Ronald McDonald House®
Southeastern MN & Western WI

House Meal Guide

Your House Meal Journey

Preparing to Serve

- Planning Your Meal
- Submit Your Meal Agreement Form
- Before You Arrive

While You're Here

- Food Safety
- Food Allergies
- Serving the Meal
- Helping Families Feel Welcome

Before You Leave

- Clean Up

Quick Reference

Serve Time
6:00–7:00 p.m.

Arrival
Approximately 2 hours before serving

Volunteers
Maximum of 12

Guests to Prepare For:
50–80 people

Questions?
Katie Arnott
507-252-2161
karnott@rmhmn.org

Preparing to Serve

Thank you for choosing to provide comfort through a meal for families staying at Ronald McDonald House.

Every evening, families gather in our Community Room after long days at the hospital. Some are celebrating hopeful news. Others are navigating difficult diagnoses and long treatments.

A meal is never just a meal. It offers comfort, nourishment, and one less thing for parents to worry about while giving families a chance to slow down, reconnect, and simply be together.

For many families, it's one of the few moments in the day that feels normal.

Whether you're joining us with coworkers, friends, family, or a service organization, your generosity makes a meaningful difference. Thank you for helping provide comfort through a meal.

The Ronald McDonald House doesn't just feed us; they sustain our family so we can focus on what matters most: healing together.

– The Quiller Family

Planning Your Meal

We ask that your menu include:

✓ **Main entrée**
✓ **Side dish(es)**
✓ **Fruit and/or vegetables**

Optional but encouraged:

Bread or Rolls, Dessert, & Beverages

White and chocolate milk are available at the House for your use.

Helpful Planning Tips

To provide variety for our families:

- Please submit your menu at least 10 days before your meal
- Check nearby meal dates to avoid duplicate menus
- If serving tacos or spaghetti, we encourage creating a taco bar or pasta bar with a variety of toppings

Optional:
Vegetarian or gluten-friendly options are appreciated but not required

Whenever possible, provide an ingredient list for your dishes to help families with food allergies make informed choices.

Kitchen Supplies

Our kitchen includes:

- Two double ovens and two stovetops
- Pots, pans, bakeware, and utensils
- Serving dishes
- Food warmers
- Gloves, aprons, and hairnets
- To-go containers

We'll provide the kitchen—you provide the meal.

Submit Your Meal Agreement Form

Please return your completed Meal Agreement Form linked below at least **24 hours** before your meal.

Meal Agreement Form Link

Before You Arrive

Volunteers

To help create a positive experience for both our families and volunteers:

- Up to **12 volunteers** may participate
- Volunteers must be at least **10 years old** with adult supervision
- **To protect the health of our medically vulnerable families, please do not volunteer if you are experiencing symptoms of illness or have been sick within the past 72 hours**

Arrival Time

- Plan to arrive **2 hours before serving** to prepare your meal
- If your meal is catered, arriving **30 minutes before serving** is usually sufficient
- If you need additional preparation time, please contact us in advance to ensure the kitchen is available

When You Arrive

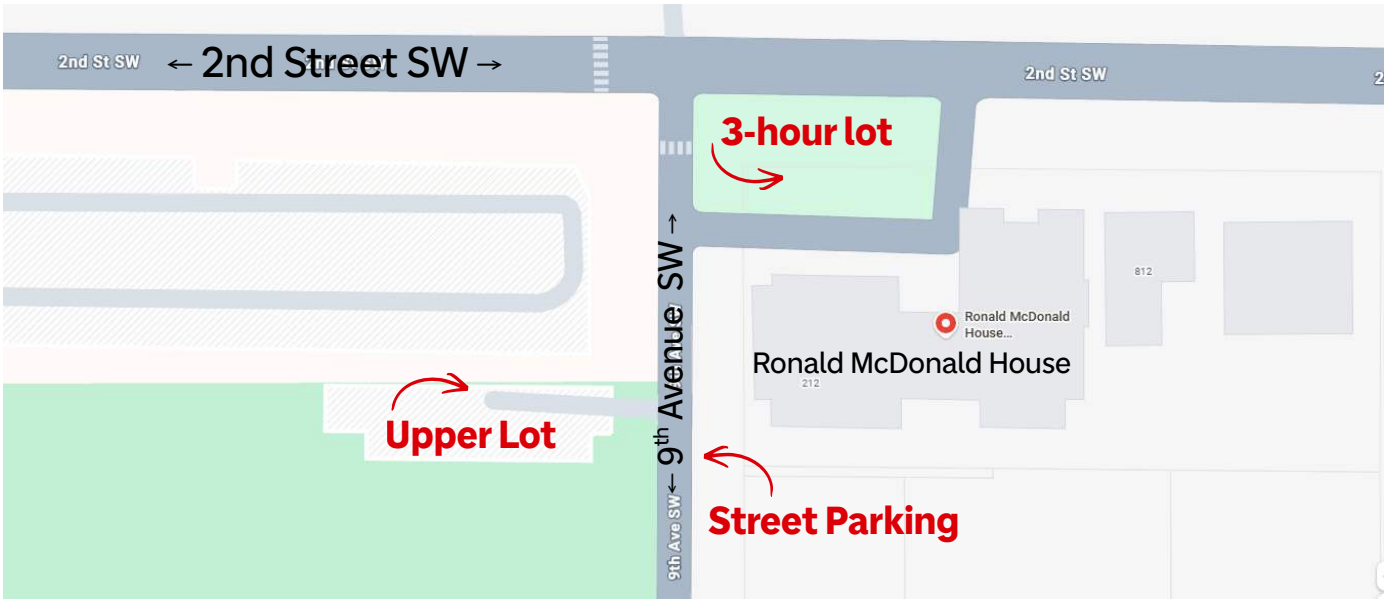
- Enter through our main entrance and check in at the Front Desk, where a staff member will welcome your group

Parking

To help keep parking available for our guest families, we encourage volunteer groups to carpool whenever possible.

Volunteer parking is available:

- Front 3-hour parking lot
- Along 9th Avenue SW
- The upper Ronald McDonald House parking lot (accessible from 9th Avenue SW)



While You're Here

Serving the Meal

House meals are typically offered Sunday through Thursday from 6:00–7:00 p.m.

Breakfast and brunch volunteer opportunities are also available on Fridays and Saturdays. Serving times vary and will be confirmed when your meal is scheduled.

Meals are served buffet-style. For food safety, volunteers will serve the food rather than allowing self-service.

Beyond serving the meal, your group is welcome to:

- Offer to help carry plates, beverages, or get highchairs as needed
- Clear tables and tidy the dining area as families finish their meal
- If your group has extra helping hands, consider creating a simple dessert bar (cookies, ice cream sundaes, brownies, or other treats). It's a fun way to involve more volunteers in the serving experience while offering families a special treat to enjoy.

Helping Families Feel Welcome

We want every family to feel comfortable, respected, and supported.

Please do:
✓ Greet families with a warm smile and a friendly welcome
✓ Enjoy friendly conversation, while allowing families to choose what and if they'd like to share
✓ Help create a welcoming atmosphere where families can relax and enjoy a meal together.
Optional ideas:

- Wear matching shirts or apparel representing your group or organization
- Decorate the dining room
- Bring small gifts, activity kits, or treat bags for children

To protect the comfort, privacy, and safety of our families, please do not:
✗ Photograph or identify guest families
✗ Promote products, services, or personal businesses
✗ Bring mascots into the House or wear costumes
✗ Hold religious activities in public spaces
✗ Use candles

Food Safety

To help keep families safe:
To protect the health of the families we serve, **all food must be:**

- Prepared onsite in our kitchen,
- Catered from a restaurant, or
- Prepared in a licensed commercial kitchen.

Food Safety, you must:
✓ Wash hands often
✓ Change gloves frequently
✓ Keep raw and cooked foods separate
✓ Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold

For the safety of our families, do not serve:
✗ Alcohol (including as an ingredient in recipes)
✗ Raw or undercooked meat, poultry, seasfood, or eggs.
✗ Food made outside of the above environments is not permitted.

Food Allergies

Many of our families have food allergies or dietary restrictions.

To help keep everyone safe:

- Label ingredients whenever possible.
- Be prepared to answer questions about ingredients
- Allow each family to decide what foods are safe for them
- **If you don't know an answer, please don't guess**

Thank you for helping keep our families safe.

Before You Leave

Clean Up

Before you leave, please help us prepare the kitchen for the next group:

- Packaging leftovers
- Loading and starting dishwashers
- Washing dishes that are too big for dishwashers
- Wiping counters and tables
- Sweeping the floor
- Taking out the trash and recycling

Our staff will take care of the rest.

Ronald McDonald House®
Southeastern MN & Western WI

Questions?

We're here to help make your meal experience a success.

Katie Arnott
Volunteer Director
507-252-2161
karnott@rmhmn.org

850 2nd Street SW
Rochester, MN 55902