



PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. Please limit the size of your group to no more than six people. This will ensure a favorable experience for your organization as well as the Ronald McDonald House families. If there are several people from your business or church that are interested, break them up into small groups.
2. Groups of volunteers ages 12-17 are welcome to participate in the Meals from the Heart Program. We do require one adult sponsor per five volunteers under the age of 18.
3. Please remind your participants they should not come if they have a fever, are not feeling well, or think they may have been exposed to a communicable disease. (example: COVID19 or chicken pox). Any exposure could be very harmful to immunosuppressed children.
4. Food can be prepared outside the Ronald McDonald House in a commercial kitchen and brought in or you can prepare the entire meal at the Ronald McDonald House. Food may also be purchased already cooked and other items added to it to make a meal, such as fried chicken, pizza, etc. Please no spaghetti dinners - this is something that can be fixed quickly by the families and is eaten very often. We have plenty of items in our pantry if you would like to use them for your meal.
5. When scheduling a dinner, it is best to plan to begin serving sometime between 6:15 and 6:30 pm. Some groups prefer to set the tables and serve the families while others set the food out buffet-style and allow them to walk through.
6. Please realize that hospital schedules and patient treatment times vary. We never know an exact number of people that will be eating and can only give you an estimate (approximately 10 to 20 people). It is helpful to call and confirm this estimate count a few days ahead.
7. Our kitchen is well stocked with dishes, glasses, pots & pans, and utensils. We also have a gas grill on our back deck at the House near Cox South if grilling is something your group may enjoy.
8. You are also responsible for clean-up. If you would like to prepare a meal, but do not have the manpower to help serve and clean up, please let us know and we may be able to coordinate efforts with one of our Family Care Managers.



FOOD PREPARATION GUIDELINES

1. Before any food preparation begins, each group member is required to wash their hands and forearms for at least 20 seconds with warm soapy water. Wash your hands frequently, especially between handling raw food and ready-to-eat food, to prevent cross-contamination.
2. Gloves must be worn at all times when handling ready-to-eat food. This includes, but is not limited to, bread, chips, cookies, vegetables, etc. Gloves are provided in the kitchen.
3. Aprons are provided for your use while at the House. We encourage you to wear these at all times when preparing and serving the meal.
4. Hairnets are also provided at the House. If you have longer hair, we ask that you pull it back in a ponytail before you begin the meal preparations.
5. When cooking meats, please ensure the proper temperature is reached for food safety. We have two meat thermometers available in the kitchen. Most meats need to reach at least 160° F before consumption.
6. Items that are packaged in abundance, such as potato chips, should be placed in bowls and served with a gloved hand or tongs.
7. Any cloths that are used should be used for one purpose and then immediately put in the dirty cloths receptacle for washing. Food spills should be cleaned up immediately and the cloth should be rinsed in the sink before being put in the receptacle.
8. All leftovers need to be properly stored in appropriate containers. Please use containers with lids or zip lock bags to store food in the refrigerator or freezer. Any item that can be individually wrapped will need to be wrapped as soon as the meal is over. We have foil and clear wrap in the cabinets for this purpose.
9. Be sure to wash your hands thoroughly before using the ice machine and scoop. Place the scoop back in the appropriate holder when finished.
10. All dinnerware needs to be placed in the dishwashers so they can be properly cleaned and sanitized.

Thank you for taking time to contribute to our "Meals from the Heart" Program. We appreciate all that you do for our families and children.

"One cannot think well, love well, or sleep well if one has not dined well." - Virginia Wolf

If you would like more information or would like to schedule a meal, contact:

House Near Cox South: Lindsey Kimes at 417.875.3501 or lindsey.kimes@rmhcozarks.org
House at Mercy Kids: Breanna Wilson at 417.820.0764 or breanna.wilson@rmhcozarks.org