Community Fundraising Information & Guidelines

Thank you for considering Ronald McDonald House SWFL as the beneficiary of your community fundraising efforts! Ronald McDonald House Southwest Florida provides essential services that remove barriers, strengthen families, and promote healing when children need healthcare.

Community support is essential to making our mission possible. Whether you're hosting an event, organizing a fundraiser, or rallying others around a meaningful cause, your generosity helps us continue providing comfort, care, and support to families who need it most. We appreciate your interest in making a difference!

The following guidelines outline our policies, procedures, and frequently asked questions for community fundraising activities. Please review them carefully before submitting your application. Once your fundraising activity is approved, these guidelines will become part of your agreement with Ronald McDonald House SWFL, and you will be responsible for complying with the requirements outlined below.

To get started, please complete and submit the Community Fundraising Form at least 2 weeks prior to your event or fundraising activity.

Policies & Procedures

1. Community Fundraising Guidelines

- Mission Alignment: All fundraising activities must complement the mission, values, and public image of Ronald McDonald House SWFL. Our team reserves the right to approve or decline any proposed activity based on its alignment with our organization.
- Application Timeline: A completed Community Fundraising Form must be submitted at least six weeks before the proposed event or fundraiser.
- Event Representation: Community-organized fundraising activities are independent initiatives benefiting Ronald McDonald House SWFL. They may not be represented or promoted as official events sponsored, hosted, or organized by Ronald McDonald House SWFL unless expressly authorized in writing.
- Organization Name: All references to our organization in event publicity and promotional materials must use our approved name: Ronald McDonald House SWFL.
- Name & Logo Usage: The use of our organization's name, logo, or other branded materials requires prior written approval from an authorized representative of Ronald McDonald House SWFL.

Once your event is approved, our team will provide the appropriate official logo files. Only the approved logos provided may be used, and they may not be altered, modified, or recreated in any way.

- Promotional Language: All event promotions must accurately describe the fundraising relationship and clearly identify Ronald McDonald House SWFL as the beneficiary.

Approved examples include:

  - "Proceeds will benefit Ronald McDonald House SWFL."
  - "A portion of proceeds will benefit Ronald McDonald House SWFL."
  - "[X]% of net proceeds will benefit Ronald McDonald House SWFL."

Promotional materials must accurately disclose the portion of proceeds being donated, including any applicable limitations or conditions. Statements indicating that all proceeds will benefit the organization may only be used when accurate.

- Marketing Approval: Ronald McDonald House SWFL must review and approve all promotional materials featuring our name or logo before publication, printing, or distribution. This includes advertisements, flyers, brochures, invitations, press releases, social media graphics, websites, and other digital or printed materials.

Please submit materials for approval to amy@ronaldmcdonaldhouseswfl.org

- Donor Privacy: To protect the privacy of our supporters, Ronald McDonald House SWFL does not sell, share, or distribute its donor or mailing lists.
- Event Observation: Ronald McDonald House SWFL reserves the right to attend or observe approved fundraising activities.
- Right to Withdraw Approval: Ronald McDonald House SWFL reserves the right to withdraw approval of any fundraising activity that does not comply with these guidelines or could negatively affect the organization's reputation, mission, or community relationships.

2. Licenses, Insurance & Liability

- Permits & Compliance: Event organizers are responsible for obtaining all necessary permits, licenses, approvals, and clearances required by applicable local, state, and federal laws.
- Insurance: Event organizers are responsible for securing appropriate insurance coverage for their activities, when necessary.
- Proof of Insurance: If insurance is required for your event, a copy of the certificate of insurance must be submitted to Ronald McDonald House SWFL at least ten business days before the event.

- Financial Responsibility: Event organizers are solely responsible for all expenses, purchases, contracts, financial commitments, and other obligations associated with their fundraising activities.
- Liability: Ronald McDonald House SWFL does not assume responsibility or liability for community-organized events, including any associated expenses, injuries, damages, losses, or other claims.
- Legal Requirements: All fundraising activities must comply with applicable laws and regulations governing charitable solicitation, fundraising, gaming, gift reporting, and special events.

**Important Note Regarding Raffles & Gaming Activities:
Raffles, drawings, auctions, and other gaming-related fundraising activities may be subject to specific legal requirements and restrictions. Event organizers are responsible for understanding and complying with all applicable Florida laws and regulations before conducting these activities. You must disclose any proposed raffle or gaming activity during the application process and obtain approval from Ronald McDonald House SWFL.

3. Our Commitment to Your Fundraiser
We appreciate the time, energy, and generosity that go into organizing a community fundraiser. While our resources are limited, we are happy to support approved fundraising efforts in the following ways when possible.

Ronald McDonald House SWFL May Provide:

- General fundraising guidance, event planning suggestions, and best practices, as staff availability allows.
- Permission to use the official Ronald McDonald House SWFL name and approved logo for the specific fundraising activity.
- Available organizational marketing materials, such as brochures, flyers, and informational resources.
- Promotion of the event through our website or social media channels, when appropriate and at our discretion.
- Acknowledgment letters and charitable contribution receipts for eligible donations received directly by Ronald McDonald House SWFL, in accordance with applicable IRS requirements.
- A representative to attend the event, when requested and subject to availability.

Ronald McDonald House SWFL Cannot Provide:

- Use of the organization's tax-exempt status or tax identification number for purchases associated with a community fundraiser.
- Guaranteed attendance or participation by staff, Board members, volunteers, or families served by our programs.
- Access to donor databases, mailing lists, or confidential supporter information.
- Use of official organizational letterhead.
- Ronald McDonald character appearances.
- Financial assistance, reimbursement, or coverage of event-related expenses.
- Insurance coverage or assumption of liability for the event.
- Endorsement of commercial products, businesses, or services.

Types of Community Fundraising

Community Fundraising Event

A fundraising activity held at a specific date, time, or location where participants gather in person or virtually to support Ronald McDonald House SWFL. Examples may include charity walks, golf tournaments, restaurant fundraising nights, benefit concerts, auctions, and community gatherings. These events may involve venue reservations, registrations, ticket sales, food and beverage service, or other logistical arrangements.

Community Fundraiser

An ongoing or time-limited fundraising initiative designed to generate support without necessarily hosting a formal event. Examples may include donation drives, workplace giving campaigns, online fundraising pages, social media campaigns, point-of-sale donation collections, or other creative fundraising efforts. Both types of fundraising activities require prior approval from Ronald McDonald House SWFL.

Community Fundraising FAQs

- How far in advance should I submit my fundraising application?
    - Please submit your completed Community Fundraising Form at least two weeks before your proposed event or fundraiser. This allows sufficient time for our team to review your request and coordinate any necessary approvals.
- How long does the approval process take?
    - Please allow approximately 72 hours after submitting your completed application for an initial response.

- Providing detailed information about your fundraiser, including its purpose, location, promotional plans, and intended use of our name or logo, will help streamline the review process.

- Can I use the Ronald McDonald House SWFL name when promoting my fundraiser?
  - Yes, once your fundraising activity has been approved.
  - All promotional materials must clearly identify Ronald McDonald House SWFL as the beneficiary rather than the organizer or presenting sponsor.
  - All references to our organization must use our approved name and follow our branding guidelines.
- How can I obtain the official Ronald McDonald House SWFL logo?
  - Once your fundraiser has been approved, our team will provide the appropriate official logo files.
  - Please use only the files provided directly by Ronald McDonald House SWFL. Logos found online or from other sources may be outdated or incorrect and should not be used.
  - Our logos may not be altered, modified, or recreated.
- Does Ronald McDonald House SWFL need to approve my promotional materials?
  - Yes. Any materials featuring our organization's name or logo must receive written approval before publication or distribution.
  - This includes printed materials, digital advertisements, websites, social media posts, event signage, and press releases.
  - Please email materials for review to amy@ronaldmcdonaldhouseswfl.org
- Will someone from Ronald McDonald House SWFL attend my event?
  - We appreciate invitations to community fundraising events and will make every effort to participate when staff or representatives are available.
  - Attendance cannot be guaranteed. Please indicate any attendance or speaking requests on your Community Fundraising Form.
- Can Ronald McDonald make an appearance at my event?
  - Unfortunately, Ronald McDonald appearances are not available for independently organized community fundraisers. Character appearances are limited and coordinated separately for designated events.
- Can I use Ronald McDonald House SWFL's tax identification number?
  - No. Community fundraising organizers may not use our organization's tax identification number or tax-exempt status to make purchases or conduct business associated with their events.
- Do I need to be a registered nonprofit organization to host a fundraiser?
  - No. Individuals, businesses, schools, community groups, and other organizations may organize fundraising activities that benefit Ronald McDonald House SWFL.

- All fundraising activities must be approved in advance and comply with our guidelines.

- How can donors receive a charitable contribution receipt?
  - Donors who make eligible contributions directly to Ronald McDonald House SWFL may receive a charitable contribution acknowledgment in accordance with IRS requirements.
  - To help ensure proper acknowledgment:
    - Checks should be made payable directly to our organization.
    - Donors should include their names and mailing addresses when submitting contributions.
    - Online donations should be made through an approved Ronald McDonald House SWFL donation platform.
  - Please note: If donations are collected by another individual, business, or organization and later submitted as a single contribution, Ronald McDonald House SWFL may not be able to issue individual tax receipts to the original contributors.
  - Additionally, purchases of event tickets, merchandise, or other goods and services may not qualify as fully tax-deductible contributions.
- How do I submit the funds raised through my event?
  - Funds may be delivered in person or mailed to:
    - Ronald McDonald House SWFL
      16100 Roserush Court Fort Myers, FL 33908
  - Checks should be made payable to: Ronald McDonald House Southwest Florida
  - Please include the name of your fundraiser and the event organizer's contact information when submitting proceeds so that we can properly acknowledge your contribution.
- Who should I contact if I have additional questions?
  - We are happy to help answer questions about community fundraising opportunities and the approval process. 239-437-0202 or amy@ronaldmcdonaldhouseswfl.org

To get started, please complete and submit the Community Fundraising Form at least two weeks before your planned fundraising activity. We look forward to learning about your ideas and working together to support families throughout Southwest Florida.