



NAZARENE
COMPASSIONATE
MINISTRIES

Guidelines for Safe Relief Distribution During Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response

One way to help vulnerable people who are isolated because of the coronavirus is the distribution of food and other essential items. However, it is important that great care is given to following protocol so that church members and community people are not at risk. This sheet is designed to help church volunteers and staff stay safe and to ensure that distributions carried out by churches do not increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the community. (**Note:** there are other ways for churches to respond to Coronavirus aside from distributions, but these same guidelines will likely apply).

Two Key Rules:

1. Follow your country's national public health guidelines regarding the coronavirus. Most governments will follow the guidelines from the World Health Organization that can be found here: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
2. If you, a) are feeling sick or have any of the symptoms
OR
b) have been in contact with anyone who either has the symptoms or is feeling sick, or tested positive for COVID-19, DO NOT participate in these efforts

Food Items

- Wear a mask (cloth or medical/surgical) when packing food indoors with other volunteers AND when distributing food.
- Where possible, pack food in an open outdoor space. If not possible, avoid spaces that are closed, crowded or involve close contact. Open windows to increase ventilation.
- Wash hands thoroughly before packing any food items and ensure that all packaging used for food is clean. Remember to wash hands regularly, including after you take any breaks while packing.
- Only pack food items that need to be cooked—rice, pasta, potatoes, beans, lentils, oil, flour, etc. Cooking of food items will reduce risk of transmission. Do NOT pack fresh food items. Multi-vitamins are OK, but should be in original packages that are sealed, and it should be made clear to the recipient that these are neither a treatment nor preventative for the virus, but simply a health-boosting supplement.
- Leave all food packages at the gate or door of the household and do NOT enter the house or stay to socialize.
- Do not shake hands with anyone and maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet (about 2 meters) from people
- Do not touch door handles, gate handles, and other commonly touched surfaces. If you do, wash your hands after. Wash your hands regularly during distributions.
- Remind recipients to wash their hands.

Non-Food Items

- Wear a mask (cloth or medical/surgical) when packing non-food items indoors with other volunteers AND when distributing food.
- Where possible, pack non-food items in an open outdoor space. If not possible, avoid spaces that are closed, crowded or involve close contact. Open windows to increase ventilation.
- Our recommendation is to only deliver non-food items that are in original packaging. This can include hygiene items like soaps, cleaning materials, sanitary pads, diapers, etc.
- Wash hands before assembling packages and ensure packaging used is clean. Wash hands after breaks while packing.
- Leave all packages at the gate or door of the household and do NOT enter the house or stay to socialize.
- Do not shake hands with anyone and maintain a minimum distance of 6 feet (about 2 meters) from people.
- Do not touch door handles, gate handles, and other commonly touched surfaces. If you do, wash your hands after. Wash your hands regularly during distributions.
- Remind recipients to wash their hands.

Volunteer Training

- Make sure that all volunteers understand the public health guidelines and the above guidelines from NCM before participating. If anyone is unwell or has any symptoms, they must not participate in the response. Volunteers that have fragile health themselves should also not participate in the response.
- If soap and water is not easily available when carrying out distributions, make sure volunteers have hand sanitizer (alcohol-based) so they can regularly clean their hands.
- For helpful posters/flyers from World Health Organization:
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
- For helpful Questions and Answers on the Coronavirus: <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>

General Reminders

- **Make wearing a mask a normal part of being around other people.**
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>
- Avoid spaces that are **closed, crowded**, or involve **close contact**.
- **Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth**
- **Practice respiratory hygiene** — This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately.
- **Wash hands regularly** — even if they don't look dirty. Watch this video!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7e8nMOJAz0>
- **Maintain distance from others** — stay more minimum of 6 feet (about 2 meters) from people.