



MEALS **on** WHEELS

SAN DIEGO COUNTY

Volunteer Handbook

Revised - September 2025

We thank you for your interest in joining Meals on Wheels of San Diego and our mission to empower seniors and veterans to remain independent by nourishing their bodies, minds and spirits.

For the safety of our clients and to ensure best practices, please review this Volunteer Handbook in its entirety and acknowledge where asked.

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Message from our President & CEO

Dear Volunteer,

On behalf of Meals on Wheels San Diego County, I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for your participation in volunteering with us at Meals on Wheels San Diego County. We are truly grateful for your commitment to our cause and the invaluable contribution of your time and effort in delivering meals to the senior clients we serve.

We've been supporting San Diego seniors with nutritious meals and isolation interruption since 1960, and we've been able to do this because of our family of dedicated volunteers. Champions like you play a pivotal role in connecting with the vulnerable seniors and disabled veterans - and their pets - in our community. Your involvement not only brings comfort and nourishment to those we serve but also helps raise awareness about the critical issues of isolation and hunger. Volunteering with us fosters a sense of unity and shared responsibility in addressing the needs of our neighbors here in San Diego County.

Should you have any further questions or if there are additional ways you would like to be involved, please feel free to reach out. Together, we can continue to make a positive impact on our clients and their pets in our community.

Once again, thank you for your support and for being a volunteer for Meals on Wheels San Diego County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brent Wakefield". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

President and CEO

Brent Wakefield

Our Mission

The mission of Meals on Wheels San Diego County (MOWSDC) is to empower seniors and veterans to remain independent by nourishing their bodies, minds, and spirits. MOWSDC contribute to the overall well-being of seniors by providing regular nutrition and daily contact with caring volunteers.

Volunteer Requirements

MOWSDC's reputation is built on excellent service and quality performance. To maintain this reputation, we require the active participation of every volunteer. Each volunteer must be sensitive to the importance of providing courteous treatment in all working relationships.

The opinions and attitudes that seniors have toward MOWSDC may be determined by the actions of one volunteer. Volunteers should not take any client for granted. Our clients are valued and important members of our community whose lives we seek to improve through our services.

Volunteers should deliver meals in a pleasant, non-rushed manner and should treat each client with respect and dignity. Volunteers should remain a professional demeanor while volunteering. This includes professional interactions with clients, their families, caregivers, and representatives with other agencies.

Definition of a Volunteer

You are considered a volunteer if you, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement for volunteer related expenses, perform a service on behalf of the organization. MOWSDC welcomes adults, families, and groups to volunteer in our program.

All Volunteers Must:

- Complete an MOWSDC volunteer application.
- Complete a LiveScan background check at one of our listed LiveScan locations.
- Pay a \$10 LiveScan background check fee.
- Complete all volunteer training material upon onboarding and in the future as necessary.
- Review and sign all parts of the volunteer handbook.
- Be over the age of 18 or, if under 18 years of age, must be accompanied by a parent/guardian who has completed the application process.
- Have a reliable, insured vehicle.
- Have a valid driver's license with a clean DMV record.
- Have a smartphone in order to use our Mobile Meals application.
- Follow directions that includes maps and special instructions.
- Be able to lift and carry up to 25 lbs.
- Be able to ascend/descend stairs, enter/exit narrow doorways or passages, and traverse uneven/bumpy/soft surfaces.

Volunteer Initial _____

Volunteer Boundaries

Volunteers must maintain professional boundaries with clients. This includes refraining from visiting clients or offering personal services outside of the meal delivery program. If you notice a client needing additional support, please submit a Change of Condition alert to notify the Care Navigation team via the Mobile Meals app. The team will connect the client to safe and available resources.

Dress Code

Dress neatly in a manner consistent with the nature of volunteer duties. Volunteers are required to wear comfortable closed-toed shoes, un-torn fabric, clothing appropriate to current weather conditions, and a MOWSDC lanyard or badge for client identifiability during meal deliveries. Volunteer Admin positions require business-casual attire.

Risk Waiver

We serve a diverse range of clients that agree to a code of conduct. The population we help serve may struggle with underlying mental health conditions and/or have a criminal background. MOWSDC conducts a careful review of all properties to ensure volunteer safety and requires all clients to agree to a code of conduct. However, volunteers should be aware that situations may arise outside of MOWSD's control. By signing this handbook, you agree that you **serve at your own risk**. Any adverse experience with clients should be reported to your Service Center immediately.

Minors

Minors (under the age of 18) must be accompanied by a parent/guardian over the age of 18 during delivery. Minors should never be left unattended, nor should they deliver meals unsupervised. Volunteers agree to supervise their minors at all times during delivery.

Attendance/Absence

Please inform your local Service Center as soon as possible if you are unable to do your route or if you will be away for an extended time.

Illness

If you are feeling unwell, please do not deliver meals under any circumstance. Please notify your local Service Center in order for us to fill the route with another volunteer.

Changes in Personal Data

Changes in name, address, email address, and telephone number should be promptly reported to your Service Center so that we can maintain regular and consistent communication and updates.

Confidentiality of Information

MOWSDC requires each volunteer to maintain the highest degree of confidentiality when handling information on client matters and MOWSDC. No volunteer shall disclose confidential client, staff, or company information to outsiders, including other clients, third parties, and members of one's own family.

Volunteer Initial _____

Personal Property

MOWSDC is not responsible for loss of, or damage to, personal property. Valuable personal items such as purses and all other valuables should not be left in vehicles in plain sight.

Computer Software Licensing

MOWSDC purchases or licenses the use of various computer software programs for use in its daily operations and service delivery. MOWSDC volunteers do not have the right to duplicate this computer software or its related documentation. Unauthorized duplication of computer software is a federal offense.

Solicitation and Distribution

Solicitation of clients, other volunteers, or company team members is prohibited while volunteering. Distribution of personal literature, including handbills, is prohibited at all times.

Care of Equipment

Volunteers are expected to demonstrate proper care when using MOWSDC's property and equipment. No property shall be deliberately damaged or destroyed. No office equipment may be removed from the premises without the proper authorization of management. If you lose, break, or damage any property, report it at once.

Contact with the Media

All media inquiries regarding MOWSDC and its operations must be referred to the MOWSDC External Relations Team or the Administrative Offices.

Anti-Discrimination & Harassment Policy

MOWSDC is committed to providing an environment free of unlawful discrimination, treatment, or harassment. MOWSDC prohibits sexual harassment and discrimination or harassment because of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, marital status, age, or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law.

Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of their race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age or any other protected class. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct that occurs because of sexual orientation, gender and has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Reporting Discrimination, Harassment, and/or Retaliation

If you have witnessed or have been subjected to any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, immediately notify your local Service Center. MOWSDC prohibits retaliation against anyone who, based on a reasonable belief, provides information about, complains, or assists in the investigation of any complaint of harassment or discrimination.

Volunteer Initial _____

Driving Requirements, Vehicle Accidents, and Citations

Volunteers must have a personal vehicle, valid driver's license and auto insurance. MOWSDC is not responsible for any damage to volunteer's vehicles, including physical damage, theft, or damage or theft of any personal belongings inside the vehicles while delivering meals on behalf of MOWSDC.

We highly recommend that volunteers check with their own personal car insurance provider to ensure that delivering meals for MOWSDC is covered in their individual policy.

Volunteers must agree to the following guidelines while driving for MOWSDC:

- Report any changes on your driving record immediately to your Service Center.
- Exercise due diligence to drive safely to maintain the safety of your vehicle and its contents.
- Use of handheld cell phones/texting while behind the wheel of a moving vehicle is strictly prohibited.
- Volunteers are responsible for all tickets, violations, infractions and/or fines. MOWSDC will not pay for or reimburse the cost of any fines.
- Volunteers must report automotive accidents and/or vehicle damage caused by you or the other involved party (if any). Reports must be made immediately to the Service Center verbally and in writing.
- Volunteers agree to follow all California traffic laws.
- Volunteers may under no circumstances drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Volunteers must exercise additional caution when navigating parking lots and neighborhoods.

Resignation and Termination

We hope you will remain with us for many years! If you do find you wish to step down from your volunteer position, please contact your Service Center.

We reserve the right to terminate a volunteer's service or decline a volunteers application for any reason including, but not limited to:

- Violating an agreement in the volunteer handbook.
- Failing to follow the policies and/or philosophies of Meals on Wheels San Diego.
- Disrespectful or inappropriate interactions with staff, volunteers, or clients.
- Volunteering while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Performing harassment of any kind.
- Showing a pattern of inability to complete scheduled shifts.

Live Scan Background Check

Live Scan is a Department of Justice approved background check and screening method used to ensure that all volunteers and MOWSDC team members can safely serve our client population. An important requirement of screening is that it is federally mandated in order for MOWSDC to receive government funding. It is a requirement of volunteerism that we screen all new volunteers upon onboarding.

Waiver Agreement for Release of Criminal Offender Record Information

The following page contains a CalVECHS Waiver Agreement that you must sign in order to qualify in volunteering with MOWSDC. Please read through it carefully, provide information, and sign where indicated. The information on this is given securely and will be kept confidential, only shared with members of MOWSDC staff.

Volunteer Initial _____



**CaIVECHS WAIVER AGREEMENT
FOR RELEASE OF CRIMINAL OFFENDER RECORD INFORMATION**

Pursuant to the Penal Code section 11105.3 and the National Child Protection Act, as amended by the Volunteers for Children Act, this form must be completed and signed by every current or prospective applicant, employee, or volunteer, for whom criminal offender record information (CORI) is requested by a qualified agency under these laws.

I hereby authorize MEALS ON WHEELS SAN DIEGO COUNTY

Name of Qualified Agency

to submit a set of my fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of accessing and reviewing state and federal CORI that may pertain to me. By signing this Waiver Agreement, it is my intent to authorize the dissemination of any state and federal CORI that may pertain to me to the qualified agency.

I understand that, until the CORI background check is completed, the qualified agency may choose to deny me unsupervised access to children, the elderly, the handicapped, or the mentally impaired. I further understand that if the information is the basis for an adverse decision, the qualified agency will expeditiously provide me a copy of the CORI background check report, and that I am entitled to challenge the accuracy and completeness of any information contained in any such report. I may obtain a prompt determination as to the validity of my challenge before a final decision is made.

☐ Yes, I have (OR) ☐ No, I have not been convicted of or pled to a crime.

If yes, please describe the crime(s) and the particulars:

I am a current or prospective (circle one): Applicant / Employee / Volunteer

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Address for receiving copy of criminal history _____

To Be Completed By Qualified Agency:

Agency Name Meals on Wheels San Diego County

Address 9590 Chesapeake Dr San Diego CA 92123

Telephone 619-260-6110

Note: This document must be retained by the qualified agency for audit purposes.



Ethics Code

The successful business operation and reputation of Meals on Wheels San Diego County are built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of our Volunteers. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and the letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

The continued success of Meals on Wheels San Diego County is dependent upon our customers' trust, and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. Volunteers owe a duty to Meals on Wheels San Diego County, its customers, and its stakeholders to act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of the public.

Meals on Wheels San Diego County will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its directors, officers, Team Members, and Volunteers to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide you with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, the matter should be discussed openly with your Supervisor. If you believe you have not received a sufficient response from your Supervisor, please contact Human Resources for advice and consultation.

Compliance with this policy of business ethics and conduct is the responsibility of every Meals on Wheels San Diego County Volunteer. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of volunteer status.



Volunteer Handbook

Signature of Acknowledgement & Agreement

I acknowledge that I have received the Volunteer Handbook from Meals on Wheels San Diego County (MOWSDC). I understand it contains information about the policies and practices of Meals on Wheels San Diego County. I agree to comply with the policies and procedures detailed in the handbook. I understand that I am volunteering at my own risk. I understand that MOWSDC retains the right to make decisions involving volunteers as needed to conduct its work in a manner that is beneficial to MOWSDC. I understand that this Volunteer Handbook supersedes and replaces all prior Volunteer Handbooks and any inconsistent verbal or written policy statements. I understand that if I do not follow the policies and procedures detailed in this handbook, that I may be released from my volunteering assignment with MOWSDC. I understand that MOWSDC reserves the right to revise, delete and add to the provisions of this Volunteer Handbook at any time without further notice. I understand that no oral statements or representations can change the provisions of this Volunteer Handbook. If I have questions regarding the content or interpretation of this Volunteer Handbook, I will contact the Service Center location where I am assigned.

By signing below, I acknowledge having read, understood, and agreed to the terms outlined on this Volunteer Handbook.

Volunteer Legal First & Last Name: _____

Volunteer Signature: _____

Date: _____