

Below are some guidelines for community volunteers who are working to keep people supplied with food. These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the advice you've been given by the group or organisation you are working or volunteering with. If you have any queries or issues, talk to your contact person or volunteer team leader.

- To prevent spread of COVID-19, individuals should employ social distancing in all food production/processing/packaging facilities and retail food establishments.
- Follow the current [FDA Food Code](#): individuals may not contact exposed, ready-to-eat foods with their bare hands and shall use suitable utensils such as deli tissue, spatulas, tongs, single use-gloves, or dispensing equipment. Gloves are not a substitute for hand washing or hand hygiene.
- According to the World Health Organisation, the risk of catching the virus that causes COVID-19 from a package that has been moved, travelled, and exposed to different conditions and temperatures is very low. However volunteers should be vigilant in their hygiene practices, including frequent and proper hand-washing, routine cleaning of all surfaces, and following all current personal hygiene government advice.
- The London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine has explained that if people are concerned they can either store products for 72 hours before using them or “spray and wipe plastic or glass containers with bleach that is carefully diluted as directed on the bottle”. Do not use products containing **any** chemicals to clean fresh produce.
- When delivering food parcels in the community be reliable and consistent. This is key for ensuring people feel safe.
- Keep a 2 metre (6 feet) separation between yourself and the person answering the door. Leave the packages on the door step, then ring the bell and wait from a safe distance to check the person collects the food parcels.
- Always try and fit in with someone's requirements; for example, someone may need you to text rather than ring the doorbell when you drop off their shopping.
- Follow the safeguarding policies you have been given in your role as a volunteer.
- Follow your organisation's health and safety policies.
- All pre-packaged food must legally display mandatory information (for example: use by date). It is therefore important not to tamper with any packaging or cover up any information.
- Don't enter someone's home for any reason. If someone needs immediate help, call 999.
- Keep people informed about other support options that may be available (for example food delivery services) so that they can choose the best service for them and don't feel they can only come to you.
- Don't offer advice on things such as benefits or legal matters, even if you have experience with the issue someone raises: encourage the person to contact a local Advice Centre or Citizens Advice (see the numbers and websites below).
- Don't attempt to offer in-depth emotional support. To do this properly you need training. Instead refer adults to the Samaritans or Silverline and young people to Childline (see the numbers and websites below).
- People may want to give something back to say “thank you”, but don't accept money or other gifts to you in person. Suggest they make a donation to your charity or contribute to a



local COVID-19 appeal, such as those by [Above and Beyond](#) (for Bristol city centre hospitals), [Quartet Community Foundation](#), and [Southmead Hospital](#).

If you are worried that someone you are helping is in danger or is experiencing any form of abuse, you must report it. If you have a key contact at your group or organisation, tell them as soon as possible. If necessary, contact the police. Call 999 in an emergency or, if the person is not in immediate danger, call 101. You can also report suspected abuse to [Bristol City Council online](#).

Voscur is here to support VCSE organisations. For support, advice and guidance, please contact us: info@voscur.org 0117 909 9949

Useful expert contacts

<p>Legal advice (for example: employment, discrimination, EU Settled Status)</p>	<p>Bristol Law Centre</p> <p>https://www.bristollawcentre.org.uk/get-help/ 0117 924 8662</p>
<p>Benefits, debt and housing advice</p>	<p>Bristol CAB</p> <p>https://www.bristolcab.org.uk/get-advice 03444 111444</p>
	<p>North Bristol Advice</p> <p>http://www.northbristoladvice.org.uk 0117 951 5751</p>
	<p>St Paul's Advice Centre</p> <p>https://www.stpaulsAdvice.org.uk 0117 9552981</p>
	<p>South Bristol Advice Services</p> <p>https://www.southbristoladvice.org.uk 0117 985 1122</p>
<p>Emotional support</p>	<p>The Samaritans</p> <p>https://www.samaritans.org 116 123 (freephone)</p>
	<p>The Silverline (for older people)</p> <p>https://www.thesilverline.org.uk 0800 470 80 90</p>
	<p>Childline (for young people)</p> <p>https://www.childline.org.uk/ 0800 1111</p>