

Revive & Thrive Project Meal Recipient Frequently Asked Questions

The Basics

What is Revive & Thrive Project?



Revive & Thrive Project is a volunteer powered nonprofit in Grand Rapids. Our mission is to support individuals and their families struggling with serious illness, such as cancer, with nourishing and healing meals during treatment and recovery.

At Revive & Thrive Project, we believe that food is the very foundation of health and healing, and our aim is to encourage our community to nourish themselves with nutritious food.

How did our meal service program begin?

Revive & Thrive Project was founded in 2015 by nutritionist and cancer survivor, Wendy Borden. Wendy founded the organization following her own experience of going through cancer treatment as a single parent. Since 2015, Revive & Thrive Project has served over 45,000 meals to individuals and their families facing a health crisis. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is modeled after and an affiliate partner of the Ceres Community Project in California.



How is Revive & Thrive Project different from Meals on Wheels?

Revive & Thrive Project:

- Highly nutritious meals prepared with high-quality, fresh, local ingredients
- For individuals and their families or caregivers who are facing a health crisis
- Contain whole foods including vegetables, whole grains, fish, and poultry
- Free meals once per week
- Maximum meal service time of 24 weeks
- Local, volunteer-powered organization serving 40-60 people each month

Meals on Wheels:

- Meals with adequate nutrition, a friendly visit, and safety checks
- For seniors over age 60 with limited mobility
- Meals for those on soft-food diets are available
- Meals may be provided multiple times per week, meal cost is based on income
- May be provided long-term depending on individual's needs
- National organization serving thousands of people each month

If you are unsure which program is a better fit for you, you may contact our Client Care Team at (616) 606-3314 to discuss your needs.

Receiving Meals

How long can I receive service?



You will be offered an initial meal service term of 8-12 weeks based on your health condition and treatment schedule. You will have the option to extend for additional weeks if needed.

The maximum number of meal service weeks that we provide to any individual or family is 24 weeks. You may receive meals at different times (for example, 2 different sessions of 12 weeks over two years) based on your treatment plan or a recurrence of your diagnosis.

If you are still in treatment and in need of meals following 24 weeks of service, you may be eligible to join our on-call list in the case that we have extra meals available.

What will I receive each week?

Each person enrolled in meal service will receive 3-4 complete entrees, 1 hearty salad, 1 quart of soup, and a healthy dessert each week. 1-2 entrees will be plant-forward or vegetarian, and the other 2 entrees will include chicken, turkey, or fish.

Depending on your dietary restrictions you may receive double of one dish to substitute for one you are not able to eat. Our meals are prepared with whole foods that are fresh, organic/chemical-free, seasonal, and local. We seek to ensure that the freshest and most nutrient-rich whole food is available when every bite counts.



How much are my meals worth and how much does this program cost?



Each meal bag that you receive is worth \$80-\$100 in ingredients plus labor. Thanks to many generous donations and volunteers, we are able to provide meals for the net cost of \$25-30 per meal bag, or about \$5 per meal.

We never charge for meal service. However, donations are always greatly appreciated. If you choose to extend meal service beyond your initial 8-12 week term, you will be asked to consider making a suggested donation based on your income.

Can my family members receive meals?



Spouses/caregivers: We always provide meals for the spouse and/or caregiver living in the household to reduce the burden of meal preparation and encourage healthy eating habits.

Other adult or teen family members: Depending on availability and interest, we may provide a full set of meals or 1 set of meals for every 2 adult or teen family members living full-time in the household.

Children: Depending on availability and interest, we may provide 1 set of meals for every 2-3 children living in the household. Typically, young children do not eat our meals (but some surprise us!)

Who do I contact if I want to change something about my meal service?

Call our Client Care Team at 616-606-3314 or email abbie@reviveandthriveproject.org to report any changes in your life that affect your meal service, such as the following:

- You move or need food delivered to another location.
- You will not need a delivery because of travel, treatments, family visiting, etc.
- You won't be home for a delivery.
- You are doing well enough to cook for yourself.
- You have new dietary restrictions.

Calls, voicemails, and emails received by 3pm on Tuesdays will be effective for the following meal service day.

What if I can't eat all of the food each week?

Many of the meals you receive can be frozen for later use, especially the soups and poultry-based dishes.

If you find that more than 10% of your meals are going to waste, please contact us immediately at (616) 606-3314 or abbie@reviveandthriveproject.org. We may be able to reduce the number of meals you receive each week, or end your meal service with us and connect you with another resource for healthy food.

What if I don't like the food?

If you find that more than 10% of your meals are going to waste, please contact us immediately at (616) 606-3314 or abbie@reviveandthriveproject.org. We will end your meal service with us and connect you with another resource for healthy food. Revive & Thrive Project often has a waiting list of several families who would enjoy and benefit from our meals, so we request that food not be wasted.

Meal Deliveries

How and when do I get my food?



Our volunteer Delivery Angels deliver your food on Wednesdays between 6:00–7:30pm unless you have made pick-up arrangements. Your Delivery Angel will call you when en route and when arriving outside your home.

Your meal bag will be set on the porch and the driver will step back to allow for proper social distancing and no-contact exchange. Please wear a mask when stepping out to receive the meals. In the event of a winter storm, we may have to postpone delivery until Thursday morning or cancel in extreme cases.

Do my family or I have to be home to receive my delivered meals?

Yes. You or a family member must be home each week to receive meals. We absolutely cannot leave meals on the porch or doorstep for health and safety reasons. We will not enter homes or apartment buildings to drop off or unpack meals.

What happens if my family or I am not home for a meal delivery?

Please call (616) 606-3314 or email abbie@reviveandthriveproject.org by 3pm on Tuesday (24 hours notice) if you will not be home for a meal delivery. If you provide notice by 3pm on Tuesday, missing your meal delivery will not be counted against your program term and you may continue meals the following Wednesday.

If you provide notice between 3pm on Tuesday and 3pm on Wednesday that no one in your household will be home to receive your meal delivery, we will not deliver your meals but this will count as a week of meal service in your program term. You may continue meals the following Wednesday.

If you do not provide notice and no one is home to receive your meal delivery, it is your responsibility to contact our Client Care Team at (616) 606-3314 or email abbie@reviveandthriveproject.org to resume meal service. Your meal service will be suspended until you make contact, and you may be moved to the end of the waiting list before resuming service.

If no one is home to receive your meal delivery and you do not provide notice on more than one occasion, your meal service will be immediately and permanently suspended.



More Details about Revive & Thrive Project

Who prepares my meals?



Teens prepare your meals! Your meals are cooked with love by teenagers who volunteer as teen chefs, and the adult mentors who guide them. Our teen chef program is a key part of our mission, empowering the next generation with nutrition, cooking, and leadership skills.

Dozens of adults in a variety of volunteer jobs also contribute their energies to bring you these meals. We hope you feel the love from all of us in each bite!

Who is Revive & Thrive Project's Chef?

Chef Mandy Thompson has a passion for food as medicine, plant-based cooking, and teaching. She brings extensive experience as a Holistic Health Practitioner and Instructor for children and youth cooking classes at Kent District Library and Northview Public Schools. Chef Mandy brings her skills for healthy and delicious cooking as well as youth development into the kitchen. She is a mom of three and is always cooking something new for her family.



How can people support Revive & Thrive Project?



Revive & Thrive Project is supported through the many donations we receive and the thousands of hours donated by our volunteers each year. Donations and support from friends and family members on your behalf enable us to make meals available to more people in need. Donations can be sent to Revive & Thrive Project at 4330 Aspen Trails Dr. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546 or by visiting our website.

You can also support our work in these ways:

- Send us a note about the difference that Revive & Thrive Project made for you.
- Share a photo of yourself with your meals in your Instagram Story or in a Facebook Post and tag @reviveandthriveproject
- Designate Revive & Thrive Project as your charity on Amazon Smile (smile.amazon.com)
- Invite your family members and friends to volunteer with us - more information can be found at reviveandthriveproject.org/volunteer