

# Meals-on-Wheels Greater San Diego Volunteer Handbook

## A Word About Volunteer Positions

The following are the skills and qualifications required:

1. Possess basic knowledge and understanding of the physical and emotional aspects of people in later years of life.
2. Practice good interpersonal communication skills with clients, other volunteers, and staff.
3. Have visual/hearing acuity and physical mobility adequate to perform the duties of the job.
4. Be punctual and reliable. Delivery hours are between 10:30 am - and 1:30 pm.
5. Be able to cope under pressure and with emergency situations.
6. Be able to lift and carry bulky equipment up to 35 lbs.
7. Be able to ascend/descend stairs; enter/exit narrow doorways or passages; enter/exit a vehicle; traverse uneven /bumpy/soft surfaces.
8. Be able to read and follow directions, road maps, and other instructions.
9. Driver must have a reliable insured vehicle, a valid driver license, and a clear DMV record.
10. Meals should be picked up at the assigned location at the designated time. Please follow all CA safe driving laws.
11. Count both hot and cold meals and beverages to be sure they are correct before you leave. The route book should also be reviewed for any changes at this time.
12. All meals must be kept in coolers or hot containers until delivered. Meals may never be left outside, not even in a cooler at the client's request.
13. Your badge must be worn when representing Meals-on-Wheels.

## A Word About our Mission and Philosophy

Our Mission is to support the independence and well-being of seniors. Meals-on-Wheels contributes to the overall well-being of seniors by providing regular nutrition and daily contact with a caring volunteer. Our goal is to provide the finest quality services to our seniors and to do so more efficiently and economically than our competitors. By satisfying our seniors' needs, they will continue to do business with us and will recommend us to others.

Volunteers should deliver meals in a pleasant, non-rushed manner and treat each client with respect and dignity.

Volunteers should maintain a professional demeanor while on route; this includes professional interactions with clients, their families, caregivers, and representatives from other agencies.

Volunteers must avoid becoming overly involved with clients, e.g., visiting a client or providing any personal service to a client outside of the Meals-on-Wheels meal delivery service.

Please review this handbook on a regular basis since failure to follow our policies and procedures may result in termination of your volunteer service.

## Non-Harassment

We prohibit harassment of anyone associated with Meals-on-Wheels because of their "protected class" including, but not limited to: veteran status, uniform service member status, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability or any other protected class under federal, state or local law. Harassment of third parties is also prohibited.

The conduct prohibited by this policy includes conduct in any form including but not limited to e-mail, voicemail, chat rooms, Internet use or history, text messages, pictures, images, writings, words or gestures.

While it is not easy to define precisely what harassment is, it includes: slurs, epithets, threats, derogatory comments or visual depictions, unwelcome jokes and teasing.

Anyone who feels that (s)he is a victim of such harassment should immediately report the matter to their Service Center Manager

Meals-on-Wheels will investigate all such reports as confidentially as possible. Adverse action will not be taken against the volunteer because he or she, in good faith, reports or participates in the investigation of a violation of this policy. Violations of this policy are not permitted and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

## **Sexual Harassment**

Any type of sexual harassment is against Meals-on-Wheels policy and may be unlawful.

We firmly prohibit sexual harassment of anyone associated with Meals-on-Wheels. Harassment of third parties is also prohibited. The purpose of this policy is not to regulate morality, it is to ensure that no one is subject to sexual harassment. While it is not easy to define precisely what sexual harassment is, it may include: unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature including, but not limited to, sexually-related drawings, pictures, jokes, teasing, uninvited touching or other sexually-related comments. The conduct prohibited by this policy includes conduct in any form including but not limited to e-mail, voicemail, chat rooms, Internet use or history, text messages, pictures, images, writings, words or gestures.

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. There will be no adverse action taken against anyone who reports violations of this policy in good faith or participates in the investigation of such violations.

Anyone who feels that (s)he is a victim of sexual harassment should immediately report such actions to their Service Center Manager. All complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated as confidentially as possible.

## **Driver's License/Driving Record**

Volunteers in positions where the operation of a motor vehicle is an essential duty of the position must present and maintain a valid driver's license and acceptable driving record to our agency. Changes in your driving record must be reported immediately. Violations of this policy may result in immediate discharge.

## **Vacation, Sick, Holidays**

Please inform the Service Center as soon as possible if you are unable to do your route or have a scheduled vacation.

We deliver meals on all holidays except if they fall on a Sunday.

## **Confidentiality of Client Matters**

Our professional ethics require that each volunteer maintain the highest degree of confidentiality when handling client matters.

To maintain this professional confidence, no volunteer shall disclose client information to outsiders, including other clients or third parties and members of one's own family.

Questions concerning client confidentiality may be addressed with your Service Center Manager.

## **Attendance and Punctuality**

Attendance and punctuality are important factors for our success. We work as a team and this requires that each person be in the right place at the right time.

If you are unable to do your route please inform the Service Center as soon as possible.

## **Standards of Conduct**

Each volunteer has an obligation to observe and follow Meals-on-Wheels policies and to maintain proper standards of conduct at all times. If an individual's behavior interferes with the orderly and efficient operation of the organization, your services as a volunteer may be terminated.

Volunteers cannot accept payments, tips or gifts from clients. If the client has any special needs, complaints or wishes to make meal changes, please notify us and encourage the client to call the Service Center.

Meals-on-Wheels' reputation for integrity is its most valuable asset and is directly related to the conduct of its volunteers. Therefore, volunteers must never use their positions with Meals-on-Wheels, or any of its seniors, for private gain, to advance personal interests or to obtain favors or benefits for themselves, members of their families or any other individuals, corporations or business entities.

Meals-on-Wheels adheres to the highest legal and ethical standards applicable in our business. Meals-on-Wheels' business is conducted in strict observance of both the letter and spirit of all applicable laws and the integrity of each volunteer is of utmost importance.

Volunteers of Meals-on-Wheels shall conduct their personal affairs such that their duties and responsibilities to Meals-on-Wheels are not jeopardized and/or legal questions do not arise with respect to their association or work with Meals-on-Wheels.

## **Computer Software Licensing**

Meals-on-Wheels purchases or licenses the use of various computer software programs. Meals-on-Wheels volunteers do not have the right to duplicate this computer software or its related documentation. Unauthorized duplication of computer software is a federal offense.

Meals-on-Wheels does not condone the illegal duplication of software. You must use the software in accordance with the license agreement. This policy applies not only to individual desktop computers and laptops but to local area networks as well.

Volunteers learning of any misuse of software or related documentation within Meals-on-Wheels shall notify a member of management. Volunteers who reproduce, acquire or use unauthorized copies of computer software will be subject to discipline, up to and including discharge.

## **Customer and Public Relations**

Meals-on-Wheels' reputation is built on excellent service and quality work. To maintain this reputation requires the active participation of every volunteer.

The opinions and attitudes that seniors have toward Meals-on-Wheels may be determined for a long period of time by the actions of one volunteer. It is sometimes easy to take a client for granted, but if we do we run the risk of losing not only that client, but his or her associates, friends or family who may also be clients or prospective clients.

Each volunteer must be sensitive to the importance of providing courteous treatment in all working relationships.

## **Solicitation and Distribution**

To avoid unnecessary annoyances and productivity interruptions, solicitation by a volunteer of clients, other volunteers or team members is prohibited while on duty.

Distribution of personal literature, including handbills, while volunteering is prohibited at all times.

## **Changes in Personal Data**

Changes in name, address, telephone number, should be reported promptly to your Service Center.

## Care of Equipment

You are expected to demonstrate proper care when using Meals-on-Wheels' property and equipment. No property may be removed from the premises without the proper authorization of management. If you lose, break or damage any property, report it at once.

Please return the equipment and route book **as soon as** you finish your route. Please inform us if you feel there are errors in the route book by using the note paper provided in the route book.

## Personal Property

Meals-on-Wheels is not responsible for loss or damage to personal property. Valuable personal items, such as purses and all other valuables should not be left in vehicles in plain site.

## Identification Badges

Your badge must be worn when representing Meals-on-Wheels.

## Contact with the Media

All media inquiries regarding Meals-on-Wheels and its operations must be referred to the Service Center Manager or Administrative Offices.

## Each Volunteers Responsibility

Safety can only be achieved through teamwork at Meals-on-Wheels. Each volunteer must practice safety awareness by thinking defensively, anticipating unsafe situations and reporting unsafe conditions immediately.

Please observe the following precautions:

1. Notify the Service Center of any emergency situation. If you are injured or become sick while volunteering, no matter how slightly, you must inform the Service Center immediately.
2. The use of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances during on duty hours will not be tolerated. The possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances on Meals-on-Wheels property is forbidden.
3. Know the proper lifting procedures. Get help when lifting or pushing heavy objects.

## In An Emergency

If a client is in need of immediate medical attention, please **call 911** and then call the Service Center. If someone has fallen, **DO NOT MOVE** the person but try to make him or her as comfortable as possible. The volunteer should stay until help arrives. Please call the Service Center so we can make the necessary client contacts.

If the client is not home or something is amiss, please notify the Service Center immediately. You are our eyes and ears in the field.

## Receipt of Volunteer Handbook

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Meals-on-Wheels of Greater San Diego Volunteer Handbook and I understand that it contains information about the policies and practices of Meals-on-Wheels. I agree to read and comply with this Volunteer Handbook. I understand that Meals-on-Wheels retains the right to make decisions involving volunteers as needed in order to conduct its work in a manner that is beneficial to Meals-on-Wheels. I understand that this Volunteer Handbook supersedes and replaces any and all prior Volunteer Handbooks and any inconsistent verbal or written policy statements.

I understand that Meals-on-Wheels reserves the right to revise, delete and add to the provisions of this Volunteer Handbook at any time without further notice. I understand that no oral statements or representations can change the provisions of this Volunteer Handbook.

If I have questions regarding the content or interpretation of this Volunteer Handbook, I will ask my supervisor or a member of management.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

VOLUNTEER  
SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_