the {your region} area. We've delivered cookies to people with depression…people who had just been diagnosed with cancer…pet owners who just lost a fur baby…employees having a rough week at work…unhoused people…people new to the area who are having a hard time adjusting…and people just generally having a crappy day!

HOW IT WORKS: TL;DR

Here's the short version:

1. Volunteer bakers decide the maximum number/what kind of treats they'd like to make.
2. Volunteer drivers offer to deliver the goodies to people who could use a boost.
3. Drivers choose their delivery area and the maximum number of boxes they can deliver. (*This is not a sure thing!* A driver may not be available on the day a baker would like to bake.)
4. If there is a baker and a driver (and a poster—see below) available for the same day, the baker makes the treats on that day. The baker and driver make arrangements to get the cookies to the driver on the chosen day.
5. The day before a confirmed delivery, a volunteer poster posts on the relevant subreddits and Nextdoor saying that the Cookie Fairies have X boxes of treats to deliver in area Y. If you are on Reddit, the poster will tag you in the post unless you ask them not to…so you can be alerted to the post, see comments, and feel the love! :)

6. The poster fields requests, makes sure the requesters are located within the delivery area, and edits the posts when the boxes have all been claimed.

7. The poster provides the driver with the list of addresses (and the recipients' phone numbers), ordered into the most efficient route.

8. On Cookie Day, the driver drops off a box on each doorstep and texts the recipient to let them know the drop-off is complete.

Read on for more details!

BAKERS

Thanks for baking for people who could use a sweet treat to improve their day!

Using the Sign-Up Sheet

In this folder is a sign-up spreadsheet. [Here's an Excel template you can use.] Add your name and phone number to the relevant date you would like to supply cookies for. We are trying to pace it out to one delivery per week maximum, as we've discovered that Redditors get burned out if there are too many Cookie Fairy posts.

[I created a Google Drive folder with the sign-up sheet, resources sheet, and instructions.]

Once you know what kind(s) of baked goods you want to make, add that info to the spreadsheet. That way the poster can include it in their post the day before the delivery.

Keep in mind that in order for a delivery to happen, we need both a baker and a driver, as well as someone to create the post, monitor requests, etc.

So check back (or sign up for notifications…more on that later) so you'll know if a driver signs up to deliver your goodies. (In the same vein, if you see a driver who wants to deliver on a particular day, you can sign up to bake for that delivery.)

Also: The same person *can* bake, deliver, and create/monitor the post!

Planning Your Bakes

Baked goods do not need to be gluten-free. I just always bake GF due to a family member with celiac. Anything is great...traditional bakes, gluten-free, dairy-free, vegan, slice-and-bake cookies, whatever! You can even offer bakery-bought items. Just indicate on the spreadsheet if the cookies are GF, vegan, etc. so the poster can be sure to include that in the post. You can also

choose to make brownies, blondies, bar cookies, chocolate-covered strawberries, cake pops, cake slices, etc….it doesn't need to be strictly cookies!

You can offer as many boxes as you like, up to the maximum that the driver is able to deliver.

You also can include as many types in each box/bag as you like. Sometimes I do one type, sometimes three!

> Want an easy way to bake more batches? Whenever you're in the mood to bake, make a double batch of dough, scoop the dough balls onto a parchment-lined baking tray, flash freeze them, and then store them flat in freezer bags. You can also make and freeze any glazes that are needed. Then, when you want to make up boxes as a Cookie Fairy, just bake the dough balls from frozen. Many baked cookies freeze well, too.

I usually include about 12-14 small cookies or 6 medium-large cookies in a cardboard box with a handle [Update: I now use air-tight, wax-lined bags with a zip closure and a clear window...which I found to be better, and even less expensive!]. The boxes re not waxed, so I line them with parchment paper sheets so oil doesn't seep through.

Half-pound treat boxes also work well, as do plastic treat bags, foil pans...whatever is easiest and least expensive for you, but will keep the treats safe and whole. (See the Resources List in this folder for info on boxes, etc.)

[I no longer have the resource list but it's easy to create one if you know of some good sources for bags/boxes/ingredients, etc. If you create a shared file, other volunteers can add their suggestions as well.]

Feel free to include an encouraging note on the box/bag! I just draw a heart on the tag, and another volunteer baker sticks a lovely, encouraging note onto each box.

Need Help?

Let me know if you think ingredients and supplies will get too pricey for you. I created an Amazon Wish List to help fund my Cookie Fairy baking—I was baking so much it started getting expensive—and I'm happy to share what I have and/or add items to the list for you.

DELIVERY DRIVERS

Thank you for taking the time and effort to deliver cookies to people who need cheering up!

Using the Sign-Up Sheet

In this folder is a sign-up spreadsheet. Add your name and phone number to the relevant date that you would like to deliver on. Or if you see that a baker is interested in baking on a particular day, you may opt to be the driver for that bake.

Indicate the MAXIMUM number of boxes you'd like to deliver and also the general area you'd like to deliver in. (For example, "Downtown {City}" or "Near {business or landmark}.") You get to choose!

To indicate your desired delivery area, please create a map with a circle around a particular point using this radius map tool. You might want to start small; I typically choose a 5-mile radius around wherever I'll happen to be that day, and it will take me around 1.5 hours to deliver 6-8 boxes.

Keep in mind that in order for a delivery to happen, we need both a baker and a driver, as well as someone to create the post, monitor requests, etc.

So check back (or sign up for notifications…more on that later) so you'll know if a baker and/or poster signs up on a day you would like to deliver.

Also: The same person *can* bake, deliver, and create/monitor the post!

Making the Plan

The day before the delivery, the volunteer poster will post on the subreddits for the relevant area announcing that we have X number of boxes of treats to give away to people who are going through a hard time in Y location. The poster will also share the link to the radius map so people can see if they're in your delivery area.

People send the poster private messages to request cookies. The poster checks to make sure they're within your delivery circle. If they're a little outside, the poster can contact you to ask if that's OK. If not—or if they're pretty far outside the area—the poster will tell them they're not within delivery range, and to keep checking back in case we do hit their area in the future.

Getting the Cookies

Please contact the baker by text or phone to arrange how you'll get the boxes for delivery. If needed, I may be able to deliver them from baker to driver…please text or call me at {number} to ask me.

Making the Drop-Off

You can drop off the boxes on people's front steps or whatever area seems best. For example, if it's warm day you might want to leave the cookies in a shaded area. [Update: I bought a big box of small, reusable ice packs to include in the packages on hot days; they cost about 33 cents apiece.]

Finally, text the recipient to let them know the cookies have been dropped off. (And to let them know where, if it's not immediately obvious where you left them.)

Keeping Safe

IMPORTANT: Please stay safe! If you get a bad feeling about a delivery location, you don't have to deliver there. You might also want to bring a friend with you on delivery runs. I have gone inside apartment buildings and into apartment complexes and not had a problem so far, but it always pays to go with your gut. If something feels weird, I'm out of there!

[I always bring a friend or family member with me on cookie runs. This also makes it easier, because they can drive and I just pop out of the car to make deliveries. I then text the recipient while my friend enters the next drop-off location into the GPS.]

Need Help?

We all know gas is expensive! If needed, we can ask Redditors to donate gas cards or cash. Any other ideas on that, please let me know.

POSTERS

Anyone can be a poster…the baker, the driver, or another volunteer. The post goes up the day before the delivery. Baker, please be sure someone has agreed to post (and drive!) before starting to bake. I'd hate for you to end up with a bunch of cookies that won't be delivered, though I guess there are worse fates than having extra cookies around. 🙂

Using the Sign-Up Sheet

Please add your name to the POSTER column of the sign-up sheet for the bake/delivery you plan to handle the post for. Get in touch with the baker and driver so they know someone will be posting the day before the delivery. You may need to remind the driver to post the link to their circle map; alternatively, you can ask for the driver's starting point and radius, and create the circle map yourself. (See the DELIVERY DRIVERS section above for info on how to do this.)

Posting

The day before the delivery, create a post on Reddit in the appropriate subreddits. {/City} is often the best one, but {/suburb} and {/suburb} are other options depending on where the delivery will take place. Check to make sure the subreddit has enough traffic to be worth your while posting there. When in doubt choose {/City} as lots of people in surrounding towns also belong to this sub.

Here's a link to the copy I use…feel free to copy it to a new file and revise however you like. (This will download as a PDF file.) Just be sure to include the number of boxes, the types of goodies, the disclaimer, and the delivery area.

The most important thing is to *be very specific*! Answer any questions people have before they need to ask you.

For example, include what kinds of treats are being delivered, and specify if they are gluten-free, vegan, etc. Be clear on the delivery area. Also, sometimes requesters neglect to give you their phone number, apartment number, or city—so be sure to ask for that information using bold, italics, paragraph spacing, or some other way to make that info harder to miss.

Feel free to post on relevant Nextdoor groups, Facebook groups, etc. as well. However, in some cities (like {City} and {City}), the treats go pretty fast, so you may not want to post in too many places. In others (such as {City} and {City}), the requests may come in more slowly.

Handling Requests

Requesters will send you DMs on Reddit (and whatever other platforms you posted on). Keep in mind that people may send you Chats (in both "Legacy Chat" and "Chat") AND messages (which you can see under Notifications)...so be sure to check all three.

You don't need to be checking constantly! Just check in periodically to see if there are any requests.

If the treats have not all been claimed by the end of the day, if you want you can keep the post active until the following morning. At some point, you'll need to decide if it's time to close the post even if all the treats haven't been claimed.

When you get requests:

First, be sure the information they give you is complete. If they're missing a phone number or city, for example, you'll need to ask them for that info.

IMPORTANT: Do not try to use the circle map without a city, and do not guess at the city if the requester did not include it! I discovered the hard way that if you put in an address that does not exist, the circle map will create a circle in a random area within the city you guessed.

If the info is complete, check that the requester is within the delivery area. To do this, open up the driver's circle map, enter the requester's address, select a radius of .2 miles, and change the border color to something bright, like red. Then hit the "New Circle" button and you can see if the bright little circle is within the driver's circle.

If the requester is outside the circle, please don't feel bad about telling them they're too far away, and to keep an eye in case we hit their area another time. If they're outside the circle but still pretty close, you can ask the driver if they'd be willing to deliver there.

If the requester is inside the circle (or the driver has agreed to deliver to them), send them a reply that they're on the list and can expect to receive their treats the next day.

Add their info to a list, which you'll use later to create the route.

Closing the Offer

When all the treats have been claimed, or you're ready to close down the post, edit your post to include a note at the top, such as "THE COOKIES HAVE ALL BEEN CLAIMED!"

If someone sends a request after all the goodies have been claimed, just let them know you just filled up and that we hope to get to their area again sometime soon.

What happens if all the treats have not been claimed?

If this happens, the baker may choose to give the driver all the treats, or only the number of boxes that have been claimed.

The driver may choose to keep any extra treats or give them to a neighbor, a homeless person, a stranger on the street, etc. The driver or baker might also post in a local group to see if any of their neighbors who are having a bad day would like a box. (That's what I usually do.)

Getting the Driver Set Up

Ask the driver for their starting and ending points. You can then use an online map to create the most efficient route.

Enter in all the addresses, starting with the driver's starting point and ending with their end point. In some map systems, you can drag the requesters' addresses up and down to reorder them until they make the straightest route between the two end points.

Text the list of addresses and phone numbers to the driver in the order that you determined to be the best route.

HOW TO STAY UPDATED

Want to stay up-to-date on new dates added, whether someone can deliver your baked goods or supply baked goods for your delivery, etc.? [These instructions are for Google Sheets; it may work differently in platforms such as Zoho, etc.]

1.   Click on TOOLS in the Google Sheets menu on the sign-up sheet.
2.   Use the dropdown menu to select Notification Settings. You can opt to receive an email when someone edits or when someone adds a comment. You can also choose to get a daily digest or to get an email every time there's a change.

Questions?

I think that's it! Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns, or if you have ideas for a better way to handle any part of this process.

I'm open to suggestions for different ways to get the word out, how to streamline the process, etc.

My cell is {number} and my email is {email}.

THANKS again!