

Donate the gift of warmth to a vulnerable Aussie this winter

Winter is with us and these chilly months can be perilous for the three million Australians living below the poverty line who struggle without the means to keep warm.

To help vulnerable Aussies survive this winter, online charity GIVIT is seeking funds and goods for its GIVIT's Winter Warmer Appeal at givit.org.au.

The appeal will match our most vulnerable with big-hearted donors from communities across the country, including remote and regional areas. The person you help could be living within your own neighbourhood.

GIVIT supports 2,700 charities to meet their needs for warm clothing and bedding for the impoverished, homeless, women and children escaping domestic violence, asylum seekers and refugees as we head into what is expected to be a cruel winter in many parts of the country.

On any night around Australia, 116,000 people are homeless. Sadly census data reports a significant increase in the number of older women living on the streets.

GIVIT Founder and Director Juliette Wright said requests for help to the online charity always soar as the cooler weather set in.

"Australians, no matter where they come from or their financial circumstances, deserve to live with dignity, comfort and respect," Mrs Wright said. "Winter is particularly harsh on anyone living without a roof over their head.

"Practical help to survive winter will give someone living with very little the chance to survive, reconnect with society and ultimately help them break out of the cycle of poverty.

"Your good quality, used jacket will have a second chance to warm the heart of someone in need."

The GIVIT website includes urgent requests for blankets and doonas, heaters and warm clothes for families struggling to make ends meet this winter. Heartbreakingly, there are several requests for warm pyjamas for children.

Winter also brings hardships to new arrivals from warm climates who are not equipped for cold temperatures in some areas of Australia. Many do not have the financial resources to buy warm winter clothing, shoes and blankets.

Inexpensive items such as socks are in high demand by charities and can make a huge difference to the dignity and comfort of a homeless person trying to survive winter.

The soaring cost of electricity also puts a huge burden on struggling families during winter, many of whom are unable to afford heating bills so require more clothing and bedding to survive.

To donate funds to the GIVIT Winter Appeal please visit givit.org.au. One hundred per cent of funds to the appeal will be used to purchase essential items for an impoverished Australian.

To donate a specific item to help someone weather winter:

- 1: Choose an item request from GIVIT's "items needed list"
- 2: Select "Winter Warmer 2019" from the drop down list and offer your donation
- 3: Once approved, contact details between you and the charity are exchanged automatically
- 4: Arrange delivery of the item with the charity user behind the request

** Poverty figure from Australian Council of Social Service statistics from 2018*

** Homeless figure from Australian Census 2016*

For more information or to arrange an interview, contact media@givit.org.au or call 0444 503 759

About GIVIT

GIVIT is a national online not-for-profit connecting those who need with those willing to give. Through its website givit.org.au, trusted Australian charities are supported as they request essential, quality items on behalf of their clients. GIVIT matches their needs with public and corporate generosity, facilitating quality goods to reach our most vulnerable, impoverished and marginalised individuals in a safe, easy and timely manner. Since establishment in 2009, more than 1,200,000 items have been donated via GIVIT to assist Australians in need. In 2011 GIVIT established its disaster recovery service following the Queensland floods and managed the donation of more than 18,000 items. Since then GIVIT has become the official partner of the Queensland Government managing offers of assistance after disasters on its behalf and has already distributed more than 221,940 items after 2019 Queensland flooding. GIVIT distributed more than 16,000 items to people in need after the 2018 Queensland fires and after 2017's Tropical Cyclone Debbie, coordinated the donation of 92,000 items. In 2015, GIVIT gained national attention with Founder and Director Juliette Wright receiving Australia's Local Hero Award by the National Australia Day Council and inducted into the Australian Businesswomen's Network Hall of Fame. In 2019, she was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM). GIVIT also received a National Resilient Australia Award by Australia's Attorney-General for its disaster recovery service and The Australian National Innovation Challenge Award.