



Volunteer Handbook

Meals on Wheels of Greater Lynchburg believes:

- That being homebound creates a unique need that can be addressed by home delivered meals.
- When people are physically nourished, they can make healthier life choices.
- When isolation is alleviated, spirits thrive.

revised July 2023



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www.mealslynchburg.org

Welcome to Meals on Wheels!

Meals on Wheels improves the well-being of the homebound, elderly, disabled and ill people in our community. Our volunteers provide a healthy meal and a community connection to reduce isolation for the homebound.

Our program allows people to stay in their own homes where they can maintain some independence and avoid living in costly institutions. We provide a hot, healthy meal five days a week, and we offer special meal modifications to meet individual dietary needs.

Meals

Each recipient receives a lunch meal with an entrée, sides, and a beverage five days a week. Some of our recipients are on special diets or require special meal preparation, and these meals are labeled with the recipient's name on an identifying sticker to insure proper delivery. A few recipients also receive supper meals, which are labeled with an identifying sticker and delivered along with the lunch meal.

The Volunteer Delivery Process

Our volunteers deliver hundreds of meals a day to our recipients, each delivering about a dozen meals on their designated route in about 90 minutes.

Here's how it works:

- Volunteers report to their designated pick-up location during the pick-up time window;
- Our team loads thermal bags with meals into the volunteer's vehicle, and provides a delivery list;
- Volunteers follow the delivery list to deliver the meals;
- Volunteers return coolers to any drop-off location.



Pick-up Locations and Times

Please arrive within the pick-up window times listed below:

Meals on Wheels Office | Pick-up between **10:30 – 10:45 am**

605 Clay Street (St. Paul's Episcopal Church parking lot)

Note: enter fenced parking lot from 6th Street

Mobile Distribution Bus | Pick-up between **10:45 – 11:00 am**

Schewel Furniture Company Parking Lot | 7007 Timberlake Road

Rustburg Presbyterian Church | Pick-up between **11:00 – 11:15 am**

681 Village Highway, Rustburg

Note: pull to rear kitchen entrance; please be mindful of shared parking space with Fire Department as well as church functions utilizing the Fellowship Hall.

Virginia Baptist Hospital | Pick-up between **11:00 – 11:20 am**

Vassar Street Entrance

Note: use Vassar Street entrance; queue according to map provided.

Pickup locations are determined by the delivery route you are assigned to. If you're unsure of your pick-up location, please contact the Office.



If you are delayed and will arrive at the Pick-Up Location after the scheduled window of time, please call the Office to let us know when you can be expected to arrive.

Delivery Bag Return Locations

Once you've completed your deliveries, please return the thermal bags to a storage locker at one of these locations:

- At any of the pick-up locations listed above, or at one of these locations:
- Lynchburg Sheltered Industries (LSI) | 3120 Odd Fellows Road (locker is on hill in front of trailer)
- Randolph Memorial Baptist Church | 4246 S. Amherst Hwy (enter from Rt. 29 – locker is in back parking lot to right of church. Note: Great Oaks Dr. is exit-only.)

There is a list of Delivery Bag Return locations in the bag pocket along with the lock code, if needed. Call the office if you have any questions.

Volunteers deliver healthy meals to our recipients, but the relationships they build means they are truly delivering so much more than a meal.



Prepare for your Delivery

When heading to pick up your meals, please be sure you have:

- a face covering - if you are exhibiting any signs of allergy or illness, or if you have any concerns about entering a recipient's residence
- hand sanitizer
- your Meals on Wheels volunteer **badge** (extra badges are in a bag pocket)
- your Meals on Wheels **tray** to help transport meals from car to door (ask the expeditor at pickup if you need a tray)
- your cell phone
- BYO grocery bags if you prefer to use them for deliveries

Be sure there is a level place in your car to place the thermal food bags.

Meals on Wheels of Greater Lynchburg could not fulfill its mission without our volunteers. Thank you!

At Pick-Up

Drive to your curbside pick-up location. **Please do not leave your vehicle** as your meals will be loaded into your car by our team.

You will be given the following:

- The current delivery list (**these are updated daily!**)
- Sanitized pre-packed thermal bags with hot meals, cold beverages, and sides for your route
- Door hangers and any other supplies you may need.
- Plastic shopping bags are only used to hand off meals to recipients with significant mobility issues (walker, cane, etc.). (*Sourcing for these is inconsistent. Please use your tray as much as possible, but do not leave the tray with the recipient.*)

Before leaving the pick-up location, even if you're familiar with the route, PLEASE review the delivery list to determine whether there are any changes, exceptions or special meals on your route that day.

Note: you may be delivering to more than one recipient at a given stop.



Important: Food Safety is critical – keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Do not gather meal items until you arrive at the recipient's home.

On Your Route

Recipients will be at home and available to receive delivery of their meal and engage in a brief friendly chat with our volunteers. Many of our recipients are very slow and/or hard of hearing, so please give them plenty of time to get to the door.

Some of our recipients may not fully perceive the potential health threat of close contact and disease transmission so we ask volunteers to be vigilant in following safe engagement practices.



The stops on your route are in relatively close proximity and driving directions are as up-to-date as possible, but errors can occur with automated directions. If you are using GPS and are directed to a location that seems far, please call the office right away for clarification. Normal delivery takes approximately 90 minutes from pick-up to delivery bag return.

Consistent nourishment strengthens the social and financial health of the community, and provides peace of mind to families and neighbors.



- Masks are always encouraged, as our recipients are very vulnerable.
- Some stops will include specific delivery instructions - please pay close attention if they are listed.
- Ring/Knock to announce yourself, then step back to social distance.
- Hand off the meal. Use your best judgment about going inside as that increases exposure for them, you and everyone else on your route.
- Be friendly and cheerful – you may be the only person our recipients see today.
- Observe any significant differences or decline in recipient behavior and report to the MOW office.
- Hand sanitize after each delivery.

Special Meals & Suppers

Almost 25% of the recipients we serve have some type of dietary restrictions. This could be a food allergy, a medication interaction, a health condition, or chewing/swallowing issues that require special preparation of menued items.

- All special meals are labeled with a sticker which includes the recipient's name and the dietary adjustment.
- Hot meal bags are packed in the order that the delivery list is printed, so the special meals should be very obviously in delivery order.
- Dietary adjustments apply to sides/cold items also, and delivery lists will be stamped accordingly.
- ***Special meals are NOT interchangeable, without first calling the office to check.***

In addition, some recipients qualify for a 'cold supper' due to certain health conditions.

- Supper meals are packed in the cold meal bag along with sides and beverages.
- Suppers for recipients with Special Diets are also labeled with a sticker.

We have many volunteer opportunities available in addition to meal deliveries. Call us or visit mealslynchburg.org to learn about our Volunteer “a la carte” Opportunities.

Meanwhile, back on your Route ...

If you have any questions during your delivery, if something doesn't "look right" or you are the least bit uncertain, please call the office.

What if the recipient doesn't come to the door or is not home?

- Meals on Wheels serves the homebound, so recipients are expected to be at home to receive their meals.
 - *effective July 2023* - Coolers with ice packs are only allowed in rare and specific situations. If a cooler is acceptable, it will be clearly marked on the Delivery List.Otherwise, you **may not** leave the meal.
- If there is no answer when you knock or ring, try to call the recipient at the phone number listed on the delivery list. If you cannot reach them, call the office **right away** to inform our team that no one is home and you cannot reach the recipient. Please do not wait until the end of your route to make one call. We will follow up with each instance.
 - Do not, under any circumstances, leave a meal in a bag at the door.
- If unable to deliver a meal, affix a door hanger (located in the pocket of the thermal bag) to the door to alert the recipient that we tried to deliver and instructing them to call the office. You may give their meal to another recipient.



Important: The reason for this policy is twofold:

First, we are concerned about food holding temperature and food safety.

Second, an important part of the service we provide is a daily check-in with each homebound neighbor. We want them to see your smiling faces - and we want you to lay eyes on them!

If you have car trouble and cannot continue with your route:

Once you have ensured your safety, call the office so that someone can come to get the meals to finish delivering your route or provide assistance.

Recipient Emergency

Meals on Wheels serves an at-risk population and it's possible that you may come upon a situation that requires immediate action. In the event you encounter an urgent situation:

- Be calm and reassure the recipient.
- Call 911 immediately if it appears to be a life-threatening situation; then call our office as soon as possible.
- If the situation does not appear to be life-threatening, call our office immediately so that we may call 911 or the emergency contact as appropriate. Staff or their contact will come to you if necessary.
- Please stay with the recipient until help arrives unless instructed otherwise.

The caring commitment of our volunteers multiplies the benefits of their deliveries.

Once you've completed your deliveries

- Call the office to report any issues.
- Return the thermal bags to any one of our drop-off stations as soon as practical.
- Please do not leave any food/drinks in thermal bags - either give or throw them away.
- Destroy and discard the delivery list, as it contains personal information.



Health & Safety Guidelines and Protocols

To ensure the health of our meal recipients, we require excellent hygiene practices from our volunteers, including:

- Wear a face covering if you are exhibiting any signs of allergy or illness, or if you have any concerns about entering a recipient's residence
- Use hand sanitizer between each delivery
- Use proper hand-washing, appropriate covering of coughs and sneezes; and
- Get vaccines when available and appropriate.

Volunteers may not deliver if exhibiting cold- or flu-like symptoms. If there is a possibility you are sick, please find a substitute or, if unable to find one, contact the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible.

- **Note:** if you do secure your own substitute, please inform the office prior to morning of delivery.

A complete copy of our Infectious Disease Policy is available upon request.

Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age to serve separately from a parent or guardian. It is understood that chaperoned groups have obtained the necessary permission from each individual's parent or guardian before delivery.

Children of all ages are welcome to accompany their parents or grandparents on delivery; however, we ask that they follow the same Health & Safety Guidelines as all volunteers.

Companion **pets are not allowed** to accompany volunteers on deliveries.

Please make sure all your contact information is current: address, email (or no email), cell phone, home phone (or no home phone)

Volunteer Best Practices

In order to offer recipients a consistent experience with our volunteers, we offer the following Volunteer Best Practices.

A friendly chat is almost as important as the meal, but be mindful that others are waiting for their meals.

- Wear a “Meals on Wheels Volunteer” name badge. If you don’t have yours, there are extras for your use in the side pocket of the thermal bags.
- We encourage volunteers to deliver in socially safe teams of 2 or more. It’s more fun, and ultimately it is safer, quicker and easier to deliver with a partner.
- Wear non-slip shoes, especially in rainy weather. In the event that you slip or fall, please notify the office immediately.
- Do not wear expensive jewelry and lock your car when unattended.
- Please bring your cell phone, and keep it on.
- Make sure your vehicle is “delivery clean” – neat and not a hazard to food.
- Please do not bring your pet along when you deliver.
- Always be aware of your surroundings – the neighborhood, lobbies, stairwells, etc. If you ever feel unsafe, call the office. Please report any safety concerns to the office immediately.
- Some recipients have companion pets. If you ever have a concern about the volatility of a pet, call the recipient to have the pet restrained at delivery time. If the issue is not immediately resolved, call the office.
- If the routing directions are in error, or if there is simply a better and safer way to deliver, we want to know so please offer your suggestions/corrections.



Important Note Regarding Medications

Under no circumstances are volunteers allowed to handle or administer any medication to recipients – regardless of whether prescription or over-the-counter, no matter how harmless it may seem. If a recipient asks for assistance with medication, please call the office so we may contact their emergency contact who may assist them.

Let the Volunteer Coordinator know if you are available to substitute on a specific day or a specific route! We especially appreciate our substitute drivers!

Policies and Procedures

Criteria for Service

To receive Meals on Wheels deliveries, recipients must live in our service area, be homebound, and not be able to prepare – or have anyone available to regularly prepare – a nutritionally appropriate meal. Note that being homebound can take many forms and while not every recipient may appear homebound at a glance, be assured each recipient has been assessed to determine need.

Statement of Liability & Criteria for Volunteers

Meals on Wheels of Greater Lynchburg is not responsible for personal injuries or property damage suffered or caused by a volunteer in connection with his or her volunteer activities. Each volunteer is expected to maintain his or her own insurance covering these and other risks, and volunteers should use their best judgement should a situation seem unsafe in any way. Note that our recipients do not necessarily maintain liability insurance.

Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age to serve separately from a parent or guardian. It is understood that chaperoned groups have obtained the necessary permission from each individual's parent or guardian before delivery.

Children of all ages are welcome to accompany their parents or grandparents on delivery; however, we ask that they follow the same Health & Safety Guidelines and Protocols outlined herein.

Companion **pets are not allowed** to accompany volunteers on deliveries.

Meals on Wheels does not currently perform background checks on meal recipients or volunteers; however, we reserve the right to do so.

Confidentiality Statement

All volunteers must protect the privacy of all of those we serve, maintaining strict confidentiality by not discussing recipients and the nature of their health concerns with anyone except Meals on Wheels staff members. If you have a question about a recipient's well-being, you may call the office and we will share information as appropriate.

Media Awareness

Meals of Wheels of Greater Lynchburg photographs and videos activities, both routine and special, to use for public promotion. Volunteers must notify the organization if they do not wish to be included.

Concerns Regarding Recipient Safety

If you have any concerns about a meal recipient's safety or home situation, please contact the office and we will report concerns to the appropriate people or organizations.

Grievance Procedure

Any problems or concerns should be addressed to the Volunteer Coordinator and/or the Executive Director.

Our volunteers are our eyes and ears and can help our recipients by reporting any concerns or changes in conditions such as confusion/disorientation, unsteadiness, indication of a fall or impact, for example.

Inclement Weather | Power Outages

During inclement weather, if there will be any changes to our delivery schedule, we will post an announcement on **WSET-13** and **www.wset.com** by 7:30 am.

Please note: We do **not** follow the Lynchburg City School schedule.

The office outgoing phone message will also have information if we are unable to deliver, and updates will be posted on Facebook and our website when possible.

Each fall we deliver Blizzard Boxes to our recipients: a supply of five shelf-stable meals to keep on hand in case inclement weather prohibits us from delivering.

In addition, we have implemented the following Snow Delivery Protocols:

- We've identified a dedicated brigade of Snow Drivers who are willing and able to brave the elements. If you have a sturdy vehicle and are experienced driving in bad weather, please call the Volunteer Coordinator to join this list of Snow Drivers.
- We have identified the most vulnerable of those we serve, those without many other resources, and made plans for their care, even when we are not delivering meals.
- We may delay pickup to allow time for the temperature to rise.

After a weather event, when regular delivery has resumed, please know:

- Volunteers are never expected to drive when they are uncomfortable with the road conditions.
- Even when the major streets are cleared of snow and ice, some side streets, sidewalks, walkways or stairs may not be safe.
- If you encounter conditions at any time of year which prevent you from delivering a meal, please do not proceed; call the office to let us know so we may contact the recipient.

In the event a power outage inhibits our ability to provide safe meals for delivery, we will contact the route drivers for that day.

If you have any questions about the delivery schedule, please call the office.



Please note that we do NOT follow the Lynchburg City School schedule for weather-related closing or delays

Holidays

Holidays

We deliver meals on most federal and religious holidays that fall on a weekday.

- We have normal delivery on 'Monday holidays' – Memorial Day, Labor Day, etc.

If a holiday falls on your regularly scheduled delivery day, a Volunteer Coordinator will be in touch to confirm your availability. If you know in advance you will be unavailable, please let us know as soon as possible.

Substitutes

If you have a conflict and cannot deliver on a given day, please try to find a substitute:

- Refer to the driver schedule for your route, and try to swap with someone;
- Try to find a substitute from the Driver Schedule for your route; or
- Call the office to speak with the Volunteer Coordinator for assistance.
- If you drive as part of a group, please call the office as well as your Route Coordinator.

If someone else will deliver for you on a given day - even if they regularly accompany you on your route - please notify the office by calling or emailing the Volunteer Coordinator. *We need contact information for anyone who delivers for Meals on Wheels.*

If you are available and can deliver on a given day, please let us know you can substitute.



If you are ill or have any symptoms of illness, we ask that you not deliver to our recipients.

Please call the office as soon as you can so that we may find a substitute to deliver your route.



Scan to watch the video of
our Virtual Ride-Along:



434.847.0796
volunteers@mealslynchburg.org



**Meals on
Wheels**
of Greater Lynchburg