



MID-MICHIGAN

Family Meals from the Heart Guidelines

Thank you for your interest in helping the families staying at the Ronald McDonald House of Mid-Michigan. Providing meals for our families is an integral part of making the House a home away from home for those staying at the House. We appreciate your understanding of and respect for the challenging circumstances our families face with their ill children.

As you prepare to lend your time and talents, please carefully review the following guidelines. Following these guidelines will ensure the best possible experiences for families and volunteers alike.

Highlights

- This program is meant for groups of no more than eight volunteers.
- With the exception of some condiments, volunteer groups will supply all of the food for the meal. See below for notes on condiments.
- The number of families staying at the House varies. Volunteers can generally expect to serve between 10 and 20 people.
- Volunteers can expect to spend between two and three hours at the House, plus any pre-preparation done beforehand
- All volunteers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with safe food handling and preparation rules and regulations.
- Children are welcome provided your group remains accountable for their supervision.
- If a member of your group is or has recently been ill, please refrain from attending. We understand this to be a disappointment, but we make this request for the safety of our families.

Pre-Preparation

Please limit your group size to no more than eight people, including children. This helps keep our House a restful haven for our families.

Please contact the House the day before or the morning of your scheduled food preparation to confirm the number of people staying in the House.

Health & Safety

Food safety and handling rules and regulations require that all food is prepared in the onsite House kitchen or in a verifiable professional kitchen. This includes defrosting of meats, washing and/or chopping of vegetables, mixing of ingredients prior to arrival, etc.

Please remind all chefs to wash hands thoroughly before and while preparing food. Food service gloves should be used when handling ready-to-eat foods, i.e. preparing salad and slicing bread.

Participants and visitors should be healthy and free of any flu like symptoms, fever or exposure to infectious diseases.

For more safety tips, visit <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/>.

Serving Requirements & Hints

You should plan to have dinner ready between 6:00 and 6:30. Our volunteers will usually arrive around 5:00, but you are welcome to come as early as 4:30. If you need access to the kitchen prior to 4:30, please call the House to make arrangements.

Spaghetti, lasagna and tacos are the most commonly served dinners at the House. We ask you to consider serving up some variety to our families as you plan your group's meal contribution. We've provided some recipe ideas in this kit for inspiration!

Thank you for helping provide healthful and balanced meals! It may be helpful to know one 16-ounce bag of frozen vegetables or 2 to 3 cans of vegetables will typically suffice. Salad servings should range from about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup per person.

Please serve salad-related items like salad dressing, cheese, croutons, etc. on the side when possible. This helps to maximize the length of time salads stay appealing to families. You might consider serving salads in a salad bar style.

Pasta servings should range from $\frac{1}{2}$ cup to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup per person. One pound of spaghetti will serve 10 to 12 people.

Quite often we have condiments! If your dinner includes things like salad dressing, sour cream, ketchup, etc., please call the House so we can let you know whether you need to bring condiments or not.

We also quite often have non-perishables! If you'd like to serve canned vegetables, boxed noodle, rice or potato side dishes, call us to see if we might already have it in the pantry.

House meals should be prepared buffet style. Our families are very grateful for your kindness in the form of a home-cooked meal, but they are often at the hospital and are usually not at the House when the meal is served. You can plan to prepare the meal and place your delicious results in the storage containers provided. More on this below.

Meal Planning

Our families look forward to enjoying complete meals. Whether in the form of a meat, vegetable and side dish or casserole or hearty stew, we ask that you consider providing a well-rounded meal.

Please avoid serving especially exotic foods. Things like sushi, seafood or foods are very spicy should be avoided.

Plan to bring a list of ingredients for your prepared foods. You can either print the recipe out or list the ingredients on one of our dry erase boards. We'd like to be mindful of any food allergies or sensitivities.

You may feel free to provide beverages, but they are not required. We have a soda machine at the House.

Arrival at the House

For unloading, please drive to the front of the House. You will unload at the front door. The Manager on Duty will greet you and show you to the kitchen upon your arrival.

If you require a cart for unloading purposes, please call ahead to request.

All guests must park in the lot south of the House. Please do not leave cars in the front drive after unloading.

Our library is available for you to store your coats and bags while you're preparing in the kitchen.

Before leaving for the night, please check out with the Manager on Duty.

Kitchen

The House has utensils, dishware and cookware for your use, including pots and pans.

Please do not use metal in the non-stick pots and pans - we'd like them to stay as nice as possible for as long as possible!

We have a grill perfect for outdoor grilling when the weather is nice.

Storage & Clean Up

More often than not, families will not be present to eat upon dinner being completed. Their schedules depend completely on the hospital and the condition of their ill children.

Food should not be left out on the serving area. Instead, meals should be packaged into storage containers with lids. Please label the containers with "Community," the date and what is in the container. Labels and markers are in the drawer under the coffee carafe.

We ask that you leave the kitchen in the condition you found it. Please wipe down the cabinets and counters, hand wash, dry and put away pots and pans, start the dishwasher if it is full, take the trash out if it is full, rinse and recycle any recyclables and sweep the kitchen floor.

Special Notes

If you are unable to meet your commitment, please provide as much notice as possible so we can make arrangements for our families. Takeout or delivery is perfectly acceptable if you find yourself in a pinch. Our families like to dine on pizza, subs, Chinese occasionally, too!

Feel free to take photographs, refraining from including any of our families in your shot. If you would like to shoot video, please call the House to obtain permission.

Volunteers are asked to stay in the common areas of the House. Tours can be arranged with prior coordination.

We have a radio and CD player in the kitchen for your enjoyment. Please be mindful and respectful of the volume.

Our volunteers spend anywhere between \$50 and \$200 and beyond. Cost very much varies dependent on meal and group. Remember, some of the best meals are simple and cost-effective!

Thank you!

We thank you for your time and talents in providing a healthy, comforting, home-cooked meal for our families. We hope to see you again!

Contact Information

To volunteer for our Family Dinner Program, please call our Dinner Coordinator, **Dona Gartside** at **517-669-3272** or **rmhmm.meals@gmail.com**.

For House/meal specific inquiries, including confirmation of number of families to serve, please call our Resident House Manager **Ruth Lumbert** at **517-485-9303**.

PLEASE REVIEW AND SIGN OUR GUIDELINES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM BELOW AND BRING WITH YOU TO YOUR SCHEDULED VOLUNTEER DAY.

FAMILY MEALS FROM THE HEART PROVIDER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please ensure you have thoroughly read the Family Meals from the Heart Guidelines.

Your signature below certifies that you have read the Family Meals from the Heart Guidelines and agree to abide by them.

Signature

Date