

**Springfield Action Team  
Service Bulletin**

## **SERVING A MEAL AT THE CONTACT MINISTRIES SHELTER**

What is Involved:

A complete meal is typically prepared by others and is picked up at Cherry Hills. The meal must be delivered to Contact Ministries and served to the residents. Groups have the option of preparing their own meal to deliver and serve.

Who is being served:

Single mothers and their children. Children range in age from infant to high school. The number of individuals can range from 15 to 40.

Location: 1100 East Adams St. Building is on the south east corner of 11<sup>th</sup> and Adams.

When:

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month. Dinner is served between 5:30 and 5:45 pm. Other days and times may be available upon request.

Typical Volunteer Time Commitment: 2 Hours

Number of Volunteers Required: 4 to 5 adults to deliver and serve the meal. Occasionally, an additional 1-2 adults can help prepare the meal. *Do not exceed 5 adults serving the meal due to space limitations at the shelter.*

Children Serving: Children 6 and older may serve as long as they are helpful and do not distract their parents from serving. *Reduce the number of adults to 4 if children are helping.*

Service Instructions:

1. The group should select one individual to coordinate the meal service.
2. The group coordinator should contact Lana Benedict (899-1612) the evening before service to confirm pick-up time and see if there are any special requirements. If the volunteer group would like to provide the meal, contact Lana Benedict a week before the meal date to let her know meal preparation is not required.
3. One or two volunteers pick-up the complete meal in the Cherry Hills kitchen between 5:00 and 5:15 pm. Travel time to Contact Ministries from Cherry Hills is approximately 20 minutes.
  - a. The meal will typically consist of a main course, vegetable, bread/potato/noodle, fruit, desert, and drink mix (lemonade). Plates, napkins, utensils, and cups are also included.
  - b. The individual(s) picking up the meal should bring clothes baskets or boxes to make carrying the meal components easier. Towels can be used to keep food warm.
4. Volunteers meet at the service door on the north side of the Contact Ministries building to the right of the main entrance. Ring the shelter doorbell to the middle left of the door. If the Shelter Monitor does not come to open the door within about 5 minutes, call 753-3939 extension 18 to reach the shelter. *Do not go to the Helping Hands shelter entrance on the west side of the building.* Make every effort to coordinate the group's arrival so the Shelter Monitor only needs to make one trip to open the door.

5. The Shelter Monitor will help load the food onto a cart, and the group will take the elevator to the second floor shelter. The food is taken to the kitchen.
6. EVERYONE WASH THEIR HANDS. The volunteers should begin organizing items to create a plate preparation assembly line. Volunteers should also begin mixing drinks in the pitchers available in the kitchen.
7. The shelter residents will begin gathering in the dining area around 5:30. They will not all be there at the same time. Ask the Shelter Monitor if a majority who will be there have gathered and are ready to be served.
8. SAY A PRAYER OF THANKS FOR THE FOOD. Keep it short and simple.
9. A couple volunteers should prepare plates with the main course, a couple should deliver the plates, and one should be filling drinks. Kid volunteers are good at delivering plates and asking if anyone needs anything else.
10. Multiple plates of fruit assortments can be prepared and delivered to tables or groups of residents. Refill as necessary.
11. Serve desert last.
12. Once you are done with the initial service, feel free to eat dinner with the residents in the dining room (if there is room). You are not obligated to eat, but don't feel you are taking the resident's food if you do.
13. Make sure everyone gets seconds and keeps their cups full.
14. As dinner is winding down, some of the younger kids may want to play. Feel free to interact.
15. When it appears a majority of the residents are finished, a couple volunteers should collect trash, and a couple volunteers should prepare leftovers and place them into the refrigerator as directed by the Shelter monitor.
16. Once things are cleaned up, your group is free to go. Collect unused plates, cups, utensils, and specific items Lana would like returned and return them to the church kitchen.

#### Interacting with the Residents

1. Have some interaction with the residents. Make sure you are friendly and don't hide in the kitchen. Don't all stand in one pack in the dining room either.
2. Not all shelter residents will be in a good mood. Sometimes individuals would like to eat without being disturbed. Pay attention to cues to determine how engaging you should be with a particular individual.
3. The residents likely come from a different background than you are familiar with. Some of the parenting skills may not meet your standards. We are not there to judge. Unless you witness physical abuse beyond spanking, do not interfere.
4. If you do witness physical abuse, err on the side of stepping in to stop the abuse and notify the Shelter Monitor.
5. We are there to serve dinner, not evangelize. However if someone asks why you are serving, tell them...
6. *Serve in a humble manner. Do not judge the circumstances or behavior of the residents.*