

VOLUNTEER MEAL SERVICE PROGRAM

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES



RMHC[®]
Maryland

Keeping families close

Feeding the Soul, Nourishing the Spirit

**Love Served Daily
at the Ronald McDonald House**

Are you or your organization looking for a way to give back to the community?

You can make a real difference by hosting a breakfast or dinner at the Ronald McDonald House!

For the past three decades, Ronald McDonald House Charities Maryland has offered a loving “home away from home” to families needing to be near their seriously ill or injured children while they’re being treated at Baltimore’s world-renowned hospitals.

We need your support to help make our House a true “home away from home” for our families. One of our most beloved activities is our **“Feeding the Soul; Nourishing the Spirit: Love Served Daily Program”** where all of our RMH guests enjoy a meal together.

Each morning before families take our Shuttle to the hospital and each evening when they return, volunteers have the opportunity to prepare a hot meal for them. Providing breakfast is a wonderful way to start your day off right and give children the energy they need to face a long day of hospital visits. Dinners are a chance to let them unwind and relax in a family atmosphere.

In addition to providing nutrition, we like to think you are helping us feed their soul and fortify their spirits.

This booklet provides food preparation and safety parameters, guidance and recipe ideas to help ensure you and our Ronald McDonald House families have a rewarding experience. Additionally, we have provided some “Frequently Asked Questions” about the RMH if you want to learn more about our mission.

We sincerely appreciate your willingness to provide RMH Families with a meal to share fellowship and hope over good food!

Sincerely,

Your Friends at RMH

When can I provide a meal?

- ❖ Our goal is to offer our guests breakfast and dinner 365 days of the year.
- ❖ You can help us reach our goal by volunteering to provide breakfast any morning (7:30 – 9 a.m. weekdays; 8:30 – 10 a.m. weekends) or dinner any evening (served nightly at 6 p.m.).

How do I sign up?

- ❖ If you would like to volunteer to provide a meal or have any questions about the dinner program, please contact our Volunteer Manager, Ashley O'Connor. We will be happy to work with your schedule, but be sure to call ahead and reserve the date you want.
- ❖ Ashley will send out an e-mail at the beginning of each month to double check your group is still on board to volunteer on your scheduled date. Please confirm as soon as possible and send us your delicious menu.
- ❖ If we do not hear back from you with confirmation, we may release your scheduled date! So please be sure to send your confirmation ASAP when you receive the reminder notice.
- ❖ If you need to cancel for whatever reason, please let Ashley know at least a week in advance. If your group must cancel, you also have the option of providing funding for us to purchase the meal for our families (ex: ordering pizza, Chinese food, etc.)

How many people should the dinner serve and what should I plan to bring?

- ❖ Dinners should serve at least 45-50 people and should contain at least one vegetarian dish and one dish without tomatoes.
- ❖ Please note we are unable to provide an exact count for any given meal due to the constant fluctuation in our occupancy.
- ❖ We welcome and encourage your group to join our families for the meal. Please add any additional people to the recommended RMH total.
- ❖ Dinners should also include all courses- a main entree, side dishes, dessert, and beverages such as tea, fruit juices, milk, lemonade, soda, etc. If possible, please bring plastic cups, plates, and utensils as well.
- ❖ Dinners can be prepared on-site, delivered and/or catered. Meals should not be prepared in your home.
- ❖ Some very broad, general guidelines to help you in your planning:
 - Poultry or meat: 6 oz per person
 - Rice and Grains: 1.5 oz per person
 - Potatoes: 5 oz per person
 - Pasta: 4 oz per person (main course)
 - Vegetables: 4 oz per person
 - Green Salad: 1 oz per person

- Dessert: Allow 1 slice of cake, tart or pastry; 4 oz of creamy dessert or 5 oz ice cream

What to Do Ahead of Time:

- ❖ Gather a group of 8-10 people. Groups should not exceed 10 people during one meal time and children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult at all times.
- ❖ Choose a delicious menu and send it to Ashley so she can share it with the families ahead of time!
- ❖ Make a flyer promoting your meal. You can e-mail us a copy and we will personally put it on our Family Information Station board.
- ❖ Determine how much time you will need on-site to prepare and make sure you arrive in enough time to prepare your meal on-site.
- ❖ Please remember to use coolers/insulators to transport any food items here to the RMH.

What to Bring With You:

- ❖ All delicious ingredients for your meal.
- ❖ All paper and plastic products- plates, cups, napkins and utensils.
- ❖ Bring music- a CD or iPod with player (optional- our families love having background music with dinner) .

What to Do When You Get Here:

- ❖ Parking Pass: Make sure to get a yellow parking pass from the Guest Service Manager when you arrive. This pass will allow you to park on the surface lot across the street for free. The pass should go on your dashboard.
- ❖ Groups must sign in at the Front Desk and get their yellow volunteer bracelets.
- ❖ Grab a cart. Carts are available for easy transport of food items to and from the kitchens. Carts are located at the front entrance in the first door to the left.
- ❖ The volunteer basket filled with trash bags and cleaning supplies is located on the wall in the second floor kitchen.
- ❖ Group members should not open our door for anyone who is not in their group. We ask the groups who are not arriving at the same time to please have your group be responsible for letting each other into our House.
- ❖ Prepare your meal!! Instructions on how to operate our ovens and microwave are located in the volunteer basket.
- ❖ When your meal is ready to be served please, dial x101 from the phone in our second floor kitchen to reach the front desk so we may make an announcement to the families.
- ❖ Groups are encouraged to eat with the families that share the House and enjoy their time here.
- ❖ Groups are encouraged to provide table-side service of food and beverage to the families. It is also nice to have a group member offer to clear plates.

Is there any guidance around what type of food I should or should not prepare?

- ❖ There are few dietary restrictions for food prepared. Generally, mildly spiced foods tend to be the most popular.
- ❖ Please only cook with eggs that are pasteurized.
- ❖ Bean sprouts must not be used in any dishes. Sprouts can be dangerous to high-risk populations.
- ❖ If you prepare a spicy dish, please have a non-spicy version available. A more bland option will help those with sensitive stomachs enjoy the meal.
- ❖ If bringing seafood, please make a meat or meatless dish to serve as well. Some people are allergic to seafood.

What are the food safety considerations at the Ronald McDonald House?

- ❖ Cleanliness is extremely important. Please remember many of our guests have weak immune systems and it is very important to be extra careful when preparing meals.
- ❖ Wash your hands with warm soapy water before and after preparing food and before eating. Hand sanitizer is also located in several locations in both kitchens.
- ❖ If you have hair that goes past your shoulders, please tie it back with a hair tie.
- ❖ Red meats should be cooked to 165°F and poultry should be cooked to 180°F. All cold meals/dishes must be under 41°F. (thermometers are provided in the kitchens)
- ❖ Please make sure to wipe off thermometers with an alcohol wipe after each use. (Alcohol wipes can be found in the kitchen.)
- ❖ Thoroughly clean utensils prior to cutting or using.
- ❖ Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running water before peeling or cutting.
- ❖ Put perishable foods in refrigerator until immediately prior to serving and then again within 2 hours of serving. Refrigerator space is usually available in the free food refrigerator or on the first floor. You are welcome to drop your food items off in the morning for storage and refrigeration if that helps with your schedule.
- ❖ Egg, cream or mayonnaise based foods should not be left unrefrigerated for more than an hour.
- ❖ Please use different utensils for stirring foods while cooking.

What kind of cooking equipment is available for use?

- ❖ The Ronald McDonald House Maryland has 2 kitchens with a total of 6 stoves, 6 ovens, 4 microwaves and several refrigerators.
- ❖ Hot plates are required for food service. There are warming plates readily available in the RMH kitchens.

- ❖ Our kitchens are fully stocked with pots, pans, and any other kitchen utensils used for cooking.
- ❖ If possible, please bring plastic or paper products for serving the meal.

What about clean-up?

- ❖ We appreciate your volunteer group helping us clean up after dinner!
- ❖ All dirty dishes should be placed in the dishwasher. If it is full, please put soap powder in it and turn it on.
- ❖ All uneaten food should be placed in containers and labeled with the day's date and marked "free." Labels are available in the volunteer basket. Some containers are available in the kitchens.
- ❖ There is one Free Food Refrigerator and Pantry in each of the second and third floor kitchens. Please do not leave food in the refrigerators that our families share.
- ❖ Counters should be wiped down with Lysol wipes provided in the kitchens.
- ❖ Trash should be taken out to the dumpster located behind the building. Trash bags are provided in your volunteer basket. Trash take out should be done in pairs.
- ❖ Our quiet hours begin at 9 p.m. each evening. Please complete dinner clean up by that time.
- ❖ If you see anything out of order or there is something we don't have that you would like to see in our kitchens and House, please be sure to leave us a note or message at the front desk before you leave. We need and love your input!!!

Here are some easy and delicious meal ideas:

- ❖ We encourage you to be creative and think of meals your own family would enjoy. In addition to perennial favorites like Italian Night and Mexican Night, consider these:
 - Breakfast for Dinner: Pancakes, sausage, bacon, hash browns, fruit, eggs, French toast, omelets to order, biscuits, desserts and drinks.
 - Potato Bar: Lots of baked potatoes, cheese, broccoli, bacon bits, cut-up chicken, chives, onions, lettuce, tomato, butter, sour cream, desserts and drinks
 - Soup Night: Makes lots of different types of soups, breads, salads, desserts and drinks.
 - Cook Out: We have a great gas grill and our families love anything cooked on the grill. Chicken, burgers, hot dogs, kabobs!
 - Grilled Cheese and Soup Night: Get clever with all kinds of custom grilled cheese ideas and bring a few crock pots of different soups. Great for cold winter nights.
- ❖ Here are some websites to check out for ideas and quantities. There are many, many internet sites for recipes and quantity cooking. We encourage you to check them out.

www.recipehut.homestead.com

www.razzledazzlerecipes.com

www.thatsmyhome.com (has a recipe converter for your favorite recipes)

For cancellations, confirmations, scheduling and any other concerns or inquiries about the volunteer program, please contact Ashley O'Connor at ashley@rmhcmaryland.org, or 410.528.1010 x 106.