

COVID-19

What Can I Do to Help?



When bad things happen, many people want to help. Right now, the best way to help your family, friends, and community is to stay home and practice social distancing.

But there are lots of other ways you can help and still stay safe. Here are some ideas. Just remember to keep your distance from others and wash your hands well after you go out.

- ✔ **Reach out to family and friends who are alone.** Older relatives especially may feel cut off right now. They will value your call. If they have a smartphone or a computer, maybe you can video chat with them using an app like FaceTime, WhatsApp, or Zoom.
- ✔ **Check on neighbors.** You could offer to run errands for an older neighbor or to text or call them. Social networking sites like NextDoor can be a source of information about neighbors who need support.
- ✔ **Show your gratitude.** Essential workers are putting themselves at risk to keep your community running. Here are some ideas for showing that you appreciate them:
 - Consider leaving a thank-you note for your mail carrier or garbage collectors.
 - Tip delivery people if you can.
 - Say “thank you” to grocery store workers.
- ✔ **Help your community.** Hospitals, schools, and aid organizations may need your help. For example:
 - Look into donating blood—it’s an urgent need in many areas.
 - Contact a local school. Many schools are providing meals to students in need. They may need volunteers to pack or deliver food to pickup sites. Or they might appreciate a fundraiser to provide funds for groceries.
 - If you can, give online to local aid organizations, like food banks. Or find out if they could use volunteers.
- ✔ **Support local businesses and nonprofits you care about.** This can help them survive until they can open again. Buy online gift cards from shops and restaurants. Or buy tickets for future plays or concerts. You can use them later or give them as gifts.

✔ Bring cheer to your neighborhood.

- Start a “Teddy Bear Hunt.” People put teddy bears in their windows, so kids can walk around and count them. But both kids and adults can enjoy this activity.
- If you have kids, get them involved. Maybe they could use chalk to draw flowers or write positive messages on concrete. Or if they have books they’ve outgrown, they could put them out for others to take and enjoy.
- Do a neighborhood food drive. Put a box outside your door with a sign asking people to add a can of food or take one if they need it. What’s left can be donated to a food bank.
- Use social media to share uplifting stories of people helping other people. Or ask people to post funny photos of their pets or kids.

✔ Share excess necessities.

- If you bought more toilet paper or canned goods than you’ll need, pass them on. Check with older or disabled neighbors. Or give them to a food pantry or homeless shelter.
- If you have hospital-grade face masks and disposable gloves, contact your hospital. These items are vital for health care workers, and they’re in short supply in many areas.
- If you have fabric and can sew, you could make cloth face masks to give away.

- ✔ **Smile and wave or say “hi.”** You need to keep your distance from people when you’re out of your home, but you can still brighten someone’s day.



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