



Ronald  
McDonald  
House  
Houston

Keeping families close™

# Group Volunteering Guidelines

## RONALD MCDONALD FAMILY ROOM MD ANDERSON CHILDREN'S CANCER HOSPITAL

### REQUIREMENTS

- The maximum number of volunteers that may participate is 5. Everyone must be 18 or older. Children or underage teens may NOT attend or participate.
- Media coverage must be pre-approved by our Marketing Coordinator at 713-795-3583 or [mc@rmhhouston.org](mailto:mc@rmhhouston.org) as well as a representative at MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital.
- Personal photos are prohibited. Do not take pictures or videos of patients/family members with personal phones or other equipment. You may participate in patient/family photos if the patient/family is taking the picture with their personal device.
- Do not discuss individual patients or their conditions outside this event. Do not discuss individual patients or their conditions with other members of your volunteer group or with other patients/families.

### FAMILY MEALS & ACTIVITIES

- Meals and activities must be scheduled and approved before arriving.
- Only food prepared at a licensed retail food establishment may be served to guests if delivered directly and served within a short period of time. All food must be fully cooked and prepared prior to delivery. Due to food safety guidelines, food cannot be cooked in the Ronald McDonald Family Room kitchen.
- When planning the menus, be sensitive to the unique population we serve. Please provide a vegetarian/non-meat option and if bringing a raw vegetable dish (i.e. salad) also provide cooked vegetables. Individual food items must be individually wrapped and large enough in size to prevent choking.
- Two microwaves and an oven are available for warming. Grills, skilletts, sterno (or any product with a flame) are not allowed due to safety reasons.
- Any small gifts must be new (never used) and cannot be wrapped or have religious messages or themes. Please do not bring items that can be easily swallowed (Marbles, small parts, stuffed animals with glass/plastic eyes, etc.)
- Cash or gift cards cannot be given out to families but may be donated to RMH for family use.
- Prior approval must be received to bring decorations for event. Mylar balloons are exclusively used throughout pediatrics. Latex balloons, bubbles, glitter and confetti are prohibited.

### BEHAVIOR

- Do not ask about diagnosis, prognosis, treatment or physical characteristics. Do not share your personal problems or information with patients/families.
- Do not invite patients/families to join you in activities outside of this event. Do not share your cell phone number or email address with patients/families. Do not "friend" patients/family members on your social media accounts.
- Do not give money or personal belongings to patients/families.
- Do not accept gifts or monetary donations, on behalf of your organization or personally, while volunteering at this event. Do not solicit donations, of any kind.
- If a patient offers a hug, please reciprocate as you feel comfortable. Side-to-side hugs are most appropriate. Do not ask patients for hugs or kisses.
- Dress appropriately. Shorts, low necklines, sleeveless shirts, midriff tops, sandals and flip-flops are not allowed.
- While you are volunteering, please refrain from using cell phones or other communication devices.

### SAFETY

- Wash your hands with soap and water and use alcohol-based sanitizer often. Latex-free gloves will be provided and must be used when handling and serving food. Change gloves that get ripped or contaminated and never reuse gloves.
- Do not come if you have any of the following: Fever, sore throat, cough, sneezing, body aches, flu or respiratory illness, Eye infection, Open sores, or exposure to any communicable infections in the previous 48 hours.
- Please don't attempt to adjust patient equipment, tubing, pumps or alarms. Notify a health care professional with concerns.



*far from home* **hot meals and friendly faces** *comforted our family*

Keeping Families Close™



[rmhhouston.org](http://rmhhouston.org)



713-745-4930

# Five keys to safer food



## Keep clean

- ✓ Wash your hands before handling food and often during food preparation
- ✓ Wash your hands after going to the toilet
- ✓ Wash and sanitize all surfaces and equipment used for food preparation
- ✓ Protect kitchen areas and food from insects, pests and other animals

### Why?

While most microorganisms do not cause disease, dangerous microorganisms are widely found in soil, water, animals and people. These microorganisms are carried on hands, wiping cloths and utensils, especially cutting boards and the slightest contact can transfer them to food and cause foodborne diseases.

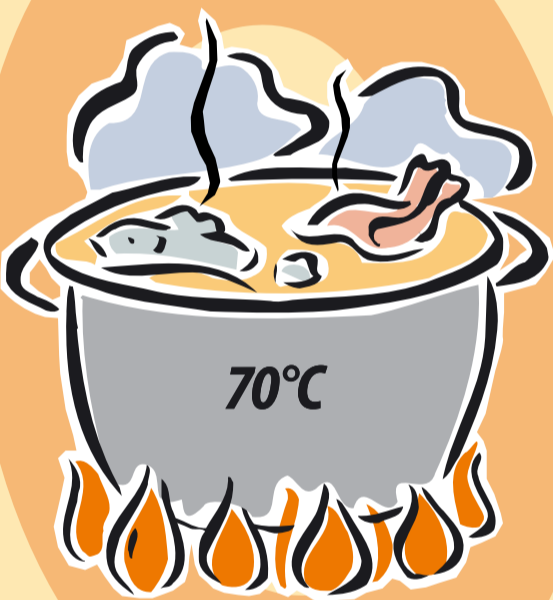


## Separate raw and cooked

- ✓ Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods
- ✓ Use separate equipment and utensils such as knives and cutting boards for handling raw foods
- ✓ Store food in containers to avoid contact between raw and prepared foods

### Why?

Raw food, especially meat, poultry and seafood, and their juices, can contain dangerous microorganisms which may be transferred onto other foods during food preparation and storage.

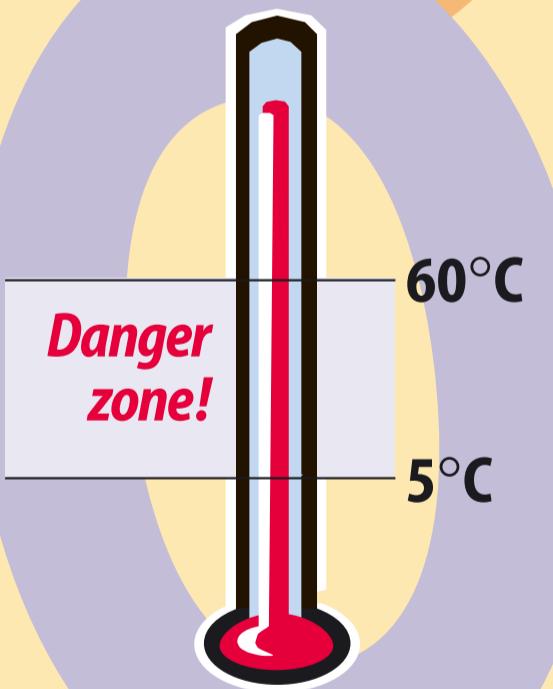


## Cook thoroughly

- ✓ Cook food thoroughly, especially meat, poultry, eggs and seafood
- ✓ Bring foods like soups and stews to boiling to make sure that they have reached 70°C. For meat and poultry, make sure that juices are clear, not pink. Ideally, use a thermometer
- ✓ Reheat cooked food thoroughly

### Why?

Proper cooking kills almost all dangerous microorganisms. Studies have shown that cooking food to a temperature of 70°C can help ensure it is safe for consumption. Foods that require special attention include minced meats, rolled roasts, large joints of meat and whole poultry.



## Keep food at safe temperatures

- ✓ Do not leave cooked food at room temperature for more than 2 hours
- ✓ Refrigerate promptly all cooked and perishable food (preferably below 5°C)
- ✓ Keep cooked food piping hot (more than 60°C) prior to serving
- ✓ Do not store food too long even in the refrigerator
- ✓ Do not thaw frozen food at room temperature

### Why?

Microorganisms can multiply very quickly if food is stored at room temperature. By holding at temperatures below 5°C or above 60°C, the growth of microorganisms is slowed down or stopped. Some dangerous microorganisms still grow below 5°C.



## Use safe water and raw materials

- ✓ Use safe water or treat it to make it safe
- ✓ Select fresh and wholesome foods
- ✓ Choose foods processed for safety, such as pasteurized milk
- ✓ Wash fruits and vegetables, especially if eaten raw
- ✓ Do not use food beyond its expiry date

### Why?

Raw materials, including water and ice, may be contaminated with dangerous microorganisms and chemicals. Toxic chemicals may be formed in damaged and mouldy foods. Care in selection of raw materials and simple measures such as washing and peeling may reduce the risk.