



Dinner is Served

Volunteer Manual

Dear Volunteer Groups,

Welcome to Dinner is Served, one of the most popular volunteer opportunities at JW House. After a long day at the hospital, our guests look forward to coming “home” to find that someone has planned and prepared a delicious meal just for them. Groups who participate in Dinner is Served soon discover that their efforts go far beyond simply supplying a dinner. As families gather for dinner, a warm sense of community exists. It is a place where families can relax with one another and check in on how another’s loved one is doing. Thank you for making a difference for these families.

If you have any questions, or need additional information for your group, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to serving with you,

Vicky Choa

Family Services Manager, JW House

vicky@jwhouse.org

Volunteer Guidelines

Volunteer Time Commitment: Dinner at JW House is served every evening at 6:00pm, so groups typically volunteer from around **3pm to 7pm**. Please be sure to plan accordingly when calculating preparation and cooking times. Groups generally spend a total of 3-4 hours at the house preparing dinner, serving guests, and cleaning up used pots and pans. Groups are encouraged to arrive between 3pm to 4pm if they are preparing the dinner in the JW House kitchen. If the meal is prepared off-site, we ask that you drop it off no later than 5:30pm.

Number of Servings: Dinner should be prepared for **20-25 hearty appetites**. Due to volume changes because of COVID, we adjust the number of portions to prepare for and will let you know one week before your scheduled date. Once guests have been served, volunteers are welcome to enjoy the meal too.

Menu: Dinners generally include: Salad, Entrée, Side Dish, Bread, and Dessert. Please be sure to include a vegetarian option. Beverages are optional. Please email a copy of your menu to vicky@jwhouse.org within a few days prior to your service date. Please note: JW House has a strict no alcohol policy – please do not use recipes that include alcohol either.

Number of Volunteers: **No more than 6 volunteers** are allowed to be onsite to prepare the meal. We find that groups with more than six volunteers can be overwhelming for our guests and the size of our kitchen. There must be at least 1 adult over the age of 21 years old in the group. Corporate groups often have more than six people interested in participating. We are happy to set an additional date to ensure all are able to participate.

Kitchen Details: Our kitchen is well equipped with a 5-burner electric stovetop, two ovens, two microwaves and a warming oven. In addition, JW House has baking pans, crock pot, pots and pans, cooking utensils, etc. We also have an outdoor grill. Please check with us prior to your visit if you need special equipment or for your meal preparation.

Off-site Preparation: Some groups find it more convenient to prepare meals off-site or to purchase ready-made food and deliver the prepared meal to JW House. In such cases, please ensure the food is delivered no later than 5:30pm and provide specific preparation and/or heating instructions. Groups and restaurants who prepare dinner off-site are also not required to stay to serve guests, but are encouraged as it is a fulfilling experience.

Serving Guests: After preparing or dropping off dinner, groups are encouraged to stay to help serve guests. Volunteers will make plates or to-go boxes for each guest with moderate portions of food. If there is extra food, guests are welcome to come back for seconds, but must be served by a volunteer.

Cleaning Up: After cooking and serving dinner, groups should wash and clean any kitchenware used to prepare the meal. Our house volunteers will assist with packaging leftovers.

COVID-19 requirements: All on-site dinner volunteers are required to pass a temperature check and wearing a mask is optional. COVID-19 safety policies are subject to change based on Santa Clara County guidelines. Your group will be notified of any important updates.

When You Arrive

Directions: JW House is located at 3850 Homestead Road. Enter from the Kaiser entrance on Homestead Road, and make a right turn over the bridge. Then take an immediate right after the bridge into the first parking lot to make your way to the front of the house.

Parking: Please park your car in the marked spots directly facing JW House. Carpooling is encouraged as parking tends to be a challenge, so please limit your group to 1-2 cars.

Entrance: The entrance to JW House faces Homestead Road. Ring the doorbell and one of our staff or volunteers will come greet you. They will also get you set up in the kitchen.

Tour: If this is the first visit for your group, or for individual participants in your group, a JW House volunteer or staff member will give your group or individuals a tour during your time at JW House.

In-Kind Donation Form: Please be sure to fill out our digital In-Kind Donation form before you leave JW House. We ask that you fill this out so we can count your donation in our end-of-year reporting. By providing your contact information, you will also receive a digital receipt for your donation with our tax ID.

Food Preparation & Safety

At JW House, we comply with the USDA guidelines for food preparation and safety:

- Wash hands thoroughly with germicidal soap and warm water before handling food, after handling raw seafood or meat, and after using the restroom, smoking, sneezing, or touching your face or hair.
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize all equipment & utensils before and after use. Always wash & sanitize your knife & cutting board in soapy, hot water after handling seafood, raw poultry or meat.
- Always wash fruits, vegetables & produce before serving to wash away dirt and pesticides.
- Return all ingredients to refrigerated storage if preparation is interrupted.
- Use a food thermometer to check all internal cooked food temperatures.
- Bacteria multiply rapidly in “danger zone” temperatures of 41°F to 139°F. To ensure safety, hot foods must be held at 140°F or above (most bacteria is destroyed at this temp). Stirring food frequently evenly distributes the temperature. Cold food must be kept at 40°F or below.
- To destroy bacteria, poultry should be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165°F.
- Cooked food should be served immediately and hot. Food should not be left out for more than two hours and leftovers should be stored in refrigeration.
- Avoid keeping food in danger zone temp of 41°F to 139°F for more than 4 hours cumulative (from preparation to service, to cool down/storage).
- Defrost frozen products in the refrigerator (not under hot running water in a sink).

Additional information:

- USDA Food Safety Basics: [t.ly/XtgZ](https://www.t.ly/XtgZ)
- Cooking for Groups, A Volunteer’s Guide to Food Safety: [t.ly/W5ZP](https://www.t.ly/W5ZP)