

Coronavirus visiting guidance

From the Methodist Church website: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/coronavirus-guidance/>

“Pastoral Concerns

Churches may want to consider carrying out pastoral ‘visits’ by phone. In any case it may be worth calling the person you are due to visit to check they are comfortable with you being there. Now is a good time to be thinking proactively about who in the church might need extra help should they decide or be required to self-isolate. Is there the need to create a plan for shopping for more vulnerable members of the community for example?”

Guidance for ministers, lay workers and pastoral visitor coordinators

(This is general guidance; practicalities will vary widely depending on the demographics of congregations and the makeup of local communities)

Who may benefit from additional support?

Check the list of members and adherents:

- Who is self-isolating due to age or complex health needs?
- Who may have to self-isolate for another reason?
- Who does not have family living nearby?

What level of support can/should be provided by the church?

1. **Pastoral support** by phone ‘visits’, as recommended by Connexion (see above)

Who may be available to provide pastoral support?

Existing pastoral visitors (some of whom may also be needing to self-isolate) will be able to provide phone ‘visits’. With permission, they may also be able to provide the pastoral coordinator with useful information on individuals’ current circumstances, including family contact details where appropriate.

2. **Practical support** for those who are self-isolating; they may need help with collecting shopping or other errands.

Who may be available to provide practical support?

- Those who are existing pastoral visitors with a current DBS check and are exempt from the self-isolating list.
- Those who are seeking to provide support, but have not done so before must be recruited safely following the church safeguarding guidance.

3. **Home visits** These should not be the norm, nor encouraged, but over the period of self-isolation people may need occasional visits to help with minor emergencies, such as replacing light bulbs

Who may be available to provide home visits?

- Those who are existing pastoral visitors with a current DBS check and are exempt from the self-isolating list.
- Those who are seeking to provide support but have not done so before must be recruited safely following the church safeguarding guidance.
- All must follow government guidance in relation to self-isolation. They must not be linked to anyone who has come into contact with the virus nor showing any symptoms. Due regard must be given to appropriate care, including hand washing.

A decision should be made, appropriate to the circumstances of the local church community on what level of support can safely be provided.

Implementation

1. Pastoral support

Contact (by phone or email) current pastoral visitors, discuss the importance of maintaining regular contact with those who are self-isolating and ask them to check who will need additional support with shopping etc.

2. Practical support volunteers

It may be helpful to decide how to organise this level of input:

- 1 volunteer could be allocated to support one or more specified individuals. (This may suit local geography)
- Alternatively, volunteers may commit to being available on certain days, with a central phone number for coordinating incoming requests for help. (This may be appropriate for larger, urban church communities)

If possible, allocate volunteers who are already known to the self-isolating individual

Once the format has been agreed, volunteers should be:

- recruited safely
- provided with a brief role description (see Guidance for volunteers – **Appendix 1**)
- given an induction - clarifying the limits of this role
- provided with contact numbers, in case of emergency

It is especially important that volunteers look after themselves and **stop volunteering** if they have either a high temperature or a new, continuous cough. The individual must notify their emergency contact person, so that those who have been receiving support can be re-allocated to another volunteer.

3. Home visits volunteers

These must only be in exceptional circumstances but may be necessary from time to time. They should be carried out by those who have appropriate DBS checks. Recruitment will be the same as that for Practical Support volunteers. However if they have either a high temperature or a new, continuous cough not only must they stop volunteering and notify their emergency contact person, but it may be necessary for people who have been visited to be notified of the increased risk of infection.

Record keeping

It is important to keep basic records of who is responsible for visiting whom and what type of support has been offered. Family contact details should also be recorded.

Appendix 1 – to be shared with volunteers

Appendix 2 – to be shared with people receiving visits

Appendix 3 - Practical support visit details

Appendix 4 – Visits Log

Guidance for volunteers

Thank you for volunteering to provide support for some of the more vulnerable members of the church community.

This guidance is in 2 parts

1. Providing Practical Support

This role involves collecting essential supplies for people who are ill or self-isolating. Your role will **not** include home visits. You will be allocated one or more people who are unable to leave their homes and do not have other local support networks.

Volunteers will:

1. Make phone contact with the person who is self-isolating, to establish contact and share phone numbers
2. Discuss with the individual an appropriate level of support (it would be extremely challenging to provide daily deliveries, but it may be helpful to be available more than once a week)
3. Make arrangements for how the person will communicate their list of requirements (many will not have internet access or smart phones)
4. Make arrangements for delivering supplies and payment.
Payments may be made by:
 - Bank transfer if they are online or a family member can arrange this
 - Telephone banking – this can be arranged by phoning the number on the back of their bank card
 - Cheque (if they don't have Covid19)
 - Cash as a last resort
5. Deliver supplies. Remember that appropriate hand washing routines protect both the volunteer and the person receiving the delivery.
6. Record transactions. Both parties should agree how much money has been handed over and that the change and receipts match. A record of any transactions should be made, including what was bought and for how much.
7. Keep brief records of interactions including dates and times but **not** a detailed account of what occurred unless there are specific concerns. These may include safeguarding concerns, a deterioration in the health or wellbeing of the person being visited, including signs of Covid 19 (a high temperature or a new, continuous cough)
8. Report any concerns to your volunteer coordinator. This may be your minister, lay worker or other designated person.

2. Providing Practical Support and occasional Home Visits

The role outline is the same as for those providing practical support only. Your role also includes occasional home visits to respond to particular needs. You will be allocated one or more people who are unable to leave their homes and do not have other local support networks but you may also be asked to visit other individuals on a one-off basis, to deal with practical issues such as replacing light bulbs.

For up to date guidance on Safeguarding please see the new Foundation Module 2020 handbook, available on line at:

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/media/16201/3348-safeguarding-css-foundation-module-2020-handbook-final.pdf>

Guidance for those receiving visits

..... from Methodist Church is coordinating deliveries of shopping and other essential. Their phone number is

Please contact them if you have any *concerns* about the way the delivery service is operating

..... will be contacting you to make regular arrangements. Their phone number is

Please pay for your shopping deliveries by:

1. Bank transfer if you are online or a family member can arrange this
2. Telephone banking – this can be arranged by phoning the number on the back of your bank card
3. Cheque (if you don't have Covid19)
4. Cash as a last resort

General Advice

- Do not allow strangers into your home, even if they claim to be part of a Community Support Scheme. Check with the scheme first (not using the phone number supplied by your 'visitor')
- Do not pay for shopping in advance
- You can check that your visitor is part of the church support arrangement by contacting the *** MINISTER**/ PASTORAL coordinator on



Practical support visit details:

This role involves collecting essential supplies for people who are ill or self-isolating. Your role will **not** include home visits. You will be allocated one or more people who are unable to leave their homes and do not have other local support networks.

Please complete this form and return to your coordinator as required:

Volunteer's Name	Address	Contact number	Emergency Contact number

Person who is receiving extra support			
Name	Address	Contact number	Emergency Contact number
Discuss with the individual an appropriate level of support (it would be extremely challenging to provide daily deliveries, but it may be helpful to be available more than once a week)	Support they would like:		
Make arrangements for how the person will communicate their list of requirements (many will not have internet access or smart phones)	Best way to contact them:		
Make arrangements for delivering supplies and payment	Agreed arrangements		

