

Safety Tips for Volunteering in a COVID World

In times of crisis, our natural instinct is to help. And now, more than ever, people are looking for ways to volunteer to support their community and the world around them. However, before you volunteer, you should first take these safety tips into consideration to ensure your safety and the safety of those around you:

STAY IN THE KNOW

Because things are changing so much on a daily basis, it is important to be aware of the latest COVID-19 news, especially locally. Make sure you pay attention to the social media, emails, texts and latest news coverage from the organization you're volunteering with and other reputable resources like the CDC, and your local and state health and safety officials.

ARE YOU HEALTHY ENOUGH TO VOLUNTEER?

If you want to volunteer in-person and the following conditions apply to you, you should consult your doctor first or review these considerations provided by the CDC:

- If you currently have a cough, fever, or any respiratory illness
- If you currently have a heart condition, lung disease, diabetes, or any other serious health condition, or are over the age of 65
- If you or anyone in your household have traveled internationally in the past 30 days.
- If you or anyone in your household have been in close contact with anyone who is confirmed to have COVID-19

UNDERSTAND THE RISKS

Before you volunteer, make sure you ask about any risks associated in your volunteer role and what they are doing to mitigate the risk. Also, check to see if there is a volunteer handbook you can reference.

CONSIDER VIRTUAL VOLUNTEERING

If you are unsure about your health status, are self-quarantining, and/or have travel restrictions in your city or state, the best way to still give back is by virtually volunteering. Reach out to the cause of your choice to see what virtual volunteering roles they have available. See example volunteer roles here and check out All for Good for volunteer opportunities.

AVOID CLOSE CONTACT

If you are volunteering out in the community, make sure you put distance between yourself and other people. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

CLEAN YOUR HANDS OFTEN

It is important that if you volunteer in-person that you:

- **Wash your hands** often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth** with unwashed hands.

LISTEN AND FOLLOW SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Follow the advice and guidance of staff or local team at all times. Staff are working around the clock to ensure their volunteers are in a safe environment, both virtually and in-person. Because of this, it is important that you follow their instructions to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

CLEAN AND DISINFECT SHARED SPACES

Clean and disinfect [frequently touched surfaces](#) daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. If surfaces are dirty, clean them – use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

(Source: PointofLight.com)