



**Ronald McDonald
House Charities®**
New York Metro

MEALS FROM THE HEART BRUNCH/DINNER PROGRAM

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Thank you for your interest in our "Meals from the Heart" Brunch/Dinner Program. The Meals from the Heart program gives local businesses, community organizations, church groups, schools, and families, etc., the opportunity to volunteer at Ronald McDonald House Charities New York Metro by planning and preparing a brunch or dinner meal for our resident families.

"Meals from the Heart" Guidelines and Frequently Asked Questions

These documents contain essential general information about the House and information specific to your meal preparation.

Before you come...

- ♥ Maximum of 12 people (18 years of age and over). If you are under the age of 18 you **MUST** be accompanied by an adult
- ♥ Photo ID is required for adults and will be scanned to enter the building.
- ♥ Please let us know what you will be making at least three days before your scheduled date so we can inform the residents of the delicious menu that is being provided. At this time, we will provide you with an approximate headcount of families to use for your shopping list needs (don't forget your to-go containers).

While you're here...

- ♥ Gloves are required to be worn during food prep.
- ♥ Hair must always be covered or pulled back while cooking and serving food.
- ♥ For dinner groups only, we ask that you pack individual meals in to-go containers for the families and let staff know when you are done.
- ♥ Please clean up the kitchen area and all kitchen items and surfaces used before completing your day of service.



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We'd love to hear all about it...

- ♥ Please share your photos and experience with us!
- ♥ Tag us on your social media- #RMHCNYM
- ♥ Send an email, photo, or video to Cassandra Basile at cbasile@rmhcny.org and share a little about your experience!

Cancellations...

- ♥ If a scheduling conflict arises and you need to cancel your cooking date, please cancel online at least 7 days prior to your reservation, using the link in your confirmation email. In addition, please send an email to lcabble@rmhcny.org notifying us directly of your cancellation.
- ♥ Please Note: If you cancel your reserved date but would still like to support our families, please consider sending meals from your favorite restaurant, instead. We are happy to provide a list of local restaurants that can provide and deliver meals to the House. Please email us at lcabble@rmhcny.org with the name and contact telephone number of the restaurant that will be providing the food to the House on your behalf.

Please read our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for more specific information about the Brunch/Dinner Program and your visit to Ronald McDonald House Charities New York Metro



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MEALS FROM THE HEART BRUNCH/DINNER PROGRAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE MEALS FROM THE HEART PROGRAM?

- ♥ Brunch/Dinner program volunteers should be at least 16 years old. Youth group volunteers, between the ages of 16 and 18, must be supervised by an adult.

HOW MANY COOKS MAY VISIT AT ONE TIME?

- ♥ We are happily welcoming groups of up to twelve participants. All volunteers must be 16 years of age or older and a photo ID is required to enter our building. This guideline has been carefully adopted to respect the safety, comfort, and privacy of our residents who use our kitchen facilities throughout the day.

WHAT DOES A MEALS FROM THE HEART VOLUNTEER HAVE TO DO?

- ♥ Volunteers schedule a day and time to visit the House to cook. Part of the fun of participating in the program is planning what you will prepare. Once you have decided on your menu ideas, purchase all the ingredients needed to create your meal and then visit the House to cook on your scheduled day.

HOW MANY PEOPLE AM I COOKING FOR?

- ♥ Currently, we average about 50-60 people per meal. We will confirm with you 3 days prior to your scheduled cooking date with a more accurate headcount to help you with your grocery shopping or catering order.

WHAT SHOULD I BRING?

- ♥ You are responsible for planning your menu. Please remember to bring all required ingredients, including spices and oils. We also ask that you supply serving containers for the meals – large serving trays/platters for buffet brunch and individual to-go containers for dinner. To ensure safety from possible food contamination, all food must be prepared on site. No items may be prepped or cooked at home and brought to the House.

WHAT DOES THE RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE PROVIDE?

- ♥ We have a fully stocked kitchen, including, but not limited to, utensils, bowls, mixers, pots and pans, and most basic kitchen supplies for your use to cook at the House.
- ♥ Participants are required to wear kitchen gloves, provided by RMHCNYM. Hair must always be covered or pulled back while cooking and serving food.



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WHAT SHOULD I COOK?

- ♥ We suggest a well-balanced meal. A good place to start is by thinking about the things that your own families like to eat. Also keep in mind items you would enjoy when warmed in the microwave. Many families return to the House late at night and warm up leftover food from the dinner you prepared earlier in the day.
- ♥ **Dinner ideas:** a protein entrée, a potato, rice, or pasta side, a vegetable and/or a salad. Beef, chicken, turkey, pork, and seafood entrees, including stew, chili, and meatloaf, have all been successful in the past. Barbeque grills are available for use from May 1st through October 31st.
- ♥ **Brunch ideas:** For hot brunch items, breakfast standards, like eggs, french toast, pancakes, quiche, and breakfast casseroles work well. Breakfast sandwiches and quesadillas are good for a crowd. Hash Browns, sausage/bacon, and salad make good sides. If you decide to provide a “continental breakfast” with no hot items, this could include fresh fruit, yogurt, granola, pastries, and wrap sandwiches. Cold cuts, tuna, egg, and chicken salad sandwiches are always popular. Assorted muffins are always a welcome addition, along with donations of milk and juice for our residents. Coffee, tea, and cold beverages are available at the House.

ARE THERE ANY RESTRICTIONS REGARDING INGREDIENTS?

- ♥ While there are no ingredient restrictions, please label each serving container with the menu and date it was prepared. Please provide the House staff with a complete list of ingredients used in case there are specific questions from a family.

CAN I COOK AT HOME AND BRING IT TO THE HOUSE?

- ♥ Please prepare all food on premises. No items should be prepped or cooked at home and brought to the House. Store-bought/pre-packaged food or food prepared by a restaurant may be brought to the House.

HOW ARE MEALS SERVED?

- ♥ Brunch can be served as a buffet on our kitchen counter for families to serve themselves. For dinner, we request that meals be individually plated in to-go containers. Please let House staff know when you have finished plating and packing your meals. Staff and in-house volunteers are responsible for distributing dinners to our families.

WHAT ABOUT CLEAN-UP?

- ♥ Please clean up the kitchen area and all kitchen items and surfaces used before completing your day of service. Please use the grease disposal containers, found on kitchen counters, to dispose of any used oil from pans. Dishes and utensils can be loaded in the dishwasher. Please hand-wash pots and pans and return them to the storage cabinets and pantry shelves. Used soft kitchen textiles, like dish towels and oven mitts, can be left on the countertop for our housekeeping staff. If you plan on using the barbeque grills, be sure clean the grill tops immediately after use. Please let the House staff know when you are finished.



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WHAT TIME DO I NEED TO BE THERE?

- ♥ Please arrive no more than 15 minutes ahead of your scheduled time.
- ♥ Groups should arrive for brunch preparation by 9:30 a.m. Brunch should be ready by 12 p.m. and clean-up completed by 12:30 p.m.
- ♥ Groups should arrive for dinner preparation by 3:00 p.m. Dinner should be ready by 6:00 p.m. and clean-up completed by 6:30 p.m.

WHERE IS THE RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES NEW YORK METRO LOCATED?

- ♥ Our street address is:
267-07 76th Avenue
New Hyde Park, NY 11040
- ♥ Our contact telephone number is:
516-775-5683 (Extension 130 to reach Reception Desk)

WHERE SHOULD I PARK MY CAR?

- ♥ There is a visitor's parking lot located to the right as you face the front of the House. The lot is utilized by our residents, volunteers, and visitors, so parking spaces may be limited when you arrive. Please consider carpooling as much as possible. You may also park on the local streets in the neighborhood.

ARE WE ALLOWED TO TAKE PHOTOS?

- ♥ Yes! You are allowed to take photos in the general areas of the House and of your group while cooking. However, please be sure that you do not include any families who are staying at the House in your pictures.
- ♥ Tag us on your social media- #RMHCNYM
- ♥ Send an email, photo, or video to Cassandra Basile at cbasile@rmhcny.org and share a little about your experience!

WHAT HAPPENS IF I HAVE TO CANCEL A COOKING DATE?

- ♥ If a scheduling conflict arises and you need to cancel your cooking date, please cancel online at least 7 days prior to your reservation, using the link in your confirmation email. In addition, please send an email to lcabble@rmhcny.org notifying us directly of your cancellation.
- ♥ **Please Note:** If you cancel your reserved date but would still like to support our families, please consider sending meals from your favorite restaurant, instead. We are happy to provide a list of local restaurants that can provide and deliver meals to the House. Please email us at lcabble@rmhcny.org with the name and contact telephone number of the restaurant that will be providing the food to the House on your behalf.



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CAN I EARN COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS?

- ♥ The Brunch/Dinner Program is a good way to earn community service hours. When you arrive at the House, complete the In-Kind Donation form at the front desk. You will receive an email confirmation. This is your receipt, as well as acknowledgement of four hours of community service. We do not provide separate service letters.

IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE WE CAN BRING FOR THE RESIDENTS?

- ♥ Please refer to the Wish List Collections on our website

HOW DO I SCHEDULE A DATE TO VISIT THE HOUSE TO COOK BRUNCH OR DINNER?

- ♥ Visit our online calendar to schedule your date at volunteer.rmhcny.org

STILL HAVE A QUESTION NOT ANSWERED HERE?

- ♥ Please send an email to lcabble@rmhcny.org.