

VA Puget Sound Fisher House

Volunteer Meals at VA Puget Sound Fisher House

We appreciate your group's interest in preparing a meal for the guests of the VA Puget Sound Fisher House. In order to make the event run smoothly we ask that you fill out the attached Event Roster and return it to the Management Office no later than 1 business day prior to the event. This will provide us with the information we need to contact you and your participants should the need arise.

Guests will be notified of this event through a variety of in-house communications. However, please understand that our guests have very spur-of-the-moment lives while in Fisher House. Someone may intend to come to the meal and then be called suddenly to the hospital for an emergency. We do not judge the success of an event by how many guests are able to come. The value of your time and service to our families is appreciated no matter what. Please know that all guests will benefit, even if they are not able to join you for the meal.

Below you will find some basic information about preparing a meal at Fisher House. If you have any issues or concerns please let us know right away.

- We cannot predict occupancy with any accuracy as guests are checking in and out all the time. Even if we gave you a head count the morning of your event it could easily change before you arrive. Therefore, we suggest you plan on cooking for 25. Leftovers can be stored in the House fridge for guests who come in after the event. Please put the event date on any leftovers. We have limited storage space for perishable goods. If you bring more food than can be prepared please take extras back out with you.
- While your volunteer group is welcome to join the families for dinner, we have also learned through trial and error that cooking groups should not exceed 10 people. Too large a group proves to be intimidating to guests who would otherwise feel free to use the kitchen prior to the meal. Please factor your volunteers into the total guest count but know that other than major holidays, you should not anticipate on feeding more than 30 people maximum.
- Guests typically begin to return from the hospital between 5 and 6 pm. Dinner can be served from 5 on, with most volunteer groups choosing to have dinner ready for service between 5:30 and 6pm. For this reason, buffet service from the kitchen island works best.
- Volunteers have the option of preparing meals offsite and bringing them in or using our big, beautiful kitchen to prep and cook. It is also at the discretion of the volunteers if they want to drop off the food for service later or stay and join the families for dinner.
- The Fisher House kitchen is well stocked with pots, pans, utensils and small appliances. We have 2 cooktops, 4 ovens, 2 microwaves, 2 dishwashers and an abundance of crockpots. Volunteers provide the ingredients for the meal they are preparing but are welcome to use our pantry stock to fill in. We also have an organic herb and vegetable garden and in season volunteers may help themselves to produce from the garden for the meal. (We can provide donation forms if you want to claim the expenses on your taxes).
- Because we serve an average of 60 families a month we can't possibly stay on top of special dietary restrictions so volunteers do not have to worry about that, either. Guests with allergies or other restrictions will ask if they aren't sure they can eat something.
- **No alcohol is permitted on the campus of VA Puget Sound.** That includes bringing in wine and beer used as cooking ingredients.
- We ask volunteers to clean up from the meal preparation; guests are responsible for cleaning up after the meal. Volunteers do not need to stay around until all the guests have been served. When you are ready to leave just bundle the leftovers into the fridge, finish tidying up and take your leave. Late arrivals know to look in the House fridge for leftovers to warm up.
- Fisher House staff is available between 8am and 4pm, Monday through Friday. Someone from your group needs to arrive at Fisher House prior to the office closing and will then be responsible for letting in anyone arriving after 4pm. If this is the first time your group is volunteering at Fisher House we ask that you make an appointment to meet with the Management staff during business hours prior to the date of your event. If your event is scheduled for a weekend arrangements must be made to let you into the house. Fisher House is a secure building. Please do not prop doors and do not open the door to anyone who is not a member of your volunteer group. Note that guests are not to open the door to anyone they don't know so it is important that volunteers never arrive without making prior arrangements.

Thank you for your willingness to be of service to our Veteran and active duty families!