



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



MEALS on WHEELS

JOHNSON & ELLIS COUNTIES

TOGETHER, WE CAN DELIVER.

www.mowjec.org





VOLUNTEER! VOLUNTEER! VOLUNTEER!

Welcome to the Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties' family!! This organization was founded 40 years ago and remains based on the same mission today as it was then, to serve the children of yesterday by enabling homebound elderly and disabled persons to remain independent and healthy in their homes by providing home-delivered meals, daily personal contact, and support for individuals and their families.

Because we have direct contact with the elderly in their homes, it is important that all of our volunteers are aware of the standards and procedures of our meal-delivery program. All volunteers will receive an orientation to Meals on Wheels and its mission. All safety procedures and policies will be discussed, as well as your volunteer duties.

During your orientation, you are provided with the essential knowledge needed to perform your volunteer duties. Our major funding source contracts require that we spend at least one hour orienting each volunteer. We appreciate your attention and compliance. The information in this handbook serves as a reference and source of information. We hope that you will refer to it periodically as you volunteer.

As a new Meals on Wheels volunteer, you may find that you have questions. Our staff is *always* available to assist you with any concerns. We believe, "*Volunteers are the eyes and ears of Meals on Wheels,*" and we rely on our army of volunteers to make sure each and every client of Meals on Wheels is safe and well.

The success and reputation of Meals on Wheels of Johnson & Ellis Counties is dependent upon the reliability, promptness and efficiency of our wonderful volunteers. *Meals on Wheels could not operate one day without you!*

THANK YOU FOR CARING & SHARING YOUR VALUABLE TIME!

Your Volunteer Specialist at Meals on Wheel of Johnson & Ellis Counties

WHY VOLUNTEER?

Meals on Wheels delivers fresh, hot lunches Monday through Friday around the noontime hour. Some of our clients will receive frozen meals on Friday, so they will have meals for the weekend.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MEALS ON WHEELS VOLUNTEER

Your responsibility, as a volunteer, is to successfully deliver these meals to the homebound elderly and disabled recipients. Your time and effort makes a difference in our community!! Every time you deliver for Meals on Wheels our clients benefit immediately from the nutritious meals, as well as the love, concern, hope and friendship that you offer.

YOUR VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

1. Deliver the meals promptly and in a safe manner.
2. Try to see and briefly say hello to the client each time you deliver.
3. Call the Meals on Wheels office, if a client is not home.
4. Check on the well-being of clients and report any changes to the Volunteer Specialists.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GUARANTEEING MEAL DELIVERY

We guarantee meal delivery to an average of more than 700 clients daily.

WHAT RAISES OUR COSTS AND LOWERS OUR EFFICIENCY:

- “No shows,” late cancels and last-minute volunteer cancellations severely impact our delivery system and may cause clients to receive their meals late.
- If a regular volunteer is unable to deliver, no matter the reason, we must find volunteers or a staff person to deliver the meals.
- Please make reminders for yourself or request a reminder call/text/email from one of our Volunteer Specialists.
- Please call/text/email the Volunteer Specialist or office if you are going to be late or unable to deliver as scheduled. We request a 24-hour notice, if at all possible.
- Remember Meals on Wheels and your homebound neighbors are depending on you!

CANCELLATIONS BY VOLUNTEER MEAL-DELIVERY DRIVERS ARE ACCEPTED 24 HOURS A DAY!

Call our office at 817.558.2840 or 972.351.9943. When prompted follow the directions or you can email or text the Volunteer Specialist.

WHAT DO I NEED TO VOLUNTEER?

YOUR OWN VEHICLE: In addition, volunteer meal-delivery drivers must provide the Volunteer Specialist with a copy of their driver's license and liability insurance on their vehicles, in compliance with the laws and requirements of the State of Texas.

TIME: 45-minutes-to-an-hour, once a week is normally what is assigned; however, some volunteers deliver more or less often. Businesses and/or groups may have limited personnel and drive once or twice a month. Any combination can be arranged to accommodate you.

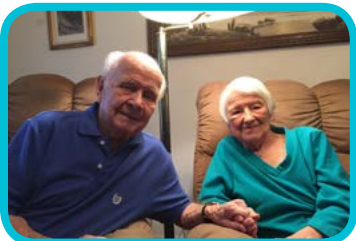
BACKGROUND CHECK: Meals on Wheels is required to complete a criminal background check on every volunteer.

WHO ARE THE CLIENTS OF MEALS ON WHEELS?

Meals on Wheels' clients are people that have requested the meal service and meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Usually 60 years old or older
- Reside within the service area
- Primarily homebound or have little or no help
- Have physical or mental impairments, which make meal preparation difficult

There is NOT a waiting list for service for those people who directly apply for Meals on Wheels and are found to be eligible. Short-term service is available for up to six weeks for those who are recuperating from serious illness or need meals in the interim. In some cases, service is provided for a spouse or other caregiver who is at risk of becoming overwhelmed by the responsibilities involved in the caring of an individual.



NUTRITIOUS: A registered, licensed dietitian plans our monthly menus. Our meals meet or exceed 1/3 of the Dietary Reference Intake (DRI) for all seniors as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Meals on Wheels offers special diets for clients with different dietary needs such as diabetic-friendly and vegetarian meals.

ENJOYABLE: Client surveys are conducted on a quarterly basis. The results demonstrate that our clients enjoy their meals.

HOT: Meals are picked up by volunteer drivers at the Meals on Wheels offices and from community pick-up locations in insulated containers.

SPECIAL DIETS: Meals on Wheels offers special diets for clients with different dietary needs. We use codes to easily identify special cold snacks and hot meals.

- *Diabetic meals and desserts* are marked with a "D" on the top of the meal and dessert container.
- *Vegetarian meals* are marked with a "VEG" on the top of the meal.
- *Diabetic/Vegetarian meals* are marked with a "D" and "VEG" on the top of the meal. The dessert is marked with a "D."

Because some of the clients are on special diets, it is important that special attention is paid to making sure a client that is on a special diet receives the correct meal.

BEVERAGES: Most clients receive a beverage and it is included in the cold container. Occasionally, there may be a client that does not receive a beverage. For those clients, a beverage will not be noted on the route sheet.

Beverage choices include:

Milk, buttermilk, chocolate milk, orange juice and apple juice.

ABOUT THE MEALS



DELIVERY OF MEALS

We provide you with two standard-size insulated containers and sometimes an insulated bag, which fit in any vehicle: one container for hot items such as the entrée and bread and the other for cold items such as the beverage and dessert.

Both of the insulated containers are labeled at the top with a letter representing the city and a number representing the route. The insulated bag is used for frozen meals.

For example, if you are delivering Cleburne Route 3, your container will have C-3 written on the top or for Waxahachie Route 4, W-4.

WHAT IS A ROUTE SHEET?

Every time you deliver meals you receive a route sheet. A route sheet is a select list of clients who live in the same general area to whom you will deliver. It contains the mileage summary, route number, date and total number of stops.

The route sheet provides you with all the information you need to deliver your route and includes the following information:

1. Each client's name, phone number, address and which meal and beverage they receive.
2. Turn-by-turn directions from the pick-up point to the first client's house and from the first client's house to the second and so on.
3. Precise, step-by-step directions are carefully mapped, so each route is efficient and easy to navigate.

MENU

A menu for each day's noontime meal is included in the hot insulated container. Sometimes the clients will ask you what's being served, so be sure and check what's on the menu for that day.

SAMPLE MENU



Hamburger Patty
Lettuce/Tomato/Onion
Ranch Beans
Hamburger Bun
Mayonnasie & Mustard
Peach Cobbler
Milk/Buttermilk/Chocolate Milk/Orange Juice/Apple Juice
Diet – Hot Spiced Peaches
Veggie – Black Bean Burger

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL DELIVERY

1. Arrive at the pick-up location at the designated time. If you are running late, please notify the office.
2. Pick up the containers needed for your route.
3. Please check to make sure the containers are for your designated route.
4. Check the last page of the route sheet. It has a summary of the number of meals that are in the containers.
5. Make sure you pick up any additional items that may need to be handed out to clients, eg., surveys, newspapers, gifts, etc.
6. Always check your route sheet to see if it has changed since the last time you delivered.

WHILE ON ROUTE

- Deliver meals in the order that is listed on the route sheet.
- If a black bar is covering a client's name, it indicates a last minute cancellation. Please skip that delivery and continue to follow the directions to the next person on the route.
- Check the street name/residence number.
- At the door, knock loudly, announce yourself as a Meals on Wheels' volunteer.
- Please allow plenty of time for the client to get to the door.
- Most clients come to the door to receive their meal. You may be asked to take the meal inside. If the client needs additional help, instructions are noted on the route sheet.
- When you greet the client, wear a smile, call him/her by their name and try to visit. Besides bringing a hot meal and a warm greeting, you may also be the only person they see during the day.
- When handling the meals, individually or in the containers, be careful! Please try to keep the meals level during delivery. When the meals are not level, spilling may occur. A tray is also provided to assist with the delivery of the meal.
- Clients may receive frozen meals for the weekend and/or holidays. Frozen weekend meals are sent out on Fridays and frozen holiday meals are sent out one-to-two days before a holiday. All frozen meals are made to accommodate each clients' diet.
- If a client is not going to eat their meal right away, please strongly encourage the client to place their meal in the refrigerator.
- Please remember to check and double check the route sheet.

WHEN A CLIENT DOES NOT ANSWER THE DOOR

- If there is no answer, please take the meal back to your vehicle and attempt to call the phone number listed on the route sheet. If there is not an answer, then please return the meal to the containers and proceed to the next stop on your route. Please call the office and we will attempt to contact the client.
- If there is not a phone number listed below the client's name, then they do not have a phone. If they do not answer the door, please contact the office and continue on the route. Then leave the meal in the containers and return it when you return the containers.
- All clients who are not at home during meal delivery are contacted by phone to ensure their safety. If they cannot be reached, the emergency contacts are called.
- Please write on your route sheet "NOT HOME" when the client is not at home and contact the office.

A FEW DON'T DOS!

- Don't leave the meal outside the client's home. The meal will not be a safe temperature to eat if you do this.
- Don't leave the meal with a neighbor or someone else.
- Sometimes you might find a note on the client's door instructing you to leave the meal on the porch, in the car, in a chair, etc. Never leave the meal unless Meals on Wheels has instructed you to do so. The client may be gone longer than anticipated and there is a real danger of the food spoiling before he/she returns. If you are unsure, please call the office.
- If a client asks you to deliver a message to the office, please encourage him/her to call the office.

AFTER YOU COMPLETE YOUR ROUTE

- Return to the pick-up point with the containers, any undelivered food items and the route sheet.
- Please sign the route sheet to verify delivery of the meals.
- Report any inaccuracies on the route sheet.

EYES AND EARS

When you arrive to deliver a meal, you become for many clients a source of more than just food. You may be the only person that the client sees all day. It is also important that you see the client as often as possible when delivering their meals, in order to check on their well-being.

PLEASE PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO THE CLIENT'S SURROUNDINGS & MAKE OBSERVATIONS SUCH AS:

1. Do you smell natural/propane gas?
2. Do you see unopened meal trays sitting out from previous days? If possible, discard old meals that you find!
3. How is the client's health? Shortness of breath, sick, disoriented, have they fallen, any injuries?
4. Are there any safety hazards? Dogs, broken steps, etc?
5. Is there adequate heating or cooling?
6. If a family member or friend receives the meal two weeks in a row and the client is not visible, please notify our office.
7. If any conditions such as, the client's health and/or living condition causes you alarm, please contact the office right away.
8. If a client says that he/she does not have any food and the Meals on Wheels' meals are not enough, report this to the office.

SAFETY FIRST

WE WANT YOU TO REMEMBER THAT YOUR SAFETY IS ALWAYS IMPORTANT TO US!

- Do not venture into any situation that does not seem safe to you.
- Be careful when stepping in tall grass or stepping into oil or grease that may cause you to slide.
- Do not enter a yard with an unrestrained dog or steps you cannot safely navigate.
- Always lock your car.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times.
- Know where you are going - read the route sheet.

EMERGENCIES

If you encounter an emergency situation in which you feel the client's health is at risk, do not move the client or give them water. Ask for instructions from the client about who to call and call our office immediately. If a client is unconscious or has fallen, please do not attempt to pick them up, call 9-1-1 and then our office.

WANT TO CONTRIBUTE MORE?

- Give cash or an in-kind gift donation.
- Remember a loved one with a Memorial gift or honor that special someone with an Honorarium.
- Help us recruit new volunteers.
- Donate any old or unused car to our "Wheels for Meals" program.
- Occasionally, there are mail outs, newsletters and packets that we may need help putting together.
- Collect canned goods for shelf-stable meals that are provided in case of inclement weather.

SOLICITATION & GIFTS

- Never solicit clients for business purposes and do not accept gifts from Meals on Wheels' clients. If a client offers a contribution for the meal, please encourage them to make a donation to Meals on Wheels, but do not accept any other monetary or other gifts from clients.
- At times, a client may give you a donation to return to our office. It is acceptable to take those and bring them back with your containers. Please note on the route sheet that a donation was made and who gave the donation. If your drop-off location is not at a manned location, please leave the donation in the containers with the route sheet.

DOING EXTRAS

- Please check with Meals on Wheels before bringing extra food items or sweets to clients.
- Perhaps a client repeatedly asks you to run errands or perform tasks when you arrive. You are not obligated in any way to volunteer any services beyond the meal delivery. You may do as much or as little as you wish.
- If you are concerned that a client needs more than you are able to give, report it to our office.

DATES TO REMEMBER

HOLIDAY/WEATHER CLOSINGS

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- 4th of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- Ice and Snow

In case of inclement/severe weather conditions, Meals on Wheels will not deliver meals. Please contact our office, check our website or watch local news stations for information on closings.

CONFIDENTIAL

- Observe, maintain and protect confidentiality regarding clients and avoid sharing information that identifies clients.
- Treat proprietary or privileged information involving clients or other volunteers as strictly confidential.
- Remember that you have the client's trust. Do not discuss their living situation, health conditions, financial status or anything you learn about them to anyone, except a Meals on Wheels staff member.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- All volunteers shall immediately disclose any business, commercial or financial interest where such interests might be construed as being real, potential or apparent conflict with their official duties of the organization.
- Avoid activity construed as conflict of interest, i.e., neither accept loans or gifts of money or property from clients nor give gifts of money or property to clients, unless through an organized agency program.
- Refrain from offering medical, legal or financial advice to clients.

NON-HARASSMENT

- Respect the cultural, religious and political views of clients and refrain from imposing your cultural, religious and political views on clients.
- Maintain an environment free of harassment (physical, sexual or verbal), discrimination and unprofessional conduct.

REFUSAL OF SERVICE

- Refrain from false, misrepresented or omitted information on a volunteer application form and understand that Meals on Wheels cannot accept applications with such information.
- Although Meals on Wheels has the right to refuse to accept volunteers on the basis of credibility, reliability or ethical backgrounds; no person shall be refused as a volunteer solely on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age or national origin.

VOLUNTEER DISMISSAL

- Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and procedures of Meals on Wheels, or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment may be dismissed. Volunteers may also be dismissed for refusing to deliver to eligible clients.

SUGGESTIONS

Your opinions and suggestions are important to us!!! We value the many hours you donate to volunteer with Meals on Wheels. Our office is always open to you and we welcome any suggestions that make your job of delivering meals easier.



MEALS WHEELS™

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