



March 20, 2020

NOTICE RE: Ronald McDonald House Charities Intermountain Area and COVID-19

Our highest priority is the health and safety of our guests, staff and volunteers and we wanted to share some of the actions RMHC Intermountain Area is taking to prepare and protect our team and continue our mission for the pediatric patient families we serve.

As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world and RMHC, and will continue to do so for an unknown period of time. With this unprecedented challenge, we have been forced to adjust as necessary, but we continue to do so thoughtfully and with the best interest of guests and staff as priority. There are two things we know for sure:

1. **The mission must continue** – Though it will be done in a modified way, we will continue to serve the most vulnerable pediatric patient families during this pandemic with lodging, food, transportation and at-home hospitality and support.
2. **We are stronger together** - We have an extraordinary team of staff, volunteers and donors that bring our mission to life every day. We have taken unprecedented steps to ensure the safety and well-being of our staff, guests, volunteers and the community at large to prevent and mitigate the spread of Covid-19. We will actively support our hospital partners and front-line health care workers through this crisis. We fully anticipate navigating through this challenge and coming through stronger on the other side.

The Mission During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Hospital-Based Programs - On March 19th RMHC suspended our hospital-based programs including our Ronald McDonald Family Rooms® and Hospitality Carts. We've temporarily released our Ronald McDonald Family Room spaces to Intermountain Primary Children's Hospital to use as they need during this Covid-19 Pandemic.

Ronald McDonald House - Primary Children's Hospital, the University of Utah Hospitals, and Shriners' Hospital for Children have cancelled ALL non-urgent medical care and surgeries. The families that remained at our local Ronald McDonald House this week have very high acuity children (NICU, PICU, Cancer, Transplants, etc.) and cannot return home at this time. This week we suspended our on-site Ronald McDonald House program to align with the CDC recommendations regarding social distancing. We moved approximately 40 guest families (120 adults and children) to safe, alternative lodging as our Ronald McDonald House is designed to keep families together. We are going to fulfill our mission over the next 60-90 days by providing meaningful support to a number of high-acuity pediatric patient families with extended family lodging, food, transportation services and in-home hospitality and support.

Our Extraordinary Team and the Remarkable Community that Fuels our Mission – We are surrounded with love, generosity and compassion. Our dedicated family of professionals will continue to provide calm, professional and mission-focused support to those that need us. We need the support of the community more than ever. We will work diligently to earn the support from our community and create new, innovative partnerships and resources to meet this challenge. Stay strong and healthy. We will get through this! Thank you for your shared dedication to our mission and the families we serve.

RMHC has also taken the following actions to help limit the spread of COVID-19:

- RMHC Intermountain Area has suspended programming while continuing the mission in a modified way.
- The program suspension of The Ronald McDonald Family Rooms, The Ronald McDonald House and the Ronald McDonald Hospitality Carts went in effect on 3/19/2020 for a minimum period of 21 days.
- RMHC will continue to meet our mission and serve these families with the greatest need during this pandemic.
- RMHC staff have been asked to stay at home for a minimum period of 21 days starting 3/19/2020 with minimal on-site staff support as it relates to critical mission activities, COVID-19 fundraising and resource development, and the basic safety and operations of the building.
- In accordance with the CDC recommendation of no groups of ten or more, RMHC will ensure that no more than 10 employees will be on-site.
- Staff, Board and Committee meetings and events will be held remotely until it's safe again to meet in person.
- RMHC is proceeding with plans to host a virtual gala for our most significant annual fundraising event in April – our Spirit of Children Gala – to help raise mission critical funds for the families
- Temporary Personnel Policies have been enacted to support our team, and provide flexibility and support
- RMHC's leadership team is conducting virtual coordination meetings each day to discuss updates, protocols and considerations as the situation evolves. We are in close contact with RMHC global, our RMHC Medical Advisory Committee leadership, infectious disease specialists and hospital partners, and monitoring recommendations from the CDC, EEOC and Department of Health to understand what is being done locally, and when/if there is a need to re-evaluate policies and procedures at RMHC

We've encouraged everyone on-site and at home to do their part to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by doing the following:

- Wash hands frequently throughout the day with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick with contagious symptoms
- Cover your cough or sneeze into a tissue when possible – quickly dispose of used tissues. If a tissue is not available, cough into your elbow
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Avoid touching hands and faces of others. Turn hugs, handshakes and high fives into elbow bumps and smiles
- Stay out of RMHC's programs when you are sick.

Background on the virus:

The coronavirus can cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe respiratory illness. Transmission from person to person usually happens via respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes (similar to the flu). People could catch COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces or objects – and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth, or breathing in droplets coughed out or exhaled by a person with the virus. Symptoms of the illness can include fever, cough and shortness of breath. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) believes that symptoms may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure. Those at increased risk for infection are people living in or near outbreak clusters, people with compromised immune systems or health issues - and though the data is very new, it appears that risk of serious illness rises with age: people over 40 seem to be more vulnerable than those under 40. There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19 infection. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid exposure. (coronavirus.utah.gov, World Health Organization, & CDC.gov)