



## Volunteer Handbook

As a volunteer with Meals on Wheels Orange County, NC, you are enhancing the well-being of older adults by alleviating hunger and reducing isolation. Your compassion, time and the use of your personal vehicle are greatly appreciated. We sincerely hope the MOWOCNC Volunteer Handbook helps make your volunteer experience better for you and the people you are serving. We can't thank you enough for your dedication and commitment to the Chapel Hill, Carrboro and rural Orange County communities!

919-942-2948

Mailing | PO Box 2102 | Chapel Hill, NC 27515 |

[www.mowocnc.org](http://www.mowocnc.org)

[www.facebook.com/mowocnc](https://www.facebook.com/mowocnc)

[www.instagram.com/mowocnc](https://www.instagram.com/mowocnc)

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#mowocnc



## Meals on Wheels Overview

### About Meals on Wheels Orange County, NC

Meals on Wheels Orange County, NC (MOWOCNC) provides a hot, nutritious meal and friendly recipient check-in every Monday through Friday to older adults, homebound adults, adults with disabilities or those convalescing, who do not have access to, or the ability to, prepare healthy meals.

Volunteer drivers currently serve 28 routes across Chapel Hill, Carrboro and rural Orange County, delivering approximately 200 meals per day in order to improve health, alleviate hunger, reduce isolation and support each recipient's ability to age in place with dignity.

### MOWOCNC Mission Statement

***To enhance the well-being of older adults by alleviating hunger and reducing isolation.***

### MOWOCNC Principles

#### *Our Meals*

At MOWOCNC we are passionate about providing the best meals at the lowest cost. We provide a nutritious, appealing and tasty lunch made from quality ingredients. A full lunch includes a hot meal, cold milk, fresh fruit and a home-baked dessert. Our hot lunch is currently prepared by Spicy Green Catering, located in Hillsborough, NC.



### *Our Partners*

We are a people powered organization. We could not do what we do without dedicated volunteers, generous donors, loyal local business sponsors and wonderful partner organizations who help ensure that older adults in our community are not forgotten.

### *Our Recipients*

We are honored to serve the older adults in our community who require our support. We are partners with our recipients, supporting them in their ability to age in place with dignity while alleviating hunger and reducing isolation. Recipients who are able, participate in paying for their meals. All meals are subsidized and no eligible recipient is turned away due to lack of ability to pay.

### *Our Volunteers*

MOWOCNC volunteers are amazing! Whether serving as a day chair organizing volunteers, picking up donated food at local stores and shops, arriving early as part of a morning set-up crew, delivering meals, making holiday gifts or serving on a committee or board, our volunteers put their heart, time and energy into serving older adults in our community. We recognize and appreciate all you do to support MOWOCNC and our recipients!

### *Our Funding*

MOWOCNC relies on individual donations, grants, Town of Chapel Hill, Town of Carrboro and Orange County allocations, program fees and money generated by fundraising events to fund on-going operations.



## Meal Delivery Program Overview

### Eligibility Requirements for Meal Recipients

Every potential recipient has a personal intake interview to determine eligibility for Meals on Wheels. Recipients are eligible for the program, regardless of ability to pay, if the recipient is above a certain age, does not have access to healthy food options, can no longer prepare nutritious meals, or has a physical or mental disability which curtails their ability to prepare a nutritious meal or have access to transportation or in-home delivery for groceries or other food options.

If a recipient receives homecare or Medicaid, they are still eligible for meal service if the homecare worker cannot prepare a meal or if he or she is designated to assist only with other tasks.

Meal delivery can be short-term (4-6 weeks) or long-term.

Residents of other counties or those in Orange County outside of our delivery area will be referred to the appropriate Meals on Wheels location.

### Requesting Meals

Prospective recipients can be referred by relatives, friends, social workers or health professionals. People can also request meals themselves. Potential recipients are contacted for an initial phone interview, and a home visit is scheduled to complete a full intake and to determine eligibility.

## Meal Program and Delivery Logistics

- Meals are delivered every Monday through Friday (excluding major holidays), between 10:45 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. by our dedicated volunteer drivers.
- Meals contain one lean protein, two vegetables, one complex carbohydrate (bread, rice or beans), a carton of milk, a piece of fruit or fruit cup/applesauce and a dessert. (Sugar-free desserts are available).
- MOWOCNC fees are based on a sliding scale. Eligibility for Meals on Wheels service is not impacted by a recipient's ability to pay. Approximately 75% of recipients pay less than .50 per meal.

## MOWOCNC Board of Directors

[available at [www.MOWOCNC.org](http://www.MOWOCNC.org)]

## MOWOCNC Staff Members

Executive Director	Rachel Sobel Bearman	execdirector@MOWOCNC.org
Operations Manager	Suzzette Jarman	operations@MOWOCNC.org
Operations and Development Associate (Hillsborough)	Julia Meyer	opcoordinator@mowocnc.org

Volunteer Coordinator	Heather Harris	<a href="mailto:volunteers@MOWOCNC.org">volunteers@MOWOCNC.org</a>
Bookkeeper	Shannon Grabowski	<a href="mailto:finance@MOWOCNC.org">finance@MOWOCNC.org</a>

## What Do Meals on Wheels Volunteers Do?

There are more than 400 dedicated volunteers who do a variety of tasks for MOWOCNC annually. In addition to driving and baking desserts, there are many other opportunities to serve. These include picking up donated food from local businesses, setting up and cleaning up daily operations, organizing shelf stable donations, organizing/supporting our pet food program, planning events and serving on a committee or the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors and Committee Chairs are always in search of volunteers with time, energy and particular skill sets that can help the organization. There are numerous opportunities available (volunteer recruitment and retention, event planning, development, governance, marketing, finance). If you are interested, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteers@MOWOCNC.org](mailto:volunteers@MOWOCNC.org).

## Volunteer Job Descriptions

- **Drivers** deliver meals to recipients (1½-2 hours once a week).
- **Substitute Drivers** (called upon as needed).
- **Day Chairs** keep track of drivers on their assigned day and schedule substitute drivers if necessary.

- **Set-up Volunteers** count, distribute & pack up the meals for drivers.
- **Clean-up Volunteers** greet drivers as they return, wipe down and put away equipment (1 hour one day/week).
- **Bakers** bake 2-3 dozen desserts (once a month).
- **Food Runners** collect the meals or other food donated by local businesses and deliver them to the MOWOCNC office (½ hour once a week per pick-up).
- **Office Coverage Volunteers** are trained to run the office when the Operations Manager is unavailable.
- **Pet Food Program Coordinator** helps manage our pet program to help ensure our recipients' cats/dogs are also well fed and cared for!
- **Administrative Support** helps with correspondence, data input, mailings and more!
- **Card Writer** helps MOWOCNC send birthday and holiday greetings to recipients and volunteers.
- **Researchers** investigate a variety of topics (as needed).

Volunteers taking on the above roles report to the Volunteer Coordinator.

Additional volunteer opportunities are available on an ad-hoc basis. The Volunteer Coordinator will keep volunteers abreast of all available opportunities.

## Volunteer Code of Ethics

MOWOCNC recognizes the critical role of its volunteers and is extremely grateful for their dedication, their time and their compassion. MOWOCNC accepts the service of all volunteers with



the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the organization.

MOWOCNC asks you as a volunteer to:

- Perform your service to the best of your ability, maintaining the recipient's interests as your primary focus.
- Observe, maintain and protect confidentiality regarding recipients, and avoid sharing confidential information or any information that identifies a recipient with anyone except MOWOCNC employees.
- Avoid activity construed as conflict of interest, i.e. neither accept loans or gifts of money or property from recipients nor give gifts of money or property directly to recipients.
- Refrain from offering medical, legal or financial advice to recipients.
- Respect the cultural, religious and political views of recipients and refrain from imposing your cultural, religious and political views on recipients.

### Recipient Confidentiality

In the course of the daily activities conducted by MOWOCNC, employees and volunteers will be in personal contact with recipients. This often necessitates the sharing of private information concerning the recipients.

All volunteers are required, as a condition of volunteerism, to abide by the following policy concerning confidential information or activities in connection with the performance of each individual's service. This policy is binding for all volunteers.



All information concerning any recipient or applicant of MOWOCNC is strictly confidential. This includes name, address, phone number, living condition/circumstances, income status and physical condition. The services received by recipients and other similar information are also strictly confidential. All volunteers shall guarantee to every person that receives the services of MOWOCNC this right to his/her personal privacy and that they will be treated in an ethical and respectful way.

## Instructions for Drivers

For volunteer positions at MOWOCNC involving the operation of a motor vehicle, volunteers are expected to follow all applicable driving laws and safe practices while operating their vehicles. Volunteer drivers must be at least 18 years old. All MOWOCNC volunteers who have direct contact with recipients must complete a background check prior to volunteering.

- Arrive at Chapel Hill (632 Laurel Hill Road, Chapel Hill) or Hillsborough (113 W Hill Ave South, Hillsborough) office between 10:15-10:30 a.m. (or time scheduled by the volunteer coordinator) on your scheduled day to volunteer.
  - Review volunteer binder and note any changes on the route. Confirm that the inside contents of the binder sheets match up with the outside cover sheet.
  - Count and verify that you have the correct number of meals, fruits, desserts, breads and drinks. Sugar-free desserts are identified by a red dot. Speak to the Day Chair or Operations Coordinator if you find a discrepancy or have any questions.

- If you find you are short a meal while on the route, call the office for instructions. Depending on the situation and if there is a grocery store nearby, the office may request that you purchase a meal for delivery and then submit a receipt for reimbursement.
- After loading the supplies in your car, place the MOWOCNC placard in your car window.
- Leave the office no earlier than 10:30 a.m. and no later than 10:45 a.m. to begin the route.
- Note: Please notify the Volunteer Coordinator or Day Chair as early as possible if you know you'll be unable to deliver on your scheduled day so that a substitute can be arranged.  
Volunteer Coordinator:  
[volunteers@mowocnc.org](mailto:volunteers@mowocnc.org)/919-942-2948.
- If you have any questions or concerns along your route, please contact the office at 919-942-2948, press 1 for Chapel Hill office or press 2 for Hillsborough office.

## Procedures with Recipients

### Basic Meal Delivery Procedures\*

\*Please review the latest detailed meal delivery procedures which are regularly updated to meet changing needs and requirements.

- Using the volunteer binder, verify food choices and instructions for recipient(s) at each stop.
- As COVID-19 continues to impact our community, we respectfully request for the safety of our recipients and our volunteers, that all volunteers, even those fully vaccinated, wear a mask covering the nose and mouth, when coming close to a recipient or entering into a recipient's home.

- Upon knocking at the residence, identify yourself as a MOWOCNC volunteer.
- At each residence, please wait patiently; it may take a few minutes for the recipient to open the door.
- Never enter a recipient's home without express permission from the recipient at each visit.
- Place the food where requested and open containers if needed.
- If the recipient plans to eat later in the afternoon, encourage him/her to refrigerate the meal.
- Visit briefly with each recipient to check on his or her wellbeing (if a family member, friend or caregiver answers the door regularly and the recipient is not visible, you may ask to visit with him or her and if not possible, ask how the recipient is doing).
- If no one answers after a reasonable amount of time, please call the recipient's number included in your binder. If the recipient does not answer or come to the door, contact the office to report the recipient was not reachable. Do NOT leave a meal. Bring the meal back with you to the office when you return at the end of your route.
- If there is an emergency that you become aware of after entering the home/apartment or that is visible from the door or window, call 911 immediately and then call the MOWOCNC office. Please stay at the residence until EMS arrives.

### Recipient Safety Checks

A safety check is something that delivery volunteers can do to help ensure the safety and wellbeing of our recipients. When delivering a meal, do a quick visual check of the physical environment and the

recipient (if applicable). Does everything seem to be okay? Things to look for include, but are not limited to:

### Safety Hazards

- Loose electrical wires
- Things that could cause the recipient to fall (e.g. bad steps)
- A front/back door that does not latch

### Recipient Issues

- Illness
- Unusual drowsiness and/or confusion
- Not his/her usual self (e.g. noticeable mood change)

*\*It is important to remember that this should not be intrusive. Simply be aware of the recipient and his/her surroundings, noting any obvious dangers or issues.*

If necessary, please complete an emergency safety checklist (found in the volunteer binder). If something does not seem right with a recipient and/or his/her surrounding environment, please tell the Operations Coordinator when you return from your route. If it is a pressing issue, please call the MOWOCNC office right away. And as always, if it is an emergency, please call 911.

### **Emergency Situations with Recipients**

If someone has fallen, is unconscious or bleeding, do not move the person. Call 911 from the recipient's home for assistance. Then call the MOWOCNC office. Stay with the recipient until 911 arrives. Upon return to the MOWOCNC office, complete an Incident Report form.

## Handling Recipient Requests

- Volunteers should not provide recipients with any type of personal care assistance or medical or financial advice or support or transportation assistance.
- As a Meals on Wheels volunteer, you should not be purchasing or giving a recipient medication, even at the recipient's request.
- If the recipient requests support services, beyond the capacity of Meals on Wheels, please share that request with the Operations Coordinator. The Office will check-in with a family member or alternate contact about the request before any action is taken. If possible, we will share information with the recipient on agencies or organizations that may handle such requests (cleaning services, minor repairs, phone disconnection, etc).
- At the beginning of each month, recipient bills are delivered with the meals. Some recipients may give you a payment. Please utilize the receipts in the binder to mark the payment and return that payment to the Office when returning your binder.
- Periodically, MOW may distribute flyers for opportunities for our recipients from partner agencies that serve the elderly and homebound community. If a recipient completes a form delivered by MOW volunteers, please deliver that form back to the office when returning your binder.

## Post Meal Delivery Procedures

- After completing deliveries, return the volunteer binder, any payments and forms collected from recipients and all storage containers to the office.

- If there is no designated Clean-Up Volunteer, please clean all storage containers, including cooler(s), milk bag and tubs and return them to their marked places in the office.
- Inform the Operations Coordinator or designated volunteer\* about anything unusual that occurred during the route, (recipient not home, change in living environment, concerns about recipient's health, wellbeing or living situation). Follow-up by the Operations Manager with the recipient or family may be needed.
- If the Operations Coordinator is not present when you return, complete an Incident Report form located in the receptacle on the Main Office door. Leave the completed form in the same receptacle.

*\*On certain days there may be a post-delivery volunteer who assists the Operations Manager with collecting binders, gathering forms and payments and collecting information volunteer drivers may have to share.*

## **Staff, Volunteer and Recipient Safety**

At MOWOCNC, the safety and wellbeing of our volunteers is paramount. Without question it is every volunteer's responsibility to maintain safe practices whether baking desserts, performing set up/cleanup or driving a specific route. Volunteers must report any suspected safety hazards or atypical recipient behavior to the Operations Coordinator immediately. If a situation is encountered during a recipient interview or delivery of meals by the volunteer(s), a judgment regarding the safety issue of the delivery or interview is at the discretion of the volunteer or interviewer.



The prevention of volunteer injuries and illnesses will be given precedence over fulfillment of volunteer responsibility. If you find yourself in an uncomfortable situation -- encountering a belligerent or unruly person, unsafe location, vicious dog, domestic dispute or any risk to your safety -- these situations are to be reported to the Operations Coordinator or Executive Director, who has the right to make the decision regarding temporary or permanent stoppage of delivery.

No one shall knowingly be permitted or required to drive while his or her ability or alertness is impaired by fatigue, illness or other causes that might expose the individual or others to injury.

## Adverse Weather Policy

It is the policy of MOWOCNC to protect employees and volunteers from adverse weather or other conditions of a serious nature. MOWOCNC will close its operations in the instance of bad weather, especially when it may pose a clear and present danger to the safety and welfare of its employees and volunteers. Closings will be communicated via local television stations, email and posted on our website [[www.MOWOCNC.org](http://www.MOWOCNC.org)].

It is recognized that in some individual cases travel may be hazardous even though closing is not warranted. In those cases, everyone is advised to take all reasonable precautions given his/her personal circumstances. MOWOCNC expects volunteers to make every effort to complete their volunteer responsibilities but not to place themselves in dangerous driving conditions. MOWOCNC employees and staff will accommodate those volunteers who are unable to complete their volunteer duties because of hazardous weather conditions. Volunteers should assess driving conditions and notify



their Day Chair/Volunteer Coordinator if they are unable to meet their volunteer responsibility that day.





## Meals on Wheels America (MOWA)

Meals on Wheels America (MOWA) is the oldest and largest national organization composed of and representing local, community-based Senior Nutrition Programs in all 50 U.S. states, as well as the U.S. Territories. Local programs like Meals on Wheels Orange County, NC are MOWA Members. All told, there are some 5,000 local Senior Nutrition Programs in the United States. These programs provide well over one million meals to seniors who need them each day. Some programs serve meals at congregate locations like senior centers, some programs deliver meals directly to the homes of seniors whose mobility is limited and many programs provide both services.

While remarkable, the one million meals per day figure underestimates the size and shape of our network and its reach and influence in communities across America. In addition to the hundreds of thousands of seniors who receive meals, there are many thousands of professionals employed at the various local Senior Nutrition Programs across the U.S. More notable than that is the virtual army of volunteers who also “work” for these programs. It is said that this group, numbering between 800,000 and 1.7 million individuals, is the largest volunteer army in the nation. For more information, please visit [www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org](http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org).

**Thank you for your commitment to MOWOCNC  
and to serving the elderly and homebound  
in our community.**