



*Silver Sage
Meals On Wheels*

**VOLUNTEER
DRIVER
HANDBOOK**

*Our Mission:
Enriching Life For Seniors*

Welcome to Silver Sage MOW.

Our organization has a proud tradition of volunteerism. It was founded by volunteers, is served by a volunteer Board of Directors and is supported by volunteers like you who are committed to improving our community. We value the role volunteers continue to play in the growth and success of MOW.

Our major funding source contracts require that we spend at least one hour orienting each volunteer. We appreciate your attendance and compliance.

During your orientation, you are provided with the essential knowledge needed to perform the duties of a MOW volunteer driver. Within a few days, you will become familiar with your delivery route.

The information in this handbook serves as a “refresher” reference of major points presented at the orientation. We hope you will refer to it periodically as you continue your volunteer job.

As a new MOW volunteer driver, you may find that you have questions concerning the people to whom you are taking meals or specific problems with route delivery. MOW staff are always available to assist you with any concerns. We encourage all of our volunteers to report any unusual circumstances that they have observed. We believe “volunteers are the eyes and ears of Meals On Wheels.”

We hope your experience as a volunteer with MOW will not be limited to the logistics of food deliver. Take time to become acquainted with the clients to whom you deliver nourishment. Develop friendships. ***Have fun. Thanks for caring and sharing your valuable time.***

Your Volunteer Commitment: The Importance of Guaranteeing Meal Delivery

At Silver Sage, we guarantee meal delivery to, on average, 220 clients daily, Monday through Friday. If a regular volunteer is unable to drive (no matter what the reason), we must still find volunteer or a staff person to deliver the meals. This raises our costs and lowers our efficiency.

“No shows,” late cancels and last-minute volunteer cancellations severely tax our delivery system and cause our clients to receive their meals late.

Please make reminders for yourself. Stick notes on doors or calendars. Team coordinators should develop a schedule.

Anticipate problems or delays such as long office meetings and appointments. If there is any chance you cannot make your delivery, please call and cancel your route.

Call Silver Sage if you will be late or unable to deliver as scheduled. We request at least 24 hours notice, cancellations received at 9:30 a.m. on your day to drive are very difficult to cover.

Please remember that we are depending on you. Give us a call if you foresee any conflicts, but try to guarantee the delivery of your route... as we do.

24 Hours A Day

**Cancellations by meal delivery drivers are accepted
24 hours a day. Call Silver Sage at (830) 796-4969.**

WHO DOES MEALS ON WHEELS SERVE?

Meals On Wheels clients are people who have requested the meal service and meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Usually 60 years of age or older
2. Reside in service area
3. Primarily homebound or have little or no help
4. Have physical or mental impairments which make meal Preparations difficult

There is no waiting list for service for those people who directly apply for Meals On Wheels and are found to be eligible. Short term service is available for those who are recuperating from serious illness or need meals in the interim. In some cases, service is provided for a spouse or other care-giver who is at risk of becoming overwhelmed by the responsibilities involved in caring for an incapacitated individual.

Clients' situations change. Persons recovering from surgery may gradually become better able to provide for themselves. Client's children may become available to provide care at the noon hour. When this occurs, we take clients off our program to accommodate others in need. The Silver Sage Director of Client and Volunteer Services will visit and recertify MOW clients once a year to determine eligibility. Volunteers are the "eyes and ears" of Meals On Wheels and should call the Silver Sage with questions or concerns.

WHAT ABOUT THE MEALS?

Meals On Wheels clients receive meals that are:

Nutritious - Our registered, licensed dietician plans the menus. Our healthful meals meet or exceed 1/3 of the Recommended Dietary Allowance for seniors as determined by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences.

Enjoyable - Client surveys are conducted on a yearly basis. The results demonstrate that our clients enjoy the meals.

Hot - Meals are picked up by volunteer drivers and delivered in insulated containers between 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.



Chilled - Chilled meals like a salad, are delivered on Wednesdays.

Shelf Stable - Meals w/long shelf life are delivered as required.

Frozen - Delivered to cover days the center is closed for Holiday or for additional meals over weekend as needed.

**All of the meals are prepared at the Silver Sage kitchen.
All meals served are low in sodium, fat and sugar.**

SPECIAL DIETS:

Meals On Wheels offers special diets for clients with different dietary needs. We use labels to easily identify special meals.

SPECIAL MEALS:

Special meals are pureed meals or mechanical soft or a substitute meal.

*Please remember to check and double check the route sheet so that each client gets the kind of nutrition he or she needs.

*Your attention to detail insures that each MOW client gets the kind of nutrition he or she needs.



WHAT IS A ROUTE SHEET?

A route sheet is a select list of clients who live in the same general area to whom you will deliver. It contains the general information at the top, along with the route name, date, and meal count summary. Below this are directions to clients house, client name, address, phone, meal type, and any additional delivery instructions. The last sheet is for recording of volunteer hours, miles, and any miscellaneous notes you wish to tell the Silver Sage.

Note: The information on the route sheet is confidential.
Please return route sheets to Silver Sage once all deliveries are complete.



THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MEALS ON WHEELS DRIVER

1. Deliver the meals promptly and in a safe condition.
2. Try to see and visit with the client each time you deliver.

3. Call Silver Sage if a client does not answer the door. (830) 796-4969

4. Volunteer drivers are the “eyes and ears” of Meals On Wheels. Check on the well-being of clients and report any changes or concerns to Silver Sage.

WHEN YOU ARE UNABLE TO DELIVER AS SCHEDULED

Please call Silver Sage as soon as possible if you will be unable to deliver meals as scheduled. When a Volunteer Delivery Driver cancels, a substitute driver must be found to fill in. We request at least 24 hour notice if you are unable to drive. Cancellations Received after 9:30 a.m. on your day to drive are very difficult to cover. Call (830) 796-4969 if you will be late or unable to deliver meals on your scheduled day.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL MEAL DELIVERY

Arrive at the site 15 minutes prior to departure.

The Director of Client & Volunteer Services will be at Silver Sage to give you your route sheet. Silver Sage staff members will help you get the correct number and kind of hot meals and cold bags.

Check the top of your route sheet. It has a summary of the number and type of hot and cold meals you will need.

Pick up any additional items that may need to be given out to clients (i.e. Menus, handouts, cards, groceries).

Always check route sheet to see if it has been changed since the last time you drove.

WHILE ON ROUTE:

1. Read the far right cell of the route sheet. This information lets you know about specific needs or conditions of the clients.
2. Deliver to correct address - check street name & house number.
3. Knock loudly, announce yourself as a MOW volunteer.
4. Allow plenty of time for the client to get to the door.
5. Introduce yourself by name.

****WHEN A CLIENT DOES NOT ANSWER THE DOOR****

When there is no answer at a client's home, take the meal back to the containers in your vehicle. Check route sheet for any special delivery instructions. If none, call client by phone. If no answer, leave a "sorry we missed you" note and continue on to the next client. Contact the Silver Sage and inform the Director of Client & Volunteer Services that client was not home and meal was not delivered and receive further instructions.

A FEW DON'TS

***Don't leave the meal outside the client's home unless there is an ice chest with ice.** The food will not be safe to eat if meal is left outside.

Don't leave the meal with a neighbor or someone else unless the route sheet specifically instructs you to do so.

AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR ROUTE:

Return to Silver Sage. Be sure car is locked, headlights are off, and car is clean. Return delivery containers. Drop off route sheets, car key, and volunteer name tag at front desk.

EXPECING THE UNEXPECTED

You are our eyes and ears. When you arrive to deliver a MOW meal, you become, for many clients, a source of more than food. You are a concerned person who can check on the elderly or homebound person's well-being. You may be the only person who will do so all day.

To this end, it is important that you see the clients as often as possible when delivering meals. If a family member or friend receives the meals two weeks in a row and the client is not visible, ask to see him or her. If any conditions, the client's health and/or living situation cause you alarm, report them to Silver Sage right away.

If a client says that he/she has no food and the MOW meals are not enough, report this to Silver Sage.

EMERGENCIES

If you encounter an emergency situation in which you feel the client's health is at risk, do not move the client or give water.

Ask for instructions from the client about who to call or call Silver Sage at (830) 796-4969. If a client is unconscious, call 911 and then Silver Sage.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Remember that you have the client's trust. Please respect the confidentiality of all the information communicated to you.

Protect the dignity of the individual. Do not discuss their living situations, health conditions, financial status or anything you learn about them with anyone but a MOW staff member.

SOLICITATIONS & GIFTS

Never solicit clients for business purposes and do not accept gifts from MOW clients. If a client offers a donation to the MOW program, you may accept the donation and turn it in to the Silver Sage.

DOING EXTRAS

Please check with MOW before bringing extra food items or sweets to clients. Many of our clients are poor, elderly and often ill. Most of them will be happy to see you, but occasionally you may encounter a situation that is uncomfortable. Perhaps a client repeatedly asks you to run errands or perform extra tasks when you arrive. You are not obligated in any way to volunteer any services beyond the meal delivery. You may do as much or as little as you wish. If you are concerned a client needs more than you are able to give, report it to Silver Sage.

SAFETY FIRST

We want you to remember that your safety is always important to us. Do not venture into any situation which does not seem safe to you. Be careful when stepping in tall grass - there may be a hole that can twist your ankle. Don't step in slippery oil or grease that may cause you to slide and fall. Do not enter a yard with an unrestrained dog or a set of steps you cannot safely negotiate. Report the situation to Silver Sage.

Additional tips for safety:

- Always lock your car.
- Be away of your surroundings at all times.
- Know where you are going. Read the route sheet.



WWW.SILVERSAGE.ORG



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