

## National Muslim Relief Charity Kicks Off Annual Halal Food Drive In Illinois

Rifat Malik, AMT Editor

ICNA's Chicago branch plans to donate over 20,000 pounds of halal meat and school supplies to Muslim families in need.



*Image courtesy of [ICNA Relief Chicago](#)*

The Chicago chapter of the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA) Relief is hosting its 13th Annual Food Pantry event this summer.

Saturday, July 31 was the first of the two-day event that allows Muslim families to both donate and receive halal meat. The second day of the event is Saturday, August 7, in Glendale Heights, which is 30 miles west of Chicago. ICNA Relief estimates giving away 20,000 pounds of meat.

Halal meat sold in stores is often three times the price of regular beef, so Muslims who cannot afford it don't have access to halal meat. That's why ICNA asks families to donate a whole animal to those in need.

“For Muslims who want to eat halal meat if they’re struggling financially, they’re not going to have a chance to buy meat that’s triple the cost,” [said Asma Jarad](#), the communications manager for ICNA Relief. “So that’s why for this time of year all Muslims who are financially able are required to do the sacrifice of meat and spread it around to anyone in need.”

Even though non-Muslims are welcome, Muslims will be given first priority, as halal is the only meat available to them.

“We’re not going to turn anyone away, but the point is to make sure that our Muslim families have this meat because non-Muslims can eat any meats,” [she said](#).



Image courtesy of [John J. Kim / Chicago Tribune](#)

Along with halal meat, this year’s food drive also includes back-to-school supplies.

“We’re doing one mega where we invite the community members, our clients, our families, our neighbors to come,” [said Jarad](#). “And at the same time that they’re giving their children back-to-school supplies and getting them ready for school, they’re also receiving the meat. So it’s like a double holiday for them.”

ICNA was initially formed in 1968 as a response to the need for a supportive community for Muslims. Since then, ICNA has expanded its reach all across the U.S., including Muslim Family Day at Six Flags, which started in 2000. The organization is now a leading grassroots organization for American Muslims.

Chicago Muslims must register for the food drive through [ICNA’s website](#). Those interested in donating to the food drive can do so [here](#).



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