

Meal Partners Volunteer FAQ's

What is Meal Partners? The Meal Partner's Program is designed to improve the health and well-being of isolated holocaust survivors and enrich the lives of volunteers by creating supportive intergenerational relationships. This goal is accomplished through the sharing of meals and by expanding the survivor's support system.

Who can be a Meal Partner?*

- An individual
- A circle of 3-5 friends (a care circle) who will rotate volunteer responsibilities
- A family or a group of families who will rotate volunteer responsibilities
- A school group or community service youth group (this can be a customized program that will be designed to work for high school students or college students)
- A synagogue group or another community group

*** Meal Partner Volunteers must be at least 18 years old unless they are volunteering with their family and/or accompanied by an adult who is a Meal Partner volunteer. For school groups or youth groups, volunteers must be supervised by an adult faculty member or youth group leader.**

*** All volunteers must undergo a background check and provide proof of car insurance to the agency if they will be transporting their survivor on any outings.**

What are the goals of Meal Partners?

JFFS will match volunteers, volunteer "care circles," family groups, synagogue groups, school communities, and other community service groups with the most isolated and needy of our survivors. Through the sharing of meals, our goal is to build relationships, broaden social support systems, reduce isolation and loneliness, and improve the survivors' quality of life.

How often do you need to meet with your survivor? *

The Meal Partner Volunteer optimally meets with their survivor once a week (this can be rotated by the members of your care circle). Examples of visits include the following:

- deliver a meal (either prepared by the volunteer or picked up by the volunteer at a restaurant or a designated Meal Partner location)
- share a meal (either in the survivor's home or the volunteer's home)
- cook a meal together with a survivor in his/her home or yours
- take him/her to a restaurant
- take him/her grocery shopping or go grocery shopping for him/her
- take him/her to a community event or a service
- share a shabbat meal in your home or the survivor's home

- If part of a school group, invite the survivor to share lunch with some students at the school or prepare a meal at the school that the students can then deliver to the survivor in his/her home
- If part of a synagogue group, cook meals at the synagogue kitchen that you can then deliver and share with the survivor in his/her home or have a synagogue member pick up survivor to go to Shabbat services and then share the synagogue Kiddush lunch with him/her

*The weekly activity can vary and will be designed to meet the needs of the survivor and the availability of the volunteer

How long is the commitment for involvement in the program?

The recommended length of commitment for involvement in the program is at least 1 year.

Will I receive training and support?

All volunteer Meal Partners are required to attend a mandatory 2 hour training session before they begin their service so that they can best understand and respond to the needs of survivors.

On-going support will be provided by trained social workers who will be available to respond to the questions and concerns of the volunteers.

When can I be matched with a survivor?

You can be matched after you:

- 1) Schedule an interview meeting with the program coordinator
- 2) Complete the volunteer application and background check (will be provided at initial meeting)
- 3) Attend a mandatory 2 hour training session (different options for times and dates will be provided at orientation meeting)
- 4) Meet with the program coordinator one on one to review your survivor match
- 5) Go with a social worker to meet your survivor

What if I can't commit to a once a week visit?

You can either ask a friend to join you and form a care circle or we can try to match you with another volunteer who lives in your area and wants to share the volunteering with you.