







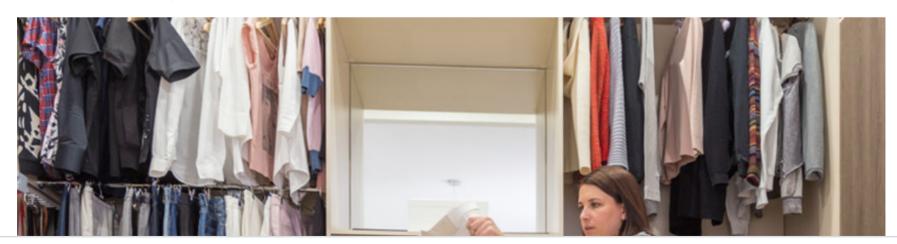
Where you can donate pre-loved items during the coronavirus pandemic

KATE BARTELS | APR 26, 2020

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many to-do lists and home maintenance tasks are on the way to completion. A common big ticket item on these lists is decluttering, meaning many Australians may be left with bags of preloved items ready to go to someone in need.

In usual circumstances, passing on your items to charities is a big yes, however new restrictions have forced some charities to stop accepting donations, and those who are accepting donations require you to do a bit of extra work before your goods can be passed on.

Founder and chief executive of St Kilda Mums Jessica Macpherson says while the need for help has skyrocketed, the organisation can't accept donations in the usual way.











Isolation has sparked a decluttering trend all around the country. Photo: iStock

"March was our busiest month. We are receiving 200 requests for help at the moment and have 3500 volunteers all at home as we can't accept donations," she says. "COVID lives on surfaces, so it's simply not safe for us."

While your donations might not be accepted at the moment, Macpherson stresses the need for items and says those willing to help can contribute to their emergency fund or purchase new items.

"What we are asking for is a direct donation to our emergency fund, which we use to buy nappies, prams, cots and all the things that mums in vulnerable situations can't access right now," she says. "Also, shopping online at places like Target and Priceline and having things delivered directly to us is a great alternative."











If your aim was to strictly donate your items, St Vinnies is still accepting donations even though stores are closed. Photo: iStock

If your aim was to strictly donate your items, St Vinnies is still accepting donations even though stores are closed. They have set up "donation stations" all around NSW to meet the demand that has come with isolation decluttering.

"We know many people are taking the increased time at home during COVID-19 as an opportunity to clean up and reorganise," says St Vinnies NSW chief executive Jack de Groot.



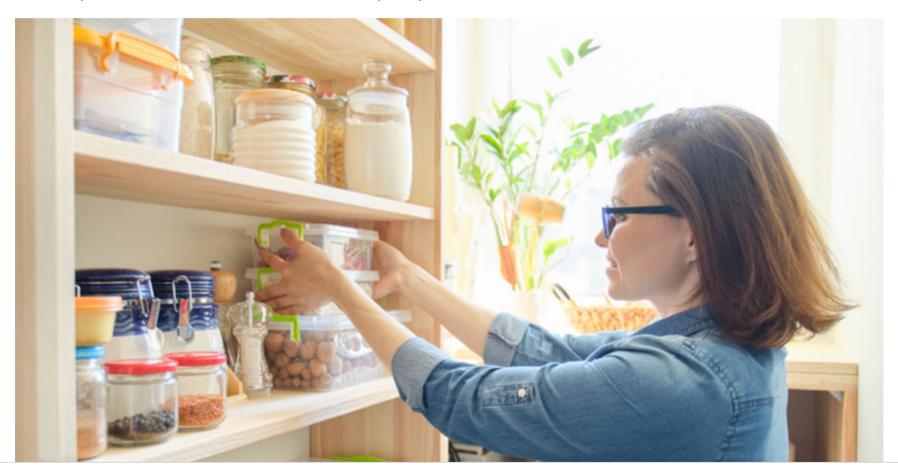




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"We rely on the generosity of donations to support our services and encourage people to continue that goodwill by donating quality clothes, books and household items as normal. For larger items, like furniture, we ask that you call ahead so we can assess our capacity to take them."











Many places are urging people to really consider the condition of the items as the key point at the moment. Photo: iStock

Organisations such as St Vinnies and St Kilda Mums urge people to check if a donation point is open before you dump your things outside. Many op-shops and charity bins have been inundated with rubbish left outside stores not currently in operation.

Macpherson says if you have good quality items that you feel could be of use, still get in touch with St Kilda Mums to see what can be arranged.

"Include information such as the model and the make, [and] the condition – we can provide some proper cleaning instructions if they are deemed suitable," she says.











It may be worth keeping the clothes to the side, until you can donate again. Photo: iStock

Similarly, St Vinnies are urging people to really consider the condition of the items as the key point at the moment.

"As always, our advice is, 'if you'd give it to a mate, it's OK to donate'. Please donate responsibly – if it's dirty, damaged or dangerous we won't be able to accept it," says de Groot.

You can find the Vinnies' donation points here. Currently all Salvos stores remain closed, so it may be worth keeping the clothes to the side, until you can donate at a later time.





