





Meals on Wheels
OF RHODE ISLAND

HOME-DELIVERED MEAL PROGRAM

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK







AUGUST 2025

Welcome to Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island (MOWRI) and thank you for choosing our Home-Delivered Meal Program to meet your nutritional, safety, and socialization needs.

Dear Participant,

We are proud to offer you this Home-Delivered Nutrition Program, which strives to help homebound Rhode Island residents maintain independence through the delivery of nutritious meals,
well-being checks, and social visits.

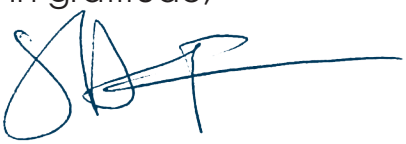
As a Home-Delivered Meal Program participant, your continued good health, safety, and program satisfaction is our top priority.

MOWRI invites you to read this handbook so you have all the information you need to have an enjoyable experience with our program, including program service details, guidelines and key contacts that will ensure MOWRI is best serving you.

Our dedicated team is committed to providing you with excellence. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcome, and MOWRI encourages you to reach out to us with any questions or concerns.

MOWRI looks forward to serving you and helping you to feel healthier, safer, and happier at home.

In gratitude,



Shana DeFelice
Programs & Mission Impact Director

Please retain this handbook as long as you participate in the Home-Delivered Meal Program and reference it when you have questions.

To request this handbook in another language, please contact a member of our team.

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ABOUT MEALS ON WHEELS OF RHODE ISLAND, INC.

Founded in 1969, Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island, Inc. (MOWRI) is a Food Is Medicine-focused organization.

MISSION

MOWRI's mission is to meet the nutritional and social needs of those we serve so that they can maintain safe and independent lifestyles.

VISION

A Rhode Island where all seniors live well-nourished lives with independence and dignity.

VALUES

MOWRI CARES are the values that we commit to our Board of Directors, team, and volunteers to uphold in every interaction with each other, with those we serve, and with our community:

Compassion, **A**ccountability, **R**espect, **E**xcellence, **S**teadfastness.

Our programs and services work to increase our clients' access to adequate nutrition, safety assurances, and socialization. Our goals are to help our clients experience improved health and to maintain their independence.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

MOWRI is committed to, and continuously engaged in, building organization practices that reflect our commitment to diversity, cultural competency, and inclusion.

Our diversity and inclusion policies encompass all identities and characteristics in which people differ from one another – including but not limited to race, ethnicity, race, gender, gender identity, age, ability, national origin, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, education, marital status, HIV status, military status, and immigration status.

Eligibility for participation in our Home-Delivered Meal Program is the same for every person regardless of all identities and characteristics in which people differ from one another.

ABOUT THE HOME-DELIVERED MEAL PROGRAM

MOWRI's Home-Delivered Meal Program has been in continuous operation since our organization's founding in 1969. The program helps to ensure the physical and mental well-being of older adults and other homebound Rhode Island residents.

MOWRI offers home-delivered meals as the only nonprofit meal delivery program of its kind in Rhode Island, serving clients each weekday across the state, including on Block Island.

Funding for this program in comprised of federal funds from the U.S Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living, and state funds administered by the Office of Healthy Aging

Our "More Than a Meal" model goes beyond just delivering food. It also provides opportunities for social interaction and well-being checks.

MENUS

You may choose to receive one of the following meal menus, depending on your needs and preferences. You will receive a monthly meal calendar of your chosen menu. Menus are also posted on our website, www.rimeals.org.

- General wellness menu
- Kosher menu
- Latin menu
- Asian menu
- Cardiac menu
- Diabetic menu
- Renal menu

All meals can be prepared and delivered chopped, ground, or pureed to meet your needs. MOWRI does our best to make sure meals match the menu. Menus are subject to change. However, MOWRI does not currently offer a gluten-free menu or vegetarian menu. All of our menus are reviewed and approved by a licensed dietitian.

MEALS

Each meal delivered to you will meet one-third of your daily recommended dietary reference intake. Meals will typically include (1) an entrée, (2) starch, (3), a vegetable, (4) milk or juice, (5) and a dessert or fruit.

Meals and menus comply with the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans, published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

You will receive your meal fully cooked and chilled. The meals are chilled for safety during delivery.

MOWRI encourages you to eat your meal on the day that it was delivered. If you do not eat your meal immediately upon delivery, please refrigerate the meal. Meals can be refrigerated for four days and frozen for six months.

MOWRI can accommodate allergies and diet preferences. For example, MOWRI can accommodate allergies and preferences for red meat, tomato sauce, pork, fish, pasta, ham, egg, brown gravy, hot dog, and cheese.

You can receive and alternate meal on a day your menu includes these items.

In certain cases, clients may receive a weekly delivery of five (5) frozen meals in place of a daily-delivered meal. These frozen meals are from the same meal menus as our daily-delivered meals.

HEATING INSTRUCTIONS

- Create a small opening in the film covering.
- Heat Time:
    - o Microwave: High for 1 minute and 15 seconds. Adjust time if needed.
    - o Oven: Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Place the meal on a cookie-sheet or oven safe dish. Position the meal in the center of the oven. Heat for 10 minutes.
    - o Do not reheat meals in a toaster oven.
- Carefully remove the meal. It will be hot after reheating.
- Allow the meal to sit for a minute or two, as it will continue to cook slightly from residual health.
- Be cautious of steam when removing the film.

MEAL DELIVERY

Meals will be delivered to your door between 9:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. on the days you are scheduled to receive meals.

Meals are delivered from 22 meal dispatch sites located across Rhode Island with the majority of meals being delivered from our Providence headquarters.

Meals are delivered by (1) MOWRI delivery drivers and (2) volunteers across 80 delivery routes. Delivery drivers and volunteers will be wearing identification. Most of the routes are delivered by volunteers.

Please note that your delivery time might vary day to day. There are likely several different volunteers who deliver your route and they differ in the time they pick up meals and how long it takes to deliver. Also, there may be unforeseen circumstances that could affect delivery schedules.

if you do not receive your meal by 2pm., please call 401-351-6700 ext. 3

MOWRI delivers meals Monday-Friday, year-round, excluding holidays. You will receive an "extra" meal prior to a scheduled holiday. A list of recognized holidays is included in this handbook.

Walkways and entryways should be safe and accessible. If walkways are not cleared, it may impact on your delivery service.

You should inform Meals on Wheels what to do to gain access to your home if it changes (e.g. temporary obstruction, access code change).

MEAL DELIVERY PROTOCOLS

Our meal delivery protocols are in place to ensure your health and safety. Please know MOWRI reserves the ability to end your meal delivery at any time for any reason with or without warning.

1. You must be home to receive your meal.

Your meal will not be left for you if you are not home. MOWRI is unable to leave meals in a cooler, insulated bag, or any other container. MOWRI cannot leave your meals at your door or with your neighbor.

Your meal delivery includes a safety-assuring wellness check. Our drivers need to be able to confirm you are home and safe when delivering your meal. Also, our drivers love to see you and spend a few moments with you during your meal delivery.

MOWRI hopes you enjoy this visit just as much and develop good relationships with your delivery driver(s).

2. You may cancel your meal delivery if you will not be home to receive it.

You may cancel your meal delivery for any day that you will not be home. MOWRI appreciates 48-hour advanced notice when you are cancelling your meal delivery. To cancel your meal, please call (401) 351-6700 ext. 3. Voicemail is available 24/7. If you call 72 hours (3 days) in advance to cancel a meal delivery, MOWRI can schedule a second meal to be included in your next delivery.

3. Pet Policy

Any pets you have in your home must be safely and securely contained during your meal delivery. This is to ensure the safety of delivery drivers and volunteers.

4. No-Answer Policy

If you have not canceled your meal delivery and you are not home to receive your meal, MOWRI will notify the person(s) you have listed as your emergency contact(s). In some circumstances, MOWRI may contact the local authorities to conduct a wellness check at your address.

5. Three-strike Policy

Failure to notify Meals on Wheels of RI that you will not be home to receive your meal on three (3) occasions within a 30-day period will result in cancellation of service.

DOUBLE MEAL DELIVERY

MOWRI strives to ensure our program clients receive meals in advance of planned delivery closures.

You may receive an extra meal for several reasons, including:

1. In advance of an upcoming holiday closure
2. In advance of a planned closure due to inclement weather
3. In advance of a planned delivery disruption—i.e., a volunteer is not available to deliver your meal

You will receive notifications prior to each double meal delivery. If you have additional questions about your double meal, please call the Home-Delivered Meal Program team at 401-351-6700 ext 3.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Participants enrolled in the Home-Delivered Meal Program during a planned holiday closing will receive a double-meal delivery prior to the holiday. This "double meal" should be refrigerated and eaten on the holiday. Annually, Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island is closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Presidents' Day
Memorial Day
Juneteenth Independence Day
Independence Day (Fourth of July)
Victory Day
Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
New Year's Eve

INCLEMENT WEATHER

MOWRI's inclement weather policy is in place to ensure the safety of its clients, team members, and volunteers. We make every effort to minimize the impact that inclement weather may have on program service.

MOWRI may schedule a "double meal" delivery ahead of a predicted weather event. This would cancel meal service on the day of the predicted event and allow you access to the same number of fully prepared meals on the week of the event.

There may be times where an unforeseen weather incident results in an unplanned delivery closure. In these cases, you should make a meal from your shelf-stable food box.

MOWRI will do our best to notify you in advance of any changes in program service. Unplanned office/delivery closures are posted through the Rhode Island Broadcasters Association and on our Facebook page.

EMERGENCY/SHELF-STABLE MEALS

Once per year, each Home-Delivered Meal Program participant will receive a delivery of shelf-stable foods that they can use to assemble—without cooking—five complete meals.

These meals are meant for you to have in case of an unforeseen/unscheduled disruption in program service, such as unpredicted inclement weather.

Your box of shelf-stable foods will be delivered to you in the Fall, ensuring you have this resource for the winter season.

SUGGESTED DONATION

The full cost of each home-delivered meal is approximately $10.00. Clients are encouraged to make voluntary contributions toward this cost. These donations help MOWRI to continue program service and to potentially serve additional clients.

Donations are always welcome but never required. Your program service will never be impacted by your decision to donate or not. Your donations support help us continue delivering nutritious meals and friendly visits to those who need them most. If you would like to make a donation, please use the envelope provided with your meal delivery. Put your contribution inside the envelope and give the envelope to your driver during your next delivery. Or, you can make a donation over the phone by calling our Finance Department at (401) 283-7764. Donations can be made by credit card, cash, check, SNAP EBT, and money order.

While a $3.00 donation per meal is suggested, donations are not required to receive program service. Clients may choose to donate more or less based on their ability.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

To ensure you continue receiving your Meals on Wheels deliveries without interruption, it's very important that you notify us right away if your phone number, address, or any other contact information changes. Keeping your information up to date helps us reach you and deliver your meals safely and on time. Please call our Home Delivered Department at 401-351-6700 ext. 3 to report any changes.

VOLUNTEER/DELIVERY DRIVER GRATUITY

Volunteers/delivery drivers cannot accept tips, money, or personal gifts. To show appreciation, you are welcome to thank them or express your gratitude to a team member who can pass along the message and recognize the volunteer or delivery driver.

SPECIAL GUEST/ELECTED OFFICIAL VISIT

Throughout the year MOWRI has the opportunity to partner with special guests/ elected officials for our Home-Delivered Meal Program. If you would like a visit please contact our Home-Delivered Program Team at (401) 351-6700 ext. 3

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Your feedback is essential to helping us improve our services and better meet your needs.

Our annual Participant Satisfaction Survey is distributed each year in June. The survey will be given to you during a regular meal delivery that month. This survey is an opportunity for you to give us your thoughts and suggestions. MOWRI encourages you to take a few moments to complete the survey and share your experience.

MOWRI also encourages you to reach out to us any time you have feedback. Please contact our Programs and Mission Impact Director Shana DeFelice by phone at (401) 351-6700, ext. 102 to discuss any concerns, compliments, or ideas you may have.

PARTICIPANT GRIEVANCES

MOWRI participants have the opportunity to express themselves and seek resolution regarding program service issues in an equitable, non-punitive manner and with no adverse repercussions to the client and/or their status for program participation.

MOWRI designates the Programs & Mission Impact Director to serve as its investigative officer for concerns related to client program participation.

Participants should report all grievances associated with their program participation to Shana DeFelice, Programs & Mission Impact Director by phone at (401) 351-6700.

The Programs & Mission Impact Director will

1. Respond to any and all reported grievances in a timely manner and work to resolve any and all grievances.
2. Record the essential information in writing. MOWRI will attempt to keep the complaint confidential to the extent feasible. Disclosure of the complaint may be necessary to complete MOWRI's investigation.
3. Depending on the nature of the investigation, the investigating officer may conduct additional interviews.
4. In conjunction with the Executive Director, the investigating officer will decide as to the course of action, if any, that MOWRI will take. The participant will then be informed of the decision.

If the participant is reporting a grievance involving the Programs & Mission Impact Director, they may report their grievance to the Executive Director who will serve as investigative officer.

CLIENT CONDUCT

Your cooperation is key to helping MOWRI maintain a safe and secure environment for its team members, volunteers, and participants, including an environment free of violence.

Please keep in mind the following important safety tips:

- Report any potentially dangerous or unsafe practice to the Programs & Mission Impact Director
- All reported incidents will be investigated. All parties involved in a situation will be counseled and the results of the investigation will be shared with them.

Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island will not tolerate:

- Inappropriate behavior directed toward any individual or class of individuals
- Speech that involves false or unsubstantiated claims that defame or tarnish the reputation of an organization or individual
- Conduct that involves dishonesty, deceit, or misrepresentation
- Conduct that violates that previously noted expectations

The threat or occurrence of violence by or between program participants and team members in direct conflict with our mission will not be tolerated.

Everyone shares the responsibility of upholding this standard. All incidents of violence—whether or not they result in physical injury—must be reported promptly and accurately. This includes any threats or conversations that suggest potential violence, regardless of the source, including employees, volunteers, participants, or other individuals.

MOWRI takes all reports seriously and will respond appropriately. Actions may include, but are not limited to, termination of program services and involvement of law enforcement or other authorities when necessary. Your vigilance and commitment to safety help ensure a secure and supportive environment for everyone involved.

CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

The Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin which includes federally funded programs under the Older Americans Act. This ensures that all programs are accessible to individuals regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

You can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights by sending a letter to 200 Independence Avenue, S.W.,

Washington, D.C. 20201, calling 1-877-696-6775, or visiting www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/complaints/.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Operations must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, and all other applicable laws that protect against discrimination.

PRIVACY PRACTICES

Our privacy practices are designed to ensure the protection and confidentiality of your personal information. MOWRI takes necessary precautions to safeguard your data from unauthorized access or misuse. Additionally, you have control over your data, with options to access, update, or delete it. Our privacy policy is regularly reviewed to comply with evolving regulations and best practices.

If you have any questions about this notice, please contact Meghan Grady, Executive Director,at mgrady@rimeals.org or by phone at (401) 351-6700, ext. 101.

How MOWRI May Use Your Information

MOWRI may use and share your information as we:

- Provide you with our programs and services
- Run our organization
- Help with public health and safety issues
- Do research
- Comply with the law
- Address workers' compensation, law enforcement, and other government requests
- Respond to lawsuits and legal action
- Tell authorized contacts about your condition
- Provide disaster relief
- Market our services
- Provide disaster relief
- Raise funds

Your Rights

You have the right to:

- Get a copy of your paper or electronic record
- Correct your paper or electronic medical record
- Request confidential communication
- Ask us to correct health information about you that you think is incorrect or incomplete
- Get a list of those with whom we've shared your information
- Ask us not to use or share certain health information for treatment, payment, or our operations. MOWRI is not required to agree to your request, and we may

say "no" if it would affect your care
- Get a copy of this privacy notice
- Choose someone to act for you
- File a complaint if you believe your privacy rights have been violated

Our Responsibilities

MOWRI is responsible for:

- Maintaining the privacy and security of your protected health information
- Notifying you promptly if a breach occurs that may have compromised the privacy or security of your information
- Following the duties and privacy practices described in this notice and providing you a copy of it.
- Adhering to the uses described here unless you tell us in writing we can share your information otherwise

Your Choices

You have some choices in the way that we use and share information:

- If you pay for a service out-of-pocket in full, you can ask us not to share that information for the purpose of payment or our operations with your health insurer. MOWRI will say "yes" unless a law requires us to share that information.
- Get a list of those with whom MOWRI has shared information
- Ask for a list of the times MOWRI has shared your health information
- MOWRI will include all the disclosures except for those about treatment, payment, and health care operations, and certain other disclosures (such as any you asked us to make).
- If you have given someone medical power of attorney or if someone is your legal guardian, that person can exercise your rights and make choices about your health information.
- MOWRI will make sure the person has this authority and can act for you before we take any action.
- You can file a complaint if you feel MOWRI has violated your rights by sending a letter to Meghan Grady, Executive Director c/o Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island 70 Bath Street, Providence, RI 02908 or by calling (401) 351-6700.
- MOWRI will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.
- For more information see: www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/consumers/noticepp.html

Changes to the Terms of this Notice

MOWRI can change the terms of this notice, and the changes will apply to all information we have about you. The new notice will be available upon request, in our office, and on our web site at www.rimeals.org.

- This notice is effective January 1, 2025.
- This notice applies exclusively to Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island.
- Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island is not a hospital or medical facility. MOWRI do not treat physical or psychological health conditions.
- Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island does not market or sell personal information.

· This Privacy Rule is in full compliance with all applicable Rhode Island laws, including the Rhode Island Data Transparency and Privacy Protection Act (RIDTPPA).

ADDITIONAL MOWRI SERVICES

MOWRI provides nutrition education materials each month in English and Spanish to all home-delivered clients.

MOWRI offers one-on-one individualized nutrition counseling to clients or their caregivers who are at nutritional risk because of their health, nutrition history, dietary intake, chronic illness, or medication use. This service can provide nutritional guidance on the options and methods for improving nutrition status with a measurable goal.

Depending on your city or town of residence, you may be eligible for additional MOWRI services.

Please visit our website www.rimeals.org or contact a Home-Delivered Meal Program team member for more information.

RESOURCES

Our team can help connect you to additional resources for maintaining your good health and independent living. Please contact our office and ask to speak with a Certified Community Health Worker (CCHW) team member.

In addition, you may find the following organizations helpful to connecting you to other programs and services that can help you age in place.

1. Rhode Island Office of Healthy Aging
   (401) 462-3000
   www.oha.ri.gov

2. Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
   The Aging and Disability Resource Center and can be best accessed online through the following links:
   The Aging and Disability Resource Center | Office of Healthy Aging
   Rhode Island ADRC - United Way of Rhode Island [unitedwayri.org]

3. Adult Protective Services Hotline
   (401) 462-0555
   https://oha.ri.gov/report-elder-abuse

CONTACT INFORMATION

MOWRI's headquarters is located at 70 Bath Street in Providence.

All program questions and concerns should be addressed to the MOWRI Home-Delivered Meal Program team by calling (401) 351-6700.

Meals on Wheels of RI is open on these days and times:

- Building operating hours: Monday- Friday 8:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.
- Call Center operating hours: Monday- Friday 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Additional information about Meals on Wheels of RI, Inc. can be found at www.rimeals.org.