

Meal Providing

Volunteer Guide



Guide For Meal Providers

Updated September 23, 2026

To Sign Up

Coordinate a date by emailing volunteer@ourhouseshelter.org or calling the Volunteer Coordinator at (501) 374-7383 ext 184. You can serve one time, or you sign up to serve on a regular schedule. For example, you can serve on the same day of the week each month!

Planning Your Meal

Your group can decide what you would like to serve! If you'd like ideas or suggestions, please reach out; we're happy to help.

Your group should be prepared to serve:

- **Breakfast:** 100 people
- **Lunch:** 70 people
- **Dinner:** 100 people

****These numbers will fluctuate as residents check in and out of the Shelter. The Volunteer Coordinator will keep you updated about any changes the day before you're scheduled to serve.**

Signing In

Each member of your meal provider team will need to sign in through Mobilize. This helps us keep track of our volunteer involvement each month and stay in communication with our meal-provider groups.

When you arrive, please check in with a staff member to let us know you're here. They will direct you where to go and help you carry food in. If you would like a donation receipt, please let them know at that time.

Cooking and Serving in the Shelter

The Our House kitchen has equipment you are welcome to use if you want to cook your meal at the Shelter. Groups who cook their meal at Our House can arrive as early as they like to prepare.

Our commercial kitchen is equipped with pots, pans, cutting boards, kitchen utensils, ovens, fryers, warmers, and just most likely everything you will need to prepare a meal. Everyone working in the kitchen must wear **gloves and hair nets** while preparing, cooking, and serving the meal. We provide hair nets and gloves in the kitchen.

Cooking Off Site

Your group may prepare the meal off-site and bring it to the Our House campus to serve or hand it off to our team to serve. If you're preparing the meal off-site, you can drop the food off at Our House at your convenience.

When you arrive, let the guard know that you're dropping off food for the Shelter, and someone from our Housing team will meet you at the garage door on the side of the Shelter to help unload. Please let the Housing Program Specialist know **which group you're with and the date and time the meal is for.**

Meal Times

Residents eat breakfast at 6am on weekdays and 8am on weekends; lunch is served at noon; dinner is served at 6pm. After you serve the meal, you are welcome to stay and eat with the residents, although space may be limited.

Late Trays

This only applies to dinner servers. Some of our residents work late and are unable to make it to dinner on time. If you are serving dinner, we ask that you prepare and set aside trays for these residents first so they are assured they have plenty of food when they return.

The Housing Program Specialist will let you know how many residents need late trays each night.

Clean Up

The residents will take care of all the cleaning and dishes when the meal is over. It gives them the opportunity to positively contribute to their home environment, so there is no need for you to do dishes or stay to clean.

Donation Receipts

If your group would like a donation receipt for your donated food, please ask the Housing Program Specialist, and they will be happy to provide one.

Unable to Serve

If your group can't make it to serve on your scheduled day, please call and let us know so that we can make alternate plans.

- On weekdays, please call the Volunteer Coordinator at (501) 374-7383 ext 184.
- On weekends (or after 5pm on weekdays), please call the Housing Program Specialist at (501) 374-7383 ext 221.

Inclement Weather

Our House follows LRSD closings when there is inclement weather. We ask that you use your best judgment during this time and don't put yourself in any harm, but please let us know if you won't be coming, so that we can make alternate plans in the kitchen.

- On weekdays, please call the Volunteer Coordinator at (501) 374-7383 ext 184.
- On weekends (or after 5pm on weekdays), please call the Housing Program Specialist at (501) 374-7383 ext 221 to let them know you won't be able to come and serve.

Tips for New Servers

- We have numerous spices for you to use on the island in the middle of the kitchen.
- There is a small amount of space for your personal items toward the back of the kitchen.
- Rolling carts are available to move the food from your vehicle into the Shelter.
- The steam table used for serving needs to have water in the bottom of them while on. The Housing Program Specialist will be happy to help you if you haven't used it before.
- If you use ice, please leave 2 inches in the bottom of the machine or it will stop making ice.

If you have any questions about where things are in the kitchen, please ask the Housing Program Specialist! Thank you so much for your generous service to Our House! If you have any questions or need any help at all, we are here for you!

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