



**MEALS on WHEELS**  
**CENTRAL TEXAS**

**MEALS ON WHEELS CENTRAL TEXAS**  
**VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

## Welcome!

Welcome to Meals on Wheels Central Texas. 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 Meals on Wheels Central Texas.

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 Meal on Wheels volunteer driver. Within a few weeks 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 volunteering for us.

As a new Meals on Wheels volunteer driver, you may find that you have questions concerning the people to whom you are taking the meals or specific problems with route delivery. Meals on Wheels Central Texas 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 Meals on Wheels will not be limited to the logistics of food delivery. Take time to become acquainted with the clients to whom you deliver nourishment. Develop friendships. Have fun. Thank you for caring and sharing your valuable time.

## Your Volunteer Commitment

We are indebted to you and all of our wonderful volunteers for generously sharing your valuable time and energy to serve Meals on Wheels clients. Your commitment makes our service effective and reliable. Thank you for being a part of the Meals on Wheels Central Texas team! You are truly making a difference in the lives of our neighbors in need.

## The Importance of Guaranteeing Meal Delivery

At Meals on Wheels, we guarantee meal delivery to, on average, 3,000 clients daily, Monday through Friday. If a regular volunteer is unable to drive (no matter what the reason), we must still find a 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: write a note on your phone or calendar. 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 Volunteer Services if you will be late or unable to deliver as scheduled. We request at least 24 hours notice; cancellations received after 8:30am 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.

Cancellations by meal delivery drivers are accepted 24 hours a day. Call Meals on Wheels Central Texas at **512-476-6325** and, when prompted, follow the directions. You can also cancel via our website: [www.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org](http://www.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org).

## Volunteer Driver Position Description

The Volunteer Meal Delivery Driver is responsible for delivering meals to homebound clients on the day(s) scheduled each week. The Driver picks up meals at a prearranged meal pick-up site and delivers to each client one hot meal and one cold meal bag. Volunteer Meal Delivery Drivers are the “eyes and ears” of the MOW program. Each driver is therefore responsible for reporting to the office when clients are not at home or in the event that there is a problem. Please call our offices at **512-476-6325**.

## Qualifications

- A valid State Issued Driver’s License
- Current vehicle liability insurance
- Ability to read a map
- Pass required confidential background checks

## Responsibilities

- Arrive at the meal pick-up site on the assigned day between 11:00am - 11:45am.
- Deliver the correct number and type of hot meal and cold bag to each client on your route sheet using two insulated coolers; one for hot meals and one for cold bags.
- Report any inaccuracies on route sheet to Volunteer Services Department.
- Call or email 24 hours in advance if you will be unable to deliver meals as scheduled.
- Maintain client confidentiality; shred your route sheet after each use. A new one will be provided each time you pick up.
- Always call the office and report if a client is not at home.
- Report any changes in client’s health, appearance or living conditions to a MOWCTX social worker.
- When you finish, shred the route sheet. Client information is confidential.

## Volunteer Meal Manager Position Description

The Volunteer Meal Manager works with the Distribution Team and the Volunteer Services Department staff to coordinate meal pick-up for volunteer drivers at a given pick-up site.

### Qualifications

- Friendliness
- Willingness to cooperate with MOW volunteers
- Reliability, dependability, and attention to detail

### Responsibilities

- Arrive at the pick-up site by 10:40am.
- Turn on the “hot box”, if needed.
- When the MOWCTX Distribution driver brings the meals: Use the “Final Count” sheet to count the number of meals. If there are not enough, call the office. Place hot meals in the “hot box” and keep cold bags in coolers with closed lids.
- Assist volunteer drivers by distributing route sheets and making sure volunteers leave with the correct number of hot meals and cold bags.
- Call the MOWCTX office at **512-476-6325** if:
  - ◇ there is a question you cannot answer
  - ◇ there are not enough meals
  - ◇ a volunteer relays information to be passed on to MOWCTX
  - ◇ there are any problems at the site
- Communicate with Volunteer Services team at end of meal delivery to coordinate plan for any routes not picked up.
- Drive “no-show” routes when possible.
- Unplug the “hot box”.
- Clear pick-up area of litter and close up the site.
- Give 24 hours advance notice if you will be unable to do your volunteer job.

## Who We Serve

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

- Usually 60 years of age or older
- Reside within service area
- Primarily homebound or have little or no help
- Have physical or mental impairments which make meal preparation difficult

Meals are provided based on need, not on income. All people who apply directly to Meals on Wheels are given the opportunity to voluntarily share in the costs of the meals by contributing. We provide monthly “cost share statements,” and a suggested donation is determined by the amount of the client’s monthly income. No one is ever refused service because of inability to participate in helping to defray the cost of providing the service.

## Confidentiality

We serve an often frail and vulnerable population.

- Please respect the confidentiality of all information given to you, including names, addresses, and personal information.
- Do not discuss living situations, health conditions, financial status or anything else you learn with anyone other than a MOWCTX employee.
- Please do not leave route sheets or directions to the client’s house where it is visible or accessible to others.

We respect your confidentiality as well.

- We will not give clients your phone number and the Program Coordinator can act as an intermediary if you choose.
- Many clients have caller ID, so use \*67 when calling if you would like to keep your number private.
- If you do choose to give out your number, there may be instances when boundaries need to be set with the client you are serving.
  - ◇ You may contact the Program Coordinator if a client oversteps their bounds.

## Nutrition Information

Meals on Wheels Central Texas clients receive meals that are:

**Nutritious** – Our registered, licensed dietitian plans the menus. Our healthy meals meet or exceed 1/3 of the Dietary Reference Intakes established by the Institutes of Medicine and follows the most current Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

**Enjoyable** – Client surveys are conducted on an annual basis. The results demonstrate that our clients enjoy the meals.

**Hot** – Meals are picked up by volunteer drivers from fourteen different locations and delivered in insulated containers within an hour.

**All of the meals are prepared at the Central Kitchen and are an excellent source of nutrients and phytonutrients making them heart healthy, diabetes friendly, and health promoting.**

## Food Safety for Meals on Wheels Volunteers

### Reminder on Route Sheets

**KEEP MEALS SAFE:** Clients are susceptible to food borne illness. Please wash your hands (or use hand sanitizer) before handling meals; use clean, closed insulated containers/bags; and never mix hot and cold food.

### Important Points

- 75 million cases of food poisoning occur in the U.S. each year.
- Older adults are more susceptible to food borne illness because they:
  - ◇ have weakened immune systems
  - ◇ produce less stomach acid (which kills bacteria)
  - ◇ are more likely to have chronic diseases
  - ◇ have sensory loss reducing ability to sense spoilage
- As volunteers, you can help keep meals safe and prevent food poisoning during meal-transit. Our two main objectives are maintaining appropriate temperatures and hygiene.

### Maintaining Temperatures

- Keep all food in a cooler or insulated bag.
- Close coolers and bags – always keep a tight seal.
- Use a cooler even if taking only one meal.
- Use separate coolers for hot & cold items.
- Use clean, non-cracked coolers with lids.
- Limit the amount of times you open the cooler.
- Deliver meals in a timely manner.

### Hygiene

- Be sure to wash your hands with warm and soapy water BEFORE picking up the food. If you cannot, hand sanitizer will be available at pickup sites.
- Keep your coolers CLEAN - load hot meals flat, NOT on their sides to prevent leaks and spills.
- Sanitize your coolers on a regular basis – wash them out with soapy water and/or wipe them down with a sanitizer.

## What is a Route Sheet?

A route sheet is a list of clients to whom you will be delivering meals and who all live in the same general area. It contains the name of the pick-up site at the top, along with the route number, date, and meal count summary. The first column is for clients' names and addresses. Meal color is in the second column, and the third column is for notes and special instructions. Each line is for one household and lists the client(s) name, address and birthday.

Color coding identifies diets. Please remember to check and double check the route sheet so that each client gets the correct color hot meal and cold bag.

## Sample Route Sheet

<b>MEALS ON WHEELS</b>	<b>CENTRAL KITCHEN</b> Tuesday, May 19, 2009	<b>ROUTE 0</b>
<b>CLIENTS</b>	<b>HOT   COLD</b>	<b>PLEASE NOTE</b>
Charles Gonzales 1001 Caldwell St 05/11	Regular WHITE	Deliver to southernmost door to home.

Instructions about what to do if the client does not answer the door plus other reminders are listed at the **BOTTOM** of the route sheet.

*Note: the information on the route sheet and map is confidential. Please shred when you have completed your deliveries. You will be given a new route sheet and map each time you deliver. A clients' name in bold means the client is new to the route.*



Tuesday, May 19, 2009

**12 Clients**

Hot Meals 5 REGULAR 1 ORANGE 2 BLUE 2 RED 1 GRAY 1 BROWN

Cold Bags 1 WHITE 1 BLACK SKIM 1 BLUE 1 GRAY 1 GREEN 1 ORANGE 1 PINK 1 RED 1 YELLOW 3 BROWN

**1 Purple Bag**

<b>CLIENTS</b>	<b>HOT   COLD</b>	<b>PLEASE NOTE</b>
Charles Gonzales 1001 Caldwell St 05/11 <b>NO PHON</b>	Regular WHITE	Deliver to southernmost door to home.
Charles Jones 2421 Louis Henna Blvd Apt 717 01/10	Red RED	Montelena Apts Make sure Roommate's Dog is restrained before entering
Mary Jones 1984 E 2nd Street 05/09	Orange ORANGE	Back door please, slow to door.
Mary Williams 350 W Parson 02/20	BLUE BLACK SKIM	DO NOT HONOR NOTES!
John Jackson 4896 W Parsons St 12/02	Regular YELLOW	Family members may accept meal
Robert Johnson 24560 Heatherwilde Blvd Apt #804 01/08	Gray GRAY <b>Purple Bag</b>	Shade Tree Apartments Do not leave meals with anyone but client.
Helen Martinez 2106 Garden St 08/26	Regular PINK	Hard of hearing (HOH)
* Betty Rodriguez 2120 Garden St 12/13	(Name on Label) Regular BROWN	Slow to door
Naomi Martinez 2324 Garden St 08/08	Blue BLUE	dog tied up in back
John Gonzales 2621 Garden St 05/19	(Name on Label) Brown BROWN	Client is slow to the door. Knock loudly.
Margaret Gonzales 2621 Garden St 06/02	Regular GREEN	Client is blind.

(Continued on next page)

Dorothy Brown  
3100 Garden St  
10/08

(Name on Label) Ring doorbell. Slow to door.  
Red|BROWN

**MOWCTX: 512-476-6325**

**Please Do Not Deliver Before 11:00 AM:** Clients are asked to be home between 11 and 1pm to accept deliveries.

**Please Keep Meals Safe:** Clients are susceptible to food borne illness. Please wash your hands before handling meals; use clean, closed, insulated containers/bags and never mix hot and cold food.

**Please Do Not Leave Meals Outside:** If you have any problems or concerns, call MOWCTX and identify yourself as a "Volunteer on Route."

**Also Please Remember:**

1. Clients are slow to the door. Knock loudly and be patient.
2. If no one answers the door, call MOWCTX on your cell phone while at clients' door or when you return to home or work.
3. Try and see every client each time you deliver (unless otherwise instructed.)
4. Do not deliver if there is an unrestrained dog. Call MOWCTX so we may call client to restrain dog.
5. If you encounter an emergency, play it safe. Call 911, and then contact MOWCTX.
6. After delivering, shred these sheets and attached map. Client information is confidential.

-----  
Clients' names in **bold** with an asterisk (\*) are new to the route. They will remain bold for 2 weeks.

Clients' birth month/day are listed below their address on the route sheet.

**MOWCTX: 512-476-6325**

## Delivery Instructions

- **EVERY** volunteer meal delivery driver **MUST** be trained. If you have not attended a volunteer orientation, please contact Volunteer Services or your team coordinator to schedule a training session.
- When you need a substitute for your route, please inform Volunteer Services at least 24 hours in advance. Any route cancellations that are reported after 8:30am on the day of your delivery, are extremely difficult to cover. Cancellations are accepted 24 hours a day. Call Meals on Wheels Central Texas at **512-476-6325**, when prompted, follow the directions. There is also a convenient form on-line at: <https://www.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org/route-substitute>.
- Arrive at your prearranged pick-up site between 11:00 – 11:45am (outlying sites 11:00-11:30am). Please call Volunteer Services if you are going to arrive late.
- Read over the route sheet before leaving the pick-up site. Be sure to take note of new clients, special instructions, and attachments. For assistance or clarification, please contact Volunteer Services.
- Pick up any additional items that may need to be given out to clients (i.e. handouts, letters, supplies, or groceries).
- Always check your route sheet to see if it has changed since the last time you drove.
- Always use **INSULATED CONTAINERS** to deliver your clients' meals and **NEVER** leave a client's meal outside. Failure to maintain proper meal temperature endangers your client's health and is a violation of requirements established by the Texas Area Agency on Aging.
- When a client does not answer the door, always call **512-476-6325** and identify yourself as a "volunteer on route." The Customer Service Team will then call the client to determine if they are home. If we can't reach the client, please leave a "not at home" card in the door.
- Confidentiality is vital. Any questions/concerns about clients on your route are only to be addressed by the social workers at the MOWCTX office. You can contact a staff social worker at **512-476-6325**.
- Any questions about your delivery route or volunteer experience are addressed through the Volunteer Services department. Contact us between the hours of 8am - 11am or 1:30pm - 5pm Monday-Thursday, or between 8am - 11am or 1:30pm - 3:30pm on Fridays.

## A Few Don'ts

Don't leave the meal outside the client's home. The food will not be safe to eat if you do this.

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

## When Other Needs Arise

- Please do not solicit clients for business purposes, and please also refrain from accepting gifts from MOWCTX clients.
- If a client offers a contribution for their meals, politely decline and ask the client to mail the donation to MOWCTX.
- If a client mentions being low on money or behind on bills and asks you for money, please alert MOWCTX staff rather than giving money directly to the client; our case management team will follow up to best address the client's needs. We have access to various community resources to assist those clients who may need more than just meals.
- If you encounter a situation that is uncomfortable or alarming, please alert MOWCTX staff.
- If 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 their meal delivery. If you are concerned a client needs more than you are able to give, please report this to the MOWCTX office, and our case managers will follow up on these concerns.
- Please don't offer legal, medical, or financial advice to our clients; if you come across a client in need of this type of assistance, please alert MOWCTX staff for follow up.

## Please Remember

- Don't leave the meal outside the client's home; the food will not be safe to eat if you do this.
- Don't leave the meal with a neighbor or someone else unless the route sheet specifically instructs you to do so.
- Please avoid giving our clients extra food or sweets due to our clients' wide variety of dietary restrictions.

## Emergency Procedures

If you encounter a client in a life-threatening situation, call **911**. Stay calm. Give clear answers and directions. Then call the Meals on Wheels Central Texas office, **512-476-6325**. Do not move the client or give water.

If you suspect a client is being abused, neglected or exploited, **Texas Law requires that you call the ABUSE HOTLINE: 1-800-252-5400**.

## Safety Concerns

- Never attempt delivery of a meal where there is an unrestrained dog. Report the incident to Meals on Wheels Central Texas at **512-476-6325**.
- If at any time you feel your safety is at risk, do not stop or leave your car. Call the MOWCTX office and tell someone about your concerns. Use your best judgment and always be aware of your surroundings.
- Please help protect MOWCTX clients' health. Texas Area Agency on Aging requires that all meals are carried in insulated containers. Never leave a meal outside and do not honor notes left by clients.

## Expecting the Unexpected

You are our eyes and ears. When you arrive to deliver a Meals on Wheels meal, you become for many clients a source of more than food. You may be the only person the client sees all day. It is important that you see the clients as often as possible when delivering meals. If a family member or friend receives the meal two weeks in a row and the client is not visible, ask to see him or her. If any conditions such as the client's health and/or living situation, cause you alarm, report them to MOWCTX right away.

If a client says that he/she has no food and the Meals on Wheels meals are not enough, report this to the MOWCTX office as well. Canned goods are always being collected to meet these needs.

## Abuse and Neglect

*What should you do if you think someone you know has been abused, neglected or exploited?*

**Adult Protective Services (APS)** is the agency that investigates allegations of abuse, neglect and exploitation. If maltreatment is confirmed, APS provides or arranges services in an attempt to alleviate the problem. Half of all reports to APS involve self-neglect. Report any concerns you may have for the safety and well-being of our clients. There is a legal responsibility to report abuse, neglect and-or financial exploitation.

*What number or website should you use if you suspect abuse, neglect or exploitation?*

Please call the toll-free hotline number: **1-800-252-5400** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week OR report on a secure website online: <https://www.txabusehotline.org>. If you believe a situation is a life-threatening emergency, dial **911** for help.

*What are the signs and symptoms or possible indicators of abuse, neglect and financial exploitation?*

### Physical Signs:

Soiled clothing and/or bed, lack of necessities and personal effects and comfort in living environment, inappropriate administration of medication, injury that is inconsistent with the explanation; poor color, sunken eyes or cheeks

### Behavioral Signs:

Fear, anxiety, agitation, anger, withdrawn, depressed, non-responsive, ambivalence, contradictory or implausible statements, hesitation to talk openly

### Financial Exploitation Signs:

- Frequent, often expensive gifts to the caregiver
- Unexplained withdrawal of money by a person accompanying the vulnerable adult
- Missing personal belongings, papers, credit cards
- Unexplained missing valuables
- Unpaid bills, unusual activity in bank account
- Frequent checks made out to "cash"
- Caregiver providing substandard care
- Forging a person's signature

**Who might be an abuser?** *Family members, caregivers, professionals hired to do a job*

## HIPAA Privacy Training for Volunteers

### 1. What does HIPAA stand for?

- H** – Health
- I** – Insurance
- P** – Portability
- A** – And Accountability
- A** – Act

### 2. What is HIPAA privacy rule?

Privacy requirements were implemented on April 14, 2003. Contractors and volunteers of state agencies that receive, create, share or store protected health information are responsible for implementing and complying with the HIPAA privacy rules. The HIPAA Privacy Rule establishes minimum safeguards to protect confidentiality of an individual's health information.

#### **The HIPAA Privacy Rule protects:**

- An individual's health information in all forms; electronic, paper, spoken, and whether past, present or future
- The rule protects individuals, living and dead, and or groups in both the public and private sector

### 3. What is protected health information?

#### **"Protected Health Information," or PHI, is information that is:**

- Linked to a specific person by name, social security number (SSN), date of birth (DOB), geographic area or other individually identifiable information)
- Related to that person's past, present or future physical or mental care condition; the provision of health care to that person; or the payment for the provision of health care
- Use of any PHI identifier when combined with information regarding a person's health, is protected under HIPAA

### 4. Who is required to comply with HIPAA?

The HIPAA Privacy Rule affects covered entities that have health information about an individual.

#### **Covered entities include the following:**

- Health care providers such as physicians, dentists, clinics, hospitals and nursing homes
- Health care insurance plans including private health insurance as well as government programs such as Medicaid, Medicare and The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
- State agencies like DADS are covered entities because they provide health care services or administer health care insurance plan

## HIPAA Privacy Training for Volunteers (cont.)

### 5. Under what conditions must you protect any of the previously mentioned pieces of information?

**Whenever:**

- The information relates to the person's physical and mental health, provision of health care or payment for health care
- The information will identify, or could be used to identify, the subject of the information
- The information is transmitted or maintained in any form or medium

**Examples: fax, computer files, paper records.**

### 6. Are there conditions that PHI may be released?

PHI may be disclosed to a government agency authorized by law to receive reports of:

- Child abuse
- Domestic violence
- Abuse or neglect of persons who are elderly or have a disability

For reports of domestic violence, and abuse or neglect of adults, inform the individual of the reports unless you believe informing the individual would place him or her at risk of serious harm.

### 7. Are there limitations for release of PHI?

The privacy rule requires you to limit uses, requests, and disclosures of PHI to the minimum necessary to accomplish the use or disclosure.

### 8. How to secure various types of PHI you encounter on a regular basis?

Apply reasonable safeguards when making these communications to protect the information from inappropriate use or disclosure.

**PAPER:** (i.e. meal delivery route sheet, letters to be delivered, surveys, etc.)

- Only authorized personnel generate or copy confidential documents
- Confidential documents must not be left in areas accessible by unauthorized persons. (pick-up site, cooler, auto, home, work, etc.)
- Confidential documents must be disposed of in a confident recycling bin, shredded, or rendered unreadable (i.e. route sheet instructions state to tear up and discard at completion of each delivery)
- Patient medical records must not be taken home or to any non-work-related place
- If in doubt about confidentiality of a document, handle as if confidential

**COMPUTERS:** (i.e. communicating client information to MOWCTX via individual email or MOWCTX website email)

- Use only password-protected devices
- Use a unique password and do not share your password
- Store personal computers, laptops, PDA's, in a secure location when not in use
- Log out when leaving above devices



## HIPAA Privacy Training for Volunteers (cont.)

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS:** (i.e. communicating client information to MOWCTX by phone or fax)

Devices such as cordless phones, mobile phones, faxes, intercoms

- When discussing information over phone, a reasonable safeguard would be to have conversation in a private location or if in proximity to others to lower your voice
- When faxing protected information always use a cover sheet and a reasonable safeguard would be prior to sending the fax, notify the person to whom the fax is being transmitted and to confirm fax #

### 9. Why is this important to you as a volunteer?

You are responsible for securing PHI and keeping it private. If you don't you may be liable!

#### **ALWAYS REMEMBER...**

All information regarding an individual's health care is confidential. **DO NOT** share this information with your friends, family or neighbors. In other words, if you learned any client Protected Health Information through your volunteer assignment or other associations with Meals on Wheels and More, it is considered private.

You also must be careful about where and when and with whom you share information required to perform your volunteer job. Share information only with persons who **HAVE** a legitimate need to know for treatment, payment or health care operations. Public locations such as hallways, break rooms, elevators, parking lots, for example, are not appropriate places to share PHI.

**And lastly, please shred route sheets after each delivery.**

## Inclement Weather Policy

Meals on Wheels Central Texas will remain open for service to the clients it serves unless inclement weather or another emergency occurs making it impossible for volunteers and staff to do so.

Please note: If other institutions such as schools, government etc. are closed, this does not automatically mean that Meals on Wheels Central Texas will be closed.

If weather conditions or other emergencies arise (ice storm, snow or other emergency), we will update our social media and website should there be any meal delivery cancellations.

The following radio and television stations will broadcast notice regarding cancellation of meal service:

### Television:

KXAN 36, Cable Channel 4

KVUE 24 Cable Channel 3

KEYE TV 42, Cable Channel 5

Fox 7 (Cable Channel 2)

Spectrum News

### Radio:

KUT-FM 90.5

## Volunteer Bicycle Safety Tips

### OBEY TRAFFIC SIGNS AND SIGNALS

Bicycles must drive like other vehicles if they are to be taken seriously by motorists.

### NEVER RIDE WITH HEADPHONES; ALWAYS WEAR A HELMET

Always wear a helmet. Never wear headphones while riding a bike.

### NEVER RIDE AGAINST TRAFFIC

Motorists aren't looking for bicyclists riding on the wrong side of the road. State law and common sense require that bicycles drive like other vehicles.

### USE HAND SIGNALS

Hand signals tell motorists and pedestrians what you intend to do. Signal as a matter of law, of courtesy, and of self-protection.

### DON'T WEAVE IN BETWEEN OR LEAVE THE CURB BETWEEN PARKED CARS

Don't ride out from between parked cars. Motorists may not see you when you enter traffic.

### FOLLOW LANE MARKINGS

Don't turn left from the right lane. Don't go straight from a lane marked "right-turn only" unless "except bikes" is posted.

### RIDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LANE IS SAFEST WHEN:

- the lane is too narrow to share safely
- debris or glass is on the edge
- obstructions force you away from the edge
- traveling the same speed as traffic

### CHOOSE THE BEST WAY TO TURN LEFT

There are two ways to make a left turn. (1) Like an auto: signal, move into the left turn lane and turn left. (2) Like a pedestrian: ride straight to the far-side crosswalk. Walk your bike across.

### DON'T PASS ON THE RIGHT

Motorists may not look for or see a bicycle passing on the right. Pass on the left like other vehicles.

### MAKE EYE CONTACT WITH DRIVERS

Assume that other drivers don't see you until you are sure that they do. Eye contact is important with any driver who might pose a threat to your safety.

## Volunteer Bicycle Safety Tips (cont.)

### SCAN THE ROAD BEHIND

Learn to look back over your shoulder without losing your balance or swerving. Some riders use rear-view mirrors, but still look before turning.

### AVOID ROAD HAZARDS

Watch out for parallel-slat grates, gravel, ice or debris. Cross railroad tracks at right angles.

### KEEP BOTH HANDS READY TO BRAKE

You may not stop in time if you brake one-handed. Allow extra distance for stopping in the rain, because brakes are less efficient when wet.

### BE VISIBLE: WEAR BRIGHT COLORS

Texas law requires a white headlight (visible from at least 500 feet ahead) and a rear reflector or taillight (visible up to 300 feet from behind).

### DON'T RIDE DOUBLE

Riding with extra people on the back or handlebars of the bike makes it unsteady and unsafe. State law requires every rider to have their own seat or saddle.

### KEEP YOUR BIKE IN GOOD REPAIR

Adjust your bike to fit you and keep it working properly. Check brakes and tires regularly. Routine maintenance is simple and you can learn to do it yourself.

## Thanks to You, We Deliver

We cannot stress enough that you are the “eyes and ears” of Meals on Wheels. If you see anything that seems unusual or anything that we should know about or look into, please call MOWCTX at **512-476-6325**.

## Have Any Suggestions?

Your opinions and suggestions are important to us. Please let us know how you are doing. You can do this by calling us at any time and by completing surveys we send out periodically asking for feedback. We continually seek ways to improve our programs. You can reach out to us directly at [volunteer@mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org](mailto:volunteer@mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org).

Meals on Wheels insulated bags are available two for \$5.00 for easy delivery of hot and cold meals! For more information, call Volunteer Services at **512-476-6325**.

## Thank You!



**MEALS on WHEELS**  
**CENTRAL TEXAS**

3227 E. 5th Street  
Austin, TX 78702  
512-476-6325 (MEAL)  
[www.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org](http://www.mealsonwheelscentraltexas.org)