



## **VOLUNTEER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Mission:**

Meals at Home fosters health and contributes to individual well-being and independence by delivering nutritious meals, medically prescribed diets, and providing other supportive services to the homebound, elderly, disabled and others temporarily unable to care for their nutritional needs.

### **Introduction**

Every individual who agrees to carry out the mission of Meals at Home, in a volunteer capacity, is covered by the volunteer policies contained in this document as well as procedures and guidelines that will be provided at the time of appointment. These procedures and guidelines are designed to provide opportunities for personal growth, satisfaction, development and recognition. The policies contained herein do not constitute a contract of any kind and are subject to change at the discretion of the Board of Directors of Meals at home.

Each volunteer shall have a written job description, guidelines and/or agreement with opportunities for feedback, support and supervision. The work done by volunteers is the heart of this organization. It should provide satisfaction and accomplishment. For these reasons, the following policies are established by the Board of Directors.

### **Non-Discrimination**

Meals at Home does not discriminate against an otherwise qualified volunteer by reason of disability, age, race, color, ethnicity, gender, creed, national origin, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.

Meals at Home respects the privacy and personal beliefs of all volunteers and clients. Meals at Home does not permit proselytizing or the maligning of any person's faith. Meals at Home does encourage interaction and understanding among faith communities and respect for religious beliefs of all persons. The open practice or advocacy of racism by any volunteer or care receiver is not permitted.

Meals at Home recognizes that volunteers with serious illnesses may desire to continue to engage in as many of their normal pursuits as their condition allows, including volunteer work. As long as these persons are able to perform essential volunteer functions and medical evidence indicates that volunteering does not result in a direct or indirect threat of harm to themselves or others, they will be encouraged to continue to perform volunteer assignments.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE**

### **Acceptance of Volunteer Appointment**

Each candidate for a volunteer position shall complete a volunteer application. The application will reflect the individual's qualifications and skills in relation to the specific volunteer opportunities available. Every effort will be made to find a position for each volunteer that will be rewarding and will meet the individual's interest, skills, experiences, needs and personality. Volunteers retain the right to request a reassignment at any time. Volunteers also retain the right to determine the number of hours to be offered and to refuse any appointment. A copy of these policies shall be provided to all volunteers at the time of appointment.

### **Background Checks**

Background Checks are performed on all volunteers annually

- All volunteers must have clean criminal and driving records
- If a volunteer no longer has a valid driver's license, staff will make every effort to find another method of volunteering if requested and appropriate.

### **Confidentiality**

All information related to those who receive care shall be treated as confidential. "Confidential" means that any materials seen or heard regarding a client shall not be discussed or shared in any manner without the written consent of the individual. All volunteers are required to sign an agreement of confidentiality before being assigned to a client.

### **Volunteer Records**

Meals at Home shall maintain all volunteer records in a confidential manner. Volunteer names, addresses or other personal information shall not be released to any outside organization or group for any reason without the written permission of the volunteer, unless such release is required by law. Volunteers should not give personal phone numbers to clients.

### **Volunteer Expenses**

The term "volunteer" as used by Meals at Home implies that an individual gives of his or her time without financial compensation. Volunteers should not incur expenses other than those involved with the use of a personal vehicle while performing volunteer work. No volunteer expenses shall be reimbursed unless permission is given in advance and in writing by the Executive Director.

Volunteers are not responsible for providing funds for groceries, bills, repairs or other expenses incurred for the benefit of the care receiver. Should a volunteer find that a care receiver is not in a financial situation to provide funds for necessary items; the volunteer shall discuss this with the Executive Director who can make a referral to an appropriate agency.

Volunteers should not accept money for themselves from clients. Donations may, however, be given to volunteers to deliver to the Meals at Home office.

### **Episodic Volunteering**

While it is in the best interest of Meals at Home to engage volunteers who can make a commitment to the organization, the administration and Board of Directors recognizes the needs of volunteers to have flexibility in volunteer opportunities. When possible, volunteers shall be accepted for short-term assignments. These volunteers shall participate in a Meals at Home In-Service and abide by all policies and procedures established for other volunteers.

Volunteers seeking temporary opportunities to fulfill requirements for a course or for other reasons must be referred by a school counselor, clergy, Executive Director and/or employer.

Meals at Home shall attempt to utilize the gifts of all individuals when appropriate. There may be times when a volunteer cannot be placed because of limited time to serve or the unavailability of opportunities.

### **Court-ordered Volunteers**

Meals at Home does not work with court ordered volunteers.

### **The Role of Children and Teenagers**

Meals at Home believes that it is by the example of caring adults that children and teenagers will learn the value of using one's gifts in the volunteer work at Meals at Home. There are many ways that children and teenagers can share in volunteer caregiving experiences and develop a pattern for their own volunteer service as they grow into adulthood.

Before children are allowed to participate in volunteering with Meals at Home, their adult volunteer shall have made at least one visit or contact with the client. The volunteer must also discuss whether or not a visit by children would be welcomed or appropriate. Volunteers are reminded that the elderly may not have been in the presence of young children for quite some time. Volunteers shall be responsible for the behavior of children during the visit. Adults should prepare the children for the visit by discussing any special needs of the care receiver. The volunteer may want to bring an activity that the child can share with the care receiver.

When individuals under the age of 18 and over the age of 13 serve as volunteers through their faith community or other group, a parent or guardian must sign a permission form which will be supplied by Meals at Home. Individuals in this group are encouraged to attend a Meals at Home In-service. Volunteer opportunities for this group are limited to those situations that are age appropriate.

### **Job Descriptions/Guidelines/Agreements**

Written job descriptions, guidelines and/or agreements shall be provided for all volunteers. These shall be reviewed periodically and revised as operating procedures are changed so that each volunteer has a clear understanding of duties and accountabilities. Volunteers may request specific terms in job descriptions and should meet with the Executive Director to discuss these.

### **Position Qualifications**

All volunteers should have a desire to serve others using their talents and gifts: the ability to work with people in the community whose circumstances leave them with social, physical, mental or spiritual needs: and a sincere respect for people of different faith backgrounds. Volunteers operating a vehicle while performing volunteer duties must be at least 21 years old with a clean driving record. The Executive Director may make minor exceptions on a case by case basis.

### **Training Programs**

All volunteers, regardless of previous experiences or position, are invited to attend Meals at Home in-services and trainings.

In-services and training sessions provide the volunteer with information about the history, mission, and philosophy of the organization; review job requirements and expectations; review policies and procedures; and help the volunteer learn techniques for working with diverse groups.

Meals at Home may offer additional training programs designed to help volunteers acquire new skills, knowledge and attitudes. Volunteers are encouraged to attend these sessions, but are not required to do so. Volunteers shall not be asked to provide services for which they have not been properly trained.

Meals at Home will provide basic training programs for volunteer positions at no cost to the participant. In exchange, volunteers are expected to make a commitment of service to the organization.

### **Reporting Services Provided**

All volunteers are required to document and report services provided. Volunteers shall be accurate and timely with these reports and understand that they are necessary to insure the continuity of care for those receiving assistance. The reports also allow the organization to effectively communicate the need for services provided. This information is crucial in securing and reporting to foundations and funding sources.

Meals at Home shall provide documentation on hours of service to employers or others upon written request of the volunteer.

### **Photo ID's**

Each Meals at Home volunteer will be issued a photo ID. This ID must be worn when volunteering for Meals at Home.

Emergency numbers are listed on the back of each ID badge. Emergency procedures should be followed as outlined in the Volunteer Policies and Procedures.

ID badges contain only the volunteer's first name. Volunteers shall keep all personal information confidential including last name and phone number.

## **Safety Policy**

Meals at Home and its Board of Directors are committed to the task of maintaining a healthy and safe environment for employees, volunteers and clients. It is expected that all will share in this commitment.

It is the responsibility of each volunteer to report any injuries or unsafe conditions to themselves or to the care receiver, to the Executive Director.

The primary concern of Meals at Home is that both clients and volunteers remain safe and comfortable at all times. Because of this focus, the Meals at Home Board of Directors empowers the Executive Director to make case by case decisions when a request falls outside the typical range of requests for services.

Meals at Home volunteers are not trained to provide emergency medical services or trained to deal with complicated or advanced behavioral health issues. In the event of an emergency, all volunteers will immediately call 911 for assistance.

Volunteers must not sign anything for or assume responsibility for the client.

Every volunteer is responsible for reporting any questionable situation, especially any situation that might result in injury or danger. The volunteer will first contact the Meals at Home office. If appropriate, staff will refer the situation to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director feels that it is necessary, the situation can be referred to the Board of Directors. Any volunteer who is struggling with establishing or maintaining boundaries with the client must contact the Volunteer Coordinator and ask for assistance.

## **Accidents & Incidents**

Any serious accident or incident must be reported to Meals at Home as soon as possible. This applies to accidents and incidents with or without injuries to volunteer or client. Meals at Home staff will inform volunteers about procedures to follow during volunteer orientation. Accident forms are available the Meals at Home office and must be completed and turned in to a Meals at Home staff member.

## **Emergency Procedures**

While Volunteering Outside of the Meals at Home Office:

- If a client, volunteer or any other person is clearly in danger call 911
- If a client is not answering their door and is expecting the volunteer, please call the Meals at Home office 847-332-2678 immediately. Staff will make arrangements for the food and call the appropriate people.

While volunteering volunteer becomes involve in a motor vehicle accident:

- Contact 911 if appropriate
- Contact Meals at Home office
- Meals at Home staff will contact a replacement driver, Meals at Home's insurance provider, and clients on the effected route.
- Contact all other appropriate assistance

While Volunteering in the Meals at Home office:

- If there is a clear emergency, contact 911.
- Follow the emergency plan for the building.
- If the Executive Director is not in the building, contact ED ASAP.

### **Transportation**

Volunteers shall have a vehicle in proper working condition that is duly licensed and insured. All volunteers who transport clients shall be at least 21 years of age and have a valid driver's license in the state of Illinois. Verification of this shall be provided Meals at Home and updated regularly.

Volunteers are not permitted to drive clients' cars except under special circumstances approved by the Executive Director.

Meals at Home provides transportation only to approved clients and their spouses or other adult caregivers.

Seat belts must be used by the driver and all passengers at all times.

### **Insurance**

Meals at Home maintains a general liability insurance policy for the organization. Details of this coverage can be obtained by contacting the Executive Director. The organization does not assume responsibility for insuring volunteers' personal property.

Volunteers who provide volunteer services with their own vehicles are required to maintain their own automobile insurance which meets state minimum standards. Verifications of this shall be provided to Meals at Home and updated regularly.

### **Use of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs**

The use, abuse or possession of illegally obtained drugs, the abuse of over-the-counter drugs and prescription drugs, or the use of alcoholic beverages while performing the work of a volunteer with Meals at Home is prohibited.

The use of tobacco is not permitted while serving as a volunteer.

## **Firearms Policy**

Firearms and weapons are prohibited:

- Within any building owned, leased or operated by Meals at Home;
- During the conduct of any activity occurring under the authority of Meals at Home.

This prohibition includes firearms and weapons that are otherwise considered legal, such as concealed carry firearms, pepper spray, knives, mace, etc.

Violation of this policy will lead to disciplinary action that may include the following:

- For employees: termination of employment;
- For volunteers: termination of the privilege of serving as an Meals at Home volunteer;
- For recipients of services: termination of the privilege of receiving services from Meals at Home Caregivers.

## **Abusive Conduct**

Meals at Home is committed to providing an environment in which relationships are characterized by dignity, courtesy, respect and equitable treatment. It is also the policy of Meals at Home to provide all volunteers with an environment free from all forms of discrimination including sexual harassment, abusive behavior and other forms of abuse.

Meals at Home reserves the right to refuse or revoke volunteer placement to anyone who, in providing services, violates any of Meals at Home's policies. Any volunteer who believes that he or she has been the subject of abusive conduct shall report the incident to the Executive Director or to the President of the Board of Directors.

Any volunteer who believes that a care receiver has been the victim of abusive conduct by another volunteer, by an employed staff member or by any other person shall report their concerns immediately to the Executive Director who will take immediate action. All such investigations and reports should be thoroughly documented. All such information shall remain strictly confidential.

## **Resolution of Problems**

When problems or grievances arise in the performance of duties, the following steps shall be taken to resolve the situation.

- All parties involved shall maintain strict confidentiality throughout the process.
- The volunteer should discuss any conflicts with the person involved.
- If unable to settle the conflict successfully, the volunteer should report the issue to the appropriate staff person.
- If further direction is needed, the Executive Director will be asked to assist.
- The volunteer and appropriate staff will then develop an action plan.
- On the target completion date for resolution, the Executive Director will review the action plan and refer to the board of directors.
- If a volunteer should experience a conflict/issue with the Executive Director, they will address their concerns to the President of the Board of Directors.

## **Release of a Volunteer**

Unfortunately, the continued service of some volunteers may not be in the best interest of the mission Meals at Home. Some serious problems may make it necessary to release an individual from a volunteer position. This action to release a volunteer shall receive careful, detailed and confidential consideration.

Some reasons that may cause the release of a volunteer include, but are not limited to:

- Neglect of responsibilities
- Physical, verbal, sexual or mental abuse of clients, other volunteers or employed staff
- Theft of money or personal property of a care receiver, other volunteer or employed staff
- Use of illegal drugs or the abuse of legal drugs while performing volunteer services
- Disregard for the safety and well-being of a care receiver
- Racism and/or discrimination in any form
- Proselytizing or maligning any faith group
- Violation of confidentiality

A volunteer shall be released without advance notice and also without any opportunity to appeal the decision.

## **MEALS AT HOME SERVICES**

### **Service Area**

Meals at Home's service area includes the City of Evanston and New Trier Township.

### **Clients**

- Clients qualify for Meals at Home services for many reasons including age, disability (physical or mental), or economic reasons. Clients are not screened.
- Clients pay for meals as they are able.
- Clients may need additional help. Please remember that you are a very valuable set of eyes and ears – report any concerns about the well-being of the client to the Meals at Home office.
- Do not dispense medications for clients.

## **MEAL DELIVERY**

### **Days and Times**

Meals are delivered by Meals at Home drivers Monday through Saturday in all weather and on all holidays that do not fall on a Sunday.

### **Food Provider Routes**

Evanston Hospital provides food Monday through Saturday. Pick up for four routes is at 11:30 am.

Saint Francis Hospital provides food Monday through Saturday. Pick up for four routes is at 11:15 am.

Three Crowns Park provides food on Mondays. Pick up for two routes is at 11:00 am.

Jilly's Cafe provides food on Thursdays. Pick up for one route is at 11:30 am.



Capt'n Nemo's provides food on Tuesdays from both the Green Bay Road (11:00 am) and Clark Street (10:45 am) locations.

Curt's Cafe provides food on Wednesday's from both the Central (11:00 am) and Dempster (10:45 am) Street locations.

(Capt'n Nemo's and Curt's Cafe meals are merged into the hospital routes.)

### **Food Pick Up**

When picking up clients' meals, please arrive at the scheduled pick up time and park in designated pick up area, locate the food provider staff person, obtain your route sheet (if you haven't already received), and load your route's food into your vehicle. Proceed to your delivery route either by following the route sheet, logging onto Assisted Rides, or by programming your own GPS.

### **Route Sheets**

Printable copies of all routes are emailed prior to the volunteer's assigned delivery day and also are available at the hospitals and Three Crowns – please carefully dispose of (i.e. shred) route sheets upon completion of the route.

Capt'n Nemo's and Curt's Cafe deliveries are incorporated into hospital routes. Nemo's and Curt's orders are emailed to their pick-up driver and clients' sandwich types are indicated on the hospital route sheets.

The Jilly's Café route sheets are emailed to the pick-up driver the day before the delivery route.

You may reroute on your GPS but be protective of the clients' addresses.

### **Food Safety**

Food must be kept in coolers while delivering, keeping hot meals in a separate cooler from cold meals. If your food provider does not provide a cooler and a volunteer does not have two coolers for this purpose, the volunteer should contact the Meals at Home office to make arrangements to receive a cooler or coolers.

If a client is not available to receive their food, the client must provide coolers (a hot and a cold) or make arrangements for a friend/neighbor to receive the meal instead. If a client needs a cooler, they may contact the Meals at Home office. Volunteers should have insulated bags provided by the Meals at Home office in the instance a meal must be left and no cooler is present.

- Pets are not permitted to ride along in the vehicle during meal delivery.
- Volunteers should have clean hands when handling clients' meals.
- Volunteers must wear clean clothing when delivering meals.

### **Opening Containers**

Volunteers should not open clients' food container unless asked by the client.

## **Driving**

All drives must follow state and local traffic laws while volunteering.

- **Parking Placard**

Volunteers should place a Meals at Home Parking Placard in their vehicle window when delivering. This placard identifies the vehicle as one that is involved in meal delivery, but the placard does not allow the driver avoid traffic citations. The volunteer still needs to park legally.

- **Cell Phones**

All volunteers must carry a cell phone while delivering meals for Meals at Home. Volunteers should leave your phone turned on while delivering meals. Do not use a cell phone while driving unless it is hands free.

- **Volunteer Teams**

Many volunteers find it easiest to work in pairs when delivering meals in neighborhood that have limited parking. If you are interested in having another volunteer assist you in your delivery route, please contact the Meals at Home office.

## **Cancelations**

Clients sometimes cancel at the last minute. Routes are firm 24 hours prior to pick up. Any last minute changes (i.e. client goes into the hospital) will be phoned to the volunteer. Please keep your cell phone on at all times.

If a volunteer needs to cancel, the volunteer should contact the Meals at Home office as soon as possible to make arrangements to have another volunteer take their place

## **FRIENDLY VISITORS**

### **Phone Visits**

Volunteers should make a short introductory phone call, establishing frequency and length of calls, interests, etc.

Call after 9 am and before 8 pm unless otherwise agreed upon with client.

Volunteer should not give their phone number to the client. Instead, volunteers should ask the client to contact the Meals at Home office. Office staff will relay a message to the volunteer to contact the client.

### **In Home Visits**

The Friendly Visitor Volunteer shall call the client to make an introduction and to arrange a short initial visit. At the initial visit, establish frequency and length of future visits. These arrangements can be flexible, but it allows both parties some comfort in knowing what to expect.

Consider interests and hobbies and talk about what you will do at your next visit. This gives the client something to look forward to and allows the volunteer time to plan. Plans do not need to be elaborate. Keep in mind you may be the only person who visits with this person all week!

**Grocery/Food Pantry Visits**

The client should give the volunteer the name of the grocery store or food pantry at which they would like to purchase items. The client should also supply a list of items to be purchased and enough money to cover the cost. When the volunteer returns with the purchased items, a receipt and change should be given to the client.

**Materials and Tools**

Groceries, supplies and materials, if needed, shall be purchased by the client. If the client is unable to pay for necessary items, the volunteer shall contact the Executive Director.

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**Policies and Procedures Acknowledgement**

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read and agree to follow the Meals at Home Volunteer Policies and Procedures.

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Signature

Date