



## Safety tips: shopping & delivering food (Covid-19 support)

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If you are delivering food or other supplies to the homes of vulnerable people or those in isolation, here are some tips to follow to stay safe:

- Here is our [general advice for volunteers to stay safe](#).
- If you feel unwell, do not volunteer. Keep checking the [latest advice and information about Covid-19 symptoms on the NHS website](#).
- Make sure that your family, friends or other volunteers in your group know where you are going and when.
- Ask the person you are supporting to give you a shopping list via text or phone call before you go shopping, and make sure you know if they have any allergies or dietary requirements. Agree whether or not they will accept substitutes.
- On money, we strongly encourage you NOT to accept credit/debit cards from people asking for help, in order to buy resources on their behalf, if this involves using their PIN number, as this is a safeguarding risk. A safer (and more hygienic) alternative is to use their Contactless card. To reduce the risk of fraud, we recommend that wherever possible, you do your shopping and come back with a receipt (take a photograph of the receipt for your records) before asking for money from people in self-isolation. We also recommend that volunteers not make purchases larger than £30 for any one person or £45 for family in self-isolation (as of 1<sup>st</sup> April, Contactless cards upper limit has increased to £45). Where possible payments should be made by bank transfer or PayPal to minimise the risk of passing on the virus, but if that's not possible then you can disinfect any coins and plastic notes you receive using soapy water. If they have a cheque book, then a cheque is also a good idea as it will have been handled far less than cash.
- Remember, act as though YOU are carrying the virus. There are some important steps to follow when shopping and delivering:
  - Wash your hands before you leave home and after you leave the shop, and before and after delivering the supplies

- If you are using your car, disinfect the door handle, steering wheel and gear lever
- Don't go inside a home and always keep 2 metres distance from the person you are helping
- Agree with your person that you will leave the shopping and receipt on their doorstep, knock and step back at least 2 metres, and wait for them to answer
- The person can take their shopping inside and leave the money/cheque for it in an envelope on their doorstep (if that's what you have agreed with them) and close the door
- You can then collect the envelope from the doorstep

Other things to consider:

- People with severely compromised immune systems may be concerned that the products you have delivered may be carrying the virus. At the time of writing there are no special measures recommended and the NHS states 'It's very unlikely [coronavirus] can be spread through things like packages or food.' The bigger risk comes from you and what you have touched but as long as you are following the guidelines above, this should mitigate the risk. If anyone is concerned, suggest that they can either store products for 72 hours before using them or spray and wipe plastic, metal or glass containers with diluted bleach.
- Use a bag within a bag – the outside of your shopping bag will have come into contact with trolleys and conveyor belts so using a bag within a bag that your person can lift out also helps.

Many supermarkets are amending their shopping hours to provide dedicated shopping hours for NHS workers or for elderly/vulnerable people. If you are shopping on their behalf, you may be able to obtain a "key worker status" letter from the group or organisation you are involved with to allow you to shop during these times.