

## **Guidelines for Volunteers in a food distribution centre during COVID 19**

*This guidance has been produced by Derbyshire County Council for those volunteers supporting the community response to COVID-19. Adherence to these guidelines will reduce the risk of further spread of the virus. DCC staff should ensure that they are following the relevant DCC Infection Prevention and Control and Personal and Protective Equipment policies.*

The virus that causes COVID 19 is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, either

- between people who are in close contact with one another, or
- through droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. Early research suggests that COVID19 can remain 'active' on: plastic for up to 72 hours, stainless steel for 48 hours and up to 8 hours on copper. It is unknown how long it would last on paper or cardboard but not thought as long as metals.

**Although no specific equipment (such as gloves or masks) is needed when packing food parcels, cleaning and hand washing routines throughout the process are critical to minimise the spread of the virus.**

Useful and up to date information can be found here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> Or

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

### **To reduce the risk of becoming infected, or passing an infection on to others, volunteers:-**

- **MUST NOT volunteer if they, or anyone in their house, has any symptoms of COVID-19 (a new continuous cough, or a high temperature)**
- **MUST observe social distancing guidelines at all times. This includes**
  - remaining at least 2 meters from other people at all times, including when working in the distribution centre
  - avoiding using public transport wherever possible
- **MUST follow advice on good hand hygiene**
  - wash your hands often, using soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser that is 60% alcohol based.

People should wash their hands:

- Between each task
- before leaving home
- after using the toilet
- after breaks and sporting activities
- before food preparation
- before eating any food, including snacks

- on return to your home
- cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze
- put used tissues in the bin immediately and wash your hands afterwards
- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth

Surfaces and regularly touched objects (such as door handles, work surfaces, light switches) should be cleaned regularly, using standard household disinfectant.

### **Handling produce**

If possible, items should be unpacked and placed into distribution packages then left for the following time limits before being sent onwards. However, the most important thing to note is handwashing and cleaning at key stages:

72 hours for items in plastic packaging

48 hours for items in stainless steel packaging

As above handwashing should take place before and after handling produce and moving to another task eg. Between packing a food parcel and then writing/typing a list of addresses. Volunteers should avoid touching their face

If not possible, those receiving the food should be advised to leave it for the length of time above and practice good hand hygiene before and after touching it

### **Shielding**

Shielding is a measure to protect people who are clinically extremely vulnerable, by minimising all interaction between those who are extremely vulnerable and others. Individuals that are required to shield themselves have been notified directly by the NHS.

Adherence to this guidance should be followed when packing food parcels for individuals who are shielding. There are no additional requirements that need to be implemented.

For more information on COVID-19, including details on what you can do to look after your own health, please visit [www.derbyshire.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/coronavirus)