



Socially distanced volunteer visits

The following information is designed to give some guidance on how to continue your socially distanced visits safely. We are aware that some people may not be able to visit from a distance or may not feel comfortable to do so yet.

Please use the following links for the most up to date national guidance in your area

Scotland: gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19

Wales: gov.wales/coronavirus

England: gov.uk/coronavirus

Below are a few things to be mindful of when deciding if distanced visits are for you.

- For any visits to be made there should be a conversation with your Independent Age contact, so that everyone's voices can be heard.
- Both parties must feel comfortable to meet without any external influence or sense of pressure to do so. Have a conversation with the person you support and your Independent Age contact to see if it's the right thing for both of you and be respectful of others' views in this situation.
- If distanced visits aren't for you or the person you support, you do not need to go ahead with them. We will support you with telephone befriending until you feel comfortable to return to in-person visits.
- Travelling to visit the person you support may include using public transport or encountering other people – think about whether this is appropriate or if you feel comfortable doing so.
- Here at Independent Age, we will not be asking for or keeping data related to vaccinations.
- We are, however, encouraging people to consider getting vaccinated if possible, because this will help protect us all from the impact of COVID-19.
- You can also protect those you visit by taking a rapid lateral flow tests. Rapid flow tests can be done at home and results are available in 30 minutes and can be ordered by visiting gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test or by calling 119
- If you do decide to start distanced visits, we encourage you to use personal protective equipment (eg face masks) and hand sanitiser, and to take precautionary measures as appropriate and in line with current government guidance.



COVID-19 guidelines



We all want what is best for the older people you support and for you as volunteers. So, if you do decide to go ahead with distanced visits, we ask that you adhere to the following points.

- A two-metre distance must be maintained at all times.
- Try to minimise physical contact but if this is unavoidable then please ensure that you wash/sanitise your hands before and after contact.
- If you are going to share food or drink then we advise you take your own cup/plate to minimise any opportunity for spreading the virus.
- Think about wearing a mask if this makes you or the person you support more comfortable.
- You shouldn't use the facilities of the person you are visiting.
- Ensure that you let fresh air in if you meet indoors.
- Make sure you can travel home safely, and wash your hands on your return.
- Do not visit or meet anyone if you have COVID symptoms or you live with someone who has symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID. This applies whether you are single, double or booster vaccinated.



Questions

If you have any questions, please get in touch with your Independent Age contact.

- If you cannot reach your Independent Age contact, please leave a message on the volunteer line on **020 7605 4255** and this will be passed on to the relevant person.
- If you are contacting an older person outside normal working hours (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) and are sufficiently concerned that you need to report a safeguarding issue, please call **020 7605 4455**. This number operates from 5pm to 9pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 9pm on weekends.

- Please look after your own health and wellbeing by following the guidance as it applies to you and by ensuring you keep in touch with your Independent Age contact.

We will update this document if any further changes are made to the government guidance that affect visiting someone in person.

Thank you for your continued support.

Wishing you all the very best.

Kelly Butler
Head of Volunteering Transformation