

## HOW DO WE SAFELY SERVE DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC?

### Caveats/Notes

- Many of these needs (such as food insecurity) will last long after the pandemic due to the economic strain this episode is placing on people/communities/businesses
- Many of “our own” are in the most threatened category-be sure to serve within as well, as one member put it: “we can't give what we don't have...” if our members aren't able to come out whole, they won't be able to serve later. “We need to show the same compassion and care for those that serve beside us everyday”-well said, ZC Keith of 14C, PA.
- CHECK WITH THE GROUPS YOU ARE HELPING-protocols are changing as quickly as the virus is morphing and as new information is discovered (for instance the virus was first thought to live 8-12 hours on a surface, now it's known that time is closer to 72 hrs). Regular communication is essential. Know the latest protocol.
- Think also of other future needs to be met during the sequelae following this pandemic
- Collaboration with other agencies (as always) increases impact and reduces duplication of effort
- Directing those in need to existing services (such as mental health support) is also service
- Keep in mind those businesses-restaurants etc-that support us and regularly donate to our causes. Find ways to support them-maybe coordinate a gift card purchase, etc
- Wear clothing, vests, etc easily identifying you as Lions while you do these services. Not only for great PR, but so people in need can identify a group to seek out should they need something else
- Your Lions and Clubs can also use this time to create/plan future service projects that have maybe been placed on the back burner due to time constraints. Ex: complete vision screening certification online in prep for the return to screening programs....

- Many items you may get wish lists for can be safely and remotely ordered and delivered (Amazon, Grubhub, etc) vs touching more hands
- Volunteering to help “undo” the many canceled events-facilitating returns, making calls, etc is also a needed service

## FOOD INSECURITY

- Support local pantries with collections, stocking, packing, delivery. Lions in Indiana are serving as “runners” for their local pantry and using other ways to bridge the gap between food sources and those in need. Lions in 33K , MA are serving as replacement volunteers for their local pantries and school packing programs as many of their typical volunteers are sequestered
- Support school meals programs such as backpacks-many students and families are dependent upon school to get at least 2 of their daily meals, as well as snacks
- “Home shoppers”-offer shopping and porch delivery of groceries for those who cannot get out or at most risk 14B in PA, the Pleasant Hills Lions Club is taking payment and doing just this. Clubs set up with Venmo, credit card billing, paypal etc would be well suited to do this
- Local shelters and other agencies are absolutely dependent upon regular support from others, some of their resources will be reduced/absent during this time-check and see what they need like food, diapers, formula, personal care products, transportation/delivery
- The above is also true for those who are homeless-support local street feeding programs, see if your local soup kitchen is operating in a modified way and could use some help. Lions in Ontario are following up with needy residents they have helped in the past and are providing care packs of snacks and personal care products, etc
- Many of the most at risk and remaining home are typically dependent upon their local Senior Centers for meals, transportation, medications, etc -see what needs can be met here
- Meals on Wheels-many of these groups are in need of replacement/additional drivers, packers, etc

- Lions in Ontario who own their own club house/hall have turned it into an emergency food distribution center for their small rural community. They are partnering with their local schools, as well as the Health Unit and Food Bank from a larger neighboring community. They are able to accept donations from a local grocery store and the food bank for local residents in need to pick up. Logistics for the program are developing ongoing
- Some of our local restaurants are offering specially-priced care packages/meals for a nominal amount (\$5 for most) they will reserve/send a meal to a person in need. Lions can offer to help supplement these programs. A pizza shop is placing meal “tickets” at their door, no questions asked, for people in need to bring inside and exchange for a meal. Again-Lions could supplement
- Pet food and supplies needs are also a concern, especially as some of the people we serve are VI. In District 33A there is a VIP (visually impaired persons) Lions Club. One of their 33A Lions took a service animal to the Vet and shopped for food

## MEDICAL SUPPORT

- Clubs that provide eye/health screenings or go on missions may have some much needed medical supplies on hand-masks, gloves, cleaning supplies, etc that can be used in hospitals and care facilities; donate them and replace later (Our 33K Eyemobile did just this and the supplies were much appreciated by our local medical center)
- Facilitate the collection and delivery of these needed supplies from others (voc schools, nail/beauty shops who use gloves and masks, local residents who no longer need them, etc) and get them to where they are needed
- Diabetics supplies-again many of the older and so most at risk are homebound and might be unable to access getting their supplies-help coordinate the purchase/delivery
- People in need of regular medical care-dialysis and such-may be without their regular transportation and need assistance

- Provide a special treat, food delivery, flowers, thank yous, etc to support local first responders, hospitals and other essential care workers putting in LONG stressful days. If these can't be accepted now, then plan a great thank you for afterward. Ordering these items from those businesses that have helped us kills two birds with one stone ;)
- Some UK Lion's organized a "Clap for Our Carers" a set time when all residents were encouraged to stand on their steps and clap for all those serving on our front lines
- Some local disaster relief agencies are in need of volunteers and services-see attached images of example of a webinar info from MA response agencies looking for volunteers-collaborate with your local response authority to see if they have similar programs
- Another possible idea for "after", but can certainly use this down time to organize and plan, is establishing a local disaster response team if your area doesn't have one. Lions have a program ( Lions Alert) and grants for just such programs
- Mental health concerns may be intensified during this time of extreme worry. Establish phone chains and friendly caller programs with neighbors, elders, your own members. Keep privacy in mind
- Regarding the above: create a virtual page of local services that people in need of emotional support can access-call in services, etc. Use "Call Em All" or other automated phone dialing services to provide helpful support from a distance
- Create and maintain a virtual page of information on the virus/directing persons to pages like CDC, local DPH etc who have important information and resources. Be sure this is regularly updated, things change quickly
- Volunteer some time (calls can be routed to home phones in some instances) with such agencies to provide support. NB:training is typically required so be aware
- Sew protective masks. Many hospitals and care facilities are in dire need of masks and mask covers to extend the life of their N95 masks. Some local fabric/craft stores are donating supplies and even pre cut material (some of the Joann Fabrics in MA are participating) or there

are directions readily available online. This might be a great program to collaborate with our shut in but still sew crafty older neighbors

- Creating a distant “alert” system for those in need to place in their windows-ie the green card/ red card system many local areas have adopted
- Facilitate virtual contact-supply hardware like Echo Show units or lap tops, or projection screens, maybe even loan them from your local GLT supplies-and offer tech support to set up Skype, Zoom, Google hangouts, etc for contact and/or gathering and playing recorded family messages, for these Nursing home/facility/hospital inpatients who are separated from their families-some/many of them in memory/Alzheimer's units in need of regular orientation and emotional support-for the duration
- A small group (family unit) in MA assembled their 3 dogs outside a large windowed, group gathering room of a local nursing home for the residents to see and enjoy, even at a distance
- You could work to beautify an area outside such a windowed room with plantings, raised gardens, bird homes/feeders if you are in an area where the weather supports this. This project will be a great one to maintain and build upon even after this threat
- Lions Club Paris Helen Keller donated clocks with sweep second hands to the infectious disease department to a hospital to aid in determining the respiratory rate of patients
- There is a huge shortage of blood around the world. NJ Lions are working with the Red Cross to motivate young and healthy to go to local hospitals and donate blood.
- NJ Lions are hosting a weekly “talk to a doc” webinar to answer the questions of the Lions and community.
- Check with local First Responders (Paramedics/Fire Departments) to see what supplies they need. Sponsor a drop off day where residents can drive up and drop off needed items. Advertise these needs on the local government webpage and your club/district facebook pages. Wear your vests on drop off day and use safety precautions (gloves and masks.)

- Many first responders and medical personnel are having to work long shifts and may have to remain where they are. Check to make sure they have plenty of food and drinks. Have your club send pizzas or subs to them so they have a change of diet. This also helps local pizzerias and sub shops with needed income.

## COMMUNITY

- Many schools are closed and teaching is taking place distantly. Check with your schools to see if they have the necessary infrastructure and technology (laptops, internet access, software, licenses, etc) to do this
- See if your school or community may want virtual community readers-Lions could read books live or recorded for these teachers to use in their lessons. Check with schools, libraries
- Sandwell Lions Club in the W Midlands, England is holding regular story hours with members and LEOs reading a variety of children's selections
- Maybe other lesson support could be useful-virtual career day or a mini distant "what's my Line?" kind of lesson where you could show a uniform, or tools of your trade, etc as the students try to guess what you do. Communicate with the schools to see what their needs are
- Beautify an area. Being outside in small groups maintaining social distance still allows for some outside service to take place. One note, please be sure your area has had a series of 50+ degrees F (10+ C) days. Many pollinators and other helpful insects overwinter in brush and would be killed if disturbed
- Along the same lines-yard clean ups in such areas might also be welcomed by those unable to do so
- Most/all local day cares are shuttered, but many essential personnel are still in need of childcare. Check to see which of your local groups may be approved to provide such care on an emergent basis and see if they need help. Again-be aware that these protocols will change, communication is key

- Organize a virtual or distant scavenger or themed drive by “fun” . For instance, residents in Medway, MA had people create chalk designs on their walks, fences, drives, etc for others to enjoy as they drove around. They did the same for St Patrick’s Day, placing shamrocks in windows. Attention to logistics on locations, not creating unsafe traffic patterns, etc is necessary, but this works well in a small rural area
- Fund a local performer providing a virtual enrichment program, maybe coordinated through your local school or library. Something like a bubble show, science show, magic, balloons, songs and movement, etc. These performers (maybe some have donated their services in the past for your events too) have lost bookings and shows
- Do you have a local distillery that is volunteering their facility to create much needed hand sanitizer (some of them are)? Maybe coordinate its distribution-being sure to follow local protocols
- Organize a virtual contest of some sort-recycled art, how I can show I Care for Others (or other feel good topic) Poster contest, thank you greetings, etc and encourage participants to upload their creative submission to an online page for voting and awards. Take care with privacy and safety of the minors
- Organize home bound students in making cards for homebound seniors, others or maybe thank yous for front liners
- KOPE Cyber Lions (Delaware based) are hosting online Lions Quest programs
- NJ Lions are hosting a Leadership training for Leos delivered by Leos.
- NJ Lions hosted a youth chat to understand feelings, fears, concerns and expectations of our youth.
- Support local restaurants by ordering takeout (if offered) Clubs in Galesville, Wisconsin are holding a “Takeout Challenge” and are offering tickets for raffle prizes to people who submit take out receipts. Remember, Lions, these are the business we ask for donations, now we can return the favor.

- Send cards and letters to elderly care facilities. These residents have been cut off from normal family visitation and need to know they are still cared for. (Be sure to check with the facility for their guidelines)

## MILITARY

- Many military units-both deployed and at “home”-are further isolated from family and support during this time, especially as many groups cannot currently assemble and mail much needed care packages. I know one local group is supporting a soldier from town who is serving here but their base has zero access internally for TP (many of us can sympathise with that) and these soldiers cannot just go to the store repeatedly in hopes they’ve stocked up. If it isn't on the shelves of the PX, they don't get any. The group is having a “Can you Spare a ‘Square’? ” (or two) for our military and coordinating a local drive to ship to this soldier and his compatriots.

Example of a group looking for volunteers in MA. Your area may have similar:





## COVID-19 VIRUS RESPONSE

### Webinar

#### Managing Volunteers During a Pandemic

Friday, April 3, 2020

10:00 – 11:00 am

Join this webinar to hear about some of the best practices being shared by and with the field of Volunteer Engagement in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Topics include: keeping your volunteers engaged, keeping volunteers (and others) safe and virtual volunteer opportunities.

[Register for the Webinar](#)



### Massachusetts Disaster Volunteers

The disaster web portal, [www.madisastervolunteers.org](http://www.madisastervolunteers.org), is designed to connect unaffiliated volunteers to agencies in need of volunteers during times of disaster. A person will go to the webpage and register as a volunteer. Agencies who serve in times of disaster are encouraged to register their agency on the site.

For further questions about the disaster web portal, you may reach out to MSA Program Officer, Roger Dunn at [rdunn@mass-service.org](mailto:rdunn@mass-service.org).

[Register Your Agency](#)



## COVID-19 Volunteer Opportunities

### Connect And Serve- COVID-19 Portal

Volunteers are still needed during this time. Organizations are encouraged to post urgent opportunities to serve during the pandemic on the new [COVID-19 response portal](#). Individuals will also be able to search and sign up for these opportunities.

Please take necessary precautions in practicing social distancing and please remain at home if you are unwell.

[Post Opportunities](#)

### Questions?

For questions please contact Belle Allen, Communications and Operations Associate, at [617-542-2544, x221](tel:617-542-2544) or [ballen@mass-service.org](mailto:ballen@mass-service.org).

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