



Cleveland Ronald McDonald House® Family Eligibility Policy

Ronald McDonald House Charities® of Northeast Ohio, Inc. (RMHC NEO) **enhances the healthcare experience for children and families through comfort, care and supportive services.** In order to serve as many families in need as possible, RMHC NEO provides *short-term* lodging for eligible families. Our highest priority is to ensure the comfort, safety and well-being of all guests staying at RMHC NEO.

Basic Eligibility

1. Families with children who qualify to stay at the Ronald McDonald House® in Cleveland must fall within the following guidelines. The patient must be twenty-one (21) years of age or younger and be admitted to or receiving treatment at any Cleveland area hospital. Exceptions for the following reasons must be approved by RMHC NEO staff and confirmed by the hospital prior to the guest's arrival:
 - Patients under the age of thirty who are being treated on a pediatric unit at any Cleveland area hospital.
 - Patients between 21 and 30 years of age who have an ongoing, chronic childhood disease (e.g., cystic fibrosis or congenital heart defects).
 - Patients between 21 and 30 years of age who are still dependents of their parents/guardians.
 - Expectant mothers with high-risk pregnancies.
2. RMHC NEO conducts a formal criminal history background check on individuals (18 years old or older) requesting an overnight stay at RMHC NEO facilities. The background check will be used to determine an individual's eligibility to stay at RMHC NEO facilities. RMHC NEO, in its sole discretion, will make a determination on eligibility before approving an individual's request for stay. The information obtained during that background check process will only be used by RMHC NEO to determine whether overnight stay will be granted and will be shared only on a "need to know" basis with individuals or entities that it deems necessary for their review.
3. RMHC NEO reserves the right to refuse admittance to any potential guest with a criminal conviction. RMHC NEO does not admit anyone with a felony or misdemeanor conviction that may threaten the health, safety, welfare, and ability of other individuals to peacefully enjoy RMHC NEO facilities (e.g., violent crimes, domestic violence, child abuse, sex offenses, illegal drug activity and/or burglary). RMHC NEO also may not admit any individual who provides false or misleading responses during the formal criminal history background check process. RMHC NEO reserves the right to evict a current overnight guest for any other inappropriate, irresponsible, or criminal behavior that takes place while temporarily staying at RMHC NEO facilities.
4. While RMHC NEO will obtain criminal history background check information on potential guests, it cannot and does not warrant or guarantee the personal safety of any guest or visitor of RMHC NEO facilities.
5. RMHC NEO does not accept responsibility for guests.

6. All patients (regardless of age) staying at the Ronald McDonald House in Cleveland must be accompanied by a related adult, guardian, or caregiver over the age of 18 (or a caregiver who meets the exceptions listed in #7 below).
7. Guests under the age of 18 will not be permitted to stay unless one of the following conditions is in place:
 - the prospective guest is accompanied by his/her parent or legal guardian, or
 - the prospective guest is married, enlisted in the armed services, or a legally emancipated minor (and can provide legal documentation of such), or
 - the prospective guest is accompanied by a responsible adult who is at least 18 years of age. This adult must have a notarized statement that he/she has the permission of the legal guardian to supervise and accept full responsibility for the prospective (minor) guest.
8. Adults who are not involved with the daily support of the patient are not eligible to stay at RMHC NEO facilities, unless the individual's presence is essential to allow another family member or caregiver adequate freedom to care for the patient.
9. RMHC NEO is able to provide only one room per patient. If the parents of the patient are divorced or separated, preference will be given to the custodial parent. If both parents share custody of the patient, the parents must determine, and provide advance notice to RMHC NEO, who will be staying in the RMHC NEO guest room.
10. For the protection of patients and families residing in RMHC NEO facilities, to the extent that the staff is aware, the following persons will not be admitted:
 - Patients or family members having, or having been exposed to, any communicable disease which may be transmitted by casual contact (e.g., coughing or sneezing). These include, but are not limited to: COVID-19, chicken pox (including shingles), tuberculosis (TB), influenza (the "flu"), rubella (measles), mumps and salmonella.
 - Patients or family members with uncontrolled body fluid excretions or secretions.
 - Patients or family members with uncontrolled behavior.
 - Patients or family members involved in an open Children's Services investigation.
11. RMHC NEO welcomes families regardless of race, religion, nationality, gender or abilities.

Requesting a Room

1. A referral from the medical facility (social worker, nurse, coordinator or doctor) is needed to start the room request process. This can be done by calling 216-229-5758, ext. 1010, faxing a referral to 216-767-4995, or emailing rooms-cleveland@rmhcneo.org no earlier than 30 days before the family is due to arrive at the Ronald McDonald House.
2. Families may then request a room beginning no earlier than the day prior to the patient's first appointment or hospital admission. A "Criminal History Background Report Authorization" must be submitted for each adult (18 years or older) who will stay overnight at the Ronald McDonald House – either via fax, email, online or in person. Completed background checks will be valid for one year.
3. Reservations for international families must be made by the respective hospital's International Center with a RMHC NEO staff member.

4. After the background checks are done and the room request is approved by RMHC NEO staff, families will be assigned a room or added to the wait list the day before their planned arrival. Rooms are assigned in the order in which they are requested. If a room is not available at the time of the request, the name is placed on a waitlist. As rooms become available, families are assigned rooms according to the waitlist order. If a room is not available, RMHC NEO has a list of discounted hotels and alternate lodging.
5. First-time guests must arrive between 9:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. in order to register and have a tour.
6. If a room is being held for a family and the family does not arrive that day, the room will be held until noon the following day. If the family has not contacted RMHC NEO by noon, the room then will be given to the next family on the waitlist.

Guest Requirements

1. Families must agree to abide by the House Guidelines and Home Healthcare Policy (explained and distributed at check-in) and may be asked to leave for failure to do so.
2. Families must clean their room, including the bathroom, during their stay and before departure. Families must also clean up after themselves in the kitchen and other common areas.
3. Room must be utilized daily, and families must be involved in the daily care of hospitalized patients.
4. Families must check out by 3:00 p.m. the day after their last scheduled appointment.

Length of Stay Criteria

The duration of family stays for eligible families is not limited during the time that children are undergoing inpatient treatment on a pediatric floor in our area hospitals. Patients who are receiving outpatient care must have a minimum of two appointments/treatments per week. Proof of appointments/treatments is required. We require that families check out by 3:00 p.m. the day after their last scheduled appointment. Emergency room visits do not count as treatments/appointments.

Stays are limited to a maximum of 60 consecutive days for outpatient care. Families will be provided with a one month notice when they are about to reach their 60-day maximum stay and are required to vacate the Ronald McDonald House within 24 hours after they have reached the 60-day maximum. When asked to leave after 60 days of outpatient care, families must wait at least 30 days before returning.

Exceptions to the 60-day rule require an explanatory note from the physician and are made at the discretion of RMHC NEO staff.