

Do

- Do make an appointment first so the person knows when you'll be calling. Communicate clearly who you are and what group or organisation you are from. Ask them in advance if they would like to let you know of any information on correct walking techniques for their dog (usual routes/routines). They might be more comfortable telling you this information in an email or on the telephone, rather than chatting on the doorstep.
- Just like human hands a pet can carry COVID-19 from one person to another, so do try to limit contact with the dog, wash your hands before and after the dog walk and don't touch your face while with them. Remember to practice social distancing whilst dog walking, keep yourself and the dog 2 meters away from other people and other dogs. (Read RSPCA's guidance here: <https://www.rspca.org.uk/coronavirus>)
- Do always try and fit in with someone's requirements: for example someone may need you to text rather than ring the doorbell when you call to pick up their dog.
- Do help people to feel safe by being reliable and consistent.
- Do keep a 2 metre separation between yourself and the person answering the door.
- Do report any serious concerns you have about someone you are helping. If you think they are in danger or are experiencing any form of abuse call 999 if it is an emergency, or if the person is not in immediate danger call 101. To report any concerns you have about someone's dog, call the RSPCA's 24-hour cruelty line 0300 1234 999.
- Do stay aware of potential dangers to your own safety and wellbeing.
- Do notify owners and pursue veterinary attention for any dog that becomes sick or injured under your supervision.

Don't

- Don't enter someone's home for any reason. If somebody needs urgent help call the emergency services. Or suggest a relevant helpline to call if it's not urgent.
- Don't overlook the skills and responsibilities required – dog walkers need to be patient, reliable, punctual, and compassionate. They also need physical strength and stamina. You must be able to handle larger dogs if needed, and keep control of a leash if a dog pulls. You must also be able to be on your feet and walk for at least 30 minutes at a time.
- Don't forget basic necessities such as picking up and disposing of dog droppings during walks!
- Don't wear a helmet or facemask when approaching someone's home.
- Don't accept money or other gifts. People may want to give something back to say "thank you" but suggest they make a donation to your charity or contribute to [Quartet Community Foundation appeal](#).
- Don't give out your personal information, if you think the person is isolated signpost them to a local befriending service such as [Age UK](#) (0800 678 1602) or [The Silverline](#) (0800 470 80 90).