



Knights of Columbus

Aid and Support After Pregnancy

ASAP

Handbook



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Overview

Aid and Support After Pregnancy (ASAP), describes the Knights of Columbus' efforts to support pregnant women, mothers and their new children by serving pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes. These pro-life, non-profits are lifelines to women and babies in need and offer essential services that make the difference between a baby being aborted and a baby being born in a supportive environment.

Pregnancy resource centers provide assistance to nearly 2 million clients each year. Last year, Knights donated more than \$5 million to support these centers and the women and children they serve through cash donations and community service activities such as baby and maternity item drives. Through its Ultrasound Initiative, the Order also donates more than 150 ultrasound machines each year – bringing its total donations since 2009 to more than 1,700 machines valued at over \$80 million. These life-saving organizations would not be able to provide the level of assistance women and children need without support from our Order and collaborating parish communities.

Through the ASAP initiative, councils can now contribute even more support. For every \$500 a council donates to a qualifying pregnancy resource center or maternity home (up to \$2,000), the Supreme Council will donate \$100 more. Visit kofc.org/asap for resources and to apply online.

This resource is designed to help councils learn how they can carry out the ASAP initiative and invite communities, especially their parishes, to join in these efforts. Resources including this handbook, posters and a brochure are available in Supplies Online under the Pregnancy Center Support program category in Faith in Action.

Pregnancy resources centers, maternity homes, and the women and babies they serve, need our support more than ever. May our Founder, Blessed Michael McGivney, whose first confirmed miracle involved the healing of an unborn child, guide our efforts to love and serve life. Let's continue to show women and children in need that Knights are there with ASAP.

PRCs & Maternity Homes

Identifying Pregnancy Resource Centers and Maternity Homes

Pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes, and the women and babies they serve, are in dire need of financial contributions, donations of material goods, and other volunteer services. Despite the essential services pregnancy resource centers provide to women and their new children, 90% of funding for pregnancy centers is raised locally and 80% of centers receive no government funding.

Every council should identify a pregnancy resource center or maternity home it can serve through the ASAP initiative. In order to qualify for financial support from Supreme, the organization must be in accordance with Catholic Social Teaching regarding life and the family: Qualifying organizations cannot promote, provide or refer for abortion, abortifacients, or contraception. Consult with your local diocesan Respect Life Office regarding the suitability of maternity homes or pregnancy resource centers.

The organization must also fall within the following categories.

1. Pregnancy Resource Centers

Non-profit pregnancy resource centers offer a variety of services to pregnant women, new moms and babies, including counseling about the alternatives to abortion; abstinence education; referrals for legal, medical, housing, and social services resources; prenatal and parenting education; maternity/baby clothes, diapers; free ultrasounds and pregnancy tests, and other support.

2. Maternity Homes

Non-profit maternity homes offer short-term or transitional housing and support to pregnant women and new moms and their children, aged infant to toddler (<5 years old). They can include live-in house parents, live-in staff, rotating staff, or shepherding/host homes.

See the ASAP Grant Request Instructions found at the end of this handbook and kofc.org/asap for more information on qualifying organizations.



Finding Organizations to Support

Pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes can be found by searching through databases available at heartbeatinternational.org, birthright.org and pregnancycarecanada.ca – among others. Local Catholic Charities, the Sisters of Life, diocesan pregnancy resource centers, and other organizations are also in need of support. Many parishes are already involved with local pregnancy centers through the USCCB's Walking with Moms in Need initiative.

Serving Pregnancy Resource Centers and Maternity Homes

Through ASAP, for every \$500 a council or assembly donates to a qualifying non-profit pregnancy resource center or maternity home, Supreme will issue a \$100 grant to the same qualifying organization. The most a council or assembly can earn as an additional grant from Supreme for a pregnancy center or maternity home is \$400 per center or home supported, per year.

Action Steps

There are a variety of activities a council can organize to qualify for ASAP funds – most fall within the categories of financial support and material assistance:

- Financial Support includes: direct donations, Baby Bottle Drives, proceeds from fundraisers, open houses, etc.
- Material Assistance includes: donations of baby items (equipment, food, formula, diapers, wipes), clothes (maternity, baby, infant and toddler) and other items often listed on a center's or maternity home's website.

Please note that while volunteering and praying for a pregnancy center or raising funds for an ultrasound initiative are worthy causes, they do not fall within the guidelines of the ASAP program.

To qualify for additional \$100 donations, the council must complete the online ASAP Grant Request Application, found at kofc.org/asap, and submit accompanying documentation. Read the ASAP Grant Request Instructions on page 11 for more details on required documentation.



Suggested ASAP Activities

The following are tried and true examples of activities councils can carry out to support pregnancy centers and maternity homes. Before beginning an activity, consult your local center or home to see how you can collaborate.

BABY BOTTLE DRIVE

A baby bottle drive is a simple and effective way to engage your entire council and parish community in fundraising for local pregnancy centers and maternity homes. As the name suggests, the drive uses baby bottles to collect loose change, cash and checks from donors.

Action Steps

1. Ask your pastor for his permission to schedule a baby bottle drive. Drives can be conducted at any time of the year. Scheduling the drive around feast days or holidays, such as weekends from Mother's Day to Father's Day or Respect Life Month (October) can make the collections more successful.
2. Appoint a Knight to lead the drive. This Knight should take the lead on procuring the baby bottles, promoting the event, and organizing the collection of bottles. Bottles are sometimes provided by the pregnancy center. If not, ask council members to donate the bottles or arrange for their purchase. Bottles can be labeled with the Knights of Columbus emblem, your council name and number, the name of the beneficiary, and the return date of the bottles. Also consider including a QR code or URL linking to an online donation portal. You can also include more information about your council and the beneficiary inside the bottle.
3. Distribute the baby bottles to parishioners after a Mass, council meeting or pro-life event. Encourage council members to raise as much funding as possible by sharing the initiative with friends and family. Consider promoting a fundraising goal.

Action Steps

4. Collect the bottles at the end of the campaign or at the end of each subsequent Mass, event or council meeting. Families and youth groups can be invited to participate. Record the number of bottles collected and amount of money donated. Bottles should be returned to your local pregnancy center, maternity home, or council.
5. Prepare for the donation of the funds collected through the drive. Be sure to arrange a photo shoot with the members of your council and the pregnancy center or maternity home's staff and volunteers. Make sure you wear Knights of Columbus branding. The photo shoot should be action oriented, not focused solely on the donation of the check. After the photo shoot, issue a press release.

BABY AND MATERNITY ITEM DRIVES

Pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes are in dire need of supplies. Councils can sponsor baby or maternity drives to collect essential items like diapers, wipes, and clothing. While babies are usually the main beneficiary of these events, the needs of pregnant women and new mothers should also be considered a top priority.

Action Steps

1. Ask your pastor for his permission to schedule the drive, which can be conducted at any time of the year. Scheduling the item drive around feast days or holidays, such as weekends from Mother's Day to Father's Day or Respect Life Month (October) can make the drive more successful.
2. Appoint a Knight to lead the drive. This Knight should take the lead on determining what items are accepted by the center, promoting the event, and organizing the collection of items.
3. Determine a location to collect the items. A crib or play pen, donated by a council member, can be used as an attractive centerpiece for collecting the items in a parish vestibule. Placing some items inside before the start of the drive will encourage more people to donate. Bags or totes can be handed out to participants to collect items. Baby bottles can also be provided so monetary donations can be made. A list of what items are needed should be advertised. One popular way to advertise items, particularly around the Christmas season, is to list items on tags on a Christmas tree.
4. At the end of the item drive, count the various items that were donated and estimate their value. This information can be used in press releases and thank you notes to participants.
5. Prepare for the donation of the items collected through the drive. Be sure to arrange a photo shoot with the members of your council and the center or maternity home's staff and volunteers. Make sure you wear Knights of Columbus branding. The photo shoot should be action oriented, not focused solely on the donation of the check. After the photo shoot, issue a press release.



Action Steps

PREGNANCY CENTER OR MATERNITY HOME OPEN HOUSE

Pregnancy centers and maternity homes sometimes host “open houses” in which volunteers and their communities are invited to attend. These open houses raise awareness of the organization’s services and offer an opportunity to meet the center’s leadership and staff. Councils can help pregnancy centers and maternity homes host these important events and tie-in council fundraising activities before or during the event.

Action Steps

1. Contact the pregnancy center or maternity home to determine if it is possible to host an open house and if so, when.
2. Create a council committee and appoint a lead Knight to organize the council’s support.



Photo by Rya Duncklee

3. In advance of the open house, collect funds or items for the pregnancy center or maternity home for future donation at the event. Consider a baby bottle drive or item drive.
4. Identify the role your council can play in the open house. Councils, for example, can underwrite the event, arrange for a blessing of the location, and/or volunteer to support any events accompanying the open house such as entertainment, catering, and awards ceremonies. Any funds donated by the council to support the open house qualify for ASAP.
5. Promote the open house to your parish community and council.
6. Present a check or items to the center during or at the conclusion of the open house. A member of the council, such as the grand knight, should consider delivering brief remarks.
7. Arrange a photo shoot with the members of your council and the pregnancy center or maternity home’s staff and volunteers at the event. Make sure you wear Knights of Columbus branding. The photo shoot should be action oriented, not focused solely on the donation of the check. After the photo shoot, issue a press release.

PROMOTING ACTIVITIES

Consider the following steps when promoting any ASAP activity:

1. Ask your pastor and parish administration to include K of C announcements in your local bulletin/parish newsletter.
2. Print and post posters in your church hall, parish school or other highly visible common area. Posters are available on Supplies Online.
3. Ask council officers and members to utilize these resources on their personal social media accounts and share with other parish groups leaders to help find pro-life supporters.

Action Steps

4. Ask your pastor to allow you to speak at select Masses – deliver a short (1-2 min) invitation to join your council's pro-life efforts. Staff or volunteers from the pregnancy center or maternity can also be asked to speak after Mass or a council meeting.
5. Personally invite people to attend after Mass and through email, phone calls and social media.

AFTER YOUR ACTIVITY

Complete an ASAP Grant Application using the online form found at kofc.org/asap.

After the Financial Secretary or Faithful Comptroller receives the check in the mail from Supreme (which is made payable to the pregnancy center or maternity home), the council or assembly should arrange for its presentation to the center or home. Consider inviting the center or home's director, staff and/or clients to a council meeting or parish event to receive the check and thank all supporters. A sample letter template that can be used to accompany the check's delivery via mail is also available at the end of this handbook.

FUNDRAISING GUIDELINES

In planning and conducting charitable fundraising events, councils should be guided by the following principles:

1. Councils may use the name "Knights of Columbus" in conjunction with the fundraiser, so long as the individual council is identified within the name, i.e., "Knights of Columbus [Name of Council] Council No. 5748". Councils should not use the name "Knights of Columbus" as a stand-alone.
2. Fundraising activities should be used only to raise money for a worthy charitable organization, consistent with the Order's mission and our first principle of Charity. The beneficiary organization should be identified in advertising for the event.
3. Proceeds from a charity fundraiser cannot be used to pay for ordinary council expenses or liabilities. The proceeds must be disbursed as follows:

- a. Payment of the expenses associated with the event;
 - b. Gift to the charitable organization.
4. If applicable, councils should obtain event insurance to cover all potential liabilities associated with the event.
 5. If a council uses the services of a professional fundraiser, event organizer, or similar entity, such services should be obtained on a one-time basis. The council should not enter a joint venture with any company or organization.



Building Support

Building Support for ASAP

Councils need not support life on their own. Pro-life advocates abound in parish communities and beyond. Here are some simple steps that can be taken to garner support for your ASAP activities.

1. Identify pro-life council members, parishioners and community members. Supporters can be found in places such as:
 - Existing Pro-Life Events (Marches and rallies for life, conferences and seminars)
 - Parish and Diocesan Groups (Walking with Moms in Need, women's groups, pro-life, social justice, young adults)
 - Catholic Schools and Homeschooling Groups
 - Men's Catholic Conferences
 - Other Existing Pro-Life Groups
2. Discuss what your local pregnancy resource center or maternity home does for pregnant women, mothers and their new children. Use the talking points provided for conversation starters.
3. Explain your council's work, past and present, to support the pregnancy resource center or maternity home.
4. Invite prospective supporters to visit kofc.org/asap and to visit your next ASAP event. Send a follow-up "thank you" email after they attend.
5. Involve participants with other council events throughout the year, especially other pro-life events such as a march for life or rally, to keep them engaged.

TALKING POINTS TO INVITE SUPPORTERS

- Knights of Columbus believe in the dignity and worth of every human life, and we work tirelessly, through prayer and action, to support mothers and their children.

- Last year Knights of Columbus donated more than \$5 million to pregnancy centers and maternity homes, providing maternity and baby clothes, diapers, food and other items to women in need. Join us in growing the pro-life safety net the Knights have long supported.
- Our Founder, Blessed Michael McGivney, devoted his life to the care of widows and orphans, and the Order's mission to support mothers in need and their children is a sacred responsibility we've carried for 140 years.
- In his historic encyclical "*Evangelium Vitae*" ... or the "*Gospel of Life*", Pope St. John Paul II addressed the value of human life, maintaining that societies and individuals, especially Christians, should do everything in their power to preserve this life.



Bulletin Announcements

Bulletin Announcements

Share these bulletin texts with your pastor or parish administration and personalize the end of the announcement with a call to action that is localized to your council.

Option 1 – Support Women and Babies in Need

Pregnancy resource centers are lifelines to nearly 2 million women and babies in need and can make the difference between a baby being born or aborted. Last year, Knights of Columbus donated more than \$5 million to pregnancy centers, providing maternity and baby clothes, diapers, food and other items to women in need.

Contact your Knights of Columbus council to assist our community's local center or join in our upcoming event: [\[INSERT CONTACT AND EVENT INFO\]](#).

Option 2 – Serve our Community's Pregnancy Resource Center

Pregnant women, mothers, and their children need our support more than ever. Our parish, together with our Knights of Columbus council, is taking steps to assist pregnancy resource centers and bring material and spiritual assistance. Without our support, these life-saving centers would not be able to provide the level of assistance women and children need. Contact your Knights of Columbus council to assist our community's local center or join in our upcoming event: [\[INSERT CONTACT AND EVENT INFO\]](#).

Option 3 – Did you know?

Did you know?

The first confirmed miracle of Blessed Michael McGivney, the Founder of the Knights of Columbus, involved the healing of a preborn child.

Last year, Knights of Columbus donated more than \$5 million to pregnancy centers and maternity homes, providing maternity and baby clothes, diapers, food and other items to women in need.

Contact your Knights of Columbus council to assist our community's local center or join in our upcoming event: [\[INSERT CONTACT AND EVENT INFO\]](#).

Option 4 – Baby Bottle Drive

Our parish and Knights of Columbus Council [\[INSERT COUNCIL NAME\]](#) are committed to serving moms in need and their babies so we're hosting a Baby Bottle Drive! All proceeds will benefit the life-saving work of [\[INSERT NAME OF PREGNANCY CENTER/MATERNITY HOME\]](#). To participate, fill the bottle with loose change or cash and return it to [\[INSERT LOCATION\]](#) by [\[INSERT DATE\]](#) to help us reach our goal to earn [\[INSERT GOAL\]](#). For more information, please contact [\[INSERT CONTACT NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS\]](#).

Bulletin Announcements

Option 5 – Item Drive to Support Babies and Moms in Need

Our parish and Knights of Columbus Council [INSERT COUNCIL NAME] are committed to serving moms in need and their babies so we're hosting an item drive for pregnant women, moms, and babies! All proceeds will benefit the life-saving work of [INSERT NAME OF PREGNANCY CENTER/MATERNITY HOME]. To participate, bring new or lightly used items to [INSERT LOCATION] by [INSERT DATE]. For more information, please contact [INSERT CONTACT NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS]. A list of items accepted is shown below: [INSERT LIST PROVIDED BY PREGNANCY CENTER/MATERNITY HOME].

Option 6 – Open House at Local Pregnancy Center or Maternity Home

Please join members of our parish and Knights of Columbus Council [INSERT COUNCIL NAME] for an Open House at [INSERT NAME OF PREGNANCY CENTER/MATERNITY HOME] located at [ADDRESS OF PRC/HOME] on [DATE/TIME OF EVENT]. The Open House will feature [INSERT ACTIVITIES] and will provide the perfect opportunity to learn more about [INSERT NAME OF PREGNANCY CENTER/MATERNITY HOME]'s life-saving services to our community. For more information, please contact [INSERT CONTACT NAME AND EMAIL ADDRESS]. All are welcome to attend!



Aid and Support After Pregnancy

ASAP

Grant Request Instructions

APPLY ONLINE AT [KOFC.ORG/ASAP](https://kofc.org/asap)

Please review these guidelines before completing the application.

For every \$500 a council or assembly donates to a qualifying non-profit pregnancy resource center or maternity home (up to \$2,000), Supreme will issue a \$100 grant to the same qualifying organization. The most a council or assembly can earn as an additional grant from Supreme for a pregnancy center or maternity home is \$400 per center or home supported, per year. There is no cap on the number of pregnancy centers or maternity homes a council or assembly can support. Qualified donations can be through a monetary donation (e.g. cash, check etc.) or by donating items such as maternity or baby supplies purchased by the council or donated through collection drives. Money or items donated to each qualifying organization must be donated between July 1 and June 30 within the fraternal year applied for, and must amount to at least \$500.

Guidelines for Qualifying Organizations

The following organizations qualify to receive a grant:

- Non-profit (U.S. 501c3 or Canadian Registered Charities) pregnancy resource centers offering a variety of services to pregnant women, new moms and babies, including counseling about the alternatives to abortion; abstinence education; referrals for legal, medical, housing, and social services resources; prenatal and parenting education; maternity/baby clothes, diapers and other support.
- Non-profit (U.S. 501c3 or Canadian Registered Charities) maternity homes providing housing services or post-birth transitional housing to pregnant women, new mothers and their children aged infant up to toddler (<5 years old).

The following do not qualify to receive a grant:

- Organizations not mentioned in the categories of qualifying organizations listed above.
- For-profit organizations.
- Organizations outside of the United States or Canada.
- Individuals or families.
- Donations made for the purchase of ultrasound machines do not qualify for a grant through ASAP.
- Organizations that promote, provide or refer for abortion, abortifacients, contraception or other associated practices inconsistent with Catholic moral and ethical principles.
- Organizations that have a mission statement which is inconsistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church, or are not welcoming of Catholics.

Please note: Consult with your local diocesan Respect Life Office regarding the suitability of the maternity home or pregnancy resource center. A member of the council or assembly should also contact the center or home's director to confirm it meets the requirements above. Pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes who are affiliated with Heartbeat International, Catholic Charities or dioceses, or are past participants of K of C Ultrasound Initiatives typically meet the criteria for participation per ASAP requirements. Identify affiliates by searching the database available at heartbeatinternational.org or through the Ultrasound Initiative map available at kofc.org/asap.

Applications will not be accepted without supporting documentation. Provide either a copy of a canceled check drawn on the council/assembly account (front and back) or an ASAP Donation Receipt Letter.

For U.S. applications, a W-9 from the pregnancy center or maternity home must also be provided as an attachment to the online form. A W-9 is not required if you have previously submitted one for the organization or it is listed on the Ultrasound Initiative map at kofc.org/asap.

W-9's are not required for Canadian organizations.



Aid and Support After Pregnancy

ASAP

Donation Receipt Letter

_____ acknowledges receipt of the below donation(s) from
(Name of Organization)

Knights of Columbus Council _____ on _____
(Council Name or Number) (Date)

Value of Items Donated _____

or

Funds Donated _____

Organization Name: _____

Organization EIN # / CRN: _____

Organization Mailing Address: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Organization Representative)

E-mail Address: _____ Phone: _____

State/Province: _____ Council/Assembly Number: _____



Aid and Support After Pregnancy

ASAP

Sample Letter Template

Councils and assemblies can use the following text as a template to accompany the check from Supreme to the pregnancy resource center or maternity supported through the ASAP Initiative.

Dear _____ ,
Name Of Pregnancy Center/Maternity Home Director

On behalf of _____ , I am pleased to convey the enclosed check in support of
Council/Assembly Name and Number

_____ 's efforts to serve women and babies, both born and unborn.
Name of Pregnancy Center/Maternity Home

We are grateful for the opportunity to contribute to your life-saving work to care for the most vulnerable.

Our enclosed donation is a part of the Knights of Columbus Aid and Support After Pregnancy (ASAP) program to increase financial support to pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes. Through this initiative, the Knights of Columbus donated more than \$5 million to pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes last year.

Please know that we remain committed to serving _____ and look
Name of Pregnancy Center/Maternity Home

forward to the next opportunity to volunteer. The Knights will continue to be there for mothers and their children, and we will continue to proclaim the dignity of every human life.

Sincerely,





**Knights of
Columbus®**

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