

Guidelines for Volunteer Organizations During COVID-19 Outbreak in Iowa

During this National Emergency, we understand that those who are not suffering from the virus, or who may have already recovered from the virus, may want to help. However, all volunteer activities should adhere to critical health and safety protocols in order to

- Protect Volunteers
- Protect Residents
- Protect Clients
- Protect Service Agencies

General Guidance for Operations:

Realize that traditional services may shift.

Clean and sanitize gathering spaces or meal distribution sites regularly. Dispose of cleaning materials properly and contain any contaminated materials.

Do not compete in the market for scarce supplies that healthcare organizations and providers need every day to perform their duties.

If congregating is necessary for your task, consult public health partners and exercise extra measures.

Keep 6-10 foot social distance rules in place during tasks if possible.

Hang posters in facilities with best practices / social distancing / hand washing etc.

Provide sufficient and accessible infection control supplies (e.g. hand-hygiene products, tissues, Clorox wipes and receptacles for their disposal) in all locations.

- When in doubt visit CDC or Iowa Department of Public Health for recommendations.

General Guidance for your Volunteers:

For distribution/delivery:

- For people receiving meals from a distribution point, consider asking people to remain in their cars. If an in-person line forms there needs to be chalk or tape on the ground that reminds people to keep at least a 6ft distance.
- For people who are giving meals, they also need to find a way to maintain at least 6ft if possible, wear a mask, and wash hands frequently. Consider asking people to open their own door or trunk to minimize surfaces volunteers may touch.

- With deliveries, setting meals or supplies on the doorstep and waving and holding conversation from that safe distance to protect the seniors and homebound vulnerable folks is key.

Make sure all volunteers understand any risks associated with the task you would like them to do and understand if they are not comfortable with that level of risk.

Screen all volunteers and clients as able and before they begin interacting with others.

- It is highly recommended to do temperature checks as volunteers come in for shift, especially if handling food.
- Consider asking a few screening questions such as:
 - Have you experienced signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat?
 - In the last 14 days, have you had contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, or under investigation for COVID-19, or are ill with respiratory illness?
- Consider having an isolation space ready in case anyone shows up with symptoms.

Realize that many volunteers are over age 65 and at a higher risk for contracting the virus.

Make sure you have the proper PPE available for your staff and make sure you train them on its proper use before allowing them to do any tasks that require PPE.

- In light of new evidence from the [CDC](#), it is recommended to wear face cloth coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
- Consider asking volunteers to bring their own mask to their volunteer shift.