

NAMI Mahoning Valley Chili Cook Off Guidelines

Contestant Instructions

\$25.00 fee for each contestant to enter.

No alcohol or promotion of alcohol is permissible.

No commercially prepared chili allowed either as a base or as a filler. All entries must be prepared from scratch by the contestant.

Each contestant must pre-register **prior to the Cook Off**, no same day registrations or no walk-in contestants permitted.

Each contestant must complete the entry form and attestation that they will use no commercially prepared chili either as a base or as a filler.

Contestants prepare their entries at home and bring to the cook off, only one entry per contestant is permitted.

Contestants may begin set-up as early as 4:30pm, the event opens to the public at 6:00pm.

Warming dishes will be provided at each contestant table, remainder of chili is kept warm in our kitchen facilities off the hall. Chili entries being kept warm in the kitchen must be clearly marked with the contestant's name. We will have a staff member posted in the kitchen to prevent any possible tampering with entries.

Contestants will be provided with a name tag which they must wear when retrieving their chili from the kitchen to re-fill warmers on their tables.

One contestant table and 2 folding chairs are provided, the table will be 3 x 6 foot. Each contestant must provide some type of table covering for their table. **Each contestant is permitted to have 2 individuals at their table.**

Each contestant will have the following at their table: Hand sanitizer for contestants and guests, plastic gloves for serving which must be worn by contestants while working with their chili entry and when serving the public.

Warming dishes will be provided at each contestant table to keep chili warm and provide samples to the guests/judging public to. Contestants are responsible for providing their own serving utensils. NAMI Mahoning Valley will provide plastic spoons to each contestant table and silverware will also be available on tables set up for the public.

NAMI will provide small Styrofoam bowls you can serve your chili to guests/judging public in.

Contestants **are required** to write their station number on the outsides of their bowls. This enables the public to vote correctly for the chili of their choice.

Contestants **are required** to post an allergy alert at their station sign if their chili contains seafood, corn, nuts or dairy products. This can be as simple as a clearly visible sign stating: “Allergy Warning: My chili contains seafood, corn, nuts or dairy products.” Dairy products includes cheese. **Participants are solely responsible for providing this warning sign.**

Contestants may if they wish provide crackers or corn bread to go with their entry.

Stations will be set up in a serving line. Guests can pass each contestant’s chili station in succession and be given a small portion of chili they can sample and judge the entry on their ballots.

Order of contestant’s stations is determined by sign-up order. If you are the first to sign up you have Station # 1.

List showing each contestant name and station number will be available on each public table.

Contestants may decorate their contestant station if they so desire, appropriateness to be determined by us, NAMI Mahoning Valley. No promotion of alcohol allowed. Information can be included about the contestants business, agent or restaurant. “Theme” displays such as patriotic, holiday, cowboy are welcome. There is a prize for Best Presentation which will be based on your display and the appearance of your station as reviewed by our Presentation Judge.

Appropriate decorum is expected. Contestants must be respectful to others, no offensive displays (as determined by NAMI Mahoning Valley), no interfering with other contestants or their displays. **Alcohol and firearms are strictly forbidden.**

Chili will be judged by a popular vote, guests (the public attendees) fill out printed ballots and vote for their favorite in each category. Contestants are allowed to encourage friends and family to attend, buy a ticket with a ballot and vote for the entry of their choice.

Guests vote (one ballot per guest) for their favorite chili in a variety of categories:

- Best Overall Chili
- Hottest Chili
- Most Creative Chili
- Best Presentation (For station design)
- Public entry fee per person: \$ 10.00 This entitles the person to one ballot. Children under 12 are admitted free but they do not receive a ballot. If you would like a ballot for your child under 12 you must purchase a ticket. One entry fee equals one ballot - you cannot purchase multiple ballots for yourself or others by paying multiple entry fees. One entry fee = one individual = one ballot. Only approved, NAMI-issued ballots will be counted.

NAMI Mahoning Valley employees, Board members or volunteers are not permitted to enter as a contestant.