

*At Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Northeast Ohio, the health and well-being of our guest families, staff, volunteers and community are our top priority.*

*We are excited to welcome volunteer groups back into our Cleveland Ronald McDonald House, and have refined our Compassionate Cuisine policies and guidelines to keep everyone as safe as possible from the threat of COVID-19. We appreciate your cooperation and continued commitment to our families.*

### Participation Requirements:

- **Compassionate Cuisine groups may include a maximum of four (4) volunteers.** Everyone who comes with your group will count toward this total and must be there to actively participate.
- **Compassionate Cuisine volunteers must be at least 18 years old.** As an increased precaution, children are currently not able to participate.
- **All volunteers must be completely illness/symptom free (cold, flu, fever, stomach virus, etc.) for at least 14 days prior to volunteering.**
- **Participants will complete a health questionnaire and temperature reading upon arrival at the House.** We ask volunteers who test positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of any volunteerism to let us know as soon as possible.
- **Volunteers must wear facemasks, and gloves.** Participants must bring masks, and RMHC NEO will provide gloves. Additional health practices during participation will include frequent hand washing and changing gloves, and no face, hair, or phone touching.
- **Volunteers should consider personal health risks and limitations prior to volunteering.** The [CDC defines higher risk individuals](#) as older adults (65+), and people with serious, chronic medical conditions (heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, etc.).

### Food Safety:

- **Cooking On-Site:** Your group will receive direction from a member of our staff to safely prepare, cook and assemble all food in the House kitchen. Our staff will secure all needed groceries and ingredients in advance of your meal, so your group does not need to bring any food on your volunteer date.
- **Safety Practices:** Volunteers must practice good food safety hygiene, including frequent hand-washing, eliminating cross contamination between raw foods, wearing face masks and gloves, etc. All refrigerated items should stay chilled as long as possible, and food in the kitchen should always be covered.

### Meal Service and Clean Up:

- **Packing Meals:** To reduce the spread of germs, volunteers will pack all prepared food into individually sized containers for families to enjoy either during or after the mealtime.
- **Social Distancing:** Floor markers indicating six-foot distances will be used in all House kitchens. We require all group members to be mindful of spacing between one another while participating, and to maintain a six-foot distance from others at all times.
- **On-Site Dining:** House dining rooms will have limited seating capacity or be closed, ensuring our families are able to practice safe social distancing while eating. Families are asked to eat in their rooms depending on seating availability and their comfort level. RMHC NEO families often have inconsistent schedules due to patient treatments and may not be available to eat while your group is on-site.

For safety reasons volunteers are currently not able to dine at the House.

- **Clean Up:** Participants are responsible for thoroughly cleaning the kitchen as part of Compassionate Cuisine volunteerism. Cleaning instructions will be provided by our House staff, and all volunteers are expected to stay until clean-up is complete.

### Volunteer Expectations:

We strive to create a safe, welcoming, and respectful environment for our families, staff, and volunteers alike. As such, we expect volunteers to adhere to the following:

- We exist so families can be together when faced with the illness or injury of a child, and these families are incredibly stressed. Volunteers and staff must treat all families with compassion and respect.
- Volunteers are to follow the leadership and direction of RMHC NEO staff at all times. Those who fail to comply may be asked to immediately leave our program location(s), and may be restricted from participation in future volunteer opportunities.
- We welcome volunteers, staff and families of all backgrounds, races, and religions. Please exclude any personal religious influences while on-site to ensure a welcoming space for all.
- You may take photos of your group and food only, and must thoroughly wash your hands after taking pictures or using your phone. You may not take photos or videos of RMHC NEO families.
- Volunteers are prohibited from exchanging personal information with or soliciting services to our families.

### Frequently Asked Questions

**How do I book a volunteer date?** All bookings must be done via <https://www.rmhcneo.org/get-involved/groups/> or by emailing Scott Lovasz at [Slovasz@rmhcneo.org](mailto:Slovasz@rmhcneo.org)

**Is there an age requirement?** To ensure the health and safety of all volunteers, families, and staff, as well as the food safety of the meals being prepared for our families, all Compassionate Cuisine volunteers must be at least 18 years old.

**What is the maximum number of volunteers per group?** Compassionate Cuisine groups currently have a maximum group size of four (4) volunteers. Following COVID-19 we are limiting the group size to reduce the number of people in and out of our House. If your group includes more than four volunteers, we ask that you divide your group and provide meals on different dates.

**I have extra volunteers or children who want to attend, can they still come and watch without volunteering?** No – everyone who comes with your group should be there to actively volunteer. Children or adults beyond the maximum group size of four volunteers are not able to attend.

**I have an illness or symptoms that aren't associated with COVID-19, so can I volunteer?** We require all volunteers to be entirely illness and symptom free for at least 14 days before volunteering. We will not allow volunteers with an illness or symptoms of any kind to participate at this time.

**I volunteered and then tested positive for COVID-19. Should I let RMHC NEO know?** We ask any volunteers who test positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of volunteerism to inform us immediately. This allows us to take the necessary steps for the wellbeing of anyone else who may be impacted.

**How long is my group expected to be at the House?** Groups should plan to volunteer for three hours, from 3pm – 6pm. *Please note – groups are required to clean up after preparing the meal, so all volunteers should expect to be at the House until all clean-up is complete.*

**Do I need to bring my own dishes, serving utensils, plates, kitchen tools, etc.?** The House provides all dishes, drinkware, cutlery, and kitchen equipment needed to prepare and provide your meal.

**What does my group need to bring?** As noted above, our House has all of the kitchen equipment needed to prepare your meal. Your group is responsible for bringing facemasks for your volunteers to wear while participating. We ask volunteers to limit the personal belongings brought to the House, so please bring only essentials.

**Are RMHC NEO staff on-site during Compassionate Cuisine volunteerism?** Yes, there will always be RMHC NEO staff present to answer questions, get you situated in the kitchen and ensure everyone is participating in a safe manner. In addition, a member of our team will provide direction throughout your entire volunteer time.

Our staff will check in with each group at least every 30 minutes to facilitate glove-changing, handwashing, proper social distancing and to ensure that all safety measures are being upheld.

**Can my group get a tour of the House?** In an effort to reduce the number of visitors moving through the House, we will not be able to offer your group an indoor tour at this time. This is for the health and safety of the families staying with us, so we appreciate your understanding.



## Compassionate Cuisine: Guidelines & FAQ

### **What are the financial donation amounts to participate in Compassionate Cuisine?**

Donations for Compassionate Cuisine support the ongoing success of the program and ensure our House can offer families diverse meals every day. Groups receive a link to donate via credit card once a volunteer date is confirmed.

- A minimum gift of \$100 provides dinner

### **My group can no longer attend on our registered Compassionate Cuisine date, can I get a refund?**

If your group is unable to volunteer on your reserved date, we will make every effort to reschedule your group for a future date. No refunds will be issued if you need to cancel, but your financial contribution will still support Compassionate Cuisine and provide meals to families.

**I still have questions, so who can I talk to for more information?** If you have any questions about Compassionate Cuisine, these guidelines or your group's participation, please contact Scott Lovasz at [Slovasz@rmhcneo.org](mailto:Slovasz@rmhcneo.org)