We’re grateful for hosting congregations’ continued commitment to support families experiencing homelessness. We recognize that the pandemic has created challenges for faith communities and makes it more difficult to recruit volunteers. Thank you for your continued service.

Overview

Due to circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, families are sheltering overnight in a hotel. The hosting congregation scheduled for each week is asked to continue to provide meals for the families.

Breakfast and lunch groceries can be delivered to the program center on Monday of your hosting week between 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Dinners can be delivered to the hotel at 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

We’ve arranged for a vendor to deliver dinner to the families on weekends beginning January 9. We’ve made this change so that we can reallocate program staff time from Saturday and Sunday mealtime at the hotel to weekday hours at the program center where staff can have a greater impact.

The cost of the meals will be about $100 per weekend. If you’d like to contribute toward the cost, your support will be appreciated.

It continues to be most helpful for hosting volunteers to provide the meals on weekdays, rather than contributing money or gift cards. It saves staff the time it takes to do the meal planning, shopping or ordering, service and clean-up, freeing them to spend their time supporting families and helping them find stable homes.

*Please note that these plans can change on very short notice if there are changes in public health guidance or if families are able to move out of shelter and into their own home and a new family enters the program. Staff will inform you of any changes with as much notice as possible. We appreciate your flexibility.*

Breakfast and Lunch

Families will have breakfast and lunch at the program center in Chaska or in their hotel rooms. Congregations are asked to bring groceries to the Chaska program center on the Monday of their scheduled hosting week. On the prior Tuesday, shelter staff will send host coordinators the number of people in the program and a shopping list for the following week. This list changes week-to-week depending on what food may be on-hand from the prior week and family preferences. Please do not make purchases before you have the list and only purchase items on the list. We have limited storage space and want to avoid wasting food.

Groceries should be dropped off at the Chaska program center on the Monday of your hosting week between 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Drop-offs are contactless. Please place groceries in the vestibule of the front door and then ring the doorbell on the outside of the door to alert staff that you’ve done so. A staff member will come and retrieve the groceries from the vestibule.
Dinner

Congregations are asked to provide dinner Monday through Friday.

- Meals should be delivered to the hotel and be ready to serve at 5 p.m. A Beacon staff member will be at the hotel to direct volunteers. To protect the privacy of the families, please only share this location with volunteers who will be dropping off meals.
  - Holiday Inn Express & Suites - Chanhassen
    7855 Century Blvd
    Chanhassen, MN 55317
- Bring ready-to-eat meals that have been prepared in a commercial kitchen or that have been picked up from a restaurant or grocery store. Please deliver the meals to the staff person on-site. Do not leave them unattended or with hotel staff.
- If the meals are packaged for each individual or family (i.e. already in boxes or on plates or divided into family packages), the meals may be dropped off for the staff member to distribute and no dishware is needed as families have plates and utensils in their rooms.
- If the meal needs to be plated on-site, provide one to two volunteers to serve the food and clean-up. Volunteers should wear masks. To limit the number of people who touch the serving containers, plan to fill plates for each person rather than setting food out buffet-style.
  - If you choose to serve meals please provide the gloves and utensils you’ll need for serving, paper plates, and supplies for cleaning up.
- Families pick up their meals in the hotel conference room and return to their rooms to eat to promote social distancing.
  - The meals need to be covered for the trip from the lobby to the families’ rooms. Boxes or an extra plate to lay on top of the dinner plate has worked well.
  - Offer bottled, canned or boxed beverages.

Key Contacts

If you have questions about these instructions:
  Rebekah Schneider
  Program Manager
  952-261-9397

If you have questions when making a delivery or need to inform staff of delays:
  Shelter On-Call Staff
  612-767-9513