

Meals on Wheels

Contact Person:

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Overall program:

1. 100,000 meals delivered per year In Richland County. Thirty routes out of Forest Acres and 20 routes from Westminster on Broad River Road. There are routes in Blythewood, Eastover and other outlying areas. These meals are delivered by paid volunteers because of the distance traveled. We would be considered non-paid volunteers.
2. Takes 400 volunteers weekly to provide service.
3. Pamphlet explains who eligible and how apply. No one turned down because of income.
4. Each potential recipient has been interviewed before receiving meals.
5. Funding provided by programs at Lt Gov's office, grants from corporations, donations.
6. Each client receives a hot meal Monday - Friday. In special situations, some clients will receive a frozen meal to tide them over the weekend.

Typical Day:

-8:45 am, pack lunches (manual says 9:00am, but it has changed)

-10:45 - 11:45 am begin delivery. Recommend starting closer to 10:45 to avoid heavy lunch traffic. Meals are kept in warming ovens until picked up by volunteers.

-1:30 - 2:00 pm delivery completed. More you drive same route, faster you can complete route. Time includes getting from pick-up point to first house.

Each volunteer:

1. Receive volunteer packet explaining everything about program, returns three forms. Must have individual forms on file in order to volunteer. Even if the church signs up, for example, 4 people, each person who chooses to work, must have form on file.
2. One can pack only, deliver only, or do both. Closest packing site is currently Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 3909 Forest Drive, near Richland Mall. Once Senior Resources bldg. completes renovations, packing will be done at that site.
3. Can work by self or as team of 2. Encourage working in pairs...get to know another church member better, plus one driver and one navigator.
4. If delivering, must have two coolers in car. One for hot foods...large refrig bag that one may take to Sams is sufficient. Another small cooler for 8-oz cartons of milk. Perishables, bread and fruit will be given to you in plastic grocery bag. Volunteer furnishes coolers.
5. Pamphlet (handbook) explains much of details.

Delivery:

1. Will receive map, list of names and addresses, tel #, and notes on individual clients (hard of hearing, wheel chair, friendly/unfriendly dogs, etc). the map is not the best. We found that GPS was very helpful. I used WAZE - a free download.
2. Will deliver between 9 and 15 meals per day. If 2 people in family, 2 meals will be delivered.

3. Volunteer is often the only person that client has contact with that day. Volunteer is not expected to sit down and talk, but just to greet client, share niceties and then move on.
4. Process for delivery: knock on door x 2, telephone, if no answer move on to next client. Give next client meals assigned, plus meals for person missed. Do not have extra meals at end of day because of non-delivery. No ability to hold meals over. If person who is receiving 2 meals (one not deliverable to last client + own meal) is listed as a “special” meal person, do not give that person the extra bread or milk...usually those on special meals are diabetic and the bread and milk give them more carbohydrates that they should have for the day.
5. If a meal has been undeliverable, call that information into Meals on Wheels (MOW) (tel # on route sheet) and inform them. If a client has not been home to receive meals and has not been reachable by phone for 3 days, MOW will call client’s emergency contact to make sure client is OK or make a wellness visit.

Volunteers always needed. I am suggesting that we sign up for **delivery** only at this time. If a volunteer wants to go early to help pack, that would be fine. If SVPC can get 10 volunteers on a rotation list, we can be assigned the **same route** on a particular day. Ten volunteers would cover each volunteer working 1 day per month for a 5 week month (2 volunteers working each assigned day). I have requested a route on **Thursday**. There are always open routes each day...thus, if we have volunteers more than our 10, we could take some other open routes for that day. I don’t think we should commit to more than one regular route until we see how it goes.

Before SVPC committed to the program, **Preston Meynardie and Ann Canary** worked 3 days and delivered a different route each time. They had many laughs over mistakes in finding people’s home’s, remembering their names and reacting to the people themselves. They got to know each other better, even though they had known each other for many

years. It was a very rewarding experience and they will continue to serve. The more you deliver to the same route, the more you will get to know these people (clients) and enjoy your brief interaction with them.

You are able to telephone MOW and ask them for answers to any questions while delivering. Each house had an address number on the mailbox (not sure if that was just a coincidence or whether MOW requires that). Apt complexes were a little bit more challenging, but they were always able to find the apt #, even if that meant going to the office.

SUMMARY: Talking to the MOW staff, reviewing written documents given to a potential volunteer, and having had some SVPC members personally delivered meals, the organization appears to be very well organized. **This is an opportunity for SVPC members to participate in a hands-on mission that members will find rewarding.**

Ann Canary

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