

If you are going to volunteer either as part of an organised volunteer response team, with a local or a neighbourhood volunteer initiative, or running errands for a friend or neighbour; it's important take the following precautions for your own safety and to prevent the spread of Coronavirus.

1. **Wash your hands with soap and water often – do this for at least 20 seconds. Do this after you blow your nose, sneeze or cough, after you eat or handle food, and before and after every drop-off using hand sanitiser if soap and water are not available.**
2. **Let family and friends know what you are doing, check in with them once you are home**
3. **Stay at least 2 metres – about 3 steps – away from the people you are helping and never go inside their homes. Please follow these guidelines from the government regarding [social distancing](#).**
4. **If you are dropping off items for someone, place the items to be delivered on the doorstep before ringing the bell or knocking on the door and take at least 3 steps back**
5. **Try to volunteer during daylight hours**
6. **Listen to social distancing guidelines and don't volunteer in groups, if you not from the same household, volunteers must stay 2 metres apart at all times**
7. **If you're are volunteering in an area you don't know well, make sure you tell someone where you are going and what time you expect to be home**
8. **Support friends and family who are volunteering by phone or video call**
9. **Take hand sanitiser gel with you and use a face mask or gloves (if available) as and when appropriate, if possible disinfect any objects or surfaces you have touched**
10. **Be careful about what personal data you share**

Other precautions you should be taking to prevent the spread of Covid-19 when volunteering are:

- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue in a bin straight away
- avoid close contact with other people
- avoiding public transport where possible
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- if dog-walking remember to wash your hands before and after handling the dog and to always keep 2 metres away from other people and animals, including when handing over the dog to the owner

- when you have finished volunteering, and before eating and drinking, thoroughly wash your hands with hot water and soap for 20 seconds and safely dispose of any gloves

Please be aware that during this time the government are asking that only those that fulfil **all** of the following conditions should be volunteering to support vulnerable people.

- you are well and have no symptoms like a cough or high temperature and nobody in your household does
- you are under 70
- you are not pregnant
- you do not have any long-term health conditions that make you vulnerable to coronavirus

The most important thing to consider before volunteering is to make sure you are healthy enough to volunteer. You also don't want to risk making someone else unwell. Please follow [NHS advice](#) and stay home if you have either:

- **a high temperature** – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)

Please keep checking the NHS website as they are regularly updating their advice on the above points. We recommend looking at the latest guidance when making decisions on volunteering. Only offer to help with tasks you feel comfortable and able to do. **If you become unwell please do not volunteer.**

Golden rules for a safe drop off

If your role involves dropping off packages or medication at people's homes, there are a few things you will need to do to minimise the risk of infection.

1. On arrival use antibacterial gel on your hands or put on a pair of disposable gloves before getting out of the vehicle.
2. Place the items to be delivered on the doorstep before ringing the bell or knocking on the door, and take few steps backwards.
3. Having returned to your vehicle, you need to dispose of your gloves in a bin liner and treat your hands with gel again.
4. When you have finished your rounds and before eating and drinking thoroughly wash your hands with hot water and soap.

Follow the World Health Organisation's advice on [the safe use of gloves](#) when helping others to minimise the possible spread of infection.